

New South Wales: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2024

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

This Plan covers:

- the implementation activities for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (Tables 2 – 4);
- the performance report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (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 2024 to 31 December 2024.
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 third 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 State of New South Wales, represented by their Minister for Education and Early Learning.
8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the State of New South Wales 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 2024.
10. The Commonwealth Government Department of Education and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2025 in consultation with states and territories (States). The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2025.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. 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

13. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the State of New South Wales is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (financial year) of the Agreement.
14. 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 2024 are set out in **Table 1**.
15. **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.
16. 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: 2024 Commonwealth financial contribution to the State of New South Wales

Category	Amount
YBFS Financial Contribution	\$134,542,013
Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels	\$6,279,583
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (excluding POM implementation funding)	\$140,821,596
Preschool Outcomes Measure (POM) Trial implementation support	Nil ¹
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (including POM implementation funding)	\$140,821,596

17. Table 2 shows how the State of New South Wales 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.	Start Strong for Community Preschools	Supporting the delivery of 600 hours of accessible quality preschool education for all children in the year before full time school, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, vulnerable and disadvantaged children, including in remote areas	To support quality uplift in preschool education, improve affordability and increase participation in the year before school.	All children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, vulnerable and disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality early childhood education program.	\$41.0m
2.	Start Strong for Long Day Care				\$81.4m
3.	NSW public preschools				\$4.7m
4.	Start Strong Pathways	Delivering strategies and actions to support educational engagement of young children prior to preschool enrolment and to promote the importance of early	To support educational engagement of young children prior to preschool enrolment. To support pathways to preschool by	All children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, vulnerable and disadvantaged	\$7.5m

¹ As agreed with the Australian Government, NSW will claim the Commonwealth funding for Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support either in the second half of 2024 via an addendum to this Plan or in early 2025 via the 2025 Implementation Plan.

		childhood education to parents.	promoting the importance of early childhood education to parents and communities, including vulnerable and disadvantaged families who may otherwise not access it.	children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality early childhood education program.	
Additional funding to maintain 2021 funding levels					
5.	Digital Hub	Implementation of systems and processes to enable preschool attendance data collection for community and NSW public preschools	Digital readiness of the preschool sectors to report attendance data for PRA reporting	Measurement and reporting of preschool attendance that meet PRA requirements and inform future strategies to increase attendance.	\$6.3m
6.	Start Strong	Refer 1 and 2 above	Refer 1 and 2 above	Refer 1 and 2 above	
Total all programs and activities²					\$140.8m

The Commonwealth Funding Follows Child allocation provided in Table 2 is based on the estimated number of children in each setting, calculated using the following methodology:

- The estimated number of children in each setting is derived by multiplying the proportion of children in each setting in 2022 with the 2024 YBFS population projection calculated by ABS.
- The proportion of children in each setting in 2022 is based on the Preschool Education Australia 2022 enrolment data (Source: PEA 2022, Table 28) and the 2022 YBFS population projection calculated by ABS. Children enrolled across multiple settings have been included within the standalone community preschools setting.

NSW's acquittal of Commonwealth Funding Follows Child will be against the funding allocation provided in Table 2 of this Plan.

State context and funding contributions

18. Context influencing the State of New South Wales delivery of preschool and the States' investment in preschool for 2024 is covered in this section.

- As per 2022 Preschool Education Australia, of the children in the YBFS, approximately 21 per cent are enrolled in community preschools, 3.5 per cent in

² Figures may not add due to rounding. These figures are based on the recent YBFS population projections estimated by the ABS and shared with NSW in January 2024.

public preschools and 60.5 per cent in long day care. A further 10 per cent are enrolled in more than one setting and 6 per cent are not enrolled. The long day care sector represents a larger share of preschool provision in NSW than in most other jurisdictions.

- b. The profile of preschool services NSW currently funds using both Commonwealth and NSW government funding includes:
 - i. 101 government-run preschools
 - ii. Approximately 735 community and mobile preschools
 - iii. Over 3,200 long day care services
- c. When signing the PRA in 2021, the NSW Government invested additional funds through the life of the Agreement to support implementation of the reforms, including funding for programs that aim to boost participation in preschool for children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.
- d. As part of the 2023-24 State Budget, NSW has maintained significant investment in the Early Childhood Education and Care sector and cost-of-living relief for families. This includes \$5 billion over 10 years to boost workforce participation, access and affordability via the Childcare and Economic Opportunity Fund. In addition, NSW has committed \$5.7 billion over 10 years to support implementation of universal preschool. An enhanced \$1.6 billion package of preschool fee relief over four years will also support affordability and will be delivered primarily through the Start Strong program. This investment is in addition to the Commonwealth Government funding of \$560 million over 4 years to deliver the Preschool Reform Agreement's goals of increasing preschool access, attendance and quality in the year before school.
- e. The Start Strong for Community Preschools program provides funding to deliver affordable quality preschool education for 3- to 5-year-old children enrolled in eligible community and mobile preschools in NSW, including fee relief of up to \$4,220 per child. The Start Strong for Long Day Care program provides funding to deliver affordable quality preschool education to children aged 3-to 5 years old enrolled in a preschool program in long day care services in NSW, including fee relief of up to \$2,110 per child for 4- and 5-year-olds and \$500 per child for 3-year-olds. The fee relief for 3-year-olds commences from January 2024 and is in addition to the Start Strong 3-year-old preschool trial that began in January 2023 (which included program payments for 3-year-olds).
- f. Preschools run by the NSW Department of Education receive funding to provide the equivalent of 5 days a fortnight of affordable preschool for all children.
- g. As per the 2023 NSW Department of Education Community Preschool Census data, 2023 saw a moderate increase in preschool enrolments in community and mobile preschools from the year prior, with a 2.0% increase overall. This equates to more than 48,000 preschool enrolments across NSW, an increase of more than 900 enrolments from 2022. Enrolment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children increased by 5.6% in 2023 to more than 5,300 enrolments. This was the highest

levels of enrolment of children in community and mobile preschools since implementation of the Start Strong Program.

Uses of funding

19. Noting the suggested uses for funding in the Agreement (cl 6, Appendix A), it is agreed that the implementation of funding follows the child at the sector level provides flexibility for all states to direct core funding for preschool in ways that meet jurisdictional needs including to drive equity outcomes and, provide for economies of scale from sector wide actions.

Data Sharing

20. The Commonwealth holds Child Care Subsidy (CCS) data which underpins the delivery of reforms, including the development, delivery and evaluation of policy initiatives to drive quality and participation outcomes in early childhood education in NSW. The Commonwealth and NSW have agreed to facilitate sharing of this data in accordance with appropriate legislation such as data privacy and Family Assistance Law and will work together to examine opportunities to establish consistent ongoing data sharing in 2024.

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

21. 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 State of New South Wales - Statement of Allocations

Implementation Project (details)	Commonwealth funding	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Building-up the attendance evidence base	\$1M	Commissioned research and behaviour analytics on attendance strategies	Report with actionable recommendations on effective strategies to improve attendance Program evaluation	December 2023 (Complete) December 2025
Boosting Preschool Attendance (Grants program)	\$5M	Delivered as grants/additional loading to extend preschool programs. Funding available to community preschools, long day cares and public preschools delivering 600-hour preschool programs. Services will be funded to deliver evidence-based attendance boosting initiatives, including those that improve community and family outreach, increase access to preschool, enhance cultural safety and inclusiveness of ECEC services and support educators working with children who have additional needs.	Evidence-based strategies developed. Grants provided to services to deliver attendance programs. Data collected to support evaluation of impact of attendance strategies. Learnings from programs assessed, to inform future attendance strategies.	Over 2024 and 2025 Over 2024 and 2025 Over 2024 and 2025 Interim report by January 2025 and Final report by December 2025 ³

³ While the project remains the same as the one indicated in 2022 and 2023 Implementation Plans, project delays have pushed the timelines by an additional year. NSW intends to carry over the \$6M one-off project implementation funding previously provided for this purpose.

		Services may also be assisted to collect data and build a baseline.		
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22. 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

23. 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.
24. Commonwealth funding is being provided on the following basis:
- For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating the new national tool as their 'primary tool' – up to \$3.4 million.
 - 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.
 - For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating an existing tool as their 'primary tool' – up to \$1 million.
25. Where a State is not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in its 2024 Implementation Plan, an option to provide these details later to access the funding will be available. Details can be outlined in either an Addendum to the 2024 Implementation Plan, or in 2025 Implementation Plans, noting both options will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.
26. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding, with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.
27. When completing Table 4 below, States are requested to also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions. This reflects the fact that this is a shared reform agenda, and is required by Commonwealth Central Agencies for payments to be made.
- Further detail about cost sharing arrangements is at *PRA Appendix A.2 Preschool Outcome Measure Trial*, clause 12.

Table 4: Overview of Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support for State of New South Wales - Statement of Allocations

Activities (details)	Commonwealth funding	State contribution	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Refer Table 5	To be decided	To be decided	Refer Table 5	Refer Table 5	Refer Table 5

28. As agreed with the Australian Government, NSW will claim the Commonwealth funding for Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support either in the second half of 2024 via an addendum to this Plan or in early 2025 via the 2025 Implementation Plan.

Risk Management

29. The State of New South Wales 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

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

Table 5: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 for the State of New South Wales

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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the 2024 Start Strong Program for Long Day Care and Community Preschools to support services to deliver quality affordable preschool education to children in the YBFS. Funding is distributed to eligible services, with the aim of incentivising preschool enrolment of 600 hours per year. Funding conditions and priority of access guidelines are also aimed to encourage enrolment of children from low-income families, children with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background and children with disability or additional needs. The 2024 program guidelines are detailed on the NSW Department of Education website. https://education.nsw.gov.au/early-childhood-education/operating-an-early-childhood-education-service/grants-and-funded-programs/start-strong-funding Continue to deliver funding to NSW public preschools, targeted towards supporting affordable and quality preschool education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, vulnerable, and disadvantaged children. Continue to deliver the Start Strong Pathways program that helps provide educational supports for young children prior to preschool enrolment and promotes the importance of early childhood education to parents. 	Throughout 2024
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.	<p>Measures to be undertaken in 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2024, NSW will submit the current attendance data collected over the 2-week August Annual Preschool Census to ABS in the 2024 NPAC template.⁴ NSW will extrapolate the 2-weeks of attendance data captured in August 2024 from the Annual Preschool Census to entire year to 	2024

⁴ In 2024, NSW will be implementing agreed transitional arrangements instead of the attendance measure in accordance with Appendix A.1

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	calculate the attendance performance of community, mobile and public preschools. NSW will share these calculations with Australian Government. Attendance performance of community, mobile and NSW Public preschools will be analysed along with Centre Based Day Care (CBDC) Term 2 2024 attendance performance (extrapolated to entire year) to set 2025 targets.	
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>Measures to be undertaken in 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start Strong equity loadings for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and other priority cohorts to facilitate preschool participation and achieve equitable outcomes for these children. • 'Ningannah No More' Aboriginal languages program delivery – As part of the NSW Government's First Steps Strategy, the 'Ningannah No More' program has been redesigned to support the delivery of the Strategy's goals, including that of increasing the number of Aboriginal children enrolled in the year before school to 95% by 2025. • Aboriginal Families as Teachers (AFaT) – The AFaT program has been expanded under the First Steps Strategy to encourage services to work side by side with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to promote the importance of early childhood education within families and communities, including participation in a quality preschool program for 600 hours in the year before school. 	Throughout 2024
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national 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 July 2023).	<p>Measures to be undertaken in 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW will undertake small scale testing of select formative assessment tool(s) to ensure NSW is well placed to meet the national requirements in 2025. • NSW undertakes to continue to work collaboratively with the Australian Government to support the development of the national learning progressions and the national tool. 	Throughout 2024
Reform Delivery/Implementation		

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
<p>State-specific data and implementation issues and strategies for how these will be overcome in the context of assessing performance under the Agreement.</p>	<p>Measures to be undertaken in 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout 2024 NSW will be working on the development of a new digital system to collect detailed attendance data required for the PRA. This represents a significant change journey for NSW community and school-based preschools that have low digital maturity. NSW will implement the new IT system and the new attendance data collection in a phased manner over 2024 to 2026 to ensure the transition is not disruptive for NSW services and it doesn't impose excessive workload burden on them. • Digital readiness planning to uplift digital capability of paper-based services. • The comparability of attendance data between 2024 and 2025 will be considered in setting attendance targets and assessment of performance under the PRA. This will also require attendance data to be re-baselined in 2025. 	<p>Throughout 2024</p>

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

32. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the State of New South Wales for 2024.
33. 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.
34. These data and performance specifications will be used to report State of New South Wales performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan.
35. 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).
36. Clarification is provided below on how Definitions, (page of the Agreement refers) are applied in NSW and have been agreed between NSW and the Commonwealth in the case of 'Disadvantaged children' and 'Preschool program'
 - a. Noting the definition of preschool program in the Agreement, NSW and the Commonwealth confirm that:
 - i. Preschool program, including associated elements such as "delivery" and "early childhood teacher", will be interpreted in accordance with the National Quality Framework and where there is any inconsistency the NQF will be preferred.
 - ii. The Children (Education and Care Services) National Law allows the regulatory authority to approve waivers from certain elements and requirements of the National Quality Standard and Education and Care Services National Regulations.
 - b. Noting the definition of disadvantage in the Agreement, it is agreed that the SEIFA score is to be applied based on the address of the child.
37. NSW and the Commonwealth acknowledge that there are limited data sets for accurate child-level measures of disadvantage and both parties are committed to working together to improve this to support shared policy aims for universal preschool participation.

38. In 2024, States are 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 2024, these should be detailed in Table 5.

39. Table 6 covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B in 2024.

Table 6: State specific attendance and enrolment data considerations

Category	Required Information	
Attendance collection period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW will provide the attendance data collected over the August 2 week census period 29 July 2024 to 9 August 2024 . The term 2 start and end date are Monday 29 April 2024 and Friday 5 July 2024 respectively. 	
Data provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW will submit its attendance collection and enrolment collection at the same time. The enrolment data will be provided in the NECECC template, and the August attendance data will be provided in the NPAC template. Following are the key dates for NSW data provision: 	
	7 Oct to 18 Oct	NSW to supply de-identified address lists to ABS for geocoding .
	14 Oct to 25 Oct	ABS returns geocoded address lists to NSW.
	21 Oct to 1 Nov	NSW to submit NECECC and NPAC templates simultaneously. Please note that the NPAC data will contain attendance data from the August period, as per the transitional arrangements agreed between NSW and the AG.
	18 Nov to 29 Nov	Cut-off for NSW data edits or re-supply to ABS (including data quality statements).
Child and state specific YBFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In NSW, a child becomes eligible for YBFS preschool if they turn 4 on or before 31st July. The compulsory school starting age in NSW is 6. 	
Children who repeat YBFS preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSW intends to claim funding for children who have a second year in a YBFS preschool program ('repeaters') in 2024. NSW will provide information on state funded repeaters through the new 'state funded repeater' indicator in its August 2024 NECECC census submission for community and mobile preschools to ABS. NSW expects that the number of repeaters identified through this indicator will far exceed the 6% cap under the PRA. 	

Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2024


40. Performance Reporting for 2024 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the State of New South Wales 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.

41. Performance reporting will be signed off by the Commonwealth Minister who will then inform the State of New South Wales 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 State of New South Wales by



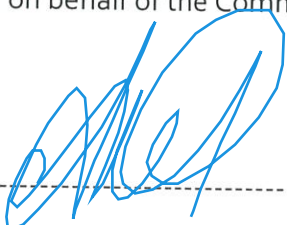
21 May 2024

SignatureDate

The Hon Prue Car MP

Deputy Premier of NSW | Minister for Education and Early Learning

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



17/6/24

SignatureDate

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly 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 2025)

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 2025.

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 2024 (update by 31 March 2025)

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 2024	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 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure from 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.

Victoria: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2024

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

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- the performance report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (Annex 1 and 2).

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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 third 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 State of Victoria, represented by their Minister for Education.
8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the State of Victoria 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 2024.
10. The Commonwealth Government Department of Education and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2025 in consultation with states and territories (States). The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2025.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. 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

13. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the State of Victoria is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (financial year) of the Agreement.
14. 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 2024 are set out in **Table 1**.
15. **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.
16. 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: 2024 Commonwealth financial contribution to the State of Victoria

Category	Amount ¹
YBFS Financial Contribution	\$109,546,509
Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels	\$18,999,977
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (excluding implementation funding)	\$128,546,486
Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial implementation support	Nil in 23-24 (\$1 million* to be provided over 2024-25 and 2025-26)
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (including implementation funding)	\$128,546,486 (with Implementation funding to be confirmed over 2024-25 and 2025-26)

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 2024.

* Based on Victoria's decision to participate in the 2025 applied trial by nominating an existing tool as their 'primary tool'.

