

# POLICY

## PRESCHOOL SPECIFIC POLICY AND PROCEDURES

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| Responsibility of: | Early Childhood Education and Care  | DET File: File2016/385-1 |
| Effective Date:    | February 2018   | EDOC2016/18757           |
| Next Review Date:  | February 2020   | Version Number: 2        |
| Target Audience:   | Principals, preschool teachers and educators,<br>parents, pre-service teachers, students and volunteers |                          |

### 1. POLICY

Preschools must ensure they are compliant with the requirements of the [Education and Care Services \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act 2011](#) (the Act) and [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#) (National Regulations).

For some prescribed matters, they must develop policies and procedures specifically for the preschool that are consistent with the Act and National Regulations. The following prescribed matters are not addressed in existing departmental policies and guidelines and preschools must therefore develop their own policies and procedures to ensure alignment to legislation:

- delivery and collection of children from preschool procedure
- responsible person in preschool procedure
- nutrition, food and beverage requirements in preschool guidelines
- managing water hazards in preschool guidelines
- participation of pre-service teachers, students and volunteers in preschool guidelines
- enrolment and orientation of new children and their families in preschool guidelines
- sleep and rest requirements for children in preschool guidelines.

Preschools are best placed to develop procedures for the prescribed matters to accommodate varying delivery models, environments in which the programs are delivered and family needs across the Northern Territory (NT).

It is acknowledged that some preschools may already have existing procedures in place for the prescribed matters. If not, under this policy, a procedures template has been developed relating to each guideline to assist preschools develop their own guidelines and procedures relevant to their program, location, families and community.

It is recommended that preschools utilise a consultative process, involving the principal, educators and families in drafting the procedures. The procedures must not contradict the Act or National Regulations and any other departmental policies, guidelines or procedures. Regular review of the procedures is required to ensure their continued effectiveness.

## 2. BUSINESS NEED

Under the Act, approved providers must ensure their services have adequate policies and procedures in relation to the prescribed matters outlined at regulation 168 of the National Regulations.

Although the Department of Education has a comprehensive range of policies and procedures to guide the operations of schools, these documents do not address all of the prescribed matters listed in the National Regulations. These outstanding matters relate to specific regulatory requirements which only preschools (not whole of school) are obliged to meet.

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all NT Government preschools, including preschools provided by independent public schools in scope of the National Quality Framework (NQF).

This policy provides an overarching framework within which individual preschools can develop or review procedures specific to their preschool and which meet the requirements of the Act and National Regulations.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

**Approved provider** is a person or legal entity who holds a provider approval under the NQF. Provider approval is a prerequisite for operating an approved education and care service. The Department of Education is the approved provider of all Northern Territory Government preschools. Responsibility for this role has been delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive School Education.

**National Quality Framework** is a regulatory system agreed to by all Australian governments, through the Council of Australian Governments, to raise quality and drive continuous improvement in early childhood education and care services, including preschools.

**Preschools in scope of the NQF** include centre-based early childhood services that provide a quality preschool program on a regular basis. This scope includes a preschool program delivered in a multilevel class (also known as a composite class) where there are six or more children enrolled.

**Prescribed matters** are regulatory requirements outlined in the Act and National Regulations.

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Early Childhood Education and Care** is responsible for reviewing the department's policies and procedures relating to early childhood education and care to ensure the ongoing compliance of preschools with the Act and National Regulations. The division incorporates the NT's regulatory authority, Quality Education and Care NT.

**Regional directors** are responsible for ensuring principals adhere to the requirements of this policy and related guidelines and procedures.

**Principal** is responsible for ensuring the preschool operates in accordance with the Act, Regulations and departmental policies, procedures and guidelines.

**Preschool teachers and educators** are responsible for ensuring the preschool adheres to the requirements of the Act and National Regulations and implements the guidelines and procedures outlined in this policy.

## 6. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

- [Education and Care Services \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act 2011](#), which includes the *Education and Care Services Act (NT)*
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)
- [Enrolment policy](#)
- [Student enrolment form](#) and [Supplementary preschool enrolment form](#)
- [School swimming, water safety programs and aquatic activities policy](#)
- [Students at risk of anaphylaxis policy](#)
- [Administration of medications to students with notified medical conditions policy and procedures](#)
- [Work health and safety information: incident reporting system](#)
- [Pre-compulsory Years of Schooling: Early Years Learning Framework policy](#)

## 7. EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed in two years or earlier if legislative changes and regulatory amendments are implemented. Review of this policy will include consideration of any amendments or updates to the documents listed above, as related policy, legislation or documents and any other future relevant departmental policy and/or procedure.