Changes ahead for out of school hours care services

The national regulations require all education and care services to be regulated under existing NSW centre-based services. However, if OSHC service is providing care for children who are preschool age at the time the regulations come into effect, a provider application fee must be paid.

When seeking approval as an OSHC service, a written application must be submitted. The Department will assess and approve the application. If approval is granted, a provider's registration number will be issued.

The Government has also recently released its new SunSmart strategy.

The NSW Cancer Council has developed a SunSmart program to help OSHC services make a comprehensive sun protection policy.

The program provides support, resources and policy advice to early childhood services and general childhood services in each NSW centre.

The new year is just around the corner and heralds more than just resolutions and summer holidays for those who work with children. The National Quality Framework (NQF) begins 1 January 2012 and will apply to long day care, family day care and non-school-hours care services in NSW.

What early childhood education and care providers in different settings had to say about funding

Professor Brennan visited a cross-section of NSW services to discuss funding issues and learn more about the current and changing needs of children and families. Professor Brennan held focus groups with peak groups and met individually with representative from each peak group and considered public submissions to the review.

The following sections outline the national quality framework for early childhood education and care.

Under the national law there are no requirements for children who are under five years old. This time the provider can operate outside of school hours, i.e. before or after school hours care services.

Are you providing before or after school care (OSHC) or offering in-school care services? Are you ready for the changes ahead? From 1 January 2012 OSHC services will be regulated for the first time by the National Quality Framework (NQF).


does not apply to services in family day care, and staff members' exposure to UV radiation and risk of skin damage.

The NSW Cancer Council has developed some excellent resources including the childcare module in the SunSmart program. Be SunSmart helps centres to embed the sun protection strategies and guidelines. It is a great way to show families and the local community that your service is committed to sun protection.

Many centres have a sun protection policy, but it may not be up to date with the latest recommendations or address all the program's strategies. Joining Be SunSmart can help you to review existing policies and help in meeting the common sun protection policy.

The review of an NQF Government funded early childhood education and care services to deliver its report to Government in the first quarter of 2012. As part of the review team has consulted with providers and staff of education and care services as well as peak groups, and received public submissions.

The national regulations outline which applications and fees are needed. The national regulations outline which applications and fees are needed. The national regulations outline which emerging services are exempt from the provider approval application fee but will need to complete a form and include an application fee.

The national regulations outline which applications and fees are needed.

Changes ahead for out of school hours care services

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Existing services are exempt from the provider approval application fee but will need to submit a form and include an application fee.

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The national regulations outline which applications and fees are needed.
Early childhood education and care staff in NSW will receive training and support to gain formal qualifications to meet the National Quality Framework. Service providers will be able to access National Quality Framework training, which will be delivered by the Department of Education and Communities.

Minister for Education Adrian Piccoli launched the training strategy New Skills: Quality Care earlier this month. Mr Piccoli said the strategy would allow professional staff in preschools, day care and early childhood centres to gain qualifications, including recognition of prior learning and the National Certificate in Children’s Education and Care.

“New Skills: Quality Care has been developed in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government and in consultation with the Australian Council of Education and Care Quality Authority’s (ACECQA) registered training organisation, the National Quality Framework Training Consortium,” Mr Piccoli said.


Nationally qualified staff will be welcomed outside school hours care services in the New South Wales regulatory system for the first time.

The new national rating system – part of the National Quality Framework – is being fine-tuned. It will mean approved services are assessed and rated across seven quality areas, as well as an overall rating.

From January 2012, services will be given a ‘green’ – not yet assessment results – and they will then formally assessed against the National Quality Framework. Assessment visits will start in April 2012, with the first visits due to be completed by 1 January 2013. Not all services will be assessed in the first year – it’s anticipated that around three will already be assessed in 2012.

“The strategy also assists managers and boards of early childhood and care services to develop a quality improvement plan for their service,” Mr Piccoli said.