17. **Table 2** shows how the State of Victoria 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.	Provision of 15 hours per week of four-year-old kindergarten	Quality, affordable preschool programs	To facilitate children’s early learning and development	All children have access to, and are able to participate in, an affordable, quality early childhood education program	\$109,546,509
2.	Strategies to facilitate participation in preschool by children in the YBFS	Quality, affordable preschool programs	To facilitate children’s early learning and development	All children have access to, and are able to participate in, an affordable, quality early childhood education program	
Additional funding to maintain 2021 funding levels (delete if not required)					
3.	Provision of 15 hours per week of four-year-old kindergarten	Quality, affordable preschool programs	To facilitate children’s early learning and development	All children have access to, and are able to participate in, an affordable, quality early childhood education program	\$18,999,977
Total all programs and activities					

Four-Year-old Kindergarten (preschool for children in the year before school) is delivered by a diverse range of service providers in Victoria, including government and non-government providers, private for-profit providers, and community service organisations. The Victorian

Government funds these services, irrespective of setting to contribute to the cost of delivering a funded kindergarten program. Under Victorian Government kindergarten funding guidelines, children can only be enrolled in one Victorian funded kindergarten place at any one time.

Commonwealth Funding Follows Child will be calculated based on the per child funding amount and the number of Victorian Government funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten enrolments. The data source to allocate and acquit Commonwealth Funding Follows Child, will be the Kindergarten Information Management System, which is Victoria's data system for calculating kindergarten funding. This will provide data for the 2024 calendar year.

State context and funding contributions

18. The Victorian Government has an ongoing commitment to strengthening and expanding early childhood education. This work commenced with the release of the *Education State Early Childhood Reform Plan* in 2017; and the delivery of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten across the state.
19. In June 2022, the Victorian Government committed an additional \$9 billion to expand early childhood education programs across the state to continue the Best Start, Best Life reform. This means that:
 - a. From 2023, Free Kinder has been available for all Victorian three and four year old children at participating services in both standalone (sessional) services and long day care (childcare) settings – a saving for families of up to \$2,563 per child in 2024.
 - b. Four-Year-Old Kindergarten will transition to 'Pre-Prep' – increasing to a universal 30-hour a week program of play-based learning for every four-year-old child in Victoria.
 - c. 50 Victorian government-owned and affordable childcare centres will be established. These centres will be built in areas that have unmet demand and will make it easier for families to access childcare. The first of the centres will be available in 2025.
20. Victorian 2024 funding rates for all services are available on the Victorian Department of Education website at: <https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-rates>
21. As a condition of opting into Free Kinder, services providing a sessional program must offer all families a free 15-hour per week program for four-year-old enrolments and a free kindergarten program of between 5 and 15 hours for three-year-old enrolments. Where longer program hours are offered these additional hours must be optional. Participating sessional kindergarten services can charge parents for optional program hours over and above the 15 funded hours per week (600 hours per year) and / or 'wrap around' care.
22. Long day care service providers that opt into Free Kinder are required to directly offset the full \$2,050 Free Kinder payment from the fees of parents with children receiving their funded kindergarten program at the centre. Long day care services must use any surplus funding (i.e., for the minority of cases where parents are charged less than \$2,050 in out-of-pocket fees for the year) on improvement efforts for the funded kindergarten program, such as improving quality and supporting engagement.

23. Service providers that do not opt into Free Kinder may charge families fees to help meet the cost of running kindergarten programs. Fees are set by individual services and can vary depending on service type, how many hours a child attends, group size and extra costs such as excursions.
24. In developing this Implementation Plan consideration has been given to the Victorian context. Key factors listed below:
- a. the historic community ownership of kindergartens
 - b. the maturity of the kindergarten system which is operating at close to full capacity (spaces and teachers) in some areas such as growth corridors and inner metropolitan suburbs
 - c. the extent to which the full range of early years services (kindergarten for both 3- and 4-year-olds, playgroups etc.) are embedded in and valued by local communities
 - d. anticipated continuation of the high participation rate in Victorian kindergarten programs
 - e. the ongoing commitment of the National Quality Framework
 - f. ongoing population growth in parts of Victoria
 - g. policy and legislation that may impact on access and participation (e.g. Victoria's No Jab No Play, the Australian Government's No Jab No Pay and the changes to the Child Care Subsidy)
 - h. the ambitious expansion of the *Best Start, Best Life* reform.
25. Victoria is committed to implementing a full attendance data collection system across our sessional preschool sector – which is the largest and most diverse such sector in Australia. This is a large scale, complex project that requires creation of new system and change management strategies for services and our workforce.
26. For performance arrangements in 2024, Victoria will work in good faith with the Commonwealth Government to develop the best possible picture about attendance levels, noting Victoria's attendance system will not be in place. This is consistent with the principles of providing transparent and fulsome data, appropriate to each state's context. This will be achieved using Child Care Subsidy data for long day care services and an interim data collection for a sample of sessional services that collect attendance data electronically.
27. In 2025, Victoria will provide data from its attendance data collection system. As a significant change to service-level practice and data collection for the sector, including for small parent committee-run and other community-based services, there will be some variability in the data over time as the engagement with the attendance collection system matures. Data from 2025 and beyond will also not be directly comparable with 2024 data given the interim collection arrangements for 2024.
28. Given the potential difficulty in comparing data between 2024 and 2025 attendance, this will be taken into consideration when assessing Victoria's performance against attendance

targets in 2025. Further, growth trajectories across these years may not be able to be meaningfully tracked and as such, bilateral attendance growth targets for Victoria for 2025 should take this into account. Victoria acknowledges the Commonwealth Government has committed to the principle that targets be non-punitive in nature, achievable, cognisant of baseline data and State's circumstances.

29. In Victoria, the Early Years Assessment and Learning Tool remains the approved early learning assessment tool and its use in kindergarten services will continue to be voluntary.
30. The Victorian Government undertakes a range of activities to help meet the objectives of maintaining universal access to affordable, quality preschool programs for all children, improving participation in preschool programs, and maximising the benefit of the preschool year by improving outcomes for children. These actions are outlined in Table 4.

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

31. 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 State of Victoria - Statement of Allocations ¹

Implementation Project (details)	Commonwealth funding	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Attendance data collection	\$5,750,000 (provided in 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a new state-based system to collect attendance data from sessional services e.g. IT system development Develop change management approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> System development complete Change management approach complete 	December 2024

32. 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

33. 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*

¹ Updated for 2024 Implementation Plan

Measure Trial. This can include alignment activities or trial preparatory activities undertaken in 2024.

34. 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.

35. Where a State is not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in its 2024 Implementation Plan, an option to provide these details later to access the funding will be available. Details can be outlined in either an Addendum to the 2024 Implementation Plan, or in 2025 Implementation Plans, noting both options will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.

36. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding, with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.

37. When completing Table 4 below, States are requested to also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions.

- a. Further detail about cost sharing arrangements is at *PRA Appendix A.2 – Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial*, clause12.

Table 4: Overview of Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support for State of Victoria - Statement of Allocations

Activities (details)	Commonwealth funding	State contribution	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Assess the alignment of the Early Years Assessment and Learning Tool and its reporting capabilities with the national learning progressions in line with the approved criteria	\$1 million (to be provided over 2024-25 and 2025-26)	Victoria had made significant investment in the development validation and trial of the Early Years Assessment and Learning tool. It continues to make significant investment in the rollout the Tool.	Participating in the agreed process at section 7.2 of Appendix A2 to demonstrate the alignment of the EYALT with the agreed learning progressions.	Assessment provided to Commonwealth that advises on alignment in accordance with Ministerially approved criteria	From October 2024, subject to Ministerial approval of national learning progressions and alignment criteria
(if required) Adjust the EYALT to ensure		TBC	Outlining plans for the development or	TBC	From early 2025, subject to

alignment with the national learning progressions in line with approved criteria			modification of the tool, if required.		Ministerial approval of national learning progressions and alignment criteria
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38. 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 2024 Implementation Plan, and consistent with clause 12.7 of Appendix A.2 .

Risk Management

39. The State of Victoria 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

40. As part of the Agreement, the State of Victoria and the Commonwealth agree to work collaboratively to implement reforms outlined in the Additional terms in the Agreement.
41. The actions that the State of Victoria will undertake to meet these commitments are detailed in **Table 4**.

Table 5: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 for the State of Victoria

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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria has a strong foundation for ensuring Commonwealth funding is allocated to settings in which children attend preschool, through its service agreement monitoring. • The eligibility criteria for services to receive Victorian Government kindergarten funding is outlined in Victoria's Kindergarten Funding Guide (https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-guide) • Victorian 2024 funding rates are available on the Victorian Department of Education website at: https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-rates • The Victorian Government processes monthly payments to funded kindergarten services based on child level enrolment data entered into the Kindergarten Information Management System. • Victoria is continually reviewing how to strengthen and enhance current contract management arrangements and processes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At the end of 2024, Commonwealth Funding Follows Child will be acquitted using information collected by the Victorian Department of Education on funded kindergarten enrolments. 	Throughout 2024
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.	<p>Measures to be undertaken in 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria will collect kindergarten attendance data from selected sessional kindergarten providers to form part of the National Preschool Attendance Collection (NPAC). The 2024 sample is expected to comprise approximately 8 service providers with approximately 10,000 enrolments. 	<p>To meet 2024 data submission deadlines (as provided by the ABS)</p> <p>Throughout 2024 quarterly status updates</p>

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data will need to be re-baselined in 2025 as the first year of full data collection. • Throughout 2024, Victoria will undertake continued development of a new state-based system to collect attendance data from all sessional services from 2025. 	on implementation of attendance system
<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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department works closely with local government, kindergarten providers and other stakeholders to support attendance through initiatives such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Free Kinder – supports access to two years of high-quality kindergarten programs for all Victorian children by making this free. Free Kinder is available for 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten programs at participating services. ○ Early Start Kindergarten – provides targeted funding for vulnerable or Aboriginal children to attend a free kindergarten program two years before school. This creates a pathway for children who are at risk of not engaging to enrol in YBFS preschool programs in the following year. ○ Access to Early Learning program – provides additional support for children experiencing vulnerability and/or disadvantage to address complex barriers to participation in early childhood education and care. ○ Early Childhood LOOKOUT – supports children in out-of-home care to attend kindergarten and builds the capacity of the sector to identify and engage children in out-of-home care in kindergarten and support vulnerable children at risk of entering out-of-home care. ○ Pre-Purchased Places – targeted services receive funding to reserve places for vulnerable children or disadvantaged children who enrol late. 	Throughout 2024

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School Readiness Funding – supports kindergartens to reduce the impact of educational disadvantage. Services can use this needs-based funding to access high-quality programs and supports that benefit children in the priority areas of communication (language development), wellbeing (social and emotional), and access and inclusion. ○ Kindergarten Inclusion Support Program – supports children with a disability, high support needs, and/or complex medical needs. ○ Specialist support to address barriers to participation experienced by children and families from CALD and refugee backgrounds, including through outreach workers employed by local government. ○ Kindergarten Central Registration and Enrolment Schemes (CRES) – provides a single point of contact for families to apply for multiple kindergarten services in their area, to help secure a place that best suits their needs. CRES is underpinned by six principles that promote consistent, inclusive and equitable access to kindergarten places, and it supports the identification and engagement of families who may need more support to register and enrol. ○ Department of Education Early Childhood Improvement Branch staff – responsibilities include conducting outreach work with kindergarten service providers and local governments to support access to, and participation in, preschool programs. <p>Significant investment to grow workforce and infrastructure capacity as part of the Best Start Best Life Reforms.</p>	
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	Measures to be undertaken 2024, subject to Ministerial approval of national learning progressions and alignment criteria	Through out 2024 and early 2025 (if

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
(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 July 2023).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the underlying learning progressions of EYALT against the national learning progressions in accordance with the alignment criteria approved by Ministers 2. (if appropriate/required) Adjust to the EYALT to ensure alignment with national learning progressions required to meet approval standards/criteria 	required) (contingent on national work to progress national learning progressions and alignment criteria)
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.	Measures to be undertaken 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria will continue to refine preschool data with the Australian Bureau of Statistics to ensure it most accurately reflects service delivery and the YBFS population in Victoria 	Through out 2024

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

42. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the State of Victoria for 2024.
43. 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.
44. These data and performance specifications will be used to report State of Victoria performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan.
45. 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).
46. 'Preschool program' is defined as per the Agreement (Definitions, p.15 of the Agreement - Preschool program (alternatives to agreed definition)), and will include:
 - a. an educational program delivered in accordance with the Early Years Learning Framework (or equivalent) and the NOF delivered by an early childhood teacher; and
 - b. an educational program the Victorian Department of Education approves to be delivered by a diploma qualified educator or primary teacher who is working towards an early childhood teaching qualification for a short-term, due to the absence of a qualified early childhood teacher.
47. In 2024, States are 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 2024, these should be detailed in Table 5.
48. Table 6 covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B in 2024.

Table 6: State specific attendance and enrolment data considerations

Category	Required Information
Attendance collection period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victoria and the Commonwealth have agreed to transitional arrangements for 2024 for the collection of Term 2 attendance data (15 April 2024 to 28 June 2024).
Data provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Under the transitional arrangements for 2024, Victoria will provide attendance and enrolment data in 2 separate datasets. Both datasets will be provided in line with the following key dates for 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 – 20 Sep: Supply addresses to ABS for geocoding 16 Sep – 4 Oct: ABS return geocoded addresses 23 Sep – 11 Oct: Submit data to ABS 4 – 15 Nov: Resupply data (including data quality statements) to ABS
Child and state specific YBFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Victoria, children become eligible for YBFS preschool in 2024 if they turn four by 30 April 2024, which follows the same rules as previous years.
Children who repeat YBFS preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victoria intends to claim funding for children who have an approved second year in a YBFS preschool program. In Victoria, where a child is observed to display delays in key outcome areas of learning and development, a second year of funded Four-Year-Old Kindergarten may be considered in exceptional circumstances. (For further information refer to Victoria's Kindergarten Funding Guide at https://www.vic.gov.au/kindergarten-funding-guide). Children receiving a second year of funded YBFS preschool are flagged in Victoria's annual data submission to the ABS.

Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2024

49. Performance Reporting for 2024 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the State of Victoria as detailed at Table 4. 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.
50. Performance reporting will be signed off by the Commonwealth Minister who will then inform the State of Victoria 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 State of Victoria by



27.5.24

Signature**Date**

[Lizzie Blandthorn]

[Minister for Children]

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



14/6/24

Signature**Date**

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly 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 2025)

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 2025.

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.

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 2024 (update by 31 March 2025)

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 2024	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 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure from 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.

Queensland: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2024

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

This Plan covers:

- the implementation activities for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (Tables 2 – 4);
- the performance report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (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 2024 to 31 December 2024.
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 third 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 State of Queensland, represented by their Minister for Education.
8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the State of Queensland 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 2024.
10. The Commonwealth Government Department of Education and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2025 in consultation with states and territories (States). The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2025.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. 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

13. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the State of Queensland is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (financial year) of the Agreement.
14. 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 2024 are set out in **Table 1**.
15. **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.
16. 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: 2024 Commonwealth financial contribution to the State of Queensland

Category	Amount ¹
YBFS Financial Contribution	\$89,775,567
Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels	\$nil
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (<i>excluding implementation funding</i>)	\$89,775,567
Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial implementation support	\$1,000,000 *
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (<i>including implementation funding</i>)	\$90,775,567

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 2024.

* Queensland has elected to receive an initial payment of \$1 million, and may be eligible for further funding at a later date, depending on which tool they elect to use to participate in the trial with (as per clause 22 below) which could include participation as defined in cl 7.1.3 and 7.2 of the PRA Appendix A.2. Detailed expenditure of this money to support trial participation will be agreed in writing between parties.

17. Table 2 shows how the State of Queensland 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.	Contribute to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland Kindergarten Funding subsidies for Centre Based Day Care (CBDC) and Stand-alone Kindergarten; and State delivered kindergarten & eKindy 	Enable fee free early childhood teacher-led kindergarten programs for 15 hours per week, 40 weeks per year, across a range of settings and types.	To facilitate children's early learning and development and transition to school, by maintaining universal access to, and improving participation in, fee free, quality early childhood education programs for all children.	All children, including children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage, have access to, and can participate in, fee free quality early childhood education programs, regardless of whether programs are delivered through schools (non-government and government), stand-alone kindergartens or CBDC.	\$83,243,100
2.	Contribute to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications/Marketing of kindergarten Promote transition from home to Kindy to school Deadly Kindies program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families Playgroups/KindyLinQ eKindy pods Workforce Strategy & Action Plan – kindergarten initiatives 	Raising awareness of the importance and value of participating in a quality kindergarten program. Attracting and retaining qualified early childhood teachers and educators to deliver kindergarten, supported study scholarships, capability building programs.	Engage with families less likely or unable to engage with kindergarten programs. Improve access to early childhood teachers and educators for services to deliver kindergarten programs.	Targeted cohorts benefit from strategies, programs and/or actions that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilitate kindergarten transitions, enrolment and attendance; and/or promote the value of early childhood education programs, including kindergarten; and/or lift the quality of early childhood education programs and services, including workforce; and/or 	\$6,532,467

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland Children's Hospital School in-patient kindergarten sessions 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> improve children's outcomes; and/or positively contribute towards achieving the objectives and performance \ reporting obligations under the Preschool Reform Agreement 2022 - 2025' 	
Total all programs and activities					\$89,775,567

The Queensland Kindergarten Funding (QKF) program provides subsidies to approved kindergarten providers, that comply with the Kindergarten Essentials <https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/fundingAndSupport/Documents/kindy-funding-guidelines.pdf>.

