

BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON ACHIEVING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

An agreement between

- the **Commonwealth of Australia** as represented by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (the **Commonwealth**)
and
- the **State of New South Wales** as represented by the Department of Community Services and the Department of Education and Training

Through this Agreement the Commonwealth will fund New South Wales to facilitate it achieving Universal Access to Early Childhood Education Programs by 2013 in its jurisdiction.

Bilateral Agreement on Achieving Universal Access to Early Childhood Education

Intergovernmental Agreement

Parties Commonwealth of Australia as represented by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
of 16-18 Mort Street, Braddon in the Australian Capital Territory.

The State of New South Wales as represented by the Department of Community Services of 4-6 Cavill Ave, Ashfield, Sydney in New South Wales and the Department of Education and Training of 35 Bridge Street, Sydney in New South Wales.

RECOGNISING THAT:

- A. The Commonwealth and New South Wales are committed to implementing the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE) and to working together to improve the accessibility, quality and quantity of Early Childhood Education for Australian children. In particular, the NP ECE is the means by which the Commonwealth and the States and Territories have committed to ensure that, by 2013, every child will have access to Early Childhood Education Programs in the year prior to formal schooling.
- B. Under the NP ECE the Commonwealth provides funding to New South Wales to help achieve the aims of the NP ECE.
- C. The Commonwealth provides funding to the States and Territories for the purposes of and subject to this Bilateral Agreement, the NP ECE and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations (IGA). These agreements provide the framework of the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education Program (the Program).

THE PARTIES HAVE REACHED THE FOLLOWING AGREEMENT

1. PURPOSE

- (a) The Parties agree to cooperate in the implementation of this Bilateral Agreement, as part of the NP ECE and in accordance with the IGA, as agreed by all governments at the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on 29 November 2008.

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- (b) The Parties have further agreed to cooperate in multilateral intergovernmental arrangements established under the NP ECE, with particular reference to the Roles and Responsibilities outlined in part 3 of the NP ECE, including developing and implementing:
 - (i) agreed data for performance measurement;
 - (ii) a national early years workforce strategy; and
 - (iii) a national strategy for achieving universal access to early childhood education for Indigenous children (including in remote communities).

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Agreement are to establish a framework for:

- (a) the provision of funding by the Commonwealth to New South Wales;
- (b) the management and implementation of the program in New South Wales; and
- (c) reporting on performance against the Performance Benchmarks and Deliverables.

3. PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKS AND DELIVERABLES

New South Wales will achieve the Performance Benchmarks and the Deliverables:

- (a) at the times and in the manner specified in table 1 of item C and table 2 of item D of schedule 1; and
- (b) in accordance with the terms of this Bilateral Agreement, the NP ECE, the IGA and assisted by the Guidelines.

4. FUNDING

- (a) Subject to clause 34 of the NP ECE and paragraph 4(b), the Commonwealth will make payments to New South Wales in the manner specified in item A of schedule 2. The Commonwealth's obligation is subject to New South Wales' delivery of the Reports and the Commonwealth's acceptance of the Reports.
- (b) If New South Wales does not meet the agreed Performance Benchmarks and Deliverables as specified in table 1 of item C and in table 1 of item D of schedule 1, the Commonwealth will consider whether or not further payments should be made, and the timing and amount of such payments. Such consideration will be subject to clauses 7 and 8 of this Agreement, and clauses 37 to 40 and 45 of the NP ECE.

5. DISCONTINUANCE OF FUNDING

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- (a) In carrying out their responsibilities under this Bilateral Agreement and the NP ECE, the parties confirm they will operate in an open and collaborative manner. However, the Commonwealth reserves the right to withhold or discontinue funding if New South Wales does not fulfil its obligations under this Bilateral Agreement or the NP ECE. Notification will be provided in writing.

6. REPORTS

New South Wales will provide to the Commonwealth:

- (a) the financial reports at the times and in the manner specified by paragraph D33 of the Intergovernmental Agreement; and
- (b) the Reports at the times and in the manner stated in item E of schedule 1 of New South Wales' progress in achieving the Performance Benchmarks and Deliverables and of New South Wales' Data Capability.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

- (a) The Parties agree that achievement of the Performance Benchmarks and Deliverables as detailed in this Bilateral Agreement will be jointly monitored by both parties in accordance with the relevant provisions of the NP ECE (part 4) and the IGA (schedule C).
- (b) The NP ECE and this Bilateral Agreement will be reviewed at least 18 months after 29 November 2008. The review will have regard to the progress made by the Parties against the NP ECE and this Bilateral Agreement, and will specifically address:
 - i. the adequacy of funding to achieve specified outcomes and outputs;
 - ii. the appropriateness of timelines;
 - iii. achievement of agreed outcomes, outputs and performance indicators;
 - iv. satisfactory compliance by governments with all financial reporting requirements of the NP ECE; and
 - v. annual bilateral discussions to review the progress against this Bilateral Agreement, and outcomes and outputs set out in the NP ECE.

8. GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

- (a) The Parties confirm that the relevant dispute resolution clauses of the NP ECE (clauses 37 to 40) apply.
- (b) In order to facilitate the collaborative implementation of this Bilateral Agreement and the NP ECE, the Commonwealth will be invited to participate in any New South Wales implementation oversight or management committee that may be established, thereby giving effect to shared responsibilities under clause 24 of the NP ECE.

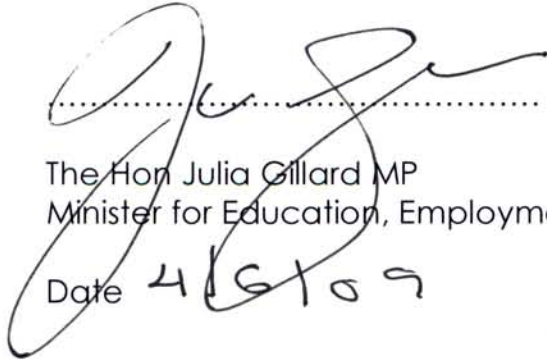
9. STATUS OF THIS AGREEMENT

- (a) This Bilateral Agreement forms part of and is subsidiary to the NP ECE. This Bilateral Agreement ceases to have effect if the NP ECE is terminated by either party in accordance with clause 46 of the NP ECE. The Bilateral Agreement will be reviewed if the NP ECE is amended in accordance with clause 45 of the NP ECE.
- (b) This Bilateral Agreement is not intended to, and does not, create legally binding obligations between the Parties.
- (c) This Bilateral Agreement is entered into on the date set out at page 6 below.

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The Parties have executed this agreement as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the
Commonwealth of Australia by

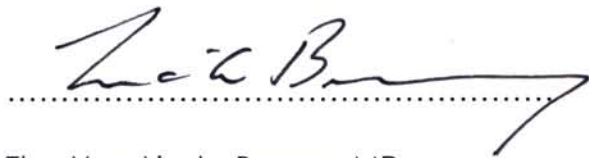


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The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Date 4/6/09

Signed for and on behalf of the
State of New South Wales by



.....

The Hon Linda Burney MP
Minister for Community Services

Date 25.5.09



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The Hon Verity Firth MP
Minister for Education and Training

Date 25/5/09

Schedule 1

A Program and Guidelines

Universal Access to Early Childhood Education Program

For details on the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education Program, refer to the NP ECE.

For details on the administration processes and procedures of the Universal Access Early Childhood Education Program, refer to the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education Program Guidelines. The Program Guidelines specify the roles of the Commonwealth and State-Territory Program Delegates, outline the relevant coordination and consultation arrangements between the parties, address administrative processes in support of the Program, and provide relevant templates for reporting under item E of schedule 1.

B Performance Objectives

In accordance with clauses 17 and 18 of the NP ECE:

- By 2013 every child will have access to a preschool program in the 12 months prior to full-time schooling.
- The preschool program is to be delivered by a four year university qualified early childhood teacher, in accordance with a national early years learning framework, for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year. Reasonable transitional arrangements—including potentially beyond 2013—are needed to implement the commitment to preschool program delivery by four year university qualified early childhood teachers, as agreed in the bilateral agreements.
- The program will be accessible across a diversity of settings, in a form that meets the needs of parents and in a manner that ensures cost does not present a barrier to access.
- In the first two years of implementing the NP ECE (2009 and 2010), national priorities include:
 - increasing participation rates, particularly for Indigenous and disadvantaged children
 - increasing program hours
 - ensuring cost is not a barrier to access
 - strengthening program quality and consistency
 - fostering service integration and coordination across stand-alone preschool and child care.

