



National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection Manual 2010





National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection Manual

Australia

2010

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ARIA	Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia
ASCED	Australian Standard Classification of Education
ASGC	Australian Standard Geographical Classification
ASGS	Australian Statistical Geography Standard
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CCMS	Child Care Management System
CCR	Child Care Rebate (formerly known as Child Care Tax Rebate: CCTR)
CD	Collection District
CEaCS	Childhood Education and Care Survey
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEEWR	Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DOB	Date of Birth
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
ERP	Estimated resident population
GIS	Geographic Information System
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage
LDC	Long day care
MCEECDYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs
METeOR	Metadata Online Registry
NCETS	National Centre for Education and Training Statistics
NIA	National Information Agreement
NMDS	National Minimum Data Set
NP ECE	National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education
NSSC	National Schools Statistics Collection
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SLK	Statistical Linkage Key
UA	Universal Access
URL	Unit record level
YBFS	Year before full-time schooling

INTRODUCTION

THE PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

The 2010 National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection Manual is intended to fulfil a number of functions:

- A traditional end to end user's guide to collection methodology and output, data collection standards, definitions and rules;
- A set of business rules to guide the reporting of early childhood education and care (ECEC) statistics, including methodological differences between jurisdictions and jurisdictional specific data limitations; and
- Instructions, explanation and guidance for the collection and reporting of both unit record level and aggregate data collections.

These guidelines aim to facilitate the delivery of nationally comparable ECEC statistics from 2011 onwards.

The manual is intended to assist jurisdictions with data collection activities. It is an important initial resource for 2011 data development activities. The manual also details information for data users about future plans and collection improvements.

The manual is divided into two components:

- *User Guide*: details information for data users relating to the 2010 National ECEC Collection. This component of the manual includes discussions on collection scope and coverage, collection overview, concepts and definitions, jurisdictional data quality and data availability.
- *Collection Manual*: outlines the content of the data standards for the 2010 National ECEC Collection, including background and governance, collection specifications and data element collection instructions, as well as privacy and confidentiality principles.

As this is the first year of the collection, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) have documented the data collection guidelines and data limitations based on knowledge of the data and collection processes. The ABS have sought jurisdictional feedback throughout the process and welcome further suggestions for improvements to future editions of the manual.

THE PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTION

The National ECEC Collection has been established to provide comparable jurisdictional statistics on ECEC. Statistics produced through the collection are designed to report key performance indicators to measure progress of the National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). Chapter 6, Collection Background and Governance, provides further context to the collection, including information on governance, the NP ECE and performance indicators.

Statistics produced through the National ECEC Collection will provide improvements in the quality and accessibility of national ECEC data. The collection is underpinned by standards within the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set

THE PURPOSE OF THE
COLLECTION *continued*

(ECEC NMDS). Further information on the ECEC NMDS is available on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website:

<<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/388509>>.

Jurisdictions are working closely with the ABS to align established jurisdictional collections to the ECEC NMDS, and further developments are planned for future collections.

One of the main benefits of the collection is that it develops the potential for comparability between jurisdictions and provides a basis for evaluating change over time. Data will be published annually, with the first release being *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0), in April 2011.

USE AND MAINTENANCE
OF THE MANUAL

The National ECEC Collection Manual has been developed within the ABS by the Education and Training Statistics Administrative Data Centre. Further collection improvements are planned, and changes in data collection capabilities and methodologies across jurisdictions will necessitate updates to this manual on an annual basis.

Users of the manual should contact the ABS by emailing <client.services@abs.gov.au> or freecall 1300 135 070 if they are experiencing any difficulties in applying rules or requirements of the manual.

CHAPTER 1

COLLECTION SCOPE AND COVERAGE

SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

The collection scope of the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection consists of all establishments delivering an early childhood education (ECE) program. An ECE program is defined as a structured, play based learning program primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full-time schooling, and usually delivered by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it or whether it is government funded or privately provided. This manual uses the term 'preschool' to describe an ECE program, notwithstanding that the terminology varies considerably across the jurisdictions. Further information on key definitions, such as jurisdictional terminology and definitions of preschools, can be found in Chapter 3, Concepts and Definitions.