For services that agree to opt-in to the Queensland Government's free kindergarten initiative, the funding is to fully offset the cost to deliver approved kindergarten programs to eligible-age children by a qualified early childhood teacher for 600 hours per annum. Services that are eligible are predominantly stand-alone kindergartens and CBDC services. Eligible services claim funding for each child on a quarterly basis.

The Department of Education directly funds and delivers the following free kindergarten programs:

- State Delivered Kindergarten – in state schools located at least 40 kilometres by road from the nearest approved kindergarten, in a selected, discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community or other selected communities where there are barriers to accessing kindergarten;
- eKindy – through the Brisbane School of Distance Education; and
- Queensland Children's Hospital School.

The estimate of the allocation of Commonwealth funding is based on enrolments of children in approved kindergarten services receiving kindergarten subsidies in 2023 (annual early childhood census). Acquittal of actual Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child expenditure will be determined from actual enrolment claims made by approved kindergarten providers during 2024 through the Department's QGrants system and from departmental records for enrolments in state delivered programs.

State context and funding contributions

18. Context influencing the State of Queensland delivery of preschool and the States' investment in preschool for 2024 is covered in this section.

- a. Queensland has made substantial progress towards universal access to kindergarten, improving from the lowest baseline nationally of 29 per cent in 2008 to exceeding its overall participation targets since 2013.
- b. From 2024, the Queensland Government has introduced free kindergarten as part of a \$645 million investment over four years. The Government is committed to ensuring that all eligible-age children access a kindergarten program delivered by an early childhood teacher in the year before full-time school.
- c. Free kindergarten is available where a service agrees to opt-in and meet the funding criteria. Free kindergarten applies to a program delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher for 15 hours per week and 40 weeks a year. Families accessing kindergarten in Australian Childcare Subsidy eligible services will receive free kindergarten for the 600 hours - annual program and may need to pay for hours of care outside the kindergarten program.

- d. In addition to free kindergarten the Department of Education also provides funding to improve inclusiveness of services, including children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and children from different cultures and backgrounds.
- e. Inclusion Ready subsidies are provided to all approved kindergarten providers (\$157 per eligible enrolled child in CBDC services and \$166 per child in sessional kindergartens) to invest in improvements in inclusive practices and staff capability. Sessional kindergartens also can apply for funding to support the participation of children with a suspected diagnosis or with a diagnosis of a disability through the Kindergarten Inclusion Support Scheme.
- f. A Kindergarten Inclusion Service is funded to provide access for eligible children with additional needs and improves the inclusiveness of kindergarten programs. The service is available to all funded services delivering an approved kindergarten program. Services can access universal and targeted support and advice to build educator capability and enhance the access, inclusion and outcomes of eligible children with additional needs, through Autism Queensland Limited; Down Syndrome Queensland; Hear and Say Limited; and SPELD Qld Inc.
- g. The Queensland Government provides Kindy Uplift program funding to all approved services to improve educational outcomes for children. Funding is allocated on a needs basis taking into account community characteristics that reflect educational disadvantage.
- h. Kindergarten programs are predominantly provided by the non-government sector through 1706 CBDC services and 458 sessional kindergarten services.
- i. The Queensland Government delivers kindergarten programs only in circumstances where the market cannot viably deliver these. In 2024, 137 Kindergarten programs (State Delivered Kindergarten) will be delivered in 119 remote state schools or their campuses, including 31 programs in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote communities.
- j. A distance education program (eKindy) is offered for isolated children that cannot easily access a centre-based program through the Brisbane School of Distance Education. Children receiving medical treatment at the Queensland Children's Hospital can also access kindergarten sessions through the Hospital School.
- k. Programs delivered directly by the Department of Education, such as State Delivered Kindergarten or eKindy, are offered at no cost to families. State Delivered Kindergarten programs ensure all children have access to a kindergarten program in the year before school, no matter where they live.
- l. The Queensland Government provides subsidies to approved kindergarten providers that meet eligibility criteria – for CBDC services-at <https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/grants-and-funding/kindergarten-funding/funding-essentials-for-long-day-care-providers> and for sessional kindergarten services at <https://earlychildhood.qld.gov.au/grants-and-funding/kindergarten-funding/funding-essentials-for-sessional-kindergartens>

- m. The Queensland Kindergarten Funding program provides a service that opts into free kindergarten a base per child subsidy. The subsidy for sessional kindergartens not eligible for Australian Government Child Care Subsidy (CCS) is \$4,024.50 per child and \$1,919.50 per child for CBDC services eligible for CCS. The base subsidy is to be used to cover the cost of delivering the program. A minimum of 80% of the base subsidy for CBDC must be used to improve entitlements for the ECT and up to two diploma or higher qualified educators delivering the kindergarten program.
- n. A Gap Fee Subsidy is provided for a service that opts in to free kindergarten to cover the fee component for a 15 hour per week, 40 week per year kindergarten program. The Gap Fee Subsidy for CBDC is paid after Child Care Subsidy.
- o. Service location funding is provided to over 300 sessional kindergartens and CBDC services located in outer regional, remote and very remote areas (using Australian Bureau of Statistics remoteness measure) to assist with attraction and retention of early childhood teachers. Sessional kindergartens in these areas also receive funding to assist with financial viability, based on the same subsidy rates. The subsidies are \$403 per child in outer regional; \$1,051 per child in remote and \$1,516 per child in very remote areas. For CBDC the subsidies are \$383 per child in outer regional; \$997 per child in remote and \$1,438 per child in very remote areas. A minimum funding guarantee of 22 funded places is available where total preschool enrolments are less than 22.
- p. The Queensland Government is investing \$120 million over four years to address challenges with the early childhood workforce through an Early Childhood Workforce Strategy (2023-2027) and Action Plan. The plan complements the National Workforce Strategy and will invest in programs to improve career recognition, wages and conditions, attraction and retention, qualification pathways, leadership and capability improvement.
- q. Recognising that not all children enrol in a kindergarten program, the Government invests in a range of initiatives to promote participation in kindergarten particularly by vulnerable and disadvantaged and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. Programs include:
 - i. Engagement of Kindy Advisors to support application of Kindy uplift funding.
 - ii. Kindy media and marketing campaign over a five year period (2023-2027).
 - iii. Deadly Kindies program that promotes kindergarten participation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and provides intensive support for families to enrol in kindergarten.
 - iv. Early Years Places that work with vulnerable families and promote the benefits of enrolling in kindergarten including operating playgroups.
 - v. KindyLinQ, which is a targeted teacher-led supported playgroup offered at schools in identified vulnerable areas aiming to connect families to the early childhood sector and promote enrolment in kindergarten.

- vi. Kindergarten sessions offered to children undergoing long-term medical treatment at the Queensland Children's Hospital School.
- vii. eKindy pods in selected locations, providing children with the opportunity to socialise with their peers.
- viii. Transition support officers allocated in regions to work with communities to facilitate transition from home to kindergarten to school.
- r. Queensland is expected to continue the longer-term trend towards strong population growth, underpinned by interstate and overseas migration. This coupled with the state's large size and decentralised population adds to the cost and challenge of achieving and maintaining universal access to kindergarten.
- s. There are challenges in the planning, implementation and measurement of success of initiatives targeting kindergarten participation rates. Difficulty in obtaining accurate population estimates and projections of Indigenous families is acknowledged by the Australian Bureau of Statistics where figures are based on self-identification of Indigeneity by a population.

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

19. 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 State of Queensland - Statement of Allocations (as per 2022 Implementation Plan)

Implementation Project (details)	Commonwealth funding	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Sector systems upgrades and support	\$2.5 million	Support Queensland community kindergartens to modify or introduce systems to manage kindergarten enrolment and attendance data, to align with arrangements under the PRA.	Community kindergartens transition to electronic data management systems Provision of high quality and robust enrolment and attendance data by CBDC and sessional kindergarten services	2022-2024

Queensland Government systems upgrades	\$3 million	Upgrades to Queensland's QGrants management system to satisfy new national data collection and reporting requirements	Collection of improved enrolment and attendance data	2022 – 2024
Data collection management	\$0.5 million	Support development and implementation of new national data reporting systems	Transition to new national data collection platform, once agreed and developed	2022 – 2025

20. 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

21. 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.

22. 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.

23. Where a State is not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in this 2024 Implementation Plan, an option to provide these details later to access the funding is available. Details can be outlined in either an Addendum to this 2024 Implementation Plan, or in 2025 Implementation Plans, noting both options will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.

24. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding (refer Table 4 of this Implementation Plan), with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.

25. When completing Table 4 below, States are requested to also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions.

26. Table 4: Overview of Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support for State of [State] - Statement of Allocations

Activities (details)	Commonwealth funding	State contribution	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
	\$1 million *	State to insert details, including in-kind contributions.			
Project Management			Activities associated with demonstrating alignment of Queensland's QKPLT	Responding to requests for information and / or evidence Validity of QKPLT is demonstrated	2024/2025
Consultation		Small scale remote community-based consultation incorporating State Delivered Kindergarten and local service providers and community-controlled organisations. Consultation with Queensland Curriculum and assessment authority – curriculum alignment.	Engage coordinators to undertake consultation. Consultation with key First Nations and other culturally and linguistically diverse stakeholders (including in rural and remote parts of Queensland), to ensure a culturally responsive tool through validation and alignment activities. This will include costs associated with (but not limited to), venue hire, travel, accommodation, and backfill arrangements.	Engagement of coordinators Consultation sessions with ATSICCOEs, teachers and educators	2024 2024
Advisory Sessions			State-wide sessions with key sector stakeholders (including in rural and remote parts of Queensland), such as organisations, teachers and educators to undertake validation and alignment activities. This will include costs associated with (but not limited to), venue hire, travel, accommodation, and backfill arrangements.	2 State-wide forums	2024
Evaluation and impact monitoring			Design the methodology for the evaluation and monitoring of QKPLT	Complete evaluation methodology	

Multimodal format transfer			Design multimodal format to support point in time data collection	Concept design of point in time data collection tool	
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* Qld has elected to receive an initial payment of \$1 million, and may be eligible for further funding at a later date, depending on which tool they elect to use to participate in the trial with (as per clause 22 above) which could include participation as defined in cl 7.1.3 and 7.2 of the PRA Appendix A.2.

27. 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 2024 Implementation Plan.

Risk Management

28. The State of Queensland 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

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

Table 5: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 for the State of Queensland

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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement free kindergarten: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sessions for services & publication of Kindergarten Essentials on website Free Kindy website for services and families to assess eligibility for free kindy and to find nearest service using the Kindy Finder Kindy marketing campaign Provision of subsidies to approved providers with quarterly claims and provision of enrolment and attendance data for both sessional kindergartens and CBDC services Provision of funding to enable State Delivered Kindergarten and eKindy programs Implement system interface to allow services to claim and provide reporting data. Continue marketing campaigns and initiatives to raise awareness of benefits of participating in kindergarten (Deadly Kindies, Early Years Places, Playgroups, KindylinQ, eKindy pods, Hospital kindy sessions, transition support). 	Ongoing
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.	<p>Measures to be undertaken 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement software solutions to enable services to provide attendance data to Department of Education through a new QGrants solution. Queensland is one of two jurisdictions participating in the pilot attendance collection in 2024. Queensland will work with the Australian Government and the ABS throughout the pilot to develop and fine tune the data specifications needed in accordance with Appendix A.1. 	Ongoing

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland will also provide attendance data to the ABS in 2024 for the National Preschool Attendance Collection. Learnings from the pilot will be shared with all jurisdictions to facilitate the nationwide attendance collection in 2025. 	
<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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to implement Deadly Kindies and Intensive Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to participate in kindergarten. Continue to implement supported playgroup programs, including KindyLinQ and support provided by regional transition officers and Early Years Places for vulnerable families to enrol in kindergarten. Media and marketing campaigns. Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to explore opportunities to encourage ownership / control of locally controlled early childhood services. Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders on development of ECEC initiatives. Expansion to a further two schools and continued delivery of the State Delivered Kindergarten program in state schools located at least 40kms from the nearest kindergarten selected, in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, or other selected communities where there are barriers to accessing kindergarten. Continue to offer eKindy pods to complement the eKindy distance education kindergarten learning program. Investment in early childhood workforce initiatives aimed at improving attraction, retention and capability of Department of Education staff working in early childhood. 	Ongoing
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.		Ongoing

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
(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 July 2023).		
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.	Measures to be undertaken 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement system changes to the Department of Education OneSchool reporting system to improve attendance data collection in State Delivered Kindergarten. 	Ongoing

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

31. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the State of Queensland for 2024.
32. 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.
33. These data and performance specifications will be used to report State of Queensland performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan.
34. 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).
35. In 2024, States are 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 2024, these should be detailed in Table 5.
36. Table 6 covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B in 2024.

Table 6: State specific attendance and enrolment data considerations

Category	Required Information
Attendance collection period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland will provide Term 2 data for the attendance collection for school and preschool settings only. Term 2 for Queensland State Schools commences on 15 April 2024 and concludes on 21 June 2024. Non-state school terms may vary from these dates. Queensland will work with the ABS as part of the attendance collection pilot to select an appropriate reference week for all services.
Data provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Queensland will provide data for National Preschool Attendance Collection (NPAC) and National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC) within the period 7 October to 29 November (as per Option C).

Child and state specific YBFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The YBFS cohort in Queensland includes the following children enrolled in a kindergarten program: all 4 year-olds (those who turn 4 between 1 July and 30 June), and 5 year-old children who did not participate in a kindergarten program in the previous year as a 4 year-old. • Should any changes to the state-specific YBFS cohort be planned, Queensland will engage with the ABS as part of the change process.
Children who repeat YBFS preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queensland fully funds YBFS repeaters and intends to claim funding for repeaters. • All repeaters will be identified by a data matching process and flagged as repeaters in the NECECC. The funding provided to these children is the same as for non-repeaters, so all funding follows the child calculations will be applied to repeaters also.

Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2024

37. Performance Reporting for 2024 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the State of Queensland 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.
38. Performance reporting will be signed off by the Commonwealth Minister who will then inform the State of Queensland 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 State of Queensland by



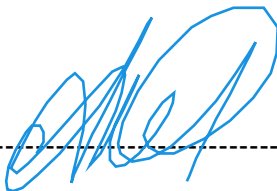
Signature

Date: 23/05/2024

The Honourable Dianne Farmer MP

Minister for Education and Minister for Youth Justice

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



14/6/24

Signature

Date

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly 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 2025)

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 2025.

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.	\$X.Xm
Stand-alone	State calculation of [n] children in YBFS counted against setting.	\$X.Xm
School-based preschool	State calculation of [n] children in YBFS counted against setting.	\$X.Xm
Total Commonwealth Funding spent in all settings		\$X.Xm

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 any setting	Total Commonwealth funding spent
State calculation of [n] children	\$X.Xm

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\$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 2024 (update by 31 March 2025)

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 2024	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 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure from 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.

Western Australia: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) – 2024

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

This Plan covers:

- the implementation activities for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (Tables 2 – 5);
- the performance report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (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 2024 to 31 December 2024.
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 third 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 State of Western Australia (WA), represented by their Minister for Education.
8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the State of WA 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 2024.
10. The Commonwealth Government Department of Education and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2025 in consultation with states and territories (States). The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2025.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. 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

13. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the State of WA is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (financial year) of the Agreement.
14. 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 2024 are set out in **Table 1**.
15. **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.
16. 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: 2024 Commonwealth financial contribution to the State of WA

Category	Amount ¹
YBFS Financial Contribution	\$49,059,815
Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels	N/A
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (excluding implementation funding)	\$49,059,815
Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial implementation support	Nil*
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (including implementation funding)	\$49,059,815

¹ Figures may not add due to rounding. These figures are based on the most recent YBFS population projections estimated by Australian Bureau of Statistics in January 2024.

* Based on Western Australia's commitment to trial the new national tool (yet to be developed by ACER), and as agreed with the Australian Government, WA will claim the Commonwealth funding for Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support either in the second half of 2024 via an addendum to this Plan or in early 2025 via the 2025 Implementation Plan.

17. Table 2 shows how the State of WA will use Commonwealth funding to meet the objectives of the Agreement. This may include strategies to facilitate preschool attendance by children in the YBFS.

