

# Early childhood education and care quality ratings

The National Quality Standard (NQS) sets a **benchmark** for the quality of all early childhood education and care services across Australia.



**Service does not meet one of the 7 quality areas or a section of the legislation and there is a significant risk to the safety, health and wellbeing of children.**

**The regulatory authority will take immediate action.**

**Service provides a safe education and care program, but there are one or more areas identified for improvement.**

**Service meets the NQS. Service provides quality education and care in all 7 quality areas.**

**Service goes beyond the requirements of the NQS in at least 4 of the 7 quality areas.**

**Services rated Exceeding National Quality Standard in all 7 quality areas may choose to apply to the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) for the Excellent rating.**

The NQS is made up of 7 quality areas. Services are assessed and rated by the NSW Regulatory Authority to determine the level of quality.

Quality Area 1	Quality Area 2	Quality Area 3	Quality Area 4	Quality Area 5	Quality Area 6	Quality Area 7
<p><b>Educational program and practice</b></p> <p>Educational program and practice of educators are child-centred, stimulating and maximise opportunities for enhancing and extending each child's learning and development.</p>	<p><b>Children's health and safety</b></p> <p>Children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that safeguards and promotes their health, safety and wellbeing.</p>	<p><b>Physical environment</b></p> <p>Physical environment is safe, suitable and provides a rich and diverse range of experiences that promote children's learning and development.</p>	<p><b>Staffing arrangements</b></p> <p>Qualified and experienced educators who develop warm, respectful relationships with children, create predictable environments and encourage children's active engagement in the learning program.</p>	<p><b>Relationships with children</b></p> <p>Relationships with children are responsive, respectful and promote children's sense of security and belonging.</p>	<p><b>Collaborative partnerships with families and communities</b></p> <p>Collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children, and community partnerships based on active communication, consultation and collaboration are essential.</p>	<p><b>Governance and leadership</b></p> <p>Effective leadership and governance of the service contributes to quality environments for children's learning and development. Effective leaders establish shared values for the service and set clear direction for the service's continuous improvement.</p>