National Quality Framework

The National Quality Framework aims to improve the quality of early childhood education and care services in Australia.

Providing children with quality experiences early in life can lead to better health, education and employment outcomes, building a productive and fair Australia.

The National Quality Framework includes legal requirements that all services must comply with. These include requirements for:

- the number of staff and their qualifications
- ensuring children’s health and safety
- service space and layout
- the quality of developmental and learning experiences for children.

What services are included?

- Long day care
- Family day care
- Preschool/kindergarten (apart from Tasmania and WA)
- Outside school hours care.

Fact: Research shows quality early education and care leads to better health, education and employment outcomes later in life.

National Quality Standard

The National Quality Framework sets a higher national quality standard to encourage services to continue to improve their programs and practices.

Services are assessed and rated against seven quality areas of the National Quality Standard:

1. Educational program and practice
   Your child is supported to participate in play and learning

2. Children’s health and safety
   Your child is protected from illness and hazards

3. Physical environment
   Your child plays in a safe and well maintained environment

4. Staffing arrangements
   There are enough qualified staff to give your child the attention they need

5. Relationships with children
   Your child is made to feel supported and welcomed

6. Partnerships with families and communities
   Local community involvement and respect and inclusion of all beliefs and values

7. Leadership and service management
   Your child is cared for in a positive environment.
How do services get a quality rating?
Assessors will visit each service to rate it against the seven quality areas of the National Quality Standard. The quality areas are made up of standards and elements that describe what research shows are the most important parts of a quality early education and care service.

Services receive a rating for each of the quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

Services must display their ratings.

What do the ratings mean?
Ratings can help you choose a service for your child. It is important to look at the rating for each of the seven quality areas as well as the overall rating.

You can also discuss ratings with the service provider to learn how they are working to meet the National Quality Standard, even if your service has not yet been rated.

For service ratings visit:
www.startingblocks.gov.au/findchildcare