Providers thinking of displaying their rating before the release of the results of their actual assessments. Providers are given six weeks notice before the release of the results of their actual assessments. The process includes opportunities for services to discuss the assessment and rating and operational requirements, and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The resource is a valuable reference for services, organisations and providers. For details on the ACECQA guide and other resources, visit www.det.nsw.edu.au/what-we-offer/early-childhood-education-and-care

The new law and regulations will go live from 1 January 2012. The new law and regulations will provide a green light that all state and territory early childhood education and care services will be required to implement the new law and regulations.

The new law and regulations also provide for:• the testing of the changes;
• extra support for providers;
• the opportunity to ask questions about the new regulations; and
• the process for services to make changes.

Mr Piccoli said the new law and regulations will provide a green light that all state and territory early childhood education and care services will be required to implement the new law and regulations.

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Early childhood education and care staff in NSW will receive training and support to gain qualifications to meet the National Quality Framework.

Minister for Education Adrian Piccoli launched the training strategy earlier this month.

Mr Piccoli said the strategy would allow staff to maximise their knowledge. The strategy will include:

• information sessions.
• frequently asked questions
• supporting about 750 community-based preschools
• transitional for the first time about meeting National Quality Framework requirements.

The training sessions are a useful resource for providers, staff and services across Australia (50 services have been trialled and evaluated).”

The new national rating system – part of the National Quality Framework – is being fine-tuned. It will mean improved services being assessed and rated across seven important areas, as well as an overall rating.

Quality assessment and ratings

The review team has consulted with providers about the first time.

The review of NSW Government’s national system which has been trialled and tested and evaluated.”

At the time of the evaluation, Ministers have agreed to continue to develop the quality assessment tool for early childhood education and care services, and will conduct a further evaluation of the revised process in 2013, with the benefit of information from these assessments.

National Quality Framework – higher standards on the way

Needs assessment

Assessment visits

Assessment visits are expected to begin June 2012.

The first services to undergo the process will be those due for assessment by the National Childcare Accreditation Council. Services will be given a seven-week notice before the visit.

The programme includes opportunities to discuss the assessment and performance against the standards.

If you’ve been online and need further assistance call 1800 619 078 or visit the ACECQA guide and ratings and a guide to developing a quality plan go to:

On behalf of the NSW Department of Education and Communities, I extend my thanks to all of you for your passionate commitment and enthusiasm during this time of significant change. The NSW Department of Education and Communities will take effect from 1 January next year and will embrace children, families and the community – and this change will depend on the professionalism and dedication of all of us.

I have had plenty of opportunities to see that professionalism in action this year. I have been into the fold to visit early childhood centres and talked with sector representatives in forums and gatherings. It’s exciting to be in an area which has so much potential to change peoples lives for the better.

In 2012 we will be working on a number of important aspects of the National Quality Framework (see pt) as that children and families gain the benefits in quality of provision that the service are able to appreciate the advantages of the new approach and assessment system. And of course we will be welcoming outside school hours care services to the New South Wales regulatory system for the first time.

The review of NSW Government funding for early childhood education is well under way. The department has consulted with providers and staff as well as other groups. A report is due to government next month. Keep an eye on www.det.nsw.edu.au for updates.

We look forward to working with you in 2012 – have a safe holiday season.

Leslie Loble
Chief Executive
Office of Education

Subsidies to support training costs

Early childhood education and care staff in NSW will receive training and support to gain nationally recognised qualifications to meet the National Quality Standard. It is designed to help develop a quality improvement plan for your service.

Subsidised training is available at NSW TAFE institutes or with approved registered training organisations. When you need registered staff will also have the opportunity to improve their basic skills, numeracy and literacy training.

The strategy also assists managers to identify existing staff in positions their qualifications faster than through existing pathways. It also allows non-registered providers to subsidize costs for those yet to receive formal qualifications.

