



6 October 2019

UANP Review
Level 19, 567 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

E-mail: UANPReview@NousGroup.com.au

Dear Nous Group,

Re: Submission to the Review of the Universal Access National Partnership

The Australian Childcare Alliance (ACA) NSW is the state's peak body representing 1,600 privately-owned centre-based childcare services who employ about 25,000 individuals and serve up to 125,000 children and their families.

Around 348,000 children across Australia are eligible to receive funding under the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education, attracting over \$1,237 per capita. This Agreement supports universal access to, and improved participation by, children in quality early childhood education with preschool programs in the year before school, with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics show that in 2016, there were 288,369 children in the Year Before School Cohort of whom 92.4% were enrolled in preschool but only 70.8% attended for 600 hours.

Based on the Report on Government Services 2018, New South Wales has the lowest enrolment and attendance in 600 hours of preschool in the year before school in 2016. We understand this has not improved significantly enough in the years to 2018.

It is worth noting that in NSW, 64.4% (2016) of children in the year before school preschool enrolments are in long daycare, Yet the NSW Government spends \$456 per child in long daycare settings (now \$459 per child per year in 2019) compared to many other comparable states who spend up to \$3,695, and the national average for the same profile of child of \$1,724 per child per year.

Similarly, the NSW Government spends on average \$5,188 per child enrolled in dedicated preschools yet the national average spend is \$6,431 per child per year.

In order to achieve a more effective result of enrolments as well as fairer distribution of funding, ACA NSW has been consistently asking the NSW Government to:

- publish its reports for 2016 and 2017 proving that the differences in funding by Commonwealth and NSW Governments compared to the rest of Australia demonstrating if such arrangements for NSW have produced the participation it originally agreed to through the National Partnership Agreement;
- significantly increase its funding for children in the year before school in long daycare to those in comparable states, especially Queensland, South Australia and Victoria; and
- have such funding in long daycare be directly for the use of reducing fees or offsetting the cost of degree-qualified teacher, regardless of settings.

To date, the NSW Government has not responded, and the Commonwealth Government has not been prepared to renegotiate with the NSW Government that funding would be withheld

entirely for children in long daycare services unless a more equitable arrangement and results are forthcoming.

Please feel free to contact us should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chiang Lim', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Chiang Lim
CEO

encl "Early Childhood Education and Care in NSW: A Better Direction" by ACA NSW (2018)

early childhood education and care in nsw: a better direction

19 March 2018



Australian Childcare Alliance
New South Wales

A Briefing Paper
for the NSW Government's consideration
from the Australian Childcare Alliance NSW

10.8 toward a more universal access of funding for the year before school

Around 348,000 children across Australia are eligible to receive funding under the FY2018/2019 National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NPAUAECE), attracting around \$1,237 per capita (total \$427m) in 2018²². This Agreement supports universal access to, and improved participation by, children in quality early childhood education (preschool) in the year before full-time school, with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

ABS preschool statistics show that in 2016 there were 288,369 children in the Year Before School Cohort, of whom 92.4% were enrolled in preschool but only 70.8% attended for 600 hours²³:

Enrolment and attendance in 600 hours of preschool in the year before school 2016:

	NSW	VIC	QLD*	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUS
Enrolled preschool	87 451	75 085	58 041	3 286	19 454	6 247	5 322	3 435	288,369
By %	84.9%	98.4%	93.8%	96.0%	94.2%	96.2%	98.3%	92.5%	92.4%
Enrolled 600 hrs	74 969	74 261	56 410	32 556	19 255	6 250	5 257	3 405	272 361
By %	72.5%	97.3%	88.6%	93.9%	93.2%	96.2%	97.1%	91.7%	87.2%
Attend 600 hrs	66 334	56 721	51 049	21 890	13 679	5 081	4 220	2 067	221,076
By %	64.4%	74.3%	82.5%	63.1%	66.2%	78.2%	77.9%	55.7%	70.8%

(ROGS Table 3A.18 & ABS 42400D0003_2016, Nov 2016)

The mix of children in each service type varies dramatically by state, with WA, SA, TAS and NT dominated by government preschools; NSW and QLD by long day care and Vic a mix of both.

Year before school preschool enrolments by sector (%) (2016)

	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	ACT	NT	AUST
Govt preschools	4.7	12.4	1.8	58.9	55.3	64.5	50.0	66.4	18.7
Non-govt preschools	26.0	42.2	27.4	22.6	4.5	16.5	2.6	4.0	27.8
Long day care	64.4	37.9	67.2	2.0	21.8	3.8	21.7	12.4	45.2
LDC+PS	4.8	7.4	3.6	16.5	18.5	13.6	25.4	17.2	8.2

²² Senate Estimates Question on Notice SQ17-732, See also 4 February 2018 announcement of 2019 funding: <https://www.senatorbirmingham.com.au/preschool-funding-boost/>

²³ Australia Bureau of Statistics 4240.0 Nov 2017 release tables 5 & 6

State Government Spending on preschool programs per child by sector 2016-17

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT	AUST
Preschool total spending \$m	278.3	385.3	175.0	171.6	329.1	47.7	46.1	35.6	1,351.9
Preschools \$per child enrolled	5,188	4,712	4,210	9,647	9,993	7,811	12,694	7,709	6,431
LDC preschool programs \$ per child enrolled	456	3,695	2,011	2,121	0	0	180	0	1,724

Source: Calculations based on ROGS 2018, ABS 4240 Table 5 and State Govt funding formulae for LDC

Based on these reports, NSW has the lowest enrolment and attendance in 600 hours of preschool in the year before school 2016.

It is worth noting that in NSW, 64.4% (2016) of children in the year before school preschool enrolments are in long day care. Yet the NSW Government spends \$456 per child in long day care settings compared to many other comparable states, and the national average of \$1,724 per child.

Similarly, the NSW Government spends on \$5,188 per child enrolled in dedicated preschools yet the national average spend is \$6,431 per child.

In order to achieve a more effective achievement of enrolments as well as a fairer distribution of funding, ACA NSW is asking the NSW Government to:

- publish its report for 2016 and 2017 proving that the differences in funding by Commonwealth and NSW Governments compared to the rest of Australia demonstrating if such arrangements for NSW have produced the participation it originally agreed to through the National Partnership Agreement; and
- asks that such funding be directly for the use of reducing fees or offsetting the cost of the degree-qualified teacher, regardless of settings.

LEAD MINISTER(S): The Hon Sarah Mitchell MLC

NSW Minister for Early Childhood Education

RECOMMENDATION(S) #9:

(a) That the NSW Department of Education publish a report for 2016 and 2017 demonstrating the overall differences in Commonwealth and NSW funding for NSW children participating in a preschool program for the year before school for up to

600 hours compared to other states, regardless of whether they are enrolled in a preschool or a preschool program conducted in a long day care service.

- (b) That the NSW Department of Education amend the use of Universal Access funding so that it is to be for the use of reducing fees or offsetting the cost of the degree qualified teacher regardless of setting.

For further information, please contact:

1300 556 330

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Australian Childcare Alliance
New South Wales