

# SCSEEC

Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood

1 May 2013

## **Media release: Quality ratings for education and care services released**

The Chair of the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC), the Hon. Adrian Piccoli MP, is pleased to announce that quality ratings of children's education and care services are available to families across Australia from today.

Education and care services are progressively being assessed and rated as part of the National Quality Framework (NQF) for Early Childhood Education and Care.

The NQF was agreed by all Australian governments in 2009, for staged implementation across the country.

Approximately 1600 of 13,000 education and care services have been rated so far against the National Quality Standard (NQS) under the NQF.

"The public release of ratings gives families information about the quality of a variety of children's services under the National Quality Framework," Minister Piccoli said.

"The ratings will help families make informed choices about the education and care of their children. This is a new assessment and rating system that sets higher benchmarks for services," said the Minister

Quality ratings can be found in national registers on the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website, [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au).

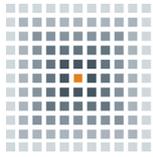
The states and territories are responsible for assessing and rating children's education and care services. Ratings are provided for seven quality areas under the NQS, as well as an overall rating for the service. There are five rating levels assigned to children's services within the national quality assessment and rating process:

- Excellent\*
- Exceeding National Quality Standard
- Meeting National Quality Standard
- Working Towards National Quality Standard
- Significant Improvement Required

"It's important for families to look at a service's rating for each quality area, rather than just the overall rating. They can work out which of these areas are most important to them and make decisions accordingly," Minister Piccoli said.

The focus of the NQS is on quality and continuous improvement so, over time, it is expected that all services will make improvements in quality.

If a service is rated 'Working Towards' in one or more of the seven quality areas, it will receive an overall rating of 'Working Towards' This rating is an important part of transitioning to higher standards under the NQF and does not mean that the health and safety of children is compromised.



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“The NQS raises the bar, so it is to be expected that a significant proportion of services will achieve the ‘Working Towards National Quality Standard’ overall rating,” noted the Minister.

The seven quality areas under the NQS are:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children’s health and safety
3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

As more services are assessed and rated, ratings will added to the national online registers, and will be displayed on-site at children’s services.

*\* The “Excellent” rating is only given to those services that have received an overall rating of “Exceeding” and who subsequently have successfully applied to ACECQA to be assessed as an excellent service.*

**Media contact:**

Greg Donaghue, SCSEEC secretariat, on (03) 9639 0588 or [greg.donaghue@scseec.edu.au](mailto:greg.donaghue@scseec.edu.au)