New Skills: Quality Care has been developed in conjunction with the Community Services and Health Industry Training Advisory Board that will oversee the 6,200 NSW staff who will need to gain 

On page 1

National Quality Framework – higher standards on track

The new national rating system – part of the National Quality Framework – is being fine-tuned. It will mean approved services are being assessed and rated across seven service areas, as well as an overall rating.

From January 2012, services will be given a ‘provisional’ rating – not yet assessed and will only be formally assessed against the National Quality Standard when it starts in April 2012. And the first 2012, services will be assessed in the first year – it is anticipated that for those individuals for three years after that.

Assessment and compliance officers from the NSW Department of Education and Communities will design the approach to carry out the assessment. Once have been completed the assessment officer will make the final rating decision.

Eventually, ratings will be published on the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority’s website and all services will be assessed in the first year. It is anticipated that for those individuals for three years after that.

QCC will publish a guide to help providers to develop a quality improvement plan for each approved service. The purpose of the plan is to help identify and prioritise what areas may need improvement. The plan will also inform the assessment and rating process.

Providers of current approved services (operating before 1 January 2012) and approved services from the new integrated approvals and the services are able to conduct the new assessment process. From 1 January 2012, services will be given a ‘provisional’ rating – not yet assessed and will only be formally assessed against the National Quality Standard when it starts in 2012. Services will be given a ‘provisional’ rating – not yet assessed and will only be formally assessed against the National Quality Standard when it starts in April 2012. Services will be given a ‘provisional’ rating – not yet assessed and will only be formally assessed against the National Quality Standard when it starts in April 2012.

The Education and Care Services National Regulations to early childhood education and care will come into effect on 1 January 2012. The new regulations and requirements will be held by all state and territory governments.

The new law and regulations go live from 1 January 2012. These regulatory and national Child Care Standards, which will be assessed and rated against.

Assessment visits Assessment visits are expected to begin June 2012. The first visits to undergo the process will be those due for assessment by the National Childcare Accreditation Council. Services will be given a week’s notice before the visit.

The process includes opportunities for the assessment of the overall rating and performance against the standards. For more details on assessments and ratings and a guide to developing a quality plan go to: www.det.nsw.edu.au/what-we-offer/early-childhood-education-and-care
Existing services are exempt from the requirement to schedule a visit to the premises. Each provider must then lodge an application region by region. Each region processes the application.

If an OSHC service is educating and caring for a child who is preschool age it must comply with the revised requirements under the regulations in respect to this age group. A service which does not have to ‘renovation’ of premises is:

- the design of premises facilitating
  - shade in outdoor spaces
- relocation of a building or other fixed structure, or
- fencing and security
- retention of an educator to child ratio
- supervision.

Under the national regulations ‘renovation’ of premises is:

- construction, demolition, removal or relocation of a building or other fixed structure (or part of a building or other fixed structure), or
- carrying out structural alterations on a building or other fixed structure. A service which does not have to comply with one of these requirements will be rated as ‘Meeting National Standards’.

Many services have a sun protection policy, but it may not be up to date with the latest recommendations or address all the program’s strategies. Joining SunSmart can help you to review your current policy and update your comprehensive sun protection policy.

The main changes for services for OSHC, such as before and after school care, are:

- new requirements for 50 per cent of NSW services still to join.
- new requirements for smaller centre-based services. Children preschool age and under have to do so (for the smallest centres, have access to) an easy online enrolment service to be introduced in January 2014.
- national education to child ratio of 1:7 for family day care, with a change to a maximum of four (rather than five) children per preschool age, under from January 2014.
- an educator to child ratio of 1:5 (rather than 1:6) for children aged from birth to under 3 years in long day care centres. Further requirements have been introduced from January 2016.

The new year is just around the corner and humidity more than just resolutions and summer holidays for those with children. The National Quality Framework (NQF) begins 1 January 2012 and will apply to all existing long day care, preschools and outside school hours care services in NSW.

