

NT: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2025

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

This Plan covers:

- the implementation activities for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 (Tables 2 – 4);
- the performance report for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 (Annex 1 and 2).

PART 1: PRELIMINARIES

1. This Plan is a schedule to the Preschool Reform Agreement 2022 – 2025 (the Agreement) and should be read in conjunction with the Agreement. This Plan covers the period from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025.
2. The Agreement reaffirms a national commitment to provide universal access to, and improved participation by, children in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school (YBFS), with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and disadvantaged children. These programs should be delivered in a manner that meets the needs of children, parents and communities at a cost which does not present a barrier to participation.
3. The objective of the Agreement is to facilitate children's early learning and development and transition to school by maintaining universal access to quality preschool programs for all children, improving participation in preschool programs and maximising the benefit of the preschool year by improving outcomes for children.
4. The Agreement supports the delivery of 15 hours a week, or 600 hours a year of quality preschool programs, by a degree qualified early childhood teacher for all children, regardless of the setting in which programs are delivered, in the year before school.
5. The Agreement has a focus on improving preschool participation and outcomes including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and disadvantaged children.
6. This Plan is the fourth of four annual implementation plans that build on each other to deliver the reforms outlined in the Agreement.

PART 2: TERMS AND DEFINITIONS OF THIS PLAN

7. This Plan will commence as soon as it is agreed between the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the Minister for Early Childhood Education, and the Northern Territory, represented by their Minister for Early Education.
8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the Northern Territory demonstrates its capacity to achieve and deliver the outcomes of the Agreement.
9. This Plan will cease on completion of the final performance reporting and the processing of final payments against the performance benchmarks or milestones set out within it for 2025.
10. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
11. The Parties to this Plan do not intend any of the provisions to be legally enforceable. However, that does not lessen the Parties' commitment to the Plan and its full implementation.

PART 3: FUNDING CONTRIBUTION

Commonwealth Funding Contributions

12. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the Northern Territory is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (financial year) of the Agreement.
13. However, the Commonwealth's financial contribution in individual program years is adjusted in accordance with the notes to Tables 1a and 1b of the Agreement. Consistent with the agreed adjustment process, the final amounts for 2025 are set out in **Table 1**.
14. **Table 1** does not include funding for children who repeat the YBFS. This funding will be calculated and paid in arrears per Appendix A.1 to the Agreement.
15. The Commonwealth contribution can only be moved between years with the agreement of the Commonwealth Minister. This would address extraordinary circumstances only and details would be agreed in the context, noting Commonwealth Funding Follows Child requires funding is expended in the year for which it is provided.

Table 1: 2025 Commonwealth financial contribution to the Northern Territory

| Category | Amount ¹ |
|---|---------------------|
| YBFS Financial Contribution | \$4,578,444 |
| Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels | \$93,919 |
| Total Commonwealth financial contribution (excluding implementation funding) | \$4,672,363 |

¹Figures may not add due to rounding. These figures are based on the most recent YBFS population projections estimated by Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in January 2025.

16. **Table 2** shows how the Northern Territory will use Commonwealth funding to meet the objectives of the Agreement. This may include strategies to facilitate preschool attendance by children in the year before full-time school.

Table 2: Program/activities objectives and outcomes

| | Program/activity | Outputs | Objectives | Outcomes | Estimated Cth funds allocated |
|--|---|--|--|--|-------------------------------|
| Program year funding (Commonwealth Funding Follows Child) | | | | | |
| 1. | Maintain universal access to 600 hours of affordable, high-quality preschool programs for all children in the year before full-time school. | Support quality early childhood education programs which meet the needs of Territory families and communities, regardless of service type. | To facilitate children's early learning and development. | All children, regardless of where they live or the level of vulnerability and disadvantage circumstances they may experience, have access to, and are able to actively participate in high-quality and culturally responsive early childhood education program. | \$4.11 million |
| 2. | Increase participation in a quality early childhood program in the year before full-time school. | Quality early childhood education programs which meet the needs of parents and communities. | To facilitate children's early learning and development. | All children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, vulnerable and disadvantaged children, have access to, and regularly attend an affordable quality early childhood education program. All children in remote and very remote areas have access to free preschool from the age of three. | \$0.15 million |
| Additional funding to maintain 2021 funding levels (delete if not required) | | | | | |
| 3. | Refer to rows one and two | | | | \$0.41 million |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Total all programs and activities | \$4.67 million |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|