The strategies for addressing these priorities may differ on a state-by-state basis.

C Performance Benchmarks

New South Wales is responsible for achieving the Performance Benchmarks as agreed with the Commonwealth and specified in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Early Childhood Education Program Performance Benchmarks ^{1,2}

Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline Position (As at Sept 2008)	Performance Benchmarks				
			31 December 2009	31 December 2010	31 December 2011	31 December 2012	30 June 2013
Children have universal access to an Early Childhood Education Program for 15 hours per week, 40 weeks per year.	The proportion of children who are enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education Program.	81.9% ³	88.6%	94.6%	94.9%	95.0%	95.0%
	The number of teachers delivering Early Childhood Education Programs who are four year university trained and early childhood qualified.	4,680 ⁴	4,680	4,680	4,916	5,152	5,624

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline Position (As at Sept 2008)	Performance Benchmarks				
			31 December 2009	31 December 2010	31 December 2011	31 December 2012	30 June 2013
	<p>Hours per week of attendance (where possible to measure) at an Early Childhood Education Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of children enrolled in an Early Childhood Education Program that is available for at least 15 hours a week⁵ ▪ The average number of hours per week of attendance at an Early Childhood Education Program.⁵ 	<p>29%⁶</p> <p>2.11 (6 hour) days⁷</p>	29%	33%	33%	66%	100%
			2.11 days	2.15 days	2.27 days	2.39 days	2.50 days

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline Position (As at Sept 2008)	Performance Benchmarks					
			31 December 2009	31 December 2010	31 December 2011	31 December 2012	30 June 2013	
Universal access to an Early Childhood Education Program is delivered across a range of settings at a cost which is not a barrier to access	Distribution of children who attend an Early Childhood Education Program by weekly cost per child (after subsidies) as defined by jurisdictions	<p>Distribution of children across settings: Government preschools: 4,284 Community preschools: 47,883 Long day care services delivering a preschool program: 19,656⁵</p> <p>Average costs per day of NSW Community preschools = \$28.30⁸</p>	<p>4,284 53,133 19,656</p>	<p>4,284 58,383 Increase on baseline</p>	<p>4,284 58,633 Increase on baseline</p>	<p>4,284 58,883 Increase on baseline</p>	<p>4,284 58,883 Increase on baseline</p>	<p>4,284 58,883 Increase on baseline</p>
Disadvantaged children have universal access to an Early Childhood Education Program.	The proportion of disadvantaged children enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education Program	Children in low income families (ie Health Care Card holding families) (21.3% of population) Current number: 13662 ⁹ Current Proportion Enrolled: 73.7%	78.0%	82.4%	86.7 %	91.0%	95.0%	

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Baseline Position (As at Sept 2008)	Performance Benchmarks				
			31 December 2009	31 December 2010	31 December 2011	31 December 2012	30 June 2013
Indigenous children (including those in Remote Indigenous Communities) enrolled in and attending an Early Childhood Education Program	The proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location as identified by the Australian Standard Geographic Classification), who are Enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education Program. ¹¹	79.6% ¹⁰	82.7%	85.5%	88.3%	91.1%	95%

Notes:

1. Where agreed reliable data are not available, New South Wales will agree with the Commonwealth a strategy for developing an appropriate data set, as part of New South Wales's Data Capability Report (see Schedule 1 D2 for details).
2. This table should be read in conjunction with the Deliverables at specified in the NSW Action Plan in Table 2 below.
3. The proportion of 81.9% comprises the number of children in the preschool age group attending Government preschools, community preschools, and long day care services delivering a preschool program (71,823), divided by New South Wales population of 4 year olds (87,000).
4. There are 4,680 teachers with university degrees or equivalent in Government preschools, community preschools, and long day care services delivering a preschool program. Data is not currently available to distinguish 3 year or 4 year duration of study. The number of early childhood teachers in other sectors is not known but may be clarified through the proposed national workforce survey. Appropriate benchmarks may then be able to be set and reported through New South Wales's Data Capability Report.
5. Figures are not currently available year by year for children in long day care services delivering a preschool program. Numbers of children attending these programs will affect the benchmarks.

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6. This is the proportion of children attending an Early Childhood Education Program in a Government or community preschool that attend that program for 15 hours per week.
7. This is the average hours of attendance per week of all children in preschool age group in a Government or community preschool.
8. Currently 6% of enrolments are in Government preschools (non-fee paying). These preschools may seek voluntary contributions from parents, where parents are able to make such contributions. Figures are not included here for long day care services providing a preschool program as fees in long day care services are not a State responsibility. It is proposed that there will be a nationally agreed approach to gathering and reporting fees data in other non-government provided settings. Appropriate benchmarks may then be able to be set and reported.
9. This figure comprises 8,060 in community and Government preschools plus 5,602 in Long Day Care services.
10. The proportion of 79.6% comprises the number of Indigenous children in the preschool age group attending Government preschools and community preschools (2,644) and Long Day Care estimated from the Child Care Census (197), divided by the New South Wales Population of 4 year old Indigenous children in total population (4.1%): 3,567.
11. The Commonwealth will be providing data on geographic location on a national basis.

NOTES ON DATA SOURCES, COVERAGE AND LIMITATIONS

Introduction

The NSW Government has three main sources of its own data regarding children's services in NSW:

- Annual data collections undertaken by each of the two main Departments involved in children's services: the NSW Department of Community Services, and the NSW Department of Education and Training; and
- the licensing database of the NSW Department of Community Services.

NSW also garners significant data from the Commonwealth Government *Census of Child Care Services*. The Census has been conducted regularly since 1986. The most recent Census was conducted in May 2006. This census collects significant information for Commonwealth funded services providing long day care including child attendances and characteristics; some details of staff qualifications training and experience; service costs and family income. No information is collected regarding standalone preschool services.

None of these data sources meet all the data needs for all aspects of *the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* (UAECE) program for the following reasons:

- The NSW Department of Community Services licensing database only contains information that is relevant to the licensing process and may be collected within the powers of the Act and Regulation. Therefore, the data from this source does not include: actual child attendances or characteristics; statistics or details of staff qualifications for most staff members; and information about service costs.
- The NSW Department of Education and Training census of the Department's 100 preschool services is undertaken for a representative week in August of each year. It collects information regarding many aspects of child characteristics and attendances but does not collect family income

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data. Other data sources are available for information regarding staff numbers and characteristics. The reporting date for data is March the following year.

- The NSW Department of Community Services annual data collection is undertaken for a representative week in September each year. The reporting date for the data is March the following year. It collects information from all services funded by the NSW Department of Community Services, including 752 not-for-profit community preschools and approximately 450 not-for-profit long day care services. The information collected from these services includes: child attendances and characteristics; some details of staff numbers and characteristics including qualifications, training and experience; service costs; and family income. No information is collected from NSW's 1,200 commercial long day care services through this process as they are not state funded.

Data in the NSW Action Plan

The data NSW has provided as the 'baseline' for the NSW Action Plan under the *Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* program, including the performance benchmarks identified, are based on NSW Department of Community Services and the NSW Department of Education and Training 2008 data collections. This is the most up-to-date information available.

As part of the *Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* program and the COAG agenda for early childhood, governments have agreed to work collaboratively to improve data and information nationally so that better, nationally comparable information is available.

As part of the NSW Action Plan under the *Universal Access to Early Childhood Education* program, NSW agencies have undertaken to further improve data collection capabilities and collections. The collections will be reviewed to better match Performance Indicators, Deliverables and Targets required for the UAECE National Partnership.

Limitations to the Use of the 2008 'Baseline' Data

There is currently no nationally agreed data strategy or framework, data fields or counting rules for the UAECE program. These are proposed to be developed as part of annual Data Capability improvements.

Therefore, the NSW data reflects historical data needs, and recent changes made to reflect NSW's Preschool Investment and Reform Plan. The best available and most comparable data has been used to provide measures for the 7 Performance Indicators under the National Partnership. In each case, data has been provided for the 'current position' or baseline.

