

What is universal pre-Kindergarten?



A quality early learning experience for every child

Decisions on the detailed design of a future universal year of pre-Kindergarten will not be taken until after extensive consultation.

Nevertheless it is envisaged that universal pre-Kindergarten will offer a high-quality play-based learning program that focuses on supporting children to be successful, competent and capable lifelong learners. It will continue to implement the valuable play-based model of early childhood education and care (ECEC) that focuses on physical, cognitive, social, emotional and language development. It is not intended to be another year of school.

Universal pre-Kindergarten will support children and teachers to build relationships and connections and help make the transition from preschool to school as seamless as possible. To enable this, strong partnerships will be built between pre-Kindergarten and schools so that schools are ready for children when they begin Kindergarten.

Supporting the early childhood education and care workforce is a key focus of universal pre-Kindergarten because we know that the leading determinant of quality education is having a skilled and stable workforce. The NSW Government will continue to prioritise the ECEC workforce and look for more opportunities to do so.

A model that works for families

A key objective of universal pre-Kindergarten is to provide families with access to no-cost, high-quality play-based learning program, for more hours and more days per week, on days and at locations that work for them.

Universal pre-Kindergarten will end the double drop off for more families with preschool aged children by increasing

preschool provision on some school sites, but not all. Pre-Kindergarten will also include models that incorporate care beyond the hours of 9am and 3pm to support working families. We will be working alongside the early childhood education and care sector, schools, and families to determine the best design for pre-Kindergarten in NSW.

Why did we introduce universal pre-Kindergarten?



The first 5 years of a child's life are vital for their health, development, learning and wellbeing. Children who participate in quality early childhood education and care – and who get the right support services such as health and development checks – are more likely to succeed at school and have improved lifelong educational, social and economic outcomes.

The 2021 Australian Early Development Census found that 2 in 5 of NSW children are not developmentally on track when they start school. Not being developmentally on track can have significant and lifelong consequences for a child.

Universal pre-Kindergarten will strive to meet the needs of families across the state. A recommendation of the NSW Government's 2022 Women's Economic Opportunities Review was to make early childhood education more accessible and affordable, to empower women to enter – or re-enter – the workforce.



For information on the NSW Government's investment in early childhood education and care, please visit education.nsw.gov.au/early-years-commitment