The Northern Territory will use the following methodology to calculate the number of children accessing a quality preschool program in each of the following service setting in which Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child will be directed:

- a. Preschool program delivered by a Northern Territory Government school
 - Funding for these preschool programs is allocated through government's school resourcing model¹, noting the Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child represents a small proportion of the total funding allocated for each child.
 - From 2025, preschool funding will be calculated using a separate methodology to improve funding transparency. Preschool students will receive funding through an enrolment-based approach determined by three components: a base rate, a weighting based on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identity, for eligible students and a size supplement.
 - Enrolment data collected in the 2024 Age Grade Census is used to inform preschool funding. The funded student number is determined based on the school's average enrolments in week 4, Term 1 of 2024.
 - If a child is enrolled in multiple services, funding will be prioritised to a school based preschool program. The Northern Territory's annual Quality Preschool Programs Survey will inform this data.
- b. Preschool program delivered by a non-government school where there is no child care subsidy (CCS) provision
 - The Northern Territory will administer the Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child through enrolment data collected in the 2025 Age Grade Census.
 - Enrolment data collected through the 2025 Age Grade Census will be used to inform funding calculations.
- c. Preschool program delivered by a long day care service, including preschool provided by an Early Learning Centre and other non-government schools
 - The Northern Territory will administer its annual Quality Preschool Programs Survey to determine how many preschool aged children are receiving a quality preschool program through their service.
 - Enrolment data collected in the 2025 Quality Preschool Programs Survey will be used to inform funding calculations.
 - If a child is also enrolled in a school based preschool program, funding will be prioritised to the school.

¹ [Government school funding in the Northern Territory | Department of Education](#)

State context and funding contributions

17. Context influencing the Northern Territory delivery of preschool and the States' investment in preschool for 2025 is covered in this section.
18. In developing this implementation plan, consideration has been given to the unique demographic, geographic, economic and historic characteristics which differentiate the Northern Territory from other jurisdictions that affect the delivery of services and achievement of outcomes.
 - a. The Northern Territory has the smallest population of all states and territories, with a population of approximately 255 100² people, representing approximately one per cent of the total Australian population, spread over an area of 1 349 129 sq. km.
 - b. The Northern Territory has the highest proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of all states and territories, with 76 487³ people, representing approximately 30.8 per cent of the Northern Territory's total population, most of whom reside in remote and very remote areas.
 - c. Of the 76 487 who identify as being Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, approximately 2.7 per cent are aged 0 to 4 years, compared with 0.41 per cent for the same cohort nationally.
 - d. Data as at 2021 AEDC report⁴, approximately 25.7 per cent of Northern Territory children are vulnerable on two or more domains of the Australian Early Development Census compared with 11.4 per cent nationally. 2024 AEDC results will be used to inform complementary activities once this data is available.
 - e. Government schools represent approximately 75 per cent of all services that provide a quality preschool program in the Northern Territory and provide preschool for the majority of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, as well as vulnerable and disadvantaged cohorts.
 - f. Majority of non-government schools that provide a quality preschool program in the Northern Territory do so under an Early Learning Centre (ELC) delivery model and provide families with access to the Child Care Subsidy (CCS).
19. In the Northern Territory, government schools provide 600 hours per year of free preschool for four- and five-year-old children. Children in very remote locations can access preschool from the age of three-years-old. This Agreement provides a contribution towards the Northern Territory's provision of quality preschool of 600 hours per year for children in the year before fulltime schooling.
20. The Northern Territory Department of Education Training's Strategic Plan 2025-2028⁵ include system objectives and priority actions to improve access to quality early childhood programs and services to provide a strong start for all Territory children.