A performance benchmark has been identified for each of the 5 calendar years of the National Partnership - 2009 to 2013. In some cases the figures provided as the performance benchmark for the years 2009 to 2013 are estimates of the growth year-on-year that is required to achieve the UAECE targets by 2013. In such cases, the benchmarks reflect the trend lines that will result if children and families and service providers respond to the Action Plan funding and strategies as planned. Comments are provided below regarding factors affecting each Performance Indicator.

The reliability of these estimates varies and each benchmark is affected by a number of factors:

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- the availability of data (for example, data is not available year to year for the participation of different groups of disadvantaged children in long day care services as this is not collected by State or Commonwealth governments);
- the sensitivity of the benchmark to UAECE strategies and other strategies (for example, the participation of some children in prior-to-school services may be affected by issues outside the scope of the UAECE program); and
- the predictability of the benchmarks and the sensitivity of benchmarks to exogenous factors (for example, family workforce participation decisions and family budget factors).

As noted above many of these data issues will be considered as part of the broader data improvement strategies under the COAG early childhood reform agenda.

Key factors affecting the NSW Performance Indicators and Benchmarks

1. The proportion of children who are enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education Program.

The data and projections for this indicator are robust and the performance benchmarks to be achieved reflect NSW and Commonwealth policy commitments to raise preschool attendance to 95%.

The child attendance numbers include children aged three years to five years for preschools, but only four and five year olds for long day care. This is because existing data collections for NSW Department of Community Services and NSW Department of Education and Training preschools include children under 4 years of age who may be eligible to attend school in the following year. Refinements to the age groupings are to be considered as part of data improvements so that age counts can better discriminate between those eligible for school in the following year and any younger children. Access strategies under the NSW plan are also expected to increase the proportion of older children and reduce numbers of younger children.

Data is not available year-to-year for child attendances at Long Day Care services providing a preschool program as this is not collected by State or Commonwealth Governments. Data is also not currently available for children attending prior to school programs in non-government schools, but is proposed to be collected as part of the NSW Action Plan.

Both these factors will affect the baseline and performance benchmarks for the following reasons:

- future growth in attendances in preschool programs may occur in long day care services; and
- significant numbers of children now and in the future will attend non-government school services prior to the commencement of formal schooling.

2. The number of teachers delivering Early Childhood Education Programs who are four year university trained and early childhood qualified.

The data for this indicator is robust for total teacher numbers.

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Data currently available for community preschools or for long day care services offering a preschool program does not distinguish three year trained teachers from four year trained teachers. This is expected to be rectified by data improvements over the National Partnership period.

The performance benchmarks to be achieved assume that most services not currently required by NSW regulation to employ university trained teachers (approximately 950 services) respond to strategies in the latter part of the National Partnership and NSW Action Plan and start to employ teachers. It also assumes that the supply of teachers is adequate to meet such demand.

3. Hours per week of attendance (where possible to measure) at an Early Childhood Education Program

- *3a - Proportion of children enrolled in an Early Childhood Education Program that is available for at least 15 hours a week; and*
- *3b - The average number of hours per week of attendance at an Early Childhood Education Program.*

The data and projections for this indicator are reasonably robust as they relate to daily attendances at community and Government preschools.

Data is not available year-to-year for child daily attendances at long day care services providing a preschool program as this is not collected by State or Commonwealth Governments. This will affect the performance benchmarks as some of the growth in daily attendances and hours may occur in long day care services providing preschool programs.

The performance benchmarks for average attendances (3b) assume that the current patterns of attendance (ranging from 0.5 days per week to 5 days per week, with most children attending 1, 2 or 3 whole days) converge towards a uniform attendance by all children of 15 hours/2.5 days per week.

The performance benchmarks for proportions of attendances at 15 hours per week (3a) assume that in the early years of the National Partnership, child attendance numbers increase significantly while average hours remain stable, but the proportions of children attending for 15 hours per week increase significantly towards the end of the National Partnership period.

4. Distribution of children who attend an Early Childhood Education Program by weekly cost per child (after subsidies) as defined by jurisdictions.

The data and projections for child attendance in a range of settings are reasonably robust as it relates to attendances by children at community and Government preschools.

Data is not available year-to-year for child attendances at long day care services providing a preschool program as this is not collected by State or Commonwealth Governments. This will affect the performance benchmarks as some of the growth in child attendances across a range of settings may occur in long day care services.

Cost figures are not included against this indicator for Government preschools because these are free, or for long day care services providing a preschool program because the cost after subsidies for these services is a result of Commonwealth policy settings through the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Tax Rebate schemes.

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The indicator of costs after subsidies is robust for the current position for community preschools. Reliable projections of costs in forward years are not available as service providers set their own fees, including in response to factors that are outside the scope of the UAECE programs such as wage rises or rental costs.

As part of the NSW UAECE Action Plan, the NSW Department of Community Services will increase the monitoring and performance management of funded preschools to ensure that increased funding is directed to reducing preschool fees to the greatest extent possible. Consideration will be given to developing mechanisms to ensure that new funding translates into reduced fees for families.

5. The proportion of disadvantaged children enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education Program.

NSW is committed to raising the participation rate of all disadvantaged children to 95% so that all disadvantaged children have access to quality ECEC at least equivalent to all other children in NSW. However there is no agreed national measure of 'disadvantage' under the National Partnership.

NSW will work with all States and Territories and the Australian Government during the life of the National Partnership to develop, agree and apply a robust and nationally comparable measure of disadvantage in order to transparently account for *all children's* access to quality ECEC.

In the absence of an agreed indicator, NSW is using low income as the proxy indicator. The income limits for a Low Income Health Care Card are the benchmark. Data for the current position as it relates to community preschools is robust and is derived from the DoCS annual data collection.

Data for attendances of low income children at long day care services is based on estimates from the Australian Government Child Care Census with the income level cut-off equal to the Low Incomes Health Care Card income cap. Indigenous families have been excluded from the count to avoid double-counting of Indigenous children who are the subject of the next measure.

The Low Income Population was estimated from the percentage of children (0-5) in families that earn between \$0-\$37,700 per annum (ABS Census, 2006). This percentage was used as a proxy to estimate the proportion of children attending services that are from families that hold a Health Care Card. The estimated figure excludes 90% of Indigenous Children. It was assumed that the remaining 10% of indigenous children are not from low income households.

The figure for low income children attending Long Day was calculated by taking the percentage of children attending NSW LDC services that are from low income (i.e. weekly income less than \$800) (Census of Child Care Services, 2008) . This percentage was applied to the children aged 4-5 currently attending a preschool program in a LDC to estimate the number from low income families.

Historically NSW has used indicators and definitions of disadvantage that also included children with disabilities, children of a CALD background, and children in remote locations. Consideration will be given to whether these categories can be reported in the future when data is more reliable and in the context of the development of an agreed national indicator of disadvantage.

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6. *The proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location as identified by the Australian Standard Geographic Classification), who are enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education Program.*

Data for the current position as it relates to Government preschools and community preschools is robust.

Data for attendances of Indigenous children at long day care services is based on estimates from the Australian Government Child Care Census.

Figures for the proportion of Indigenous children as a proportion of all children are drawn from the 2009 *Report on Government Services*, sourced from the ABS.

The figure for Indigenous children attending Long Day Care was calculated by taking the percentage of Indigenous children attending NSW LDC services and applying this percentage to the number of children aged 4-5 currently attending a preschool program in a LDC that provides a preschool program.

D Deliverables

New South Wales is responsible for achieving the Deliverables as agreed with the Commonwealth and specified at Table 2 below.