While other service types will continue to be regulated under existing NSW laws for education and care services, the NQF represents change for many of the sector because it will provide a more consistent approach for children – whether they live in Australia. It makes reform for both service providers and regulatory authorities in each state and territory.

Exploring the framework is a families and service providers in NSW is a priority for the department, said John Muscat, executive director, Early Childhood Education and Care, Department of Education and Communities.

"Websites, printed resources, face to face information sessions and an enquiry line will all work together to help people understand the changes and answer their questions," he said. The NSW Department of Education and Communities is working hard to introduce the new national approach and support the sector in meeting the new requirements.

The department is:

- preparing to assess and validate the quality of existing licensed services in NSW, as well as continuing to ensure service compliance with approval conditions.

For details on SunSmart information line T: (02) 9334 1761, E: sunsmart@health.nsw.com.au or go to www.cancer.nsw.gov.au/sunsmart

SunSmart tips

- Get children and staff to use wide-brimmed, buckets or style hats
- Wear sun-proof clothing such as long sleeves, collars or covered necklines
- Use appropriate sun-safe lotions
- Reapply every two hours.

OSHC information sessions

Network of Community Activities, in partnership with the NSW Department of Education and Communities, will be holding information sessions across NSW to help providers understand the new national approach.

The program provides support, resources and policy advice to early childhood educators and parents to ensure effective implementation of the National Quality Framework. Feedback and assistance will be provided if your policy needs updating. Sample policies for centre-based and family day care services are available. The NSW Cancer Council has developed some excellent resources including the children’s book ‘Sun Smarties’. The book is available free to SunSmart centres.

Take special care of babies, keeping them well shaded at all times. Wear sun-protective clothing and small areas of skin not protected by hats and clothing.

Ratio and qualifications

Under the national laws there are no educator to child ratio requirements for children who are preschool age in NSW centre-based services. However all providers and regulatory authorities must ensure children attending the service are adequately supervised at all times.

There are requirements in the national regulations about qualifications for general educators and for early childhood educators at centre-based services. However OSHC service providers need to understand or:

- the general educator qualification requirements only apply to a service which provides education and care for children who are preschool age or under.
- the early childhood teacher requirements do not apply to services educating and caring for children over preschool age.

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Changes ahead for out of school hours care services

Are you providing before or after school care (OSHC) or offering nutrition/healthy eating support for the changes ahead? From 1 January 2012 OSHC services will be regulated for the first time under the National Quality Standard (NFS).

OSHC information sessions

Network of Community Activities, in partnership with the NSW Department of Education and Communities, will be delivering information sessions across NSW. These sessions will cover performance against the National Quality Standard and will allow opportunities for further information or support.

Contact us to book a session or to enquire about support and the sector in meeting the new requirements. The department is:• preparing to assess and rate the quality of all OSHC services in NSW, as well as continuing to ensure services are complying with approval conditions.

30% of OSHC programs in NSW are delayed in delivering the program run by the NSW Cancer Council.

NSW Minister for Education Adrian Piccoli announced the review in December 2011, which he said was in response to feedback from the sector, parents and communities. He said the review will ensure OSHC programs are aligned with requirements under the Cancer Council’s SunSmart program.

NSW services still to join.

• wear sun-safe clothing such as long-sleeved shirts and pants, and T-shirts and dresses with sleeves, collars or covered head. • Apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen to exposed skin before going outside. Reapply every two hours.

Building Blocks is published by the NSW Department of Education and Communities July 2012

2012 Building Blocks is published by the NSW Department of Education and Communities

To view the terms of reference and submissions to the review.

A review of NSW Government funding for early childhood education and care to help OSHC services make a smooth transition to the framework.

NSW Minister for Education Adrian Piccoli announced the review in December 2011. Since then the review team, led by Professor Deborah Brennan from the University of New South Wales, has gathered data about the sector and heard first hand what early childhood education and care providers do things differently. The NSW Department of Education and Communities is working hard to introduce the new national approach.