² <https://nteconomy.nt.gov.au/population>

³ <https://nteconomy.nt.gov.au/population#aboriginal>

⁴ <https://www.aedc.gov.au/resources/detail/2021-aedc-national-report>

⁵ [Department of Education and Training strategic plan 2025-2028](#)

21. The Northern Territory Government Department of Education and Training will progress to the next stage of building a contemporary early childhood system for the Northern Territory. The review of the funding and delivery of preschool in the Northern Territory (funded under this Agreement), three-year-old preschool trial in urban and regional government school settings and review of the standard and capacity of 41 Community Child Care Funded Restricted services (Commonwealth funded) will inform the roadmap development in charting the way for universal ECEC reform in the Northern Territory.
22. Complementary Northern Territory Government Department of Education activities include:
 - a. Improve access to quality early childhood programs and services to provide a strong start for all Territory children
 - b. working closely with schools and system leaders to implement school attendance strategies;
 - c. using 2024 AEDC results as evidence to support ongoing policy consideration, planning and action;
 - d. supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged children, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, parents and caregivers in remote and very remote communities to engage in quality early childhood education programs through programs and services such as the Families as First Teachers program, Child and Family Centres and Connected Beginnings programs;
 - e. providing resources to support the delivery of quality preschool programs including the *NT Early Years Curriculum Guide: Preschool* and the *Preschool STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) Games*;
 - f. supporting schools and early childhood services and programs to develop effective transitioning periods for children and their families to and from preschool using the *Northern Territory Early Childhood Transitioning Package*;
 - g. partnering with key early childhood stakeholders and financial support to deliver the annual *Northern Territory Education and Care Awards* and *Little People Big Dreams Conference*, which aim to promote quality early childhood practices and raise the profile of the sector;
 - h. establishing an annual forum with early childhood stakeholders to integrate sector input in shaping national and local ECEC reform agendas and foster collaborative approaches for improving children's learning outcomes;
 - i. continuing to provide the Early Childhood Services Subsidy to all regulated long day care services in the Northern Territory to help with the cost of providing a service and subsequently reduce the cost of education and care for parents;
 - j. implementing the Northern Territory Quality Preschool Programs Survey to determine if long day care, early learning centers and other non-government schools are providing a quality preschool program to children in the year before full-

time school, delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher, for at least 600 hours per year, using the Early Years Learning Framework; and

- k. publicly reporting preschool expenditure and attendance targets annually in the Northern Territory's Budget Paper (BP3) publication available on the Northern Territory Treasury website⁶.

⁶ <https://budget.nt.gov.au/budget-papers>

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

23. This section includes a State's summary of details of implementation project funding provided by the Commonwealth including funding amounts, purpose and the State's progress in implementing the project to date. States will be required to provide details of how Implementation Project Funding will be used to deliver reforms, including key performance indicators (KPIs) and timing. Details will be captured at **Table 3**.

Table 3: Overview of Implementation Project Funding for Northern Territory - Statement of Allocations

| Implementation Project (details) | Commonwealth funding | Actions (incl. deliverables) | KPI | Timing (incl. delivery schedule) |
|---|----------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Preschool in the NT Review | \$0.65 million | Support external consultant to conduct a review that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the current situation of preschool delivery and funding in the NT. Identify best practice approaches and opportunities for preschool reform, including ways to maximise existing funding. Engage and consult with NT stakeholders. | Interim project deliverables (interim report and options paper) | Completed |
| | | Consider final report and recommendations to government | Final Report | Completed |
| | \$0.1 million | Develop a strategic approach to the review's recommendations | Strategy developed | Throughout 2025 |
| Develop capacity to deliver PRA from 2024 | \$0.25 million | Assess existing system capacity and impact of proposed changes to attendance collection and reporting system, including FFC. | Actions undertaken | Completed |

24. Consistent with the terms of the Agreement, Commonwealth funding for Implementation Projects was provided as part of the first milestone payment of the Agreement, when the Commonwealth and State agreed the 2022 Implementation Plan.

Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial Implementation Support

25. This section outlines the ways in which States intend to spend Commonwealth funding made available to support the 2025 national applied trial of the Preschool Outcomes Measure (as outlined in Table 1) in accordance with *PRA Appendix A.2 Preschool Outcome Measure Trial*. This can include alignment activities or trial preparatory activities undertaken in 2024.
26. Commonwealth funding is being provided on the following basis:
- a. For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating the new national tool as their 'primary tool' – up to \$3.4 million.
 - b. For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating a tool that is well developed, validated but not yet trialled at scale as their 'primary tool' – a mid-point funding, more than \$1 million and up to \$3.4 million, to be negotiated bilaterally.
 - c. For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating an existing tool as their 'primary tool' – up to \$1 million.
27. Where a state was not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in its 2024 Implementation Plan, they should provide these details in 2025 Implementation Plans to access funding.
28. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding. For the NT, these costs will include:
- a. delivery of professional development to support the preschool outcomes measure trial
 - b. a one-off funding contribution for each NT service that participates in the national trial to support:
 - i. Purchasing of suitable Information and Communications Technology (ICT) equipment to administer the tool at the service
 - ii. Backfilling arrangements and release time to support trial preparation activities including trial planning, administration and professional development
 - iii. Purchasing of resources to support programming
 - c. evidence-based research for the NT to strengthen quality early learning programs and services programs
 - d. build the necessary foundations for meaningful learning and support the delivery of quality teaching practices.

Table 4: Overview of Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support for Northern Territory - Statement of Allocations

| Activities (details) | Commonwealth funding | State contribution | Actions (incl. deliverables) | KPI | Timing (incl. delivery schedule) |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Phase 1: Project Planning | \$3.4 million | Establish a governance structure for the trial and develop and deliver a whole of sector professional learning series. | <p>Increase awareness of the Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial.</p> <p>Strengthen foundational understanding of learning domains to maximise sector readiness for trial.</p> <p>Establish project governance.</p> | Actions undertaken as specified in Table 5 | Completed |
| Phase 2: Trial Preparation | | Establish a professional learning network for educators across Early Childhood Education and Care settings. | <p>Broker service participation across a range of locations and settings.</p> <p>Support delivery of the small-scale trial to trial an initial design of the national learning progression and assessment tool.</p> <p>Develop funding criteria to support service uptake and participation in national applied trial through an expressions of interest process.</p> <p>Administer grant funding to support service participation.</p> | Actions undertaken as specified in Table 5 | <p>Semester 2, 2024</p> <p>Semester 1, 2025</p> |
| Phase 3: Project Management | | Implement the Preschool Outcomes Measure National Trial | <p>Dedicated project management to facilitate trial implementation, including pedagogist support.</p> <p>Develop localised, evidence based, and culturally responsive</p> | Actions undertaken as specified in Table 5 | Throughout 2025 |

| | | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|--|--|--|--|
| | | | professional development supports. Facilitate targeted support for educators and services participating in the trial. Build the evidence base to support delivery and evaluation of the Preschool Outcome Measurement trial. | | |
| Total | \$3,400,000 | | | | |

29. Commonwealth funding for Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial Implementation Support will be provided on the basis of the information provided above when the Commonwealth and State agree the 2025 Implementation Plan.

Risk Management

30. The Northern Territory will actively identify, monitor and manage the risks associated with delivering outcomes under the Agreement, such as through maintaining their own risk management plan.

PART 4: REFORMS

31. As part of the Agreement, the Northern Territory and the Commonwealth agree to work collaboratively to implement reforms outlined in the Additional terms in the Agreement.
32. The actions that the Northern Territory will undertake to meet these commitments are detailed in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025 for the Northern Territory

| Reform Element | Actions | Timing |
|--|---|--|
| Reform Element One: Implement Commonwealth Funding Follows Child | | |
| Details of how the Commonwealth Funding Follows Child at the setting level will be implemented in the State. | <p>Measures to be undertaken in 2025</p> <p>Funding will be disseminated in each setting as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preschool program delivered by a Northern Territory Government school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preschool funding allocated to schools in Term 1 of 2025 Confirmation of the funding allocation will occur via the Northern Territory Government Department of Education's centralised datasets. Funding contributes to the provision of free access to a preschool program. Preschool program delivered by a non-government school where there is no child care subsidy (CCS) provision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirmation of enrolment will occur via the 2025 Age Grade Census process to inform funding allocation. Preschool program delivered by a long day care service including preschool provided by an early learning centre and other non-government schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administer the Northern Territory Quality Preschool Programs Survey 2025. Provision of the Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child contribution through a Quality Preschools Program grant payment. <p>The Northern Territory will administer an annual acquittal statement to confirm expenditure of the Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child.</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Term 1, 2025 Semester 2, 2025 Term 2, 2025 |