Table 2: Program/activities objectives and outcomes

	Program/activity	Outputs	Objectives	Outcomes	Estimated Cth funds allocated
Program year funding (Commonwealth Funding Follows Child)					
1.	Universal access to 600 hours a year of a quality Kindergarten program, taught by a degree-qualified early childhood teacher.	WA children in the YBFS are offered access to 600 hours of Kindergarten through the public and non-government school systems.	To facilitate children's early learning and development and transition to compulsory schooling, through maintaining universal access to, and maximising participation in, affordable, high quality early childhood education programs in the YBFS, delivered by degree-qualified early childhood	All WA children have access to an affordable, high quality Kindergarten program in the YBFS, delivered by a degree-qualified teacher.	\$ 37,048,065.00
		Administer funding via grant payments to approved early childhood education and care services. ¹			

¹ References to the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector throughout this document refers to approved centre-based day care services.

			teachers.		
2.	Kindergarten program quality, equity, participation, and preparation programs.	<p>Programs and initiatives designed to develop and maintain program quality, prepare children for Kindergarten and promote student enrolment and regular attendance, particularly amongst Aboriginal children, children living in remote and very remote communities, and children experiencing significant disadvantage.</p> <p>Examples of programs and initiatives undertaken by the State that align with and support the objectives of the Agreement are detailed on page 7.</p>	<p>To facilitate student enrolment, attendance, and preparation for Kindergarten, particularly amongst Aboriginal children, children living in remote and very remote communities, and children experiencing significant disadvantage.</p> <p>To support and enhance the professional capability of the early childhood workforce (teachers and education assistants), and their provision of quality Kindergarten programs, regardless of the delivery location and/or setting.</p>	<p>Student enrolment, attendance, and preparation for Kindergarten is improved, particularly amongst Aboriginal children, and children in remote and very remote communities, and communities where there are high levels of disadvantage.</p> <p>Continuous development and upskilling of the professional capability and contemporary practice of the early childhood workforce.</p>	\$ 12,011,750.00
Total all programs and activities					\$ 49,059,815.00

The WA Department of Education undertakes a student census of all WA schools in February each year. In 2024, the data from this census will be used to calculate the number of children enrolled in Kindergarten in the public and non-government school sectors.

For the ECEC sector, the most recent Preschool Education, Australia data published by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will be used to determine the number of children in the YBFS who are enrolled in 600 hours of preschool exclusively through this sector. For 2024, this will be Preschool Education, Australia 2023, to be released in March 2024.

Funding for all sectors (school and ECEC) will be transferred as soon as possible after the relevant data is available to determine exact per-child funding amounts. If a child is enrolled across multiple preschool settings, funding will be prioritised to a school-based program. Payments will be made as per the relevant sector's associated grant agreement. A third-party organisation will manage a grant program to distribute funding to the ECEC sector.

Acquittals will be through demonstration of Commonwealth funding being provided to each sector based on a pro rata Kindergarten (preschool) market share.

State context and funding contributions

18. Context influencing the State of WA delivery of preschool and the States' investment in preschool for 2024 is covered in this section.

Historical Context

Since the early 1990s, successive WA governments have championed affordable, universal early childhood education in the school sector throughout the State, ensuring that even children living in regional and remote communities are provided with access. This has been achieved through significant State Government investment in school infrastructure, qualified early childhood teachers and education assistants and resources.

- In 1995, the Good Start program was introduced in WA, resulting in preschool (referred to as Kindergarten in WA) being expanded to four half-days (11 hours) per week from 1996.
- In 1996, following extensive public consultation, the school starting age was delayed by six months, with gradual implementation over four years.
- The change was cemented in legislation in 1999 through the *School Education Act 1999*, which also entitled four-year-old children (children who turn four on or before 30 June) to enrol, free of compulsory charges, at a public school or a community Kindergarten for their first year of pre-compulsory education for a minimum of 11 hours per week. Provision was also made in the Act for non-government schools to deliver Kindergarten, with the government significantly subsidising the cost in these school systems. This took effect for all children from January 2001.
- The *Teacher Registration Act 2012* gives paramount consideration to the best interests of school children in WA, and the Teacher Registration Board of WA (TRBWA) has responsibility for the registration of all WA teachers of students from early childhood to Year 12 who teach in an educational venue.
- With implementation of the previous National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (UANP), and now PRA, since 2013, WA has provided Kindergarten for 600 hours per year in public schools, community kindergartens, Catholic and Independent schools, with four hours per week funded by the Commonwealth.
- Commonwealth funds for the additional four hours are allocated to sectors through pro-rata market share based on the annual February enrolment census.

- In 2023, WA continued to have the highest rate in Australia of preschool children educated through school-based Kindergarten rather than an ECEC setting.²
- 32,310 (97.0%) of the 33,279 WA children who participated in preschool in 2023 in their YBFS did so at a school-based Kindergarten.³
- In 2023, 898 WA children participated in 600 hours or more of preschool exclusively in centre-based day care in their YBFS.⁴

In conclusion, over the past two decades, Kindergarten participation in schools has been normalised among WA families and is widely known as the first year of schooling (albeit part-time and pre-compulsory).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children

- In 2023, WA continued to have the highest rate in Australia of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children educated through school-based Kindergarten.⁵
- 2,417 (96.9%) of the 2,494 Aboriginal children who participated in preschool in 2023 in their YBFS, did so at a school-based Kindergarten, ensuring that they were taught by a degree-qualified teacher.⁶

School-based Kindergarten in WA

In WA, the vast majority of children participate in preschool as their first year (Kindergarten) of school - across public, Catholic and Independent schools. The provision of Kindergarten as part of school is embedded in State legislation such as the *School Education Act 1999* and the *School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997*, and reflected in Kindergarten's incorporation in WA's Kindergarten to Year 10 Curriculum.

This approach ensures children in Kindergarten are taught by qualified teachers and have access to whole-school literacy, numeracy and behavioural, social and emotional development and wellbeing strategies. The approach ensures children can access the full range of disability, early intervention and other support services that are available to schools, such as school psychologists and allied health professionals. For these reasons, school-based Kindergarten is considered to be fundamental to ensuring all children in WA continue to have access to and participate in high quality, affordable preschool, no matter where they live in the State.

Legislative Context

In WA, Kindergarten provision in the schooling sector falls under the *School Education Act 1999* and its regulations.

- The *Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012* does not apply to Kindergarten provision through schools.

² ABS Preschool Education, Australia 2023

³ ABS Preschool Education, Australia 2023

⁴ ABS Preschool Education, Australia 2023

⁵ ABS Preschool Education, Australia 2023

⁶ ABS Preschool Education, Australia 2023

- The National Quality Framework (NQF) does not apply to Kindergarten provision through schools.
- The National Quality Standard (NQS), which is one element of the NQF, is required to be applied, with public and non-government schools implementing the NQS in Kindergarten to Year 2.

The ECEC sector is regulated through WA's Education and Care Regulatory Unit within the Department of Communities.

- The *Education and Care Services National Law (WA) Act 2012* applies to this sector.
- The NQF is applied in this sector.

Examples of programs and initiatives undertaken by the State that align with and support the objectives of the Agreement

Enhanced Transition to School (ETTS): A joint cross-sectoral initiative

Implemented by Playgroup WA with support from the public and non-government education systems, the program establishes playgroups on or near public, Catholic and Independent schools for local children and families to participate in. The objective is to engage and develop relationships with families, facilitate preparation for Kindergarten and improve Kindergarten enrolment and attendance, particularly among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children living in communities where there are high levels of disadvantage.

KindiLink

KindiLink is a culturally responsive play-and-learn initiative for Aboriginal children who are not old enough to enrol in school. The program is provided at 38 school sites in communities with high levels of disadvantage, and where there is a high proportion and number of Aboriginal children. Children attend with a parent/carer and where there is capacity and after consultation with the local community, non-Aboriginal children and parent/s can also attend.

KindiLink provides six hours a week of play-and-learn sessions at no cost to families. The evidence-based Abecedarian Approach Australia (3a) is used as the learning program, along with the Early Years Learning Framework and it is guided by the NQS.

- The program focuses on developing the social, emotional, language and cognitive capabilities of Aboriginal children. It aims to boost their learning before they start Kindergarten and forge strong and supportive links between home and school.
- Early childhood teachers and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers plan and deliver the sessions, which have a dual focus on participating children and their parent/s to increase the parent/s capability as their child's first educator.

CaLDEYLink

The Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) Early Years Link Program (CaLDEYLink) is established in two metropolitan primary schools with a high proportion of CaLD families with young children from birth to three years of age. Based on the KindiLink model, the program

provides six hours a week of culturally responsive play-and-learn sessions at no cost to families. It seeks to further develop the personal/social, language and cognitive capabilities of CALD children prior to school entry, build on the capability of families as their children's first and most influential educators, and forge stronger and more collaborative partnerships between home and school. Early childhood teachers and CaLD education assistants plan and deliver the sessions.

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

19. 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 State of WA - Statement of Allocations (as per 2023 Implementation Plan)

Implementation Project (details)	Commonwealth funding ¹	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Prepare for the Commonwealth Funding Follows Child (CFFC) reform to apply to the State's ECEC sector from 2023.	\$700 000	<p>Statewide coordination of the implementation of the CFFC and other Agreement reforms affected in the State's ECEC sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement document development and contracting a consultant/agency to execute an Engagement and Communication Strategy with the WA ECEC sector to determine options for CFFC to the sector (completed in 2022). Procurement document development to contract an appropriate entity to receive, administer and distribute the ECEC sector's CFFC funding in 2023 (completed in 2023). 	<p>Agency is engaged to determine options for FTFC to the ECEC sector.</p> <p>Agency completes all requirements set out in Service Request.</p> <p>Consultation and collaboration with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Funding entity established.</p>	All actions completed by 31 December 2023.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with the Department of Communities and the ECEC sector to contract an appropriate entity to receive, administer and distribute the ECEC sector's CFFC funding for 2023 (completed in 2023). • Seed funding to the entity to facilitate its operation in 2023, with it becoming self-funded from the sector's CFFC funding from 2024 (completed in 2023). 		
Work to ready the State to provide baseline preschool attendance data in 2024.	\$300,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Commonwealth to agree the details of the new enrolment and attendance measures as per PRA Appendix A.1. • Public and non-government school systems prepare to provide baseline preschool attendance data in 2024. 	<p>Participate in and contribute to scheduled national meetings.</p> <p>Communicate with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Work collaboratively with the non-government schooling sector to prepare their systems to provide baseline data in 2024.</p> <p>Make any necessary data collection modifications to sector systems.</p>	All actions are completed by 31 December 2024.

³ WA expects the full implementation project funding allocation will be used for the above elements. Where any funding is leftover, WA reserves the right to redirect this towards costs incurred by the State to implement other PRA reforms and/or expended in accordance with clause 7 of Appendix A of the PRA.

20. 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

21. 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.
22. Commonwealth funding is being provided on the following basis:
- For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating the new national tool as their 'primary tool' – up to \$3.4 million.
 - 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.
 - For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating an existing tool as their 'primary tool' – up to \$1 million.
23. Where a State is not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in its 2024 Implementation Plan, an option to provide these details later to access the funding will be available. Details can be outlined in either an Addendum to the 2024 Implementation Plan, or in 2025 Implementation Plans, noting both options will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.
24. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding, with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.
25. When completing Table 4 below, States are requested to also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions. This reflects the fact that this is a shared reform agenda and is required by Commonwealth Central Agencies for payments to be made.
- Further detail about cost sharing arrangements is at PRA Appendix A.2 Preschool Outcome Measure Trial, clause 12.

Table 4: Overview of Implementation support for State of WA - Statement of Allocations

Activities (details)	Commonwealth funding	State contribution	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl.
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					delivery schedule)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to ready the State to participate in the national applied trial in 2025 	Nil in 2023-24 (\$3.4million in 2024-25).	<p>Officers from the WA Department of Education will support a small number of schools to participate in the national applied trial in 2025. The Primary, Early Childhood and Education Support Branch will primarily support services in the trial and will seek support from other areas of the Department (e.g. Directors of Education) as needed.</p> <p>The Department of Education will also liaise with officers from CEWA and AISWA to enable cross sector participation in the national trial.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate and contribute to the development of new learning progressions and the national tool. Work with the Commonwealth to agree to the new learning progressions and the national tool. Recruit preschools to participate in the national applied trial in 2025. Selected preschools participate in professional learning. 	<p>Participation in consultations and national meetings.</p> <p>Consultation and communication with key stakeholders.</p> <p>Preschools are selected to participate in the national applied trial in 2025.</p> <p>Selected preschools are prepared to participate in the national applied trial in 2025.</p>	All actions are completed by 31 December 2025.
State participates in the national applied trial in 2025.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preschools implement trial the preschool outcomes measure. Preschools participate in national evaluation activities. 	Selected preschools participate in the national applied trial in 2025.	All actions are completed by 31 December 2025.

26. 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 2024 Implementation Plan.

Risk Management

27. The State of WA 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

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

Table 5: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 for the State of WA

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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and refine the process and continue to support the entity to administer and enable the CFFC reform to apply to the State's ECEC sector in 2024. Continue to implement the CFFC reform in relation to the State's public, Independent and Catholic school sectors. This includes using the February Kindergarten census data. Acquittals from 2024 will be through demonstration of Commonwealth funding being provided to each setting based on a pro-rata Kindergarten (preschool) market share. Transparency of Commonwealth contribution by setting will be through information provided on the Department's public-facing website. <p>Note: CFFC for the ECEC sector will be based on the most recent data published by the ABS, for children in the YBFS who are enrolled in 600 hours of preschool exclusively through this sector. For 2024, the data will be from the ABS Preschool Education, Australia 2023, which is expected to be released in March 2024.</p>	All actions are to be completed by 31 March 2025
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.	<p>Measures to be undertaken 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Term 2 student level attendance data will be collected from all schools in WA via the August student census. Enrolment data at the student level will be collected from all schools in WA via the August student census. Values for all required fields as per the PRA performance indicator specifications will be collected or derived from provided values. Files will then be provided to the ABS as part of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC) and the 	Collection date as for the student census 2 August 2024.

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	National Preschool Attendance Collection. The attendance data file and enrolment data file will be provided separately.	
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.	Measures to be undertaken 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public-school sector will review its annual Kindergarten enrolment and attendance campaign. The public, Catholic and Independent school sectors will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review / develop enrolment and attendance campaign strategies specific for Aboriginal and CaLD children. Provide targeted Kindergarten enrolment messaging for schools located in communities where there is a high proportion and number of Aboriginal families to assist them to engage with their communities. 	Throughout 2024
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national 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 July 2023).	Measures to be undertaken 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate and contribute to the development of new learning progressions and the national tool. Work with the Commonwealth to agree to the new learning progressions and the national tool. Recruit preschools to participate in the national applied trial in 2025. Selected preschools participate in professional learning. 	Throughout 2024, with all actions to be completed by 31 December 2025 .
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.	Measures to be undertaken 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquittal of Commonwealth funding to be based on funding allocations to each sector. The Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) to be used as supplementary data for disadvantaged children, if required (see Clause 34 below). 	At point of need

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

30. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the State of WA for 2024.
31. 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.
32. These data and performance specifications will be used to report State of WA performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan.
33. 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 National 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).
34. Clarification is provided below on how definitions, (page 15 of the Agreement refers) are applied in WA and have been agreed between the State of WA and the Commonwealth in the case of '*Disadvantaged children*' and '*Preschool program*':

The State of WA's elaboration on how definitions for '*Disadvantaged children*' and '*Preschool program*' are realised

- a. WA retains the right to use the Index of Community Socio-Educational Advantage (ICSEA) as supplementary data in relation to '*Disadvantaged children*', if required.
- b. In WA, vulnerable and disadvantaged children are provisionally defined as children enrolled in schools with an ICSEA value in the lowest socio-economic quintile within WA. Each public and non-government school's ICSEA is calculated based on the ICSEA profile of every enrolled student of compulsory age and schools in the bottom quintile are the 20 per cent in WA with the lowest ICSEA.
- c. Regarding the definition of '*Preschool program*', most preschool programs in WA are provided through school-based Kindergarten, delivered by qualified early childhood teachers, and underpinned by the WA Kindergarten to Year 10 curriculum, the Early Years Learning Framework, and the NQS (implemented across Kindergarten - Year 2). Teachers also use their professional knowledge to develop programs that are aligned with education sector strategic directions, whole-school plans and initiatives, and tailored to community contexts.

35. In 2024, States are 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 2024, these should be detailed in Table 5.

36. **Table 6** covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B to the Agreement in 2024.