Table 2: Early Childhood Education Program Deliverables¹

Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target²	Timing
<i>The deliverables and targets listed in this plan are subject to the terms of the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education³</i>				
1.1 Children have universal access to an Early Childhood Education program for 15 hours per week, 40 weeks per year.	1.1.1. The proportion of children who are enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education program.	1.1.1.1 Increased proportion of target child population accessing a Early Childhood Education program in the year before school	<p>Stage 1 Target: Increase towards 95% of children in the year before school (ie. 100% of all those seeking an Early Childhood Education opportunity). Funding provided to increase accessible 12 hours/2 day places for up to 10,500 children in the year before school.</p> <p>Current Position According to the latest data child attendances in a Early Childhood Education program are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4,284 children attend NSW Department of Education and Training preschools; ▪ 47,883 children attend community preschools; and ▪ 19,656 children receive a ‘preschool equivalent’ service at long day care services with an Early Childhood Education (preschool) program. 	2009 and 2010
Action A - New Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (PIRP) Resource Allocation Model	As above	As above <i>Strategy - Revised and increased funding allocations to support UAECE targets</i>	<p>The NSW Department of Community Services is reforming funding for community preschools. Services are now being funded based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the relative need and/or disadvantage 	2009 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>of children and families attending services; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ characteristics of services that reflect increased service costs and/or community disadvantage. <p>Every service is funded for every child that attends the preschool, up to 2 days per week.</p> <p>As a minimum, per child funding is provided based on the weighted average income of families with children aged 0-5 in the service’s Local Government Area (\$780 per-child per-year for high income LGAs up to \$1,600 per-child per-year for low income LGAs).</p> <p>Higher rates of funding are provided for children from target groups to assist these children to access Early Childhood Education programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ all Indigenous children: \$3,000 per-child per-year (instead of LGA rate); ▪ children from low-income families (ie non-Indigenous, Health Care Card holders): \$1,750 per-child per-year (instead of LGA rate); ▪ children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds \$250 per-child per-year for high income LGAs up to \$500 per-child per-year for low income LGAs (in addition to LGA rate). 	

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>A loading is provided for mobile preschools at the rate of \$1,000 per-child per-year for remote areas; and \$500 per-child per-year for other areas.</p> <p>A loading is provided to all remote services (\$765 per-child per-year) to account for the extra costs of remote services.</p> <p>From 1 July 2008 an additional \$12.2 million is being provided to community based preschools in NSW according to this new approach.</p> <p>Total expenditure under this reformed funding approach is rising from \$78 million in 2007-08 to \$90 million 2008-09.</p>	
<p>Action B - Localised Strategies to Increase Early Childhood Education Access</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>As above <i>Strategy - Work directly with services in priority locations to develop and implement strategies to promote improved Early Childhood Education access</i></p>	<p>From January 2009 Growth Funding of \$21 million (full year) is being rolled out to increase access to Early Childhood Education programs.</p> <p>An EOI process was conducted in late 2008 to select agencies to undertake the rollout.</p> <p>From early 2009 the Community Child Care Cooperative and CareWest are responsible for working directly with services in priority locations to develop and implement strategies to promote improved Early Childhood Education access including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reducing or removing barriers to access to preschool programs; 	<p>2009 and 2010</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increasing the efficiency of use of existing preschool places; and ▪ increasing the usage of existing preschool places and/or the number or supply of preschool places. <p>Initially, funding will be provided for two years (i.e. to end 2010) to the agencies and partner services to develop and implement growth strategies, with an option to extend funding for a further two years.</p> <p>Once child attendances are increased and maintained, the additional funding will become part of each service’s annual funding.</p> <p>The funding allocations available to the agencies and service providers are the same as the new Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (PIRP) Resource Allocation Model detailed above.</p> <p>The targets for the creation of these new 2 day per week preschool opportunities are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 50% achieved by December 2009; and - 95% achieved by December 2010. 	
Action C - Non-Government school based services prior to school	As above	As above <i>Strategy – New census of preschool children in Non-Government schools</i>	As part of the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan the NSW Government has commenced regulating school-based preschools to ensure that all families are provided a consistent quality of early childhood education and care, regardless	2010

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>of who operates the service.</p> <p>Licensing is being implemented in three stages from 1 July 2008; 1 July 2009; and 1 July 2010.</p> <p>Services provided by registered schools and providing formal education in accordance with the school curriculum prescribed under the <i>NSW Education Act 1990</i> are not considered to be providing a play-based early years preschool program and are therefore not included in this licensing.</p> <p>As an enhancement of this initiative to achieve UAECE aims, the NSW Departments of Education and Training and Community Services will develop and conduct a data collection for non government school-based services provided to children in the year/s before they commence school.</p> <p>This will aim to identify the number of children receiving a service in the year prior to starting school (ie the year before kindergarten) in the non-government school system. This is an important aspect of establishing all services that are provided to all children in NSW in the year before school.</p>	
Action D - Increased Service Funding to support UAECE	As above	As above <i>Strategy - Revise and increase funding allocations</i>	Additional funds provided by the Commonwealth Government through the National Partnership Bi-lateral Agreement	2009 and beyond

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
participation rate targets		<i>to community preschools to achieve UAECE targets</i>	<p>will be invested in community preschools. Using the Resource Allocation Model developed for the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (see Action A above), funding will be increased to support increased affordability and increased access to preschools.</p> <p>The funding increases are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The income weighted Local Government Area rate will be increased (previous range of \$780 per-child per-year up to \$1,600 per-child per-year) to a range of \$1,200 per child per year for high income LGAs up to \$2,986 per-child per-year for low income LGAs; ▪ for Indigenous children funding will be increased from \$3,000 per-child per-year to \$3,300 per child per year; ▪ for children from low-income families (ie non-Indigenous, Health Care Card holders) funding will be increased from \$1,750 per-child per-year to \$3,000 per child per year; and ▪ the loading for services in remote areas will be increased from \$765 per child per year to \$850 per child per year. <p>As a result of these changes – together with the increase to 15 hours per week funded days of eligible preschool outlined</p>	

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			at Action M below – an additional \$10.2 million will be provided to community preschool in the current year, an additional \$20.3 million in 2009-10; and an additional \$25.9 million from 2010-2011 onwards.	
Actions A-D (As above)	As above	As above	<p>Stage 2 Target: Achieve and maintain 95% preschool attendance (ie. 100% of all those seeking a preschool opportunity). All the actions and strategies outlined above (A to D) will be retained or adapted to maintain and continue to increase universal access</p>	2011 to 2013
Action E - Maintain Early Childhood Teacher requirements	1.1.2 The number of teachers delivering Early Childhood Education programs who are four year university trained and early childhood qualified.	1.1.2.1 Stage 1: Strategy - <i>Current numbers of 3 year trained and 4 year trained teachers leading Early Childhood Education programs are maintained or improved.</i>	<p>Maintain current position: NSW is the only Australian jurisdiction to already require by law the employment of university trained Teaching Staff Members in all long day care <i>and</i> preschool services catering for 30 or more children. Services must ensure that there are the following number of teaching staff members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ one teacher for the first 30 children; ▪ two teachers if there are 40 or more children; ▪ three teachers if there are 60 or more children; and ▪ four teachers if there are 80 or more children. 	2009 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>A “Teaching staff member” is defined in the <i>NSW Children’s Services Regulation 2004</i> as a member of staff who has a degree or diploma in early childhood education from a university following a course of not less than three years.</p> <p>NSW is considering this matter as part of a statutory review of the current <i>Children’s Services Regulation 2004</i>, which commenced in September 2008 (see ‘Action K’ below)</p> <p>NSW supports recognising and preserving the status of teachers currently approved to work in NSW as a means of making a smooth transition to the new approach. The NSW Department of Education and Training employs a four year university trained teacher at each of its 100 preschools, including for those programs offered by distance education.</p> <p>The latest data for the numbers of Early Childhood Teachers in community and government preschools and long day care services providing Early Childhood Education programs are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 132 in DET preschools; ▪ 2,734 in Long Day Care services delivering preschool programs; and ▪ 1,814 in community preschools. 	
Action F - Increase the number of Early	As above	As above <i>Strategy - Increased numbers</i>	<p>Stage 1 Target: Increased numbers of (at least) 3 year</p>	2009 and 2010