| Reform Element | Actions | Timing |
|---|--|---|
| Reform Element Two: Implement a new national preschool attendance measure | | |
| <p>Agree details of preschool enrolment and attendance targets for 2025, to be measured using data provided to the Commonwealth, in accordance with Appendix A.1 in 2024 (to set the baseline) and 2025 (to measure performance against the baseline).</p> <p>Appendix A.1 to the PRA agrees attendance targets will be expressed according to the formula 'at least x% of children attend at least y% of 600 hours'.</p> <p>The PRA agreed attendance targets that are being introduced for the first time in 2025 will be negotiated bilaterally in good faith once national baseline data is available (refer pg.10, note 4 of the PRA and clause 15, Appendix A), and in accordance with the guiding principles PRA Appendix A.1.</p> <p>However, noting enrolment data in previous years was generally available in late March, delivery of 2024 baseline attendance data in May-June 2025 was not (and could not be) anticipated when the PRA was signed in 2022, before the details of the attendance data collection arrangements had been worked through multilaterally.</p> <p>In this context, to limit delays to the agreement of this IP and payment of the associated funding allocation attendance targets for 2025 <i>may</i> be agreed as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a proportion (y%) of 600 hours; with levels of 'x' for each Performance Indicator becoming known when 2024 data becomes available (noting this is expected to occur after this Implementation Plan is agreed); and <i>any improvement</i> in 2025 on the baseline level of 'x' in 2024 may be taken as meeting Target (a) as set out in the PRA to receive full funding under the specific Performance Indicator. | <p>Work towards meeting the following agreed targets for 2025:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Improvement from the 2024 baseline proportion of children in the year before full-time school (x%) who attended a preschool program(s) for 75% of 600 hours (450 hours). Improvement from the 2024 baseline proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the year before full-time school who are enrolled in a preschool program(s) for 600 hours. Improvement from the 2024 baseline proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the year before full-time school (x%) who are attending a preschool program(s) for 75% of 600 hours (450 hours). Improvement from the 2024 baseline proportion of disadvantaged children in the year before full-time school who are enrolled in a preschool program(s) for 600 hours. Improvement from the 2024 baseline proportion of disadvantaged children in the year before full-time school (x%) who are attending a preschool program(s) for 75% of 600 hours (450 hours). <p>Measures to be undertaken 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work collaboratively with the Australian Government and states and territories to facilitate the collection, reporting and analysis of enrolment and attendance data. Prepare and derive government school attendance data based on specific business rules as articulated in Appendix B of the agreement. In order to ensure accurate comparison between attendance collection years, the Northern Territory will work with the Australian Government Department of Education and the Australian Bureau of Statistics to provide supplementary data (e.g FaFT, attendance rates) and information that enables performance to be measured from 2025 onwards. | <p>Detailed 2024 baseline data available in May 2025</p> <p>2025 performance data expected delivery March-April 2026</p> <p>Throughout 2025</p> |

| Reform Element | Actions | Timing |
|--|---|--------|
| <p>If a jurisdiction prefers to wait until baseline data is available – any improvement in 2025 on the baseline specified value of 'x' in 2024, against the agreed 'y' value may be taken as meeting Target (a) as set out in the PRA to received full funding under the specific Performance Indicator. The ABS expects to provide custom tables to test settings of this kind in early June 2025.</p> <p>Similarly, noting enrolment targets will also be measured according to a new YBFS methodology, any improvement in 2025 on the baseline proportion (x%) of children who were enrolled for 600 hours in 2024 will be taken as meeting Target (a).</p> <p>This is a transitional measure for the first year of targets under new data collection arrangements and should not be considered as setting a precedent for future years.</p> <p>Targets will be set <i>and assessed</i> with reference to the PRA Appendix A, clause 15 and clause 21 and Appendix A.1 clauses 4.15, 4.16 and the principles set out in Appendix A.1 section 5, noting the Parties acknowledge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attendance in preschool programs is not compulsory and influenced by parental choice and other factors attendance targets have been set in advance of understanding the outcomes from the 2024 preschool attendance collection the attendance measure is based on a new data collection and may be subject to year-to-year volatility; this volatility may be driven by a number of factors such as higher than average levels of illness and changes in the mix of provision within a jurisdiction (i.e. between school based / community preschool / CBDC) a range of sources of supplementary data may need to be provided and considered in good faith to properly assess performance against attendance targets | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure alignment with NT Government performance targets to provide consistency and support the delivery of the NT's quality improvement agenda. | |