Table 6: State specific attendance and enrolment data considerations

Category	Required Information
Attendance collection period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The State will provide attendance data for Term 2 in 2024. In WA, the standard term dates for Term 2 in 2024 are 15 April 2024 to 28 June 2024. The average number of hours per half-day session will be collected when non-government schools upload the attendance data. This value will be multiplied by the number of sessions attended for each student to determine the total number of hours attended. For public schools, each half-day session will be estimated at 2.5 hours (based on 6 sessions = 15 hours). However, due to reporting practices for public schools 5 sessions will also be interpreted as 15 hours. Estimation methodology is outlined in the data quality statements
Data provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Term 2 attendance data and August enrolment data will be supplied in 2 separate datasets. De-identified address lists will be provided to the ABS for geocoding by 20 September 2024. Attendance and enrolment files will be provided to the ABS by 11 October 2024. The State is planning to provide both files on the same date, but this cannot be confirmed at this time.
Child and state specific YBFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In WA, a child should be aged 4 by 30 June 2024 to enrol in a preschool (kindergarten) program. In WA, a child should be aged 5 by 30 June 2024 to enrol in a pre-primary program. Pre-primary is the first year level for compulsory schooling in WA. In WA, a child should be aged 6 by 30 June 2024 to enrol in Year 1.
Children who repeat YBFS preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The State intends to claim funding for children who have a second year in a YBFS preschool program. Students are identified as repeating a year level by schools, and this is collected through the student census system. The repeating flag will be included in the data file submitted to the ABS through the NECECC.

Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2024

37. Performance Reporting for 2024 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the State of WA 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.

38. Performance reporting will be signed off by the Commonwealth Minister who will then inform the State of WA 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 State of Western Australia by


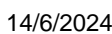
 

Signature Date

The Hon Dr. Tony Buti MLA

Minister for Education; Aboriginal Affairs; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

Signature Date

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly 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 2025)

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 2025.

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 2024 (update by 31 March 2025)

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 2024	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 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure from 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.

Addendum 1

Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial Implementation Support

1. This Addendum can be completed where states were not able to finalise details of Trial Implementation Support in their 2024 Implementation Plan. This Addendum will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.
 - a. States have the option to either finalise details in an Addendum to their 2024 Implementation Plan or in 2025 Implementation Plans, to access Trial Implementation Support funding.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding, with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.
5. When completing Table 1 below, States are requested to also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions. This reflects the fact that this is a shared reform agenda and is required by Commonwealth Central Agencies for payments to be made.
 - a. Further detail about cost sharing arrangements is at PRA Appendix A.2 Preschool Outcome Measure Trial, clause 12.

Table 1: Overview of Preschool Outcomes Measure (POM) Trial implementation support for State of Western Australia: Statement of Allocations

Planned actions for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025 for the state of Western Australia

Activities (details)	Commonwealth funding	State contribution	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Prepare for and participate in the 2025 national applied trial using the new national tool as the 'primary tool'	\$3.4 million	<p>The WA Department of Education (the Department) will support a small number of schools to participate in both the small-scale trials in 2024 and in the national applied trial in 2025.</p> <p>The Department will liaise with officers from the non-government sector (Catholic Education WA and the Association of Independent schools of WA) to enable cross sector participation in the small-scale trial and the national trial.</p> <p>Staff from The Department will contribute to the design, planning and participation in the POM trial.</p> <p>Staff will also provide supervision support and administrative support over 2024 and 2025.</p>	<p>Participate in activities as required by the Australian Government Department of Education, NOUS and ACER.</p> <p>Preschools (Kindergartens) will be recruited to participate in the small-scale trial in 2024 and in the national applied trial in 2025.</p> <p>As further details emerge about the POM trial in Western Australia, more active communication and engagement activities will be undertaken to reach specific stakeholder groups. This will include Catholic Education WA and the Association of Independent schools of WA and teachers in the public school sector.</p> <p>Preschools (Kindergartens) trial the preschool outcomes measure.</p> <p>Preschools participate in national evaluation activities as required.</p>	<p>Participation in consultations and national meetings including participation in the POM working group and regular engagement with ACER.</p> <p>An appropriate number of Preschools are selected to participate in the small-scale trial in 2024 and in the national applied trial in 2025 to ensure that the POM tool is suitable for use in WA.</p>	All actions are completed by 31 December 2025.
Total	\$3.4 million				

6. 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 this addendum to the 2024 Implementation Plan.

Sign off

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

Signed for and on behalf of the State of Western Australia by



The Hon Dr. Tony Buti MLA

Minister for Education

09/09/2024

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



Signature

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly MP

Minister for Early Childhood Education | Minister for Youth

Date 22/10/2024

South Australia: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2024

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

This Plan covers:

- the implementation activities for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (Tables 2 – 4);
- the performance report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (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 2024 to 31 December 2024.
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 third 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 State of South Australia, represented by their Minister for Education, Training and Skills.
8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the State of South Australia 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 2024.
10. The Commonwealth Government Department of Education and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2025 in consultation with states and territories (States). The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2025.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. 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

13. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the State of South Australia is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (fiscal year) of the Agreement.
14. 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 2024 are set out in **Table 1**.
15. **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.
16. 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: 2024 Commonwealth financial contribution to the State of South Australia

Category	Amount ¹
YBFS Financial Contribution	\$27,815,894
Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels	\$406,728
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (<i>excluding implementation funding</i>)	\$28,222,621
Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial implementation support	Nil*
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (<i>including implementation funding</i>)	\$28,222,621

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 2024.

* As agreed with the Australian Government, South Australia will claim the Commonwealth funding for Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support either in the second half of 2024 via an addendum to this Plan or in early 2025 via the 2025 Implementation Plan.

17. Table 2 shows how the State of South Australia 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.	Funding allocations to government and non-government preschool program providers	i. Continue provision of additional funding to government preschools ii. Continue to administer funding grant payments to approved child care centres, non-government schools and non-government preschools	To facilitate children's early learning and development, by maintaining universal access to, and improving participation in, affordable, quality preschool programs for all children	All children, including disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality preschool program	\$25.6m
2.	Inclusion programs and projects aimed at improving enrolment and regular participation in preschool for Aboriginal and Torres Strait	Delivering programs targeting the participation in quality preschool programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and	To facilitate children's early learning and development, and improving preschool participation	i. All children, including disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality	\$2.6m

	Islander children, and disadvantaged children	disadvantaged children	and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and disadvantaged children	preschool program. All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in remote communities have access to preschool education. ii. Continue an annual preschool promotion campaign that is both universal and targeted using social media.	
Additional funding to maintain 2021 funding levels (delete if not required)					
3.	Funding allocations to non-government preschool program providers	Continue to provide funding grant subsidies to approved child care centres, non-government schools and non-government preschools in excess of the Commonwealth's per child contribution	To facilitate children's early learning and development, by maintaining universal access to, and improving participation in, affordable, quality preschool programs for all children	All children, including disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality preschool program	Funding allocated included as part of 1.
Total all programs and activities					\$28.2m

In order to calculate the number of children in each setting to whom Commonwealth Funding Follows Child will be directed, South Australia will continue to collect preschool enrolment data from government preschools, approved child care centres, non-government schools and non-government preschools. Enrolment data is used for the purposes of calculating staffing allocations for government preschools and grant subsidies payable to non-government preschool providers. South Australia has a robust process in place to ensure that children who access multiple settings are not accessing more than 15 hours of funded preschool, which includes reviewing enrolment and attendance data and addressing any excess claims.

As part of the department's Funding Follows Child implementation projects, a new preschool enrolment report has been developed which allows for the cumulative reporting of YBFS preschool enrolments by setting over the calendar year (as per the actions detailed in Reform Element One: Implement Commonwealth Funding Follows Child of Table 5).

State context and funding contributions

18. Context influencing the State of South Australia delivery of preschool and the States' investment in preschool for 2024 is covered in this section.
19. The South Australian Department for Education (department) is the agency responsible for the delivery of universal state government preschool in South Australia for all children in their year before full time school, and Aboriginal children and Children in Care from three years of age.
20. The department is also responsible for the implementation of the PRA. In 2024 South Australia (SA) will continue with the following approaches to support the delivery of 600 hours a year of quality preschool programs to all children in the YBFS regardless of the setting:
 - a. Increased service provision in existing preschool services: Children enrolled in one of the over 380 department operated preschools have an increased annual provision from 480 hours to 600 hours of preschool in their year before full-time school. Department operated preschools are provided with additional staffing allocations and other resourcing to enable the delivery of 600 hours of preschool.
 - b. SA also applies PRA funding for programs and subsidies with an emphasis on participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and disadvantaged children. In department operated preschools and services, inclusion and support programs are provided to support access to preschool for children with a disability. Other programs include the Hospital Based Preschool program and Aboriginal Children with Impaired Hearing Support program.
 - c. Child care operators and non-government schools and preschools are provided with funding subsidies on an application basis to assist with offsetting the cost of a university qualified early childhood teacher to deliver a preschool program to children in their year before school not accessing a department preschool. Over three hundred (300) non-government early childhood education and care services have an approved grant agreement to deliver 600 hours of quality preschool programs to children in the YBFS, including one organisation that provides a multi modal remote delivery preschool program for children residing in very remote locations in SA.
 - d. Non-government services funded for preschool also have access to targeted additional subsidies to offset the cost of delivering preschool to children of families from disadvantaged backgrounds and for Aboriginal children that directly promotes enrolment in preschool and regular attendance. Other subsidies are available for non-government services for children with a disability to provide access to and enable regular participation in the preschool program.
21. The South Australian government's total annual expenditure on preschool services over the past 10 years is made available in the annual publication of the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services: Early Childhood Education and Care section data tables (refer table 3A.6). The Commonwealth government's contribution through the former National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education agreements and the Preschool Reform Agreement is also published in the data tables (refer table 3A.7).

22. Complementary to the PRA's objectives of improving outcomes for children, the Government of South Australia commissioned a Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care in South Australia, with the final report being handed down in August 2023. The Government of South Australia has committed to action on all recommendations, whether it be direct state investment and reform, identifying an alternative approach or advocating to the federal government for change. In response to one of the report recommendations, the Office for Early Childhood Development has been established to steward the early childhood development system in South Australia and detailed implementation planning has commenced.
23. Some of the early reform initiatives to be implemented, which complement PRA objective of universal access to affordable, quality preschool programs for all children in the year before full time school and improved participation and outcomes, include:

Reform Initiative
Up to 15 hours of quality preschool programs available for 3-year-olds progressively from 2026 to 2032.
From 2024, 3-year-old Aboriginal children, as well as children in care, at department operated preschools will be offered 15 hours of preschool, up from 12 hours.
Trialling preschool out of hours care in government-operated preschool in 2024 at 20 locations, which will inform a broader roll-out from late 2025.

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

24. 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 State of South Australia - Statement of Allocations (as per 2022 Implementation Plan)

Implementation Project (details)	Commonwealth funding	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Funding follows the Child – projects to support the rapid deployment of funding to non-government providers, by investing in improved systems and processes	\$1.62m	<p>1) Reform paper-based non-government preschool funding application process to online form</p> <p>2) Back-end data collection systems for non-government services reviewed and enhanced</p>	<p>1) Paper based application process replaced</p> <p>2) Non-government services payment</p>	<p>• Completed in 2022</p> <p>• Phase 1 completed in 2022 – standard reporting</p>

			timelines reduced	improvements for grant funding efficiency purposes.
		3) Grant/payment management system replaced	3a) Procurement approach in place	<p>Phase 2 completed in 2023 - FFC enrolment report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 completed in 2022 - business requirements and pre-design
			3b) Non-government services payment timelines reduced.	<p>Phase 2 II-supported improvements developed and implemented for non-govt preschool payments across 2024 and 2025.</p>
		4) Develop and implement new non-government services funding arrangements/ agreements for 2023 – 2025	4) New non-government funding arrangements implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1: Funding arrangements for 2023 implemented. Phase 2: Funding arrangements for 2024 implemented. Phase 3: Funding arrangements for 2025 to be determined.
		5) Develop enhanced funding acquittal and transparency processes	5) Acquittal and transparency process requirements documented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webpage and parent information for non-government services to improve transparency updated for commencement of 2023.

				Funding acquittal reporting developed and implemented in 2023.
Attendance strategies and measurement - IT systems development and enhancement projects to increase the quality and quantity of attendance measurement.	\$2.38m	<p>1) Replace manual parent sign in/out with electronic process for government preschool data administration systems and explore opportunities for any non-government preschools not approved for Child Care Subsidy (CCS).</p> <p>2) Enhance existing government data administration systems for attendance measurement.</p> <p>3) Enhance existing Non-Government Preschool Data System (NGPDS)</p>	<p>1) Electronic sign in/out system implemented</p> <p>2),3) Government and non-government preschool enrolment and attendance data complies with agreed enrolment and attendance measurement requirements</p>	<p>1) Electronic sign in/out system project on hold due to significant estimated budget overspend. Support will be provided to Department for Education (DfE) operated preschools to ensure no impact on meeting the new 2024 preschool attendance data collection requirements</p> <p>Non-government preschools not approved for CCS offered a funding grant to procure CCS approved third-party software</p> <p>2),3) South Australian DfE IT systems projects scoped and designed in 2023 aimed at significantly improving the efficiency and effectiveness of Appendix A.1 and B preschool data collection requirements for implementation in 2024.</p>

25. 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

26. 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.
27. Commonwealth funding is being provided on the following basis:
- For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating the new national tool as their 'primary tool' – up to \$3.4 million.
 - 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.
 - For States participating in the 2025 national applied trial by nominating an existing tool as their 'primary tool' – up to \$1 million.
28. Where a State is not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in its 2024 Implementation Plan, an option to provide these details later to access the funding will be available. Details can be outlined in either an Addendum to the 2024 Implementation Plan, or in 2025 Implementation Plans, noting both options will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.
29. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding, with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.
30. When completing Table 4 below, States are requested to also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions. This reflects the fact that this is a shared reform agenda and is required by Commonwealth Central Agencies for payments to be made.
- Further detail about cost sharing arrangements is at PRA Appendix A.2 Preschool Outcome Measure Trial, clause 12.

Table 4: Overview of Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support for State of South Australia - Statement of Allocations

Activities (details)	Commonwealth funding	State contribution	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Refer Table 5	To be decided	To be decided	Refer Table 5	Refer Table 5	Refer Table 5

31. As agreed with the Australian Government, SA will claim the Commonwealth funding for Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support either in the second half of 2024 via an addendum to this Plan or in early 2025 via the 2025 Implementation Plan.

Risk Management

32. The State of South Australia 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

33. As part of the Agreement, the State of South Australia and the Commonwealth agree to work collaboratively to implement reforms outlined in the Additional terms in the Agreement.
34. The actions that the State of South Australia will undertake to meet these commitments are detailed in **Table 4**.

Table 5: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 for the State of South Australia

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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • South Australia already has in place a funding mechanism that facilitates excellent state-wide coverage to provide preschool access to all children in the year before school which limited the changes required to implement Commonwealth funding follows child at the setting level. <p>Plan for, and/or actions to be taken on how funding will be deployed to benefit children in each setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Continue funding mechanisms in place that support the provision of early childhood teachers to deliver preschool programs including targeted subsidies to non-government services for children with disabilities and Inclusive Preschool Programs in department preschools. <p>Initiatives that promote enrolment and attendance in preschool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: South Australia will continue an annual preschool enrolment promotion campaign that is both universal and targeted using social media with a focus on disadvantaged cohorts. • Action: Continue targeted child subsidies as an incentive to promote enrolment and regular attendance in preschool to children who may not otherwise have enrolled. • Action: Undertake a trial of preschool out of hours care in 2024 for a select number of department operated preschool services to facilitate improvements in accessibility to and participation in preschool. <p>Plan to acquit, or plan to establish acquittal mechanism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: ICT systems have been enhanced to provide a summary calendar year report that lists all South Australian children in their YBFS enrolled and attending a department operated or 	Throughout 2024

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<p>non-government preschool program by each setting. The YBFS enrolment data summary report is combined with the Funding Follows Child resource allocations and grant payments by setting that facilitates the ability to produce an acquittal report.</p> <p>Mechanism to provide transparency of Commonwealth contribution to stakeholders, including when and how payments will be made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Information on the amount of the Commonwealth contribution and the quantum of preschool hours is published on the department's Preschool and Kindergarten enrolment webpage. • Action: The department has advised non-government preschool providers and stakeholder associations of the Commonwealth contribution as part of correspondence from the Minister on the 2024 PRA grant funding arrangements. • Action: Information on when and how payments will be made are published on the department's non-government preschool service provider funding webpage. • Action: The department's Parent Disclaimer Form has been updated to include reference to the Commonwealth contribution. 	
Reform Element Two: Implement a new national preschool attendance measure		
<p>The approach to measure preschool enrolment and attendance and how data will be provided to the Commonwealth, in accordance with Appendix A.1.</p>	<p>Measures to be undertaken 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Undertake ICT enhancement projects to the department's preschool administration systems, non-government preschool data system, corporate collection and reporting systems in accordance with PRA Appendix A.1 - Enrolment and Attendance Measures and Appendix B - Appendix B - Performance Indicator Specifications. • Action: Support non-government preschools not approved for CCS to ensure they are able to meet the new 2024 preschool 	<p>Throughout 2024</p>

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<p>attendance data collection requirements for dedicated preschool services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Undertake and provide customer support to preschool service providers to collect, validate and report to the ABS on in-scope preschool enrolment and attendance data in accordance with the required specifications and timelines. 	
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>Measures to be undertaken 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Continue employment of an Early Years Engagement Officer to consult with, and work alongside preschool teachers and Anangu educators located in Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands schools with a school-based preschool, to deliver culturally responsive arts/literacy activities to increase regular attendance of preschool aged children. • Action: Continue implementation of project initiatives to improve enrolment, attendance and participation of 3- and 4-year-old Aboriginal children and Children in Care in quality preschool. • Action: Continue contribution of funding for programs that facilitate preschool attendance in department operated preschools including the Hospital Based Preschool, Inclusive Education Support Program, and Aboriginal Children with Hearing Impairment Support Program. 	Throughout 2024
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national 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 July 2023).	<p>Measures to be undertaken 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SA will continue to work collaboratively with the Australian Government to support the development of the national learning progressions and the assessment tool. SA is continuing to consider options for participation in the 2025 national trial. 	State to insert timing
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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A State-specific data issue for South Australia relates to the impact that a mid-year enrolment intake has on the ABS 	Throughout 2024

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<p>methodology to provide an accurate estimate of the YBFS population each year. The YBFS population estimate is used to calculate the Commonwealth's Funding Follows Child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: The department will collaborate with and supply the ABS with additional data and contextual information to allow for analysis and calculation of an adjustment to the 2024 ABS YBFS population estimates based on the impact of the midyear enrolment intake. • Action: Medium to longer term action will require both the Commonwealth and South Australian departments to continue to work with the ABS on a resolution to this issue. 	