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
Childhood Education Programs led by Early Childhood Teachers		<p><i>of children that receive an Early Childhood Education program led by a 3 year or 4 year trained Early Childhood Teacher, in the year before school.</i></p> <p>(Note: there may be some reduction in 3 year trained teachers, in proportion to any increase in 4 year trained teachers, as graduates with 4 year qualifications displace those with 3 year qualifications).</p>	<p>degree trained teachers.</p> <p>The focus over the first two years will be on increasing participation in Early Childhood Education programs led by an Early Childhood Trained Teacher.</p> <p>As a first step, the desired result is that increased numbers of children receive an Early Childhood Education program that is led by a 3 year or 4 year trained Early Childhood Teacher, in the year before school.</p> <p>This first step will provide a foundation for moving to the UAECE goal of all preschool programs being delivered by four-year trained teachers.</p>	
Action G - Priority of Growth Places to services with Early Childhood Teachers	As above	As above Strategy – <i>Develop new Early Childhood Education places led by EC Teachers</i>	<p>Services identified for increased places in the Growth Phase (see ‘Action C’ above) will be required to provide an Early Childhood Education program to children in the year before school that is developmentally appropriate and led by an Early Childhood Teacher.</p> <p>This will apply even where services are below NSW’s existing regulatory threshold of 30 children that requires the employment of an Early Childhood Teacher.</p> <p>The impact of this will be to increase the number of services providing programs led by an Early Childhood Teacher, hand-in-hand with strategies to increase</p>	2009 and 2010

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>children’s access to such programs, thereby increasing the number of children receiving such Early Childhood Teacher led educational programs in the year before school.</p>	
<p>Action H - Expedited Qualifications Assessment</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>As above <i>Strategy - Assist qualified staff to enter the Early Childhood workforce</i></p>	<p>The NSW Department of Community Services conducts assessments of qualifications for qualified staff positions - including Early Childhood Teachers - in NSW children’s services. The full list of assessed and approved training has been provided on the Departmental website, www.community.nsw.gov.au for the first time to make it easier for employers and workforce entrants to assess whether they have suitable, approved qualifications. The processes and procedures for assessments are being reviewed to accelerate assessments while improving assessment against core Early Childhood Teacher course requirements. To support the UAECE commitment that Early Childhood Education programs are delivered by qualified staff, NSW will increase the number of assessments undertaken and reduce processing times for assessments for qualified staff roles. 150 assessments were completed in 2007. A count of qualifications</p>	<p>2009 and ongoing</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>completed in 2008 is underway. The revised processes are expected to result in a 50% increase in the number of assessments completed per year.</p>	
Action I - Regulation Review	As above	As above <i>Strategy – Review and reform regulation to support UAECE targets</i>	<p>The provision of children’s services in NSW is regulated by the <i>NSW Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998</i> and the <i>NSW Children’s Services Regulation 2004</i>.</p> <p>The Regulation applies to all service providers in NSW of long day care, preschool (including community, government and non-government preschools), occasional care, mobile services, family day care and home based care.</p> <p>The Regulation is due to be repealed and remade by September 2009. A new regulation is expected to commence in 2010.</p> <p>A discussion paper for the review was released in October 2008. The discussion paper seeks industry input on a number of regulatory reform propositions related to COAG early childhood development reforms, including the universal access commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ whether NSW’s regulatory threshold for employment of an Early Childhood Teacher should be lowered from 30 children to 10 or 20 children; 	<p>2009 and 2010.</p> <p>The NSW Government will consider whether alternative or additional strategies are required to achieve UAECE targets for four year trained teachers once the outcomes of the Regulation review are known.</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ whether the benchmark for qualifications of an Early Childhood Teacher should be raised from the current three year degree to four year degrees; and ▪ whether the roles and responsibilities of Early Childhood Teachers, including those relating to the development and delivery of early childhood programs, should be specified in the Regulation. <p>If any or all of these proposals are supported for inclusion in a new Regulation, they will provide a stepping stone towards the new National Quality Framework and standards.</p> <p>No other regulatory changes have been identified to date as being necessary to achieve the universal access commitment.</p> <p>Any propositions arising from the discussion paper and consultations will be the subject of a Draft Regulation and Regulatory Impact Statement from mid 2009.</p>	
Actions E to I	As above	<p>Stage 2: Increased numbers of children receiving a Early Childhood Education program in the year before school guided and/or</p>	<p>Stage 2 Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased numbers of 4 year degree trained teachers. <p>All the actions and strategies outlined above for this element (E to I) will be retained or adapted to maintain and</p>	2011 to 2013 and beyond

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
		delivered by a 4 year trained ECT.	continue to increase universal access.	
Action J – Introduce an Early Childhood Teacher Costs Contribution Scheme	As above	As above	<p>NSW will introduce a new Teacher Costs Contribution Scheme under which an amount will be payable to every licensed centre-based or mobile service in NSW employing an Early Childhood Teacher consistent with the numbers of the <i>NSW Children’s Services Regulation 2004</i> (ie up to four Early Childhood Teachers).</p> <p>The same funding contribution will be payable for small, licensed centre-based or mobile services that are under the regulatory threshold requiring a teacher but employ an Early Childhood Teacher anyway (limit of one).</p> <p>The Early Childhood Teacher will be required to have either a primary contact teaching role or a leadership role in the design, development and implementation of the developmental/educational child program.</p> <p>(Services with an approval under NSW’s Interim Early Childhood Teacher policy will <u>not</u> be eligible for the subsidy until a fully qualified Early Childhood Teacher is employed).</p> <p>Services may only apply the funds for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ offsetting the costs of employing Early Childhood Teacher qualified staff, and/or 	2011-12 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ recruitment and retention incentives, and/or ▪ Investing in bona fide professional development including formal qualifications upgrades. <p>Services will be required to provide an annual accountability statement for the funding received verifying that a qualified Early Childhood Teacher was employed for the year and that all/any teachers for which the funding was provided were in a primary contact teaching role or a leadership role in the design, development and implementation of the developmental educational child program.</p> <p>Services will also be required to advise of any period greater than 4 weeks during which they did not have a teacher and stating the years of training (3 years, 4 years or more) of the respective teacher/s.</p> <p>Indicative amounts proposed for the subsidy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$6,000 per 3 year trained Early Trained Teacher per year; ▪ \$8,000 per 4 year trained Early Childhood Teacher per year; and ▪ an additional \$1,000 payable for services in remote areas. <p>Depending on the rate of take-up of the</p>	

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>Scheme and the level of qualifications at the four year level, the annual cost will range from \$30 to \$50 million per year. The full cost of the Scheme will be met from funds made available by the new National Partnership.</p> <p>NSW Government preschools will not be eligible for the Scheme.</p> <p>The Scheme will start in the 2011-12 financial year (year four of the National Partnership).</p>	
	<p>1.1.3 Hours per week of attendance (where possible to measure) at an Early Childhood Education program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The proportion of children enrolled in an Early Childhood Education Program that is available for at least 15 hour a week.</i> • <i>The average number of hours per week of attendance at an Early Childhood Education program.</i> 	<p>1.1.3.1 Stage 1: Increased numbers and/or proportion of children attending Early Childhood Education in the year before school for 2 days per week.</p>	<p>Stage 1 Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase towards 12 hours/2 days as the average hours/days of children attending an Early Childhood Education program per week. <p>Current Position: The latest data for the numbers of days of attendance (counted in half or full days) by children is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The state-wide average attendance in NSW preschools is 2.11 days per week. Of all children attending preschools 29% currently attend for 15 hours/2.5 days or more per week. ▪ Figures are not available for average attendance per week in long day care services providing Early Childhood Education programs. However, the 2006 Commonwealth Government Census of Child Care reports that 80% 	<p>2009 and 2010 and ongoing</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			of all children (of all ages) in Long Day Care services attend for 10 or more hours per week, and 40% of all children attend for 20 or more hours per week.	
Action K – Increase Average Hours in Community Preschools	As above	As above <i>Strategy – Use funding support and accountability to increase child attendance hours</i>	NSW will use the first two years’ of the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan growth funding to target access and affordability, particularly for children from disadvantaged families, who are less likely to access children’s services and who evidence shows benefit most from quality early childhood education programs. The focus over the first two years will be on delivering both increased rates of participation and increased average hours of attendance as defined under the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (i.e. 2 days/12 hours per week) to provide a foundation for moving to the UAECE goal of 15 hours per week.	
		Stage 2: Increased numbers and/or proportion of children attending Early Childhood Education in the year before school for 2.5 days/15 hours per week.	Stage 2 Target: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 95% of children (ie. 100% of all those seeking a Early Childhood Education opportunity) attending Early Childhood Education program 15 hours/2.5 days per week in year before school 	2011 to 2013 and beyond
Action L - Increase Average Hours in	As above	As above <i>Strategy – Develop strategies</i>	For children attending NSW Department of Education and Training preschool	It is anticipated that where a

