



# Family News

## Have you heard about the National Quality Framework?



You may have heard about the new [National Quality Framework \(NQF\)](#). It introduces improved child to educator ratios, new qualification requirements for educators and a focus on learning outcomes.

The NQF covers most long day care, preschool, outside school hours and family

day care services across Australia.

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) oversees these changes nationally for the benefit of families.

Working with state and territory governments, ACECQA aims to ensure the best possible start in life for children in approved services.

## Assessment of services



Under the NQF, services are assessed against seven quality areas in the new [National Quality Standard \(NQS\)](#).

Different rating levels can be awarded for each quality area, as well as an overall rating. Most services are likely to be rated *Working Towards*, *Meeting*, or *Exceeding* the NQS.

Services must meet every element in all 18 standards to receive a rating of *Meeting National Quality Standard*. Some services may take time to achieve the rating of *Meeting*.

Individual quality areas or standards may be rated as *Exceeding* the NQS, however the overall service rating may be quite different. Education and care services performing well across a number of quality areas may receive an overall rating of *Working Towards*.

More information about the ratings is available on ACECQA's [website](#).

## Why are there new ratings?



Under the previous national accreditation scheme about 90 per cent of services in Australia had reached the maximum possible rating of 'high quality'. The new system raises the bar and asks all services to aim for even higher standards for our children.

Don't be surprised if your service moves from high quality to *Meeting* or *Working Towards* under the new system.

It doesn't mean your service has suddenly dropped its performance, it simply means it is being assessed against a new and more challenging scale. This is good news for families and has been welcomed by educators.

ACECQA expects to start publishing service ratings on its website in 2013.

## FOLLOW US



## DID YOU KNOW?

About 1 million children from 700,000 families use approved children's education and care services in Australia.

Source: Australian Child Care Update September 2011

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## TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

We would like to know what information you would like to see. Please help us by completing our survey and tell us what you think about the new Family Newsletter: <http://acecqa.gov.au/families/>

## GOT A QUESTION?

ACECQA has a wide range of information available for families on our [website](#).

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Your local state or territory Regulatory Authority is available to answer your questions about your child's service. Contact details are available here: <http://acecqa.gov.au/regulatory-authorities/>.



# ACECQA National Quality Standard

The *National Quality Standard* consists of seven quality areas:

QA1	Educational program and practice
QA2	Children's health and safety
QA3	Physical environment
QA4	Staffing arrangements
QA5	Relationships with children
QA6	Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
QA7	Leadership and service management

Each of the seven quality areas has two or three standards. These are the standards that your child's service will be assessed against.

Under each standard are elements that must be 'met' for that standard to be achieved. There are 58 elements in total.

A summary table with all the quality areas, standards and elements is available on the [ACECQA website](#).

To find out more, talk to the educators at your child's service or contact ACECQA on 1300 4 ACECQA (1300 422 327) or email [enquiries@acecqa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@acecqa.gov.au).