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

35. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the State of South Australia for 2024.
36. 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.
37. These data and performance specifications will be used to report State of South Australia performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan.
38. 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):
- PI calculation description (numerator, denominator, computation, and presentation)
 - numerator information (collection name and population description)
 - denominator information (collection name and population description)
 - calculation notes (including any information about how the PI is calculated)
 - methodology
 - 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).
39. In 2024, States are 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.
- Where a State has agreed with the Commonwealth transitional arrangements for 2024, these should be detailed in Table 5.
40. Table 6 covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B in 2024.

Table 6: State specific attendance and enrolment data considerations

Category	Required Information
Attendance collection period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Australia will provide Term 2 2024 attendance data. The standard term date for department operated preschools for Term 2 2024 in South Australia is from 29 April to 5 July 2024.
Data provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Australia will provide the following submissions to the ABS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> de-identified address lists to ABS for geocoding the Term 2 2024 attendance data file and the Term 3 2024 enrolment data file on or before 18 October 2024. the Term 2 2024 attendance data and the Term 3 2024 enrolment data as two separate files to the ABS on or before 1 November 2024. re-supply of Term 2 2024 attendance data file and the Term 3 2024 enrolment data file as required by 29 November 2024

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o data quality statement by 29 November 2024
Child and state specific YBFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department operated preschool services and most non-government preschool providers have the following age criteria for entry into YBFS preschool. • Children who turn four years old: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o before 1 May 2024 are eligible to start preschool at the beginning of 2024; o from 1 May 2024 to 31 October 2024 can commence preschool at the start of term 3 2024. • Aboriginal children and children in care can start in a department operated preschool services after they turn three years of age and are eligible for YBFS preschool in accordance with the eligibility criteria above. • South Australia will continue to consult with the ABS to satisfactorily resolve impacts that the mid-year enrolment intake is having on calculating the YBFS population estimates and to implement a revised YBFS age-based eligibility criteria for counting preschool enrolments and attendances.
Children who repeat YBFS preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The South Australia department does not permit within its enrolment policies and procedures for children to repeat their YBFS preschool entitlement. A second year of YBFS preschool would only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and in practice is granted to an exceedingly small number of children. • Non-government services funded for preschool are ineligible to receive funding for children repeating YBFS preschool. • For these reasons, South Australia is not intending to claim funding for children who have a second year in a YBFS preschool program ('repeaters').

Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2024

41. Performance Reporting for 2024 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the State of South Australia as detailed at Table 4. 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 State of South Australia 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 State of South Australia by



Signature

Date 2 / 5 / 2024

The Hon Blair Boyer

Minister for Education, Training and Skills

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



14/5/2023

Signature

Date

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly 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 2025)

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 2025.

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		<u>\$N.Nm</u>

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 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
			<u>\$ 0.00</u>

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.

Tasmania: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2024

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

This Plan covers:

- the implementation activities for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (Tables 2 – 4);
- the performance report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (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 2024 to 31 December 2024.
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 third 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 State of Tasmania, represented by their Minister for Education.
8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the State of Tasmania 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 2024.
10. The Commonwealth Government Department of Education and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2025 in consultation with states and territories (States). The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2025.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. 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

13. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the State of Tasmania is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (financial year) of the Agreement.
14. 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 2024 are set out in **Table 1**.
15. **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.
16. 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: 2024 Commonwealth financial contribution to the State of Tasmania

Category	Amount ¹
YBFS Financial Contribution	\$8,300,325
Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels	\$1,542,318
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (excluding implementation funding)	\$9,842,643
Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial implementation support	\$180,000*
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (including implementation funding)	\$10,022,643

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 2024.

***Tasmania** has elected to receive an initial payment of \$0.180 million, and may be eligible for further funding based on their participation in the trial at a later date (as per clause 22 below) which could include participation as defined in cl 7.1.3 and 7.2 of the PRA Appendix A.2. Detailed expenditure of this money to support trial participation will be agreed in writing between parties.

17. Table 2 shows how the State of Tasmania 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.	Funded preschool program and places in government, Catholic and independent school sectors.	Provision of 600 hours of free Kindergarten in government schools ¹	95% or more of eligible children enrol and attend a Tasmanian preschool (Kindergarten) program in a quality setting where cost is not a barrier.	Tasmania continues to deliver high enrolment and attendance rates, including for the targeted disadvantaged cohorts.	\$9.84M (Annual PRA). Note funding comments below for programs 2 – 4.
2.	Universal access to Kindergarten	Providing accessible, quality early childhood education programs which meet the needs of parents and communities at a cost which does not present a barrier to	To facilitate children's early learning and development and transition to school, by maintaining universal access to, and improving participation in, affordable,	All children, including vulnerable and disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality early childhood	Remaining PRA funding provided to the following program and initiatives 2 – 4.

¹ Funding is also provided to non-government schools to top-up delivery to 600 hours of Kindergarten to meet the objectives of the National Partnership.

		participation, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged children.	quality early childhood education programs for all children. Supporting all children's quality early childhood education participation, regardless of whether quality early childhood education programs are delivered through schools (non-government and government), standalone preschools	education program.	
3.	Maintain Indigenous children's participation	Delivering strategies and actions targeting the participation of Indigenous children, including in remote areas	To facilitate children's early learning and development and transition to school, by maintaining universal access to, and improving participation in, affordable, quality early childhood education programs for all children.	All Indigenous children have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality early childhood education program. All Indigenous four-year-olds in remote communities have access to early childhood education.	Remaining PRA funding provided to the following programs and initiatives 2-4.
4.	Maintain participation by vulnerable and disadvantaged children	Delivering strategies and actions targeting the participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged children.	To facilitate children's early learning and development and transition to school, by maintaining universal access to, and improving participation in, affordable, quality early childhood education programs for all children.	All children, including vulnerable and disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality early childhood education program.	Remaining PRA funding provided to the following programs and initiatives 2-4.
Additional funding to maintain 2021 funding levels					

Refer to all programs listed above.	
Total all programs and activities	\$9.84M

Accuracy

Please refer to the ABS Data Quality Statement for Tasmania for 2023 Preschool Education, Australia². In particular, please refer to the **Accuracy** section for a detailed explanation of Tasmania's collection and validation processes to report actual students' enrolments per school.

Child level: The process of obtaining and processing data in Tasmania commenced with government service providers uploading information from each child enrolment form into the Tasmanian Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP) student management system 'EduPoint' which stored the information in a data warehouse. The data warehouse contains in-built data quality checks that provide timely data feedback to schools. Data from the warehouse were then used to populate the Tasmanian ECEC Data Collection. Non-government schools enter student, timetable, attendance and teacher information into a secured online application.

Service Provider level: The data of government and non-government service providers were reviewed and cleaned by Tasmanian DECYP staff. This process included numerous system quality checks such as confirming student ages, hours enrolled, and verifying duplicate enrolments across schools. A declaration stage is included in the data collection application, which each principal was required to review and declare that all data were true and correct. This set of students became the authoritative dataset for the census date (6 August). Preschool data were extracted from this census application to match with all other data collated for this Collection. Extensive quality assurance occurred for the attendance and teacher qualification data, to ensure that data were consistent with other Tasmanian DECYP data sources.

Once the actual enrolments numbers are finalised, the actual annual funding per school, based in PRA funding requirements, is calculated by DECYP's Finance and Budget Services (FABS) business unit for disbursement to school sector's management organisations (e.g., Tasmanian Catholic Education Office or each Independent School directly).

State context and funding contributions

18. Context influencing the State of Tasmania's delivery of preschool and the States' investment in Preschool for 2024 is covered in this section.

- (a) The Tasmanian Government's total expenditure on Preschool services is available at Early childhood education and care section of the Report on Government Services (Productivity Commission) Table 3A.4³

² <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/preschool-education>

³ [3 Early childhood education and care - Report on Government Services 2024 - Productivity Commission \(pc.gov.au\)](#)

- (b) In 2023, Tasmania provided free Kindergarten for 600 hours a year to just over 150 public schools and 60 non-government schools. For registered Kindergarten programs in government schools and not-for-profit non-government schools, ten hours per week are funded by the State, with the remaining five hours per week funded through the Agreement. Funds for the extra five hours are allocated in accordance with enrolments. In 2023, quality early childhood education programs⁴ were delivered in just over 120 long day care centre-based services (Latest data). However, because these were not registered Kindergarten programs, they did not attract National Partnership funding (refer to paragraphs (f) through to (h) below for further information on the registration process).
- (c) The 2023 (latest results) Estimated Residential Population (ERP) of the average four and five -year-olds in Tasmania in 2023 was 6,033. of whom it is estimated 628 were Indigenous and 2,012 reside in a low socio-economic area. In 2023, nearly 4,450 four and five-year-olds attended a registered Kindergarten program in a government school, and just over 1,500 attended a non-government school. It is expected about 1,100 children were enrolled in both a registered Kindergarten program and a long day care centre-based service. (*Data Source: ABS Preschool Australia, 2023 (latest Data).*)
- (d) The Tasmanian Department for Education, Children and Young People has provided state-funded Kindergarten linked to primary schools since 1911, along with other Kindergarten programs provided by the Kindergarten Union and parents. In 1968, a review recommended the provision of Kindergarten as part of the school system, which led to a rapid expansion of places. By 1980 the State was responsible for most Kindergartens in Tasmania. Rates of participation were high, the minimum age of enrolment was set at 4 as of 1 January each year, and the universal entitlement to enrolment was legislated in 1994. Non-government primary schools gradually established Kindergartens during the 1980s and most now deliver a Kindergarten program. Long day care centre-based services have also delivered a Kindergarten program (being registered by the Non-Government Schools Registration Board (NGSRB) to do so) with one service registered in 2020. The main reason for lack of enrolments at long day care centre-based services is the fact that, given the history above, parents see Kindergarten as the first year of school.
- (e) Tasmania's high number of disadvantaged families who could not afford to participate in community Kindergartens were a significant factor in the 1968 decision to embed Kindergartens in the school system. There was evidence that the children who were most in need of a Kindergarten education were those most likely not to be receiving it and attaching Kindergarten to the school system was a successful strategy in alleviating this risk with almost all eligible children in Tasmania attending Kindergarten since then. The effectiveness of this approach was illustrated in the 2019 Nous review of the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education where Tasmania met all the benchmarks that were able to be measured – the only jurisdiction to do so.
- (f) Kindergartens in Tasmania historically are regulated as part of the school system rather than the early childhood education and care sector, thereby avoiding

⁴ Centre based long day care services report delivering 'quality early childhood education programs' in ABS Preschool Australia. This report includes children in the year before Tasmania's Kindergarten year.

duplication of some regulatory and administrative processes. It is important that Kindergartens deliver quality early childhood programs and in 2011 the then Tasmanian Government committed to ensure Kindergartens substantially corresponded with the National Quality Framework National Law requirements, without being subject to them. In 2016, the Tasmanian Government determined that government Kindergartens would be formally assessed against the National Quality Standards from 2020 and this work is progressing.

- (g) Early childhood education and care service providers, for example in centre based services, have always been able to seek registration as a non-government school (through the Non-Government Schools Registration Board (NGSRB), which registers non-government schools) in order to deliver Kindergarten. If a centre-based service registers as a school, regardless of its profit status, then it will receive funding under the Agreement, which would be allocated according to the existing procedures and methodologies for distributing funding to independent and Catholic schools (N.B long day care centre-based services not registered as a school cannot officially be recognised as a Kindergarten by the State Government. The Tasmanian *Education Act 2016* defines a Kindergarten as the year of education immediately preceding the first year of compulsory education and delivered by a school).
- (h) Registering as a school requires the centre-based care service to meet standards in areas such as governance, the curriculum, qualifications of teachers, and facilities. The registration process takes into account where there is consistency between the school registration standards and the early childhood education and care regulatory requirements. Evidence of compliance with those requirements will be accepted by the NGSRB as evidence of meeting the relevant school registration standard.
- (i) Other than the Preschool Reform Agreement funding, no Commonwealth childcare subsidies/rebates are paid in respect of the Kindergarten year in government schools in Tasmania.
- (j) If a for-profit centre-based care service registers as a school with the NGSRB to run a Kindergarten, it will be eligible for a share of the Commonwealth funding under the Agreement. However, for-profit services will not be eligible for the State subsidy because the Tasmanian *Education Act 2016* does not allow State funding to go to for-profit schools.
- (k) If a not-for-profit centre-based care service registers with the NGSRB to deliver Kindergarten, it will be entitled to the State funding subsidy for 10 hours (as for all non-government schools) and a share of the Commonwealth funding under the Agreement. Currently in Tasmania, almost 67 per cent of long day care services are not-for profit.
- (l) There was no registered centre-based care service registered to deliver Kindergarten in Tasmania in 2023.
- (m) Early Learning is one of four priority areas in the Department of Education Strategic Plan 2022-2024. Tasmania's first ever Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy for 0-25-year-olds, *It Takes a Tasmanian Village*, was released on 22 August 2021.

- Through the Strategy, the Tasmanian Government is investing over \$100 million across four years to fund 65 initiatives that support the wellbeing of 0- to 25-year-olds, with a particular focus on the first 1,000 days (pregnancy to age two), where there is clear evidence that a good start in life is vitally important to a child's future wellbeing.
 - The Strategy builds on many existing Tasmanian Government initiatives that support parents, families, and communities, and provides new investments and a clear plan for government and its partners to deliver the services and supports that children, young people and their families need for good wellbeing.
- (n) There are five existing state-funded projects which focus on education during the pre-Kindergarten years (birth to four years). These programs are not funded under the Agreement or through other Commonwealth funding streams but complement the Agreement by supporting participation in learning by vulnerable and disadvantaged and Indigenous children. These projects are:
- i. Launching into Learning (in all government schools)
 - ii. Child and Family Learning Centres (16 in existing local communities and 2 new centres to be opened by the end of 2024)
 - iii. Aboriginal Early Years Education Workers
 - iv. Early Childhood Intervention Service
 - v. Working Together – supporting early learning (up to 220 places available through 43 ECEC services in 2024)
 - vi. Early Learning for Three Year Olds
- (i) Launching into Learning (LiL) is a program available in all government primary schools for children from birth through to age 4. LiL aims to give Tasmania's youngest children the best possible start in life by:
- Supporting parents/carers as their child's first and most influential teacher,
 - Reaching families with highest need,
 - Facilitating a positive transition into Kindergarten.

A state-wide Early Learning team supports consistent approaches to the ongoing implementation of the Early Years Learning Framework, which underpins the work of LiL teachers.

A longitudinal study of LiL shows that children from all socioeconomic backgrounds made significant gains in educational performance from regular participation in LiL. However, children from disadvantaged and low socioeconomic backgrounds benefited most.

- (ii) Child and Family Learning Centres (CFLCs) focus on improving the learning and care, and health and wellbeing of Tasmania's very young children by supporting parents and enhancing accessibility to services in the local community. In the 2018 State election, the Tasmanian Government committed to build on the success of the CFLC model by building six new early learning hubs across Tasmania. Over a six-year period from 2019, work is progressing to establish these new CFLCs in areas of highest need and community readiness. The CFLCs

will provide greater access for families to relevant early years' services, with a strong focus on improving place-based service delivery to communities around Tasmania. The CFLCs form part of the existing continuum of Department of Education services and support available to young children and their families.

- (iii) The Aboriginal Early Years Program emphasises early literacy, language development and school readiness. The program has been running since 2005. Aboriginal Early Years Education Workers (AEYEWs) provide professional learning and high-level advice to early years' staff and agencies to enable successful implementation of departmental and Closing the Gap strategies.