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
Government Preschools		<i>to raise average hours of attendance in Government preschools</i>	<p>programs parents are able to arrange an attendance pattern that suits their own circumstances. As a result, attendance patterns vary significantly. Attendance patterns are generally negotiated with the local community and can be: five days, two days or three days, mornings or afternoons. However, in some locations attendance patterns also vary within preschool programs. The Department has undertaken a thorough scoping exercise over the period 2006-2008 to identify the attendance patterns of all children attending Departmental preschools. Information gathered from this scoping exercise will be used to develop strategies to support NSW in reaching the UAECE of 15 hours per week for forty weeks per year for each child attending Departmental preschools.</p>	<p>significant change in attendance pattern is required that a phasing approach will be required. Given that enrolment applications for 2010 will commence early in 2009 it is likely that new attendance patterns will be phased in over the period 2011-2013.</p>
Action M – Increased Service Funding to support UAECE weekly attendance hours targets	As above	As above <i>Strategy - Revise and increase funding allocations to community preschools to achieve UAECE targets</i>	<p>Additional funds provided by the Commonwealth Government through the National Partnership Bi-lateral Agreement will be invested in community preschools. Using the Resource Allocation Model developed for the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (see Action A above), funding will be increased to support increased weekly hours of attendance at community preschools.</p>	<p>2009 and beyond for increased funding. It is anticipated that it will take a further two years for this change to have an impact on</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>The Preschool Investment and Reform Resource Allocation Model previously allocated funding to a maximum of 12 hours per week per child. Funding was capped at this level.</p> <p>Using the extra resources provided through the National Partnership the per-child funding will be increased to 15 hours per child per week and the cap raised accordingly.</p> <p>As a result of these changes – together with the increase to per child allocations outlined at Action D above – an additional \$10.2 million will be provided to community preschool in the current year, an additional \$20.3 million in 2009-10; and an additional \$25.9 million from 2010-2011 onwards.</p>	<p>average hours attended so that from 2011 to 2013 average hours increase towards 15 hours per week.</p>
<p>1.2 Universal access to an Early Childhood Education program is delivered across a <i>range of settings</i> at a <i>cost</i> which is not a barrier to access.</p>	<p>1.2.1 Distribution of children who attend an Early Childhood Education program by weekly cost per child (after subsidies) as defined by jurisdictions</p>	<p>1.2.1.1 Strategy – <i>Ensure Early Childhood Education programs continue to be delivered across a range of settings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>DET preschools;</i> ▪ <i>Community Preschools;</i> and ▪ <i>Long Day Care services (with preschool programs).</i> <p>Strategy – <i>Ensure Early</i></p>	<p>Target:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Range of settings - Increased numbers/proportion of children receiving a Early Childhood Education program across all settings ▪ Costs – Average fees for community preschools are stable or decrease, particularly for disadvantaged children. <p>Current Position - Range of settings: According to the latest data child attendances in a Early Childhood Education program are as follows:</p>	<p>2009 and ongoing</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
		<p><i>Childhood Education programs in State funded settings are provided at a cost which is not a barrier to access, particularly for disadvantaged children.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4,284 children attend NSW Department of Education and Training preschools; ▪ 47,883 children attend community preschools; and ▪ 19,656 children receive a ‘preschool equivalent’ service at long day care services with an Early Childhood Education (preschool) program. <p>Current Position - Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ According to the latest data provided to the NSW Department of Community Services by funded community preschools the range of fees for children aged 3 to under 6 years is between \$0 per day and \$45 per day. ▪ The NSW state-wide average fee is \$28.30 per day, and 54.7% of children aged 3 to under 6 years pay fees at or below this average. 	
<p>Action N - Localised Strategies to Increase Early Childhood Education Access in a range of settings</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>As above <i>Strategy - Work directly with services in priority locations to develop and implement strategies to promote Early Childhood Education access in a range of settings</i></p>	<p>As part of NSW’s Localised Strategies to Increase Preschool Access, priority will be given to increasing the utilisation of existing places in preschool services first to maximise the efficient use of the existing service system and infrastructure. Other strategies, including the creation of new places, will then follow. Places may be established via long day</p>	<p>2009 and ongoing</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>care services where no Early Childhood Education services are available or there are other barriers to increasing opportunities in preschools.</p> <p>New places may also be established in integrated models of service combining both long day care and preschool service models.</p>	
<p>Action O - Targeting new funding support to preschool costs for disadvantaged children and families</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>As above <i>Strategy – Improve affordability of community preschool programs, especially for UAECE target groups</i></p>	<p>From January 2009 Growth Funding of \$21 million per year is being rolled out to increase access to preschool programs. A major focus of the new investment in the sector is to improve preschool program affordability by limiting real fee increases and contributing to fee reductions for children and families. Funding under the new Resource Allocation Model targets increased access and affordability for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and families by providing the greatest funding support for Indigenous children, low income families, and children in remote and low income communities.</p>	<p>2009 and ongoing</p>
<p>Action P – Increase monitoring and management of preschool fees to ensure increased funding results in fee reductions,</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>As above</p>	<p>From January 2009 \$29.8 million is being provided to community preschools each year under the NSW Government Preschool Investment and Reform Plan. Additional funds provided by the Commonwealth Government through the National Partnership on Early Childhood</p>	<p>2009 and ongoing</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
particularly for priority groups			<p>Education will be targeted towards disadvantaged children and families - Indigenous children, children from low income families, and children in low socio-economic areas and remote areas. The NSW Department of Community Services will increase the monitoring and performance management of funded services to ensure that increased funding is directed to reducing preschool fees to the greatest extent possible. Strategies will include providing information to the public regarding the fees charged by funded preschools in NSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to provide accurate information regarding average fee levels; and ▪ to provide accurate information to parents and community members that they may consider when choosing services. <p>During the first year of the National Partnership, consideration will be given to developing other mechanisms to ensure that new funding translates into reduced fees for families.</p>	
Action Q – New Commonwealth Early Learning and Care Centres	As above	As above <i>Strategy – Utilise new infrastructure and integrated service provision models to ensure services are available</i>	The Australian Government has committed to establishing up to 260 Early Learning and Care Centres in areas of unmet demand for child care. Where possible, these centres will be located on	2009 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
		<i>in a diversity of settings</i>	<p>school grounds, TAFE, university or other community land.</p> <p>The Australian Government has allocated \$114.5 million over four years in the 2008-09 Budget to build the first 38 additional Early Learning and Care Centres in priority locations (including six autism specific centres). Of these first 38, 10 mainstream Early Learning and Care Centres and one Autism-specific Early Learning and Care Centre are to be delivered in NSW by 2010. NSW understands that the roll-out of any additional Early Learning and Care Centres will be considered by the Commonwealth.</p> <p>The ELCCs are expected to provide on average 50 places per day. The possible number of preschool places that may be provided in these services cannot be quantified at this stage, but they will contribute to the availability of preschool places in a range of settings.</p> <p>NSW's regulatory framework (as outlined above) will ensure that such services provide programs led by university trained Early Childhood Teachers providing developmentally appropriate, educational programs.</p> <p>NSW will continue to work closely with the Commonwealth Government on the</p>	