| Reform Element | Actions | Timing |
|--|--|-------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> capacity to demonstrate year-on-year improvements diminish the greater the proportion of children attending at the target attendance rate inclusion of targets within 2025 Implementation Plans do not constitute agreement to those same targets in future years or for future agreements. | | |
| <p>Strategies to facilitate participation in preschool by children in the YBFS. For strategies relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, consistent with the Closing the Gap agreement, engage those communities and/or representative bodies in the design process.</p> | <p>Measures to be undertaken 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop targeted communications including key messages and resources to promote enrolment and participation of preschool aged children, with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait as well as vulnerable families in urban and remote communities. Develop and implement targeted strategies to affect quality improvements across service settings. Promote and support preschool children's engagement in a quality preschool program through the following programs: Families as First Teachers Program, Literacy for Parents, Child and Family Centres and Connected Beginnings. Review and update as necessary, and continue to promote the use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. <i>Early Years Curriculum Guide: Preschool - a supporting resource to embed the Early Years Learning Framework; and</i> ii. <i>Northern Territory Early Childhood Transitioning Package to help services develop effective transitioning periods for children and their families to and from preschool.</i> | Throughout 2025 |
| Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025 | | |
| <p>How the State will participate in the National Applied Trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2. (Note, reform element has been updated to reflect Appendix A.2. The actions a State plans to undertake should be consistent with the timeline agreed to by Education Ministers in August 2024).</p> | <p>Measures to be undertaken 2025</p> <p><u>Stage 1 activities (2024)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish project governance. | Stage 1 Completed |

| Reform Element | Actions | Timing |
|--|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and deliver a series of professional development opportunities to strengthen the foundational understanding of learning domains for all early years educators. Consult with system leaders, educators and other key stakeholders to inform the design of the NT trial, with consideration to the participation needs for a diverse cohort of educators and children. <p><u>Stage 2 activities (2024-25)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a trial project management plan. Determine the approach and facilitate delivery of the small-scale trial across the NT. Develop criteria for funding, nomination and expression of interest to encourage and support service participation. Actively promote the new national learning progressions and national assessment tool to the ECEC sector. Work collaboratively with the Australian Government and its suppliers to prepare services for trial participation. Cultivate the professional learning network for the ECEC sector. <p><u>Stage 3 activities (2025)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the national applied trial of the Preschool Outcomes Measure across ECEC services in the NT. | <p>Stage 2 Semester 2, 2024 and Semester 1 2025</p> <p>Stage 3 Term 3 2025</p> |
| Reform Delivery/Implementation | | |
| State-specific data and implementation issues and strategies for how these will be overcome in the context of assessing performance under the Agreement. | <p>Measures to be undertaken 2025</p> <p>The Northern Territory will work collaboratively with the Australian Government to identify Northern Territory specific data (e.g FaFT, attendance rates), supplementary information, implementation issues and develop appropriate strategies to minimise any adverse impact on the Northern Territory's performance under the Agreement.</p> | Throughout 2025 |

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

33. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the Northern Territory for 2025.
34. The Commonwealth and State based collections or data sources and methodologies, agreed by both the Parties to this Plan, to measure progress against the performance milestones and benchmarks and targets in the Agreement, are set out in Part 5 of this Plan and Appendix B of the Agreement.
35. These data and performance specifications will be used to report Northern Territory performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan.
36. Supplementary data reports must contain the following details for each Performance Indicator (PI) where the method is not consistent with the Early Childhood Education and Care Minimal Data Set (NMDS):
 - a. PI calculation description (numerator, denominator, computation, and presentation)
 - b. numerator information (collection name and population description)
 - c. denominator information (collection name and population description)
 - d. calculation notes (including any information about how the PI is calculated)
 - e. methodology
 - f. rationale for supplementary data and reporting (including any additional information to explain how and why the specifications for the supplementary data differ from the specifications in the NMDS).
37. Families as First Teachers (FaFT) delivers quality early learning and parent support programs to children and their families in the Northern Territory. It develops place-based programs to engage families and communities and builds parents' capacity to give their children the best start in life. All children from birth to four years of age may participate in a FaFT program with a parent or carer and is enrolled at the school in which the program operates.
38. Supplementary information to provide context to NT's enrolment and attendance under the National Preschool Attendance Collection (NPAC) will be determined once 2025 performance data is available.
39. From 2024, States were required to provide baseline enrolment and attendance data in order to receive their full performance funding. Appendix A.1 and Appendix B to the Agreement set out the nationally agreed approach for data collection, provision, and reporting.
 - a. Where a State has agreed with the Commonwealth transitional arrangements for 2025, these should be detailed in Table 5 and 6.
40. Table 6 covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B in 2025.

