

A message from DEEWR – Working with NCAC to keep quality a priority

Michael Manthorpe, the Deputy Secretary Office of Early Childhood Education and Child Care, provides further information about the transition to the new National Quality Standard for child care.

As you are by now all aware on 7 December 2009 the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care. The National Quality Framework will set a new National Quality Standard for early childhood education and care providers in Australia.

The changes will be put in place in a step by step approach to allow services time to get ready and adjust to the new requirements, particularly those relating to staff-to-child ratios and qualifications.

It is important that services continue to work with NCAC to maintain quality and make satisfactory progress during this transition period

The first changes start in July 2010, during a transition phase, where some services will begin to undergo assessment against the new National Quality Standard. The new National Quality Framework will be fully in place by 1 January 2012, with changes to staff-to-child ratios and qualifications requirements being phased in over a number of years following full implementation.

An important focus during the transition phase will be maintaining and improving quality. That is why the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments and NCAC are working together to develop processes which ensure services continue to meet licensing and quality accreditation requirements while streamlining the administrative burden on services, ready for full implementation in 2012.

Until the new system is fully implemented, services will need to continue to operate to the existing licensing requirements and NCAC will continue

to monitor quality. Any changes in process will be communicated to services as the details become clearer and in the interim the existing CCQA systems remain in place. All Child Care Benefit (CCB) approved services continue to be required to satisfactorily participate in the systems administered by NCAC until further notice.

NCAC is working closely with the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments to assist with a smooth transition to the new arrangements and is funded to provide current information and professional advice to services on providing the best in early childhood education and care. It is important that services continue to work with NCAC to maintain quality and make satisfactory progress during this transition period.

As the exact details of the transition process become clearer, information will be made available to services through a variety of methods including the NCAC website. Should you have any questions do not hesitate to call NCAC on 1300 136 554 or email qualitycare@ncac.gov.au or email the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) at ECECqualityreformenquiries@DEEWR.gov.au

Quality early childhood experiences continue to be important and all CCB approved Child Care Services are required to participate in the current CCQA systems and work with NCAC to maintain and improve quality standards for the well being of Australian children in care.

I look forward to working with you and NCAC to implement the National Quality Framework.



Michael Manthorpe

For further information about the National Quality Framework
Visit the DEEWR (www.deewr.gov.au) or NCAC (www.ncac.gov.au) websites or
Email ECECqualityreformenquiries@DEEWR.gov.au or qualitycare@ncac.gov.au