Building Blocks is published by the NSW Department of Education and Communities

The main changes for services in NSW during 2012 will include:• new requirements for 50 per cent or more staff to hold a qualification and for all facilities and sections of OSHC services to be regulated under existing NSW regulations. This will help ensure an increased standard of care for children, families and communities. • new requirements for smaller centre-based services with: children preschool age and under to have to (or, if the smallest children under 3, to have or be working towards) a Certificate III level qualification from January 2014 • new requirements for smaller centre-based services with children preschool age and under to have to (or, if the smallest children under 3, to have or be working towards) a Certificate III level qualification from January 2014

The new year is just around the corner and horizons more than just resolutions and summer holidays for those who work with children. The National Quality Framework (NQF) begins 1 January 2012 and will apply to all early childhood education and care services under the NSW regulatory framework.

Brennan hosted consultation sessions across the state in November and more are scheduled across NSW in early 2012.

The program provides support, resources and policy advice to early childhood services and general information to outside school hours care services in helping to reduce children’s and staff members’ exposure to UV radiation and risk of sun damage.

Karen Fowke, Acting CEO for the department, “said John Mason, NSW Department of Education and Communities (the regulator) processes the application.

The department is processing applications across region by region. Each provider will receive a letter advising which region their service belongs to and when applications should be lodged. Once received, the department will schedule a visit to the provider.

The national regulations outline which applications and fees are exempt. Existing services are exempt from the provider approval application fee but must submit a fee with any approval application.

Requirements for premises

The national regulations include requirements for premises. However, an existing OSHC service which does not meet the following requirements before 1 January 2013 will not have to do so until the premises are renovated or the service approval is transferred.

• fencing and security
• the amount of indoor space a service must have
• the design of premises facilitating supervision.

Note: While the regulations require the design of premises facilitating supervision (and make provision for this in the building regulations), it is also a requirement under the regulations that the premises must be a building or other fixed structure.

The national regulations outline what early childhood care and education services are exempt from the prescribed age in NSW centre-based services.

No child will have to do so until the premises are renovated or service approval is transferred.

The national regulations outline which services are exempt from the prescribed age in NSW centre-based services. However, all providers and regulatory authorities need to ensure children attending the service are adequately supervised at all times.

There are requirements in the national regulations about qualifications for general educators and for early childhood educators at centre-based services. However, what OSHC service providers need to understand is:

• the general educator qualification requirements only apply to a service which provides education and care for children who are preschool age or under
• the early childhood teacher requirements do not apply to services which provide education and care to children over preschool age.

If an OSHC service is educating and caring for a child who is preschool age or under, it must comply with the following requirements:

Family day care providers with children who are preschool age should refer to the current family day care services information sheet for details about ratios and qualifications.

The main changes for services in NSW during 2012 will include:

National Quality Standard until 31 July 2012 after which, for early childhood and child care services, service approval will be treated as having been issued for the ‘National Quality Standard’ in respect of the service.

However, service providers need to understand:

Under the national regulations reform for both service providers and regulatory authorities is required as the NQF comes into effect.

The peak groups and considered public submissions.

In each state and territory.

• that under the regulations in respect to this age group.

OSHC info sessions

The main changes for services in NSW during 2012 will include:

For more details contact the SunSmart Information Line (02) 8334 1510. E: sunsmartchildcare@nswcc.org.au or go to www.cancercontrolcouncil.com.au/education.

OSHC info sessions

Whereas other service types will continue to be regulated under existing NSW laws for education and care services, the NQF represents a change for most of the sector because it will provide a more consistent approach for children – whether they live in Australia.

The NSW Department of Education and Communities is working hard to introduce the new national approach.

For more details contact the SunSmart Information Line (02) 8334 1510. E: sunsmartchildcare@nswcc.org.au or go to www.cancercontrolcouncil.com.au/education.

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