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
<p>1.3 Disadvantaged children have universal access to an Early Childhood Education program.</p>	<p>1.3.1 The proportion of disadvantaged children enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education program.</p>	<p>1.3.1.1 Increase in numbers/proportion of population of children from target groups attending Early Childhood Education programs.</p>	<p>delivery of these services..</p> <p>Target 95% of children in target groups (ie. 100% of all those seeking a preschool opportunity) attend an Early Childhood Education program. NSW is committed to raising to 95% the participation rate of all disadvantaged children so that disadvantaged children have access to quality ECEC at least equivalent to all other children in NSW. However there is no agreed national measure of 'disadvantage' under the National Partnership. NSW will work with all States and Territories and the Australian Government during the life of the National Partnership to develop, agree and apply a robust and nationally comparable measure of disadvantage in order to transparently account for <i>all children's</i> access to quality ECEC. In the absence of an agreed indicator, NSW will use low income as the proxy indicator using the income limits for a Health Care Card as the benchmark. Historically NSW has used indicators and definitions of disadvantage that also included children with disabilities, and children from a CALD background. Consideration will be given to whether these categories can be reported in the</p>	<p>2009 and ongoing</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			future when data is more reliable and in the context of the development of an agreed national indicator of disadvantage.	
Action R – Priority of Access for disadvantaged children in Community Preschools	As above	As above Strategy – <i>Ensure that access to available services is prioritised for disadvantaged children.</i>	<p>NSW has developed new Preschool Investment and Reform Plan Priority of Access guidelines.</p> <p>Services receiving NSW Department of Community Services preschool funding are required to enrol children according to the Priority of Access guidelines.</p> <p>There are priority of access targets for the following children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ children who are at risk of harm; ▪ children in their year before school, with highest priority given to children closest to school entry (NB: children will be aged more than 3½ years and less than 6 years); ▪ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children; and ▪ children from low income families (ie those with Health Care Cards); ▪ children from CALD backgrounds; and ▪ children with disabilities. <p>Prioritisation of access according to these guidelines is expected to lead to increased access by children from target groups.</p> <p>Application of the Priority of Access guidelines will be enforced as an element</p>	2008 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			of the Performance Management Framework for NSW Department of Community Services funding for preschools.	
2.1 Indigenous children (including those in remote Indigenous communities) enrolled in and attending an Early Childhood Education program.	2.1.1 The proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location as identified by the Australian Standard Geographic Classification), who are enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education program.	2.1.1.1 Increase in numbers/proportion of population of Indigenous children attending Early Childhood Education programs.	Target: 95% of Indigenous children (ie. 100% of all those seeking a preschool opportunity) attend a Early Childhood Education program	2009 and 2010 and ongoing
Action S - Increased Service Funding to support UAECE participation rate targets for Indigenous and disadvantaged children	As above	As above <i>Strategy - Revise and increase funding allocations to community preschools to achieve UAECE targets</i>	Additional funds provided by the Commonwealth Government through the National Partnership will be targeted towards disadvantaged children and families. Using the Resource Allocation Model developed for the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (see Action A above), funding will be increased to support increased access to preschools particularly by Indigenous children, children from low income families and children in lower socio-economic areas. The funding increases are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Local Government Area rate will be increased (previously a range of 	2009 and beyond

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>\$780 per-child per-year up to \$1,600 per-child per-year) to a range of \$1,200 per child per year for high income LGAs up to \$2,986 per-child per-year for low income LGAs so that increased support is provided to services in lower income communities;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ for Indigenous children funding will be increased from \$3,000 per-child per-year to \$3,300 per child per year; ▪ for children from low-income families (ie non-Indigenous, Health Care Card holders) funding will be increased from \$1,750 per-child per-year to \$3000 per child per year; and ▪ the loading for services in remote areas will be increased from \$765 per child per year to \$850 per child per year. <p>As a result of these changes – together with the increase to 15 hours per week funded days of eligible preschool outlined at Action L above – an additional \$10.2 million will be provided to community preschool in the current year, an additional \$20.3 million in 2009-10; and an additional \$25.9 million from 2010-2011 onwards.</p>	
Action T – Priority of Access for Indigenous	As above	As above <i>Strategy – Ensure that access</i>	NSW has developed new Preschool Investment and Reform Plan Priority of	2008 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
children in Community Preschools		<i>to available services is prioritised for Indigenous children.</i>	Access guidelines. Services receiving NSW Department of Community Services preschool funding are required to enrol children according to the Priority of Access guidelines. The nominated access priorities include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (other priority groups are noted above). Prioritisation of access according to these guidelines is expected to lead to increased access by Indigenous children. Application of the Priority of Access will be enforced as an element of the Performance Management Framework for NSW Department of Community Services funding for preschools.	
Action U – Priority of Access for disadvantaged and Indigenous children in Government Preschools.	As above	As above <i>Strategy – Ensure that access to available services is prioritised for disadvantaged and Indigenous children.</i>	The NSW Department of Education and Training has introduced a new preschool enrolment policy for its 100 preschools. The new policy gives priority of access to children from disadvantaged backgrounds that are unable to access other children’s services. Priority is given to children of Aboriginal descent and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – children whose families experience financial hardship; – children from CALD backgrounds; and – children with disabilities. Since implementation of the policy, the average annual enrolment of Aboriginal	2009 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target²	Timing
			children has increased to 9.5% of the total enrolment.	

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>are not met, the NSW Department of Community Services withholds funding until the requirements are fulfilled as outlined in the Service Agreement between the Department and the funded service provider.</p> <p>New Proposed Accountabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Revised Children’s Services Service Specification</u>: The NSW Department of Community Services will introduce a revised Children’s Services Service Specification to reflect the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan and UAECE program aims. The Service Specification outlines what outcomes are expected from services that receive NSW Department of Community Services funding. The Specification outlines client groups, geographic coverage, service activities provided, outcome and service results, any performance targets expected and levels of service. • <u>Random audits to ensure compliance with Service Specification</u>: Audits are conducted by NSW Department of Community Services Regions to ensure services are compliant with the Service Specifications. Audits consist of a service visit and a comparison of data provided for the 	

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			annual data collection, the levels of service agreed in the Service Specification and actual attendance on the day of audit.	
Action W – NSW Department of Community Services' Research Agenda	<p>1.3.1 The proportion of disadvantaged children enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education program.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>2.1.1 The proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location as identified by the Australian Standard Geographic Classification), who are enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) an Early Childhood Education program.</p>	<p>1.3.1.1 Increase in numbers/proportion of population of children from target groups attending Early Childhood Education programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CALD children; – children from low income families; – children from remote areas; and – children with additional needs <p>AND</p> <p>2.1.1.1 Increase in numbers/proportion of population of Indigenous children attending Early Childhood Education programs.</p> <p><i>Strategy – the NSW Department of Community Services will continue to commission and support research to inform policy and</i></p>	<p><i>Child Care Choices - Longitudinal Extension Study:</i></p> <p>The report is based on information from six years of a longitudinal study of an initial 677 children and families recruited from children's services in urban and rural NSW.</p> <p>Information was collected from a variety of sources: primary caregivers, carers and teachers at child care and preschool services, teachers in schools, and the children themselves.</p> <p>The report contains information from all of these sources in a detailed account of the children's services experienced by these children prior to and during their first year of school, including the type(s), quantity, and changeability of care received.</p> <p>The report also presents the reasons parents gave for the choices they made in relation to multiple child care/education arrangements. Parents' choice and timing of school entry for their child, the kinds of transition to school experiences children's attended are also reported.</p> <p>Developmental outcomes focus on</p>	2009 and 2010

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
		<p><i>practice aimed at increasing participation in early childhood services, especially for disadvantaged and Indigenous children and families.</i></p>	<p>children’s adjustment and achievement in the years before entering school, particularly the year before school entry and the first year of school (Kindergarten). A final report is currently being finalised for this project. <i>Child Care Choices of Indigenous Families:</i> Use of formal children’s services is known to be lower for Indigenous children than for other Australian children. What is not known is why this is the case. The aim of the project is to identify the experiences and attitudes of indigenous families in relation to children’s services in selected urban, regional and remote sites in NSW. One hundred families across NSW will be participants in the study. The draft report will be submitted to the NSW Department of Community Services by 30 June 2009. <i>Barriers to participation of disadvantaged young children, their families, and professionals in early childhood services:</i> This research was developed around the concern that participation rates in early childhood services are low for socio-economically disadvantaged families despite research and policy supporting the benefits of engagement for both children and their carers.</p>	