AEYEWs are situated around the State in CFLCs. They work closely with families of Aboriginal children from birth to four years of age to engage their children in a wide range of early years' activities and programs that nurture and stimulate young children's learning. AEYEWs play a key role in building connections between schools and families with young children by supporting families to engage in CFLCs and other early years providers.

- (iv) The Early Childhood Intervention Service (ECIS) supports children with a disability or developmental delay from birth to school entry, and their families. ECIS builds on opportunities for learning and development that are provided at home or through birth-4 programs and assists with transition to Kindergarten. Professional learning support for Kindergarten staff is provided where children with disability enrol for Kindergarten programs. A child-and-family-centered approach, based on a partnership between parents and professionals, is at the core of early intervention.

- (v) Working Together (WT) provides free, quality early learning for eligible children in the year before they start Kindergarten. Plus, support for their families. This initiative is addressing barriers to participation experienced by Indigenous and vulnerable and disadvantaged children, by funding places in quality early learning centres (up to 400 hours per year for each child). WT works in partnership with families, early childhood educators, government agencies and community services to provide holistic support to help children to thrive. WT also provides professional learning opportunities for the early childhood education and care sector so they can assist these children and their families in the best way possible. The initiative is supporting three-year-olds, along with their parents and carers, through the transition from home into early childhood education and care, and then into Kindergarten.

- (vi) Early Learning for Three Year Olds (EL3) is an initiative to contribute to the achievement of universal access to early learning in the year before Kindergarten for Tasmanian children. EL3 aims to expand access to early learning in partnership with the ECEC sector, families and communities. Under the EL3 initiative, up to six Trial Sites will be established in communities across Tasmania to test different models of early learning service delivery to meet local community needs. Under the EL3 initiative, Trial Sites are being established in areas where there is low or no capacity of existing ECEC services. This means that through the process of establishing the Trial Site, ECEC services (as the preferred provider), DECYP, families and communities can work together to increase access to early learning in their area.

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

19. 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 State of Tasmania - Statement of Allocations (as per 2023 Implementation Plan)

Implementation Project (details)	Commonwealth funding	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Project team to implement reporting requirements for 2022 until 2025.	\$350,000 over the PRA 2022-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project team organises additional attendance reporting as per agreed 2024 data specification for Government and Catholic school sectors. Organise Independent school sector IT updates for 2025 reporting, noting 2024 reporting for this sector will be a 2-weeks reporting reference period in August. Document current Department of Education Children and Young People (DECYP) and school system functions to determine required enhancements Implement new User requirements for systems to meet reporting requirements Appoint IT contractor/s to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project updates provided to the Australian Government. Project team reports 2024 reporting requirements as per agreed national data specifications. Note an interim project team is now in place to support the implementation of the PRA, Implementation Plan, and other working group discussions and decisions currently underway. Subject to agreed national or bilateral policy and data measures decisions, completion of documentation outlined in actions table are planned to 	March 2022 until August 2025.

		implementation enhancements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement IT system change specifications with schools. • Support Australian Government and contribute to national decisions to implement student outcome measure in 2025 • Monitor and refine enhancements to meet reporting requirements 	be completed by 31 December 2024. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the completion of project documentation by 31/12/2024, the required IT enhancements made in time for data to be provided to Commonwealth for agreed reporting in November 2024. 	
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20. 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

21. 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.

22. 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.

23. Where a State is not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in this 2024 Implementation Plan, an option to provide these details later to access the funding is available. Details can be outlined in either an Addendum to this 2024 Implementation Plan, or in 2025 Implementation Plans, noting both options will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.

24. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding (refer Table 4 of this Implementation Plan), with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.
25. When completing Table 4 below, States are requested to also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions. This reflects the fact that this is a shared reform agenda and is required by Commonwealth Central Agencies for payments to be made.
- a. Further detail about cost sharing arrangements is at PRA Appendix A.2 Preschool Outcome Measure Trial, clause 12.

Table 4: Overview of Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support for State of Tasmania - Statement of Allocations

Activities (details)	Commonwealth funding	State contribution	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Preparing to support the implementation of the Preschool Outcome Measure Trial in Tasmania, nominating the national tool as Tasmania's primary tool. This involves embedding the national tool within the Kindergarten Development Check (KDC).	\$180,000*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participation in national meetings. Providing feedback on papers/materials related to the POM and the national trial. Consultation with the non-government school sectors to support their participation in the national trial. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appoint and onboard project manager. Establish project team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project team established by 1 July 2024. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 2024 – December 2024.

*Tasmania has elected to receive an initial payment of \$0.180 million, and may be eligible for further funding based on their participation in the trial at a later date (as per clause 22 below) which could include participation as defined in cl 7.1.3 and 7.2 of the PRA Appendix A.2.

26. 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 2024 Implementation Plan.

Risk Management

27. The State of Tasmania 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

28. As part of the Agreement, the State of Tasmania and the Commonwealth agree to work collaboratively to implement reforms outlined in the Additional terms in the Agreement.
29. The actions that the State of Tasmania will undertake to meet these commitments are detailed in **Table 4**.

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Table 5: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 for the State of Tasmania

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 2024 - Tasmania will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on existing funding mechanisms to provide funding for each student as per the PRA for the Tasmanian government, Catholic and independent school sectors • Discussions to be held with non-government school sectors throughout 2024 to deliver increased data reporting capabilities. Further meetings to be held following confirmation of student enrolments in August 2024 (Data collection reference period). • Ongoing support provided to students who cease to be enrolled or cease attending. Students are supported by schools and central DECYP Learning Services as part of wider school engagement services to re-enrol or return to preschool. Students who are absent due to long-term illness are supported to continue learning at home. • Acquit funding distribution for school sectors based on confirmed August 2024 student enrolments in preparation in 2024 (date to be confirmed). Tasmania continues to provide preschool funding based on confirmed enrolments. In Tasmania, school sectors do not need funding at the start of the school year to deliver services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Develop an auditable report on enrolments and funding distributions to Government, Catholic and independent school sectors to provide transparency of Commonwealth contributions from 2024. 	February 2024 until December 2024
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.	<p>Measures to be undertaken 2024 - Tasmania will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish project team and governance arrangements. 	February 2024 until December 2024

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document attendance reporting requirements for new agreement, in particular increased attendance reporting specifications. Document current DECYP and school (Government, Catholic and Independent) system attendance reporting capabilities to determine required attendance reporting enhancements. Develop new attendance user requirements for systems to meet attendance reporting requirements. Document IT system change specifications for attendance reporting. 	
<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>Actions to be undertaken 2024 -:</p> <p>30. Aboriginal Education Services (DoE) officers work closely with the families of Aboriginal children from birth to five years to engage their children in a wide range of early years activities and programs in their community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through outreach programs, work with schools to identify families with Aboriginal children who haven't engaged in early years learning Support increased participation in Launching into Learning (LiL) at their local school and pre-kinder sessions Support with transport to attend specialist appointments Follow ups with families re appointments Connect up DECYP support teams with other early years support agencies (e.g., CHaPS nurses, Save the Children, Dental, etc.) Child and Family Learning Centres (CFLCs) deliver supports by Aboriginal Early Years Education Workers and Aboriginal Family Safety Workers Conduct Pop-up play (e.g., local parks) 	<p>February 2024 until December 2024</p>

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide drop off resources to door/home visits • Provide support for third-party HIPPY programs at nominated CFLCs (a structured education program, parent/carer teaching their child literacy, numeracy and language skills as well as physical skills) • Provide Working Together places for families in selected communities with the provision of free early learning for Aboriginal children for three full days per week, with, transport and other holistic supports are identified with the family. • Linking families with Aboriginal Community Organisations (e.g., kutralayna Health, TAC, Karadi etc.) • Facilitate local programs under the Learning in Families Together (LIFT) initiative. • Providers to utilise Early Learning Integrated Support Model to support young children and families to thrive in strong connected communities and with successful transitions into formal schooling 	
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national 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 July 2023).	<p>Measures to be undertaken from February 2024 – 1 July 2024 (end of financial year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in national meetings. • Providing feedback on papers/materials related to the POM and the national trial. • Consultation with the non-government school sectors to support their participation in the national trial. • Appoint project manager and establish project team. 	February 2024 – 1 July 2024
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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DECYP Project team continue to manage approval of PRA recommendations through existing DECYP procedures and 	February 2024 until December 2024

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	<p>applicable DECYP Executive members and Tasmanian Minister for Education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DECYP project Team continue to engage with Australian Government and other jurisdictions to implement reform agreement. • Significant In-kind support towards implementation of reform agreement in all working groups (as a small jurisdiction with limited resources supporting a range of governmental priorities) 	

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

31. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the State of Tasmania for 2024.
32. 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.
33. These data and performance specifications will be used to report State of Tasmania's performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan.
34. 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).
35. In Tasmania, a preschool program is defined as: an educational program in accordance with the Early Years Learning Framework (or equivalent) and the NQF (as replicated in Tasmania through the Tasmanian Quality Standards) delivered by an early childhood teacher.
36. In 2024, States are 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 2024, these should be detailed in Table 5.
37. Table 6 covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B in 2024.

Table 6: State specific attendance and enrolment data considerations

Category	Required Information
Attendance collection period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The terms for which Tasmania will provide attendance data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Term 2 for Government and Catholic schools. The standard term dates for Term 2 in 2024: 29 April – 5 July. • For independent schools, a 2 week reference period 29 July – 9 August 2024. Please note this is a transitional arrangement for 2024 collection. This data collection arrangement for independent schools is requested due to IT resource constraints and the complexities of independent

	schools' enrolments systems. Work will continue for the remainder of 2024 to enhance the existing Tasmanian Kindergarten data collection application, as per Appendix A.1 of the Preschool Reform Agreement.
Data provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasmania will be providing its attendance and enrolment collection at the same time, at the nationally agreed due dates for data submission to the ABS for option B (NPAC Term 2 and NECECC), with a final data submission between 4 November to 15 November.
Child and state specific YBFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The child specific YBFS age range(s) for 2024: Tasmania's Kindergarten entry requirements is children are aged 4 years old as at 1 January 2024. This means the children have date's of birth in the range 2 January 2019 - 1 January 2020. The compulsory school starting age is children aged 5 at the 1 January. The starting age of children is detailed in Clause 11 of the Tasmanian Education Act (2016) (https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2016-051)
Children who repeat YBFS preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasmania will not claim for repeaters due to low numbers (less than 30).

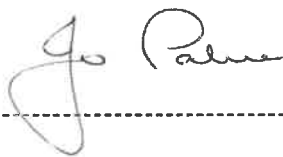
Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2024

38. Performance Reporting for 2024 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the State of Tasmania as detailed at Table 4. 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.
39. Performance reporting will be signed off by the Commonwealth Minister who will then inform the State of Tasmania's 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 State of Tasmania by



19.6.24

Signature**Date**

The Hon Jo Palmer MLC

Minister for Education

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

Signature**Date**

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly MP

Minister for Early Childhood Education | Minister for Youth

Sign off

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



Signed for and on behalf of the State of Tasmania by

SignatureDate

The Hon Jo Palmer MLC

Minister for Education

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



SignatureDate

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly 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 2025)

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 2025.

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 0 children in YBFS counted against setting.	\$0.0m
Stand-alone	State calculation of 0 children in YBFS counted against setting.	\$0.0m
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 2024 (update by 31 March 2025)

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 2024	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 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure from 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.

Australian Capital Territory: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2024

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

This Plan covers:

- the implementation activities for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (Tables 2 – 4);
- the performance report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (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 2024 to 31 December 2024.
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 third 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 Australian Capital Territory, represented by their Minister for Education.
8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the Australian Capital 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 2024.
10. The Commonwealth Government Department of Education and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2025 in consultation with states and territories (States). The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2025.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. 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

13. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the Australian Capital Territory, is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (financial year) of the Agreement.
14. 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 2024 are set out in **Table 1**.
15. **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.
16. 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: 2024 Commonwealth financial contribution to the Australian Capital Territory

Category	Amount ¹
YBFS Financial Contribution	\$7,853,069
Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels	\$1,801,406
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (excluding implementation funding)	\$9,654,475
Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial implementation support	\$3,400,000
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (including implementation funding)	\$13,054,475

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 2024.

* Based on the ACT's commitment to trial the new national tool.

17. Table 2 shows how the Australian Capital 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.	Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child financial contribution at the sector level, to the government school sector (3,825 children)	To facilitate children's early learning and development and transition to school, by maintaining universal access to free quality early childhood education for all children To promote the importance of preschool and encourage enrolment for all children in the year before	All children have access to 600 hours of free, high-quality preschool in the year before school	All children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and vulnerable and disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, free quality early childhood education programs	\$5,396,692.50

		formal schooling			
2.	Implement the Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child financial contribution at the sector level, to the non-government school sector (1,189 children)	To support delivery of quality preschool programs and encourage attendance and participation in affordable, quality early childhood education programs	All children have access to a high-quality preschool program in the year before school	All children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and vulnerable and disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, quality early childhood education programs	\$1,677,560.10
3.	Implement the Commonwealth Funding Follows the Child financial contribution at the sector level, for the non-government long day care sector (552 children)	To support delivery of quality preschool programs and encourage attendance and participation in affordable, quality early childhood education programs	All children have access to a high-quality preschool program in the year before school	All children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and vulnerable and disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, quality early childhood education programs	\$778,816.80
Additional funding to maintain 2021 funding levels (delete if not required)					
4.	Provide a financial contribution towards 600 hours of free government preschool programs	To facilitate children's early learning and development and transition to school, by maintaining universal access to, and improving attendance, and participation in affordable, quality early childhood education	All children have access to a high quality and free preschool program in the year before school	All children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and vulnerable and disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, free quality early childhood education programs	\$1,801,406

		programs for all children			
Total all programs and activities					\$9,654,475.40

18. 2024 funding allocations for Funding Follows the Child contributions to the government and non-government school sectors are based on actual 2024 Enrolment Census data.
19. As the ACT does not hold child level enrolment data for the long day care sector, the 2024 funding allocation for the Funding Follows the Child contribution to the long day care sector is an estimate based on the balance of the year before full time school (YBFS) population estimate for 2024 (5,566) minus the 2024 Enrolment Census data for school-based preschools (5,051). This means that school-based preschool is considered the first setting for the purpose of Funding Follows the Child in the ACT.
20. In 2024, Enrolment Census data indicates 75 children who attend more than one school-based setting. Government school-based preschool is considered the first setting for the purpose of Funding Follows the Child in the ACT, as this placement provides free preschool for families.

State context and funding contributions

21. Context influencing Australian Capital Territory delivery of preschool and the States' investment in preschool for 2024 is covered in this section.
 - a. Quality early childhood education in the ACT is delivered in a range of settings including government preschools, non-government preschools and long day care centres.
 - b. The ACT Government is the primary funder of 600 hours per year, of quality early childhood education in government preschools in the YBFS. This provision is delivered by a qualified early childhood teacher under the National Quality Framework.
 - c. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in the ACT can access an additional 15 hours per week, 600 hours per year, of a free culturally safe early learning program through the ACT Government funded Koori Preschool Program.

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

22. 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 Australian Capital Territory - Statement of Allocations

Implementation Project (details)	Commonwealth funding	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
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Development of system and process capabilities to support cross sectoral data collection (based on scoping and design work completed in 2023)	\$0.5 million	Development of system to support streamlined administration of funding follows the child from 2025	Information management system developed and operational	Q1- 2025
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23. 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

24. 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.
25. 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.
26. Where a State is not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in its 2024 Implementation Plan, an option to provide these details later to access the funding will be available. Details can be outlined in either an Addendum to the 2024 Implementation Plan, or in 2025 Implementation Plans, noting both options will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.
27. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding, with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.
28. When completing Table 4 below, States are requested to also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions.

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

Activities (details)	Commonwealth funding	State contribution	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Recruitment of temporary staff for 24 months to support POM Trial implementation	\$783,344	<p>ACT Government staff will undertake recruitment and onboarding activities for staff</p> <p>ACT Government staff will provide supervision support and administrative support for staff over the two-year period</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake recruitment actions and appoint staff Onboard staff 	Staff appointed	Q1 2024
Prepare for and participate in the 2025 national applied trial using the new national tool as the 'primary tool'	\$2,616,656	<p>ACT Government staff will contribute to the design and planning of the POM Trial, including participation on national working groups and facilitating local stakeholder engagements</p> <p>ACT Government preschool staff will be involved in the trial of the POM in identified ACT government preschools, subject to industrial consultations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in implementation activities as required by the Cwlth and provider Determine financial and other supports for trial sites to encourage participation Liaise with ACT stakeholders to confirm trial sites Support trial sites to understand the POM Trial and prepare for implementation Support trial sites to implement the POM trial and contribute to evaluation activities as required. 	Suitable number of trial sites engaged and supported to prepare for and implement the POM Trial in 2025	Throughout 2024 and 2025
TOTAL	\$3.4 million				

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 2024 Implementation Plan.