Table 6: State specific attendance and enrolment data considerations

| Category | Required Information |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Attendance collection period | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NT will supply Term 2, 2025 preschool attendance data for the National Preschool Attendance Collection (NPAC) The standard NT government school term dates for Term 2, 2025 are from 14 April 2025 to 20 June 2025 (inclusive). Noting one government school in the NT has an approved flexible school calendar and the Term 2 dates for this school are from 7 April 2025 to 20 June 2025 (inclusive). Refer https://nt.gov.au/learning/primary-and-secondary-students/school-term-dates-in-nt Furthermore, NT non-government schools may operate with different dates to the above. |
| Data provision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National Preschool Attendance Collection (NPAC) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC) datasets will be supplied as two different data sets at the same time. In 2025, the NT will supply de-identified address lists for NECECC and NPAC to ABS for geocoding by 20 Sep 2025. ABS to return geocoded address lists to NT by 4 Oct 2025. NT to submit NECECC and NPAC data to ABS by the latest acceptable date. |
| Child and state specific YBFS | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A data quality statement will accompany the NT's submissions. In the NT, children are eligible to enrol in preschool at the beginning of the year if they turn 4 years of age on or prior to 30 June of the same year. Children in very remote schools may be enrolled in a preschool program when they turn three years of age. This is an important strategy to engage children in remote areas early in early childhood education programs. The compulsory school age for children in the NT is when children turn 6 years of age on or prior to 30 June of the same year. |
| Children who repeat YBFS preschool | In order to claim funding for children who repeat in 2025, the Northern Territory will complete and provide the preschool repeater flag in the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC) to the ABS. |

Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2025

41. Performance Reporting for 2025 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the Northern Territory as detailed at Table 5. States should provide sufficient detail in performance reporting to enable consideration of progress against actions and provide the Commonwealth with a draft prior to submission of the final report.
42. Performance reporting will be signed off by the Commonwealth Minister who will then inform the Northern Territory Minister of the outcome through an exchange of letters.

Sign off

The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by



16th June 2021

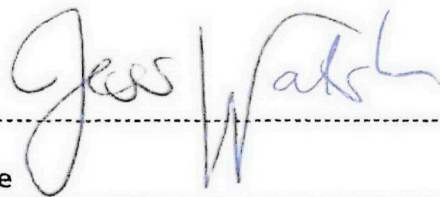
Signature

Date

The Hon Jo Hersey MLA

Minister for Early Education | Minister for Education and Training | Minister for Public Service

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



30/6/25

Signature

Date

The Hon Dr. Jess Walsh MP

Minister for Early Childhood Education | Minister for Youth

Annex 1 – Funding Follows Child Acquittals

Commonwealth Funding Follows Child (CFFC) acquittals (updated by 31 March 2026)

Requirements for Commonwealth Funding Follows Child can be found in Appendix A to the PRA.

Examples of the types of program expenditure and subsidies that meet these requirements include:

- a. For enrolled children (in each setting):
 - i. Fee relief for families
 - ii. Provision of early childhood teachers to deliver preschool programs
 - iii. Quality improvements, including teacher recruitment and retention
 - iv. Program subsidies, including needs-based funding models or additional support
- b. For funding that cannot be attributed to any children enrolled in a quality preschool program:
 - i. Communication and outreach
 - ii. Enrolment and attendance strategies, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and disadvantaged children.
 - iii. Specialised programs, without which children would have no access to preschool programs, or programs that meet their individual needs

It is not the intention of Funding Follows the Child that per-child contributions are used to support:

- c. For enrolled children (in each setting):
 - i. Programs that cannot be attributed to settings
- d. For children who are not enrolled:
 - i. Universal program subsidies and fee relief for children enrolled in preschool programs.

