

Preschool specific policy and procedures

Policy

Document title	Preschool specific policy and procedures
Contact details	Early Childhood Education and Care
Approved by	Operational Policy Subcommittee
Date approved	
Document review	March 2021
TRM number	50:D19:19022

Version	Date	Author	Changes made
3.1	30 January 2020	Operational Policy Coordination Unit	Minor update to terminology and NTG template
3.2	23 April 2020	Operational Policy Coordination Unit	Minor review for readability, accessibility and publishing standards
3.3	September 2020	Early Childhood Policy and Programs	Consequential amendment to procedure name

Acronyms	Full form
NQF	National Quality Framework
NT	Northern Territory
NTG	Northern Territory Government
TRM	Territory Records Management

1. Policy

Preschools must ensure they are compliant with the requirements of the [Education and Care Services \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act 2011¹](#) (the Act) and [Education and Care Services National Regulations²](#) (National Regulations).

The Act and National Regulations requires preschools to have specific policies and procedures in place as a minimum standard for operating an education and care service. There are a number of prescribed matters under Regulation 168 of the National Regulations that department policies and guidelines for schools do not address:

- delivery, collection and transportation in preschool procedure
- responsible person in preschool procedure
- nutrition, food and beverage requirements in preschool guidelines
- managing water hazards in preschool guidelines
- managing health care needs in preschool procedures
- 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.

In some instances, preschools are best placed to develop procedures for most of these 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. Where this is not the case, guidelines and a procedures template has been developed under this policy relating to prescribed matters to assist preschools to develop their own 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.

The [Preschool guide to NQF policy requirements³](#) outlines the all of the department policies and procedures that preschools must implement to comply with the Act and National Regulations.

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.

¹ <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EDUCATION-AND-CARE-SERVICES-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-ACT-2011>

² <https://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/#/view/regulation/2011/653>

³ <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/preschool-specific-policy>

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.

The NQF 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.

Senior Directors, School Improvement and Leadership are responsible for ensuring principals adhere to the requirements of this policy and related guidelines and procedures.

Principals are responsible for ensuring their 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 legislation

- [Education and Care Services \(National Uniform Legislation\) Act 2011](#)¹, which adopts the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2011 in the NT
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)²

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.