Risk Management

30. The Australian Capital 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 Australian Capital Territory and the Commonwealth agree to work collaboratively to implement reforms outlined in the Additional terms in the Agreement.
32. The actions that the Australian Capital Territory will undertake to meet these commitments are detailed in **Table 4**.

Table 5: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 for the Australian Capital 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 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT will distribute funding directly to the government school sector through existing funding distribution arrangements. • The ACT will distribute funding to the non-government school based preschool sector through a Deed of Grant arrangement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Deed will clearly articulate the Commonwealth contribution to stakeholders. ○ Recipients will be required to apply funding in line with the requirements of the PRA, including implementation of initiatives that promote enrolment and attendance in preschool. ○ Funding will be distributed through two milestones: 30% will be provided on execution of the Deed and a progress report will be required to be provided to the Territory in order to release the remaining 70%. ○ An acquittal of funding will be requested at the end of the Deed period. • The ACT will invest funding into quality improvement strategies for the long day care sector (based on consultation themes), which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Professional learning opportunities such as formal training on topics identified through the consultation ○ Coaching opportunities to lift quality in program delivery through Preschool Practice Coaches ○ Grant offerings to enable services to implement quality improvement strategies appropriate to their unique setting and/or to release staff to attend professional learning. Grants will be available via application and an 	Throughout 2024

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	acquittal of funding will be requested at the end of the Grant period.	
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.	Measures to be undertaken 2024: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT Education Directorate will collect preschool enrolment data and preschool attendance data for 2024 term 2 for children enrolled in public schools. In 2023, three independent preschools in the ACT did not provide data to the Commonwealth through the CCSS. ACT Education Directorate will act as data collection agent for these three services unless a service chooses to submit data directly to the ABS or AG DoE. Catholic Education will continue to act as the collecting agent for preschool services provided by Catholic Education Early Learning Centres. Data will continue to be provided directly to ABS or via the CCSS. All other preschool services in the ACT submit enrolment and attendance data via the CCSS. This includes services provided by the other independent preschools. 	Mid 2024
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.	The ACT will deliver the following strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early Entry to government preschool for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children Koori Preschool for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children at select government schools Engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families through Early Years Engagement Officers Engaging vulnerable and disadvantaged families through Early Childhood Community Coordinators Providing supported transitions and inclusive practices through Preschool Pathways Partners 	Throughout 2024
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	The ACT undertakes to work collaboratively with the Commonwealth and ACT service providers on the implementation of the new National Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial.	Throughout 2024 and 2025

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
(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 July 2023).	<p>Measures to be undertaken 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT will collaborate with the Commonwealth and consultant to prepare for trial participation, including supporting the development of the new national tool as the ACT's 'primary tool' • The ACT will liaise with stakeholders to share information on the trial and encourage participation • The ACT will identify suitable service providers and invite voluntary participation in the POM Trial • The ACT may offer a financial incentive (using Cwlth funding) to trial sites to encourage participation in the trial, subject to sector consultations • The ACT will work closely with trial sites to support participation in the trial • The ACT will develop suitable communications and support materials based on advice and information provided by the consultant 	
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 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT undertakes to continue to work collaboratively with the Commonwealth to identify appropriate targets that take into account the impact of small numbers when measuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's enrolment and attendance in preschool. • The ACT undertakes to work collaboratively with the ABS to apply the Index of Household Advantage and Disadvantage (IHAD) methodology to measure disadvantage in the ACT context. • The use of SEIFA and similar area-based measures is not appropriate for the ACT as the measure of disadvantage, due to the distributed nature of social housing and general social mobility in the Territory. In the ACT, SEIFA identifies 	Throughout 2024

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
	approximately 1% of children as being disadvantaged, rather than an estimated 12% to 20% under other measures.	

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

33. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the Australian Capital Territory for 2024.
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 Australian Capital 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. In 2024, States are 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 2024, these should be detailed in Table 5.
38. Table 6 covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B in 2024.

Table 6: State specific attendance and enrolment data considerations

Category	Required Information
Attendance collection period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACT will provide 2024 attendance data for Term 2 only (Monday 29 April 2024 (student-free day) to Friday 5 July 2024).
Data provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT Education Directorate will provide attendance and enrolment data separately (refer Appendix B, pg. 4). June attendance data and August enrolment data will be supplied in two separate datasets, which will be provided at the same time for both geocoding (2-20 September), with initial data submission between 23 September and 11 October and final analytical data before 15 November).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT Education Directorate will be following Option B for the provision of data for the National Preschool Attendance Collection (NPAC) and the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection (NECECC).
Child and state specific YBFS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child is eligible for 4-year-old (YBFS) preschool when born between 1 May 2019 to 30 April 2020. • Parents can select to delay commencement of 4-year-old preschool if born between 1 May 2018 – 30 April 2020. • Children must be enrolled in compulsory education (first year of formal schooling) 10 days after their sixth birthday.
Children who repeat YBFS preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT intends to claim funding for children who have a second year in a YBFS preschool program ('repeaters') in 2024. • ACT will be able to provide an estimate of the number of children repeating preschool (School-based preschools and Catholic Education ELCs) in 2024 using data from the 2023 and 2024 February Censuses of ACT Schools. • ACT Education will provide statistical linkage keys for all child records submitted by the Directorate to the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection. It is our expectation that other data providers will also provide child records with statistical linkage keys as per the requirements of the ECEC NMDS.

39. The use of SEIFA and similar area-based measures is not appropriate for the ACT as the measure of disadvantage, due to the distributed nature of social housing and general social mobility in the Territory. In the ACT, SEIFA identifies approximately 1% of children as being disadvantaged, rather than an estimated 12% to 20% under other measures.

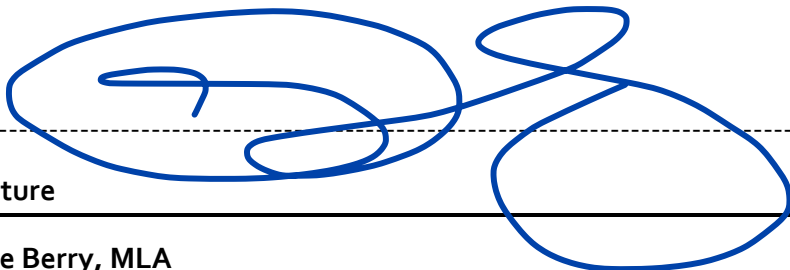
Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2024

40. Performance Reporting for 2024 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by Australian Capital Territory as detailed at Table 4. 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.
41. Performance reporting will be signed off by the Commonwealth Minister who will then inform the Australian Capital 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 Australian Capital Territory by



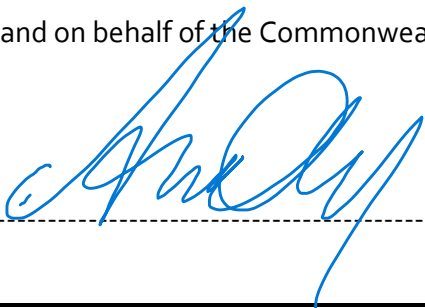
Signature

Date16/04/24

Yvette Berry, MLA

Minister for Early Childhood Development

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by



Signature

Date20/5/24

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly 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 2025)

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 2025.

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		<u><u>\$N.Nm</u></u>

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
			<u><u>\$ 0.00</u></u>

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 2024 (update by 31 March 2025)

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 2024	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 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure from 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5.



Northern Territory: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2024

Preschool Reform Agreement – 2022 to 2025

This Plan covers:

- the implementation activities for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (Tables 2 – 4);
- the performance report for the period 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024 (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 2024 to 31 December 2024.
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 third 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 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 2024.
10. The Commonwealth Government Department of Education and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2025 in consultation with states and territories (States). The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2025.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. 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

13. 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.
14. 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 2024 are set out in **Table 1**.
15. **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.
16. 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: 2024 Commonwealth financial contribution to the Northern Territory

Category	Amount ¹
YBFS Financial Contribution	\$4,258,096
Additional funding to maintain 2021 levels	\$414,267
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (excluding implementation funding)	\$4,672,363
Preschool Outcomes Measure: Trial implementation support	\$3,400,000 *
Total Commonwealth financial contribution (including implementation funding)	\$8,072,363

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 2024.

* Based on the NT's commitment to trial the new national tool.

17. **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 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	\$0.15 million

				free preschool from the age of three.	
Additional funding to maintain 2021 funding levels					
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.
 - Enrolment data collected in the 2023 Age Grade Census is used to inform the school's average student needs profile and the 2024 per student rate. 2024 funding calculations (including for preschool students) are determined based on a school's per student rate and funded student number. The funded student number is determined in Term 1 2024 based on the school's 2023 effective enrolment and movement in week 4, term 1 enrolment.
 - 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 the Age Grade Census.
 - Enrolment data collected through the 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 2024 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.

State context and funding contributions

18. Context influencing the Northern Territory delivery of preschool and the States' investment in preschool for 2024 is covered in this section.

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

19. 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 252 500² 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.
 - 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 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).
20. Northern Territory Government schools provide 600 hours per year of free preschool for four and five year old children, and three year olds in very remote locations. This Agreement provides a contribution towards the Northern Territory's provision of quality preschool of 600 hours per year.
21. The *Northern Territory's Education Engagement Strategy 2022 – 2031*⁵ identifies goals and actions that aim to engage every child in learning and improve their educational outcomes.
22. The Northern Territory Government Department of Education's *Education NT Strategy 2021-2025*⁶ includes system priorities and strategic actions that aim to support every child to engage, grow and achieve.
23. The Northern Territory Government Department of Education 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

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 <https://education.nt.gov.au/statistics-research-and-strategies/education-engagement-strategy>

⁶ https://education.nt.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0007/1061386/education-NT-strategy-2021-2025.pdf

Agreement), evaluations of the Families as First Teachers program, 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.

24. Complementary Northern Territory Government Department of Education activities include:


- a. working closely with schools and system leaders to implement school attendance strategies;
- b. supporting vulnerable and disadvantaged children, Aboriginal 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;
- c. 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*;
- d. 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*;
- e. further refinement of the NT's framework to promote and support children's Continuity of Learning from birth to year 12;
- f. 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;
- g. 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;
- h. 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;
- i. Co-chairing the Early Childhood Policy Group: Workforce Subgroup with the Australian Government; and
- j. Consultation and development of legislative amendments required to enable early childhood teachers working in non-school settings to become registered through the Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory.

- k. publicly reporting preschool expenditure annually in the Northern Territory's Budget Paper (BP3) publication available on the Northern Territory Treasury website⁷.

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

25. 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	By end of 2024
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

⁷ <https://budget.nt.gov.au/budget-papers>

26. 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

27. 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.
28. 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.
29. Where a State is not in a position to finalise details for Trial Implementation Support in its 2024 Implementation Plan, an option to provide these details later to access the funding will be available. Details can be outlined in either an Addendum to the 2024 Implementation Plan, or in 2025 Implementation Plans, noting both options will require agreement by Commonwealth and State Ministers.
30. Implementation Plans will include high-level proposed expenditure categories for Trial Implementation Support funding, with detailed expenditure to be settled between officials in writing as trial participation arrangements are finalised and details become clearer.
31. When completing Table 4 below, States should also outline State contributions, where relevant, including in-kind contributions. This reflects the fact that this is a shared reform agenda, and is required by Commonwealth Central Agencies for payments to be made.
- a. Further detail about cost sharing arrangements is at *PRA Appendix A.2 Preschool Outcome Measure Trial*, clause 22.

Table 4: Overview of Preschool Outcomes Measure Trial implementation support for the 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 board.</p>	Actions undertaken as specified in Table 5.	Semester 1 2024
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>Develop funding criteria to support service uptake and participation in trial.</p>	Actions undertaken as specified in Table 5.	Semester 2 2024
Phase 3: Project Management		Implement trial of the Preschool Outcomes Measure.	<p>Work collaboratively with developer to implement the trial.</p> <p>Dedicated project management to facilitate trial implementation, including pedagogist support.</p> <p>Develop localised and culturally responsive professional development supports.</p> <p>Deliver tailored one on one support for educators and services participating in the trial.</p> <p>Support delivery and evaluation of the Preschool Outcome Measurement trial.</p>	Actions undertaken as specified in Table 5.	Anticipated to occur June to September 2025
TOTAL	\$3.4 million				

32. 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 2024 Implementation Plan.

Risk Management

33. 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

34. 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.
35. 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 2024 to 31 December 2024 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 2024</p> <p>Funding will be disseminated in each setting as follows:</p> <p>a. Preschool program delivered by a Northern Territory Government school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School resourcing funding allocated to schools in Term 1 of 2024 - 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. <p>b. Preschool program delivered by a non-government school where there is no Child Care Subsidy (CCS) provision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirmation of enrolment will occur via the Age Grade Census process to inform funding allocation. <p>c. Preschool program delivered by a long day care service including preschool provided by an early learning centre and other non-government schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Administer the Northern Territory Quality Preschool Programs Survey 2024. - 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>	<p>a. Term 1, 2024</p> <p>b. Semester 2, 2024</p> <p>c. Term 2, 2024</p>

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
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.	Measures to be undertaken 2024 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procure and build a new data collection system to facilitate the reporting of attendance data. Prepare and derive government school attendance data based on specific business rules as articulated in Appendix B of the agreement. 	Throughout 2024
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.	Measures to be undertaken 2024 <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 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, Learning with Families, Literacy for Parents, Child and Family Centres and Connected Beginnings. Review and update as necessary, and continue to promote the use of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Early Years Curriculum Guide: Preschool - a supporting resource to embed the Early Years Learning Framework; and</i> <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 2024
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure trial in 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national 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 July 2023).	Measures to be undertaken 2024 <u>Stage 1 activities (2024)</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish project governance. 	Stage 1 Semester 1, 2024 Stage 2

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. 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 NT's trial of the Preschool Outcomes Measure national tool. 	Semester 2, 2024
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.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Northern Territory will work collaboratively with the Australian Government to identify Northern Territory specific data, implementation issues and develop appropriate strategies to minimise any adverse impact on the Northern Territory's performance under the Agreement. 	Throughout 2024

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

36. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the Northern Territory for 2024.
37. 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.
38. 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.
39. 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).
40. 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 participate in a FaFT program with a parent or carer and must be enrolled at the school in which the program operates.
41. In 2024, States are 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 2024, these should be detailed in Table 5.
42. Table 6 covers information states are required to report annually to facilitate application of Appendix A.1 and Appendix B in 2024.

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, 2024 preschool attendance data for the National Preschool Attendance Collection (NPAC) The standard NT government school term dates for Term 2, 2024 are from 15 April 2024 to 21 June 2024 (inclusive). Noting one government school in the NT has an approved flexible school calendar and the Term 2 dates for this school are from 8 April 2024 to 21 June 2024 (inclusive)⁸. 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 2024, the NT will supply de-identified address lists for NECECC and NPAC to ABS for geocoding by 20 Sep 2024. ABS to return geocoded address lists to NT by 4 Oct 2024. 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 if they turn 6 years of age on or prior to 30 June of the same year.
Children who repeat YBFS preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to claim funding for children who repeat in 2024, 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 2024

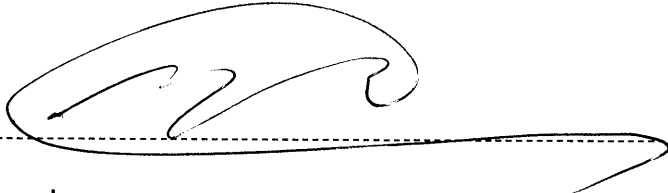
43. Performance Reporting for 2024 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the Northern Territory as detailed at Table 4. States should provide sufficient detail in performance reporting to enable consideration of progress against actions and provide the Commonwealth with a draft prior to submission of the final report.
44. 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.

⁸ <https://nt.gov.au/learning/primary-and-secondary-students/school-term-dates-in-nt>

Sign off

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

Signed for and on behalf of the Northern Territory by

 8/4/24.

Signature

Date

The Hon Mark Monaghan MLA

Minister for Education

Signed for and on behalf of the Commonwealth of Australia by

 20/5/24

Signature

Date

The Hon Dr. Anne Aly MP

Minister for Early Childhood Education | Minister for Youth

Annex 1 – Funding Follows Child Acquittals

Commonwealth Funding Follows Child acquittals (updated by 31 March 2025)

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 an 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 FFC 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 2025.

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>
	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 2024 (update by 31 March 2025)

Element	Agreed Action	Progress Update
Reform Element One: Implement Commonwealth Funding Follows Child		
How Commonwealth funding follows child at the setting level will be implemented in the State	As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2024	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 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5
Reform Element Three: Implement a new national preschool outcomes measure from 2025		
Plans for how the State will prepare for the 2025 national trial of the preschool outcomes measure, in accordance with Appendix A.2.	As per Table 5 in the Implementation Plan in 2024	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 2024	A progress update on actions agreed at Table 5