States should provide an account of how CFFC is allocated across settings and describe their approach or methodology to derive their calculation for the number of children in the YBFS within a particular setting. States should also provide some explanation of their method for estimating the YBFS population which is not yet participating in preschool.

To acquit funding by setting, states will need to complete Tables 1, 2 and 3 below and submit these to the Commonwealth by 31 March 2026.

In Table 1, States should set out the number of children that attended preschool in their YBFS in each setting as determined using the methodology outlined in their implementation plans. They should also include the total funding spent in each setting.

Table 1. Summary of children and Commonwealth funding spent by setting

| Setting | Number of Children attending preschool in the YBFS | Total Commonwealth funding spent in setting |
|--|--|---|
| CBDC | State calculation of [n] children in YBFS counted against setting. | \$N.Nm |
| Stand-alone | State calculation of [n] children in YBFS counted against setting. | \$N.Nm |
| School-based preschool | State calculation of [n] children in YBFS counted against setting. | \$N.Nm |
| Total Commonwealth Funding spent in all settings | | \$N.Nm |

In Table 2, states should provide a summary of expenditure by program for initiatives that were undertaken to promote enrolment and attendance in preschool in reference to clause 7 of Appendix A. Again, this should reflect the methodology described in the State's implementation plan.

Table 2. Summary of expenditure of Commonwealth funding not attributed to children in the YBFS enrolled in preschool (children in the YBFS who are not enrolled)

| Estimated number of children in the YBFS, for which funding cannot be attributed to children in in any setting | Total Commonwealth funding spent |
|--|----------------------------------|
| State calculation of [n] children | \$N.Nm |

In Table 3, States should acquit funding against programs outlined in Table 2 of Implementation Plans. Where a program runs across more than one setting, a row should be added for each setting. This table relates to clauses 6 and 7 of Appendix A which outline the purposes for which Commonwealth funding should be used.

Table 3. Commonwealth funding by program and setting

| Item | Setting | Program description | Amount (\$) |
|---------------|--------------------------|---|------------------|
| <i>Auto #</i> | <i>e.g. School-based</i> | <i>Type a description of the program.</i> | <i>\$NNN,NNN</i> |
| 1. | Choose an item. | Click or tap here to enter text | \$0 |
| | | | \$ 0.00 |

Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels is not required to be acquitted through this template. However, States may choose to acquit this funding in these tables if this cannot be separated. States may also choose to include state funding at their own discretion.

Annex 2 – Progress Update

Progress update on actions agreed in the Implementation Plan

State and Territory reporting should provide updates on work agreed in Implementation Plans (Table 5) including implementation of attendance strategies in the following tables. The below table provides a template for the submission of this progress update.

Table 1: Reporting on delivery of Planned Actions for 2025 (update by 31 March 2026)

| Element | Agreed Action | | Progress Update |
|---|---|--|--|
| Reform Element One: Implement Commonwealth Funding Follows Child (CFFC) | | | |
| How Commonwealth funding follows child at the setting level will be implemented in the State | As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2025 | | A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5. |
| Reform Element Two: Implement a new national preschool attendance measure | | | |
| The approach to measure preschool enrolment and attendance and how data will be provided to the Commonwealth, in accordance with Appendix A.1. | As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2025 | | A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5. |
| Strategies to facilitate participation in preschool by children in the year before full-time school. For strategies relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, consistent with the Closing the Gap agreement, engage those communities and/or representative bodies in the design process. | As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2025 | | A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5. |
| Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure from 2025 | | | |
| How the State will participate in the National Applied Trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2. | As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2025 | | A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5. States should also provide an update on the use of Commonwealth funds provided through Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial Implementation Support. |

| Reform Delivery/Implementation | | | |
|--|---|--|---|
| State-specific data and implementation issues and strategies for how these will be overcome in the context of assessing performance under the Agreement. | As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2025 | | A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5. |