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>This research, therefore, seeks to interview 100 parents of young children (aged 3 – 5) in disadvantaged areas across NSW.</p> <p>Parents are asked to discuss their experiences and perspectives relating to the service and support needs of families with preschool-age children. Whenever possible the young children themselves are also interviewed and asked to talk about their experiences in child care.</p> <p>Early Childhood Workers who provide services in disadvantaged areas will be invited to participate in focus groups and give their perspectives on how the barriers for families may be broken down, as well as how they might be supported to provide the best possible early childhood services in these communities. It is anticipated that data collection will be complete by September 2009.</p>	
Action X - Improved Data	All the above	All the above	<p>The NSW Department of Community Services has developed and piloted new data collection and reporting as part of the Preschool Investment and Reform Plan.</p> <p>An on-line reporting tool for community preschools funded by the NSW Department of Community Services was trialled in November 2008.</p> <p>The new tool contributes to:</p>	2009 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - easier and faster completion of reporting be services; - on-line reporting contributing to improved data quality; and - increased rates of return. <p>This online tool will be fully implemented for the 2009 and subsequent collections. The tool will be revised further in 2009, in time for the 2009 collection, to match Performance Indicators, Deliverables and Targets required for the UAECE National Partnership.</p> <p>The data collected drives services funding accountabilities and future allocations. This link between data collection and reporting, funding accountability and future funding allocations to services is expected to improve the reliability and timeliness of record keeping and reporting.</p> <p>The NSW Department of Education and Training conducts an annual data collection census in a representative week (first week in August). The census is in line with Commonwealth census requirement's for schools. The NSW Department of Education and Training has undertaken significant work to develop an on-line census collection tool.</p> <p>Data is now provided by schools through</p>	<p>2009 and ongoing</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>the web based format. Information is collected on staff employed, gender, disability, language background, Aboriginality, attendance patters, strategies for engaging Aboriginal children and families. Information is analysed by state office and provided to regions to assist them in their planning.</p>	
<p>Action Y – NSW capability enhancements: Data, Funded Service Performance, and Accountability.</p>	<p>All the above</p>	<p>All the above</p>	<p>National Partnership activities will increase requirements for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - data and reporting; - funding administration; and - service performance management and accountability. <p>The National Partnership requirements for data capability reporting and improvements will increase the scope and range of data collections, data quality assurance, and reporting.</p> <p>National Partnership activities will increase the number and range of funding administration tasks.</p> <p>Accountability for funding and data and related performance management of services funded to deliver National Partnership outcomes and outputs will increase as National Partnership activities will increase the number of funded partners.</p> <p>NSW will enhance resources at the NSW Department of Community Services to</p>	<p>2009-10 and ongoing</p>

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			meet these National Partnership requirements (four Equivalent Full Time Positions) from National Partnership funds.	
Action Z - Curriculum and Educational Frameworks	All the above	All the above	<p>NSW has a Curriculum Framework (<i>The Practice of Relationships</i>) as a resource to support the work of early childhood professionals.</p> <p>The document focuses on the crucial role of early childhood professionals in bringing theoretical and practical knowledge of children’s development and learning together with the knowledge of parents and families to create the most beneficial programs for children.</p> <p>NSW is actively participating in the development of the new National Early Years Learning Framework to build on this existing resource.</p> <p>NSW is committed to implementing the new framework, once approved by COAG. Legislation in NSW requires <u>all</u> licensed children’s services (including long day care centres and preschools) to have in place policies and programs for the development and education of children that set out:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the level of involvement of children, parents and staff in the development of the curriculum; ▪ the ways in which the service ensures 	2009 and ongoing

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Outputs	Performance Indicators	Deliverables	Quantity/Target ²	Timing
			<p>that individual children’s interests are taken into account; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the ways in which children will be assisted in the transition to other early childhood programs or to school. <p>The programs must provide activities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ stimulate and develop each child’s social, physical, emotional, cognitive, language and creative potential; ▪ are appropriate to the individual needs and development level of each child; and ▪ engage the interest of children and allow children to select experiences. 	

Notes:

1. This table constitutes New South Wales’ Action Plan for achieving Universal Access to preschool.
2. For further details on the Quantities/Targets, refer to the Performance Benchmarks in table 1 above.
3. The deliverables and targets listed in this plan are subject to the terms of the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education including:

Clause 17: The universal access commitment is that by 2013 every child will have access to a preschool program in the 12 months prior to full-time schooling. The preschool program is to be delivered by a four year university qualified early childhood teacher, in accordance with a national early years learning framework, for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year. It will be accessible across a diversity of settings, in a form that meets the needs of parents and in a manner that ensures cost does not present a barrier to access.

Reasonable transitional arrangements—including potentially beyond 2013—are needed to implement the commitment to preschool program delivery by four year university qualified early childhood teachers, as agreed in the bilateral agreements.

Clause 18: Especially for the first two years of implementing universal access (2009 and 2010), national priorities include: increasing participation rates, particularly for Indigenous and disadvantaged children; increasing program hours; ensuring cost is not a barrier to access; strengthening program quality and consistency; and fostering service integration and coordination across stand-alone preschool and child care. The strategies for addressing these priorities may differ on a state-by-state basis.

Clause 35: States and Territories may need to scope their implementation of this Commonwealth commitment to available funding, including Commonwealth and jurisdictions’ own resources.

E Reporting

- E1 The State Delegate is responsible for providing the Program Delegate with two hard copies and an electronic copy of Reports as follows:

Details of Report	Due Date*
Data Capability Report	30 June 2009
2009 Progress Report	30 September 2009
2009 Annual Report	31 March 2010
2010 Progress Report	30 September 2010
2010 Annual Report	31 March 2011
2011 Progress Report	30 September 2011
2011 Annual Report	31 March 2012
2012 Progress Report	30 September 2012
2012 Annual Report	31 March 2013
Final Report	30 September 2013

* Where the due date falls on a weekend or a public holiday, the due date is taken to be the next business day.

- E2 Data Capability Reports must contain the following details for each Performance Indicator:
- (a) Collection Name(s)
 - (b) Data (i.e. the figure(s) for the Baseline Data position)
 - (c) Methodology (of the underlying data and sources)
 - (d) Coverage (i.e. the participant coverage in the collection)
 - (e) Data Quality Assessment
 - (f) Future Data Developments.
- E3 Progress Reports must contain the following details:
- (a) Title of the Program
 - (b) Description of the Program

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- (c) Program activities commenced in the reporting period 1 January to 30 June
- (d) Program activities completed in the reporting period
- (e) A statement of issues of concern that may impact on the achievement of any of the Performance Benchmarks or Deliverables
- (f) be signed by the State Delegate or the Delegate's authorised representative.

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- E4 Annual Reports must contain the following details:
- (a) Title of the Program
 - (b) Description of the Program
 - (c) Program activities commenced in the reporting period
 - (d) Program activities completed in the reporting period
 - (e) Progress against:
 - i. the Performance Benchmarks and Deliverables
 - ii. the national priorities, as outlined in paragraph 18 of the NP ECE
 - (f) A statement of issues of concern that may impact on the achievement of any of the Performance Benchmarks or Deliverables
 - (g) Copies of all reports, evaluations, analysis and /or survey outcomes New South Wales has undertaken or had commissioned in relation to achieving any of the Performance Benchmarks or Deliverables
 - (h) A Data Capability Exception Report reflecting any changes from the previous year
 - (i) be signed by the State Delegate or the State Delegate's authorised representative.
- E5 As part of the Annual Report, the State Delegate or State Delegate's authorised representative will attend a meeting with the Commonwealth to present and discuss the Annual Report.
- E6 The Final Report must contain the information to be included in Annual Reports described in item E4, except for the information described in paragraphs (f) and (h).

Schedule 2 - the Commonwealth's Obligations

A Funding

A1 The total funding for the Agreement is \$278,614,000 (exclusive of GST) payable by the following instalments:

Amount	Payable on acceptance by the Commonwealth of the:	No later than:
10,249,000	signing of this agreement	7 June 2009
10,803,000	Data Capability Report due by 30 June 2009	7 Oct 2009
10,526,000	Progress Report due by 30 September 2009	7 Dec 2009
22,160,000	Annual Report due by 31 March 2010	7 Jul 2010
4,709,000	Progress Report due by 30 September 2010	7 Dec 2010
41,134,500	Annual Progress Report due by 31 March 2011	7 Jul 2011
41,134,500	Progress Report due by 30 September 2011	7 Dec 2011
68,949,000	Annual Report due by 31 March 2012	7 Jul 2012
68,949,000	Progress Report due by 30 September 2012	7 Dec 2013

A2 The Commonwealth will not provide any additional funds to New South Wales to meet any GST liabilities New South Wales incurs as a result of subcontracting any part of the performance of New South Wales' obligations under this Agreement.