The National ECEC Collection aims to compile child, teacher and service provider statistics from all in-scope preschool programs. Child care services that do not operate a preschool program are out of scope.

Child data

All children enrolled in a preschool program, at an in-scope service provider, are within scope. To be considered as enrolled, the child must be between 3 and 6 years old inclusive, have been offered a place at the preschool program and be actively attending. Children who are absent in the reference period due to illness or holiday leave are considered to be enrolled if they are expected to return.

Teacher data

Persons in scope of the collection are those who are engaged in the provision of a preschool program, at an in-scope early childhood education establishment. Teacher level data were not published as part of the 2010 National ECEC Collection, however this data is expected to be included in future releases. In 2010 teacher data was collected as part of the National ECEC Workforce Census, which was an initiative of the Australian Government, as represented by DEEWR, in partnership with state and territory governments. Teacher data will be further developed in 2011.

Service provider data

A service provider is considered to be in-scope if it is delivering an in-scope preschool program.

COLLECTION COVERAGE
FOR 2010

All state and territory governments in Australia, as well as the Commonwealth Government, currently collect statistics on preschool programs. The current collection governance responsibilities for ECEC within each jurisdiction are outlined below:

Commonwealth - Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

New South Wales -

- NSW Department of Education and Training
- Community Services, Department of Human Services NSW

Victoria - Vic. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Queensland - QLD Department of Education and Training

South Australia - SA Department of Education and Children's Services

Western Australia - WA Department of Education

Tasmania - Tas. Department of Education

Northern Territory - NT Department of Education and Training

Australian Capital Territory - ACT Department of Education and Training

The following section describes the 2010 National ECEC Collection coverage in each state and territory.

Commonwealth

Enhancement to the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is currently underway to enable supply of statistics for preschool programs in long day care (LDC) centres. As a result, a number of in-scope providers (and subsequently children) were not covered in the 2010 collection. This coverage issue affects each jurisdiction differently, due to the nature of preschool delivery and jurisdictional specific collection methodologies. In future collections CCMS data will be combined with jurisdictional data, however until this occurs, coverage limitations within each jurisdiction will remain unknown. See Chapter 4, Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements for further information on specific jurisdictional preschool delivery and data quality.

New South Wales

New South Wales (NSW) achieved full collection coverage of all government preschools through the annual School Census conducted by the Department of Education and Training.

Community Services, Department of Human Services NSW (Community Services) collected statistics from the preschools which are licensed and subsidised by the department. Only children who did not receive or were not eligible for the Child Care Benefit or the Child Care Rebate were included in this collection. These preschools account for almost half of all in scope non-government preschools in NSW.

Over a third of non-government preschools were not covered in the 2010 collection because they are not funded by NSW Community Services. The majority of these providers will be included in future collections, with the inclusion of CCMS data.

*New South Wales
continued*

There were a small proportion of non-government preschools not covered in the 2010 collection because they were not licensed by NSW Community Services. The majority of these providers are school-based preschools, associated with non-government schools. The appropriate mechanism to include these preschools in the collection is still under investigation.

Victoria

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development collected preschool data from all government funded providers through the 2010 Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection. The collected data covered the vast majority of preschools in Victoria, irrespective of their management type and delivery setting.

There may be a small number of preschools, as defined by this collection, not funded by the state government who were not included in the 2010 Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection. The majority of these providers will be included in future collections, with the inclusion of CCMS data.

Queensland

All licensed preschools and LDCs received the 2010 Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census (ECECSC) from the Department of Education and Training. Although participation was voluntary, the Queensland collection received responses from almost all of the state government funded providers. Only a limited number of unfunded programs in LDCs responded to the collection. With the inclusion of CCMS data in future collections, the majority of these providers will be included.

Full coverage was achieved through the ECECSC of all Queensland government state and private schools providing preschool under specific programs (such as the Bound for Success Pre-Prep program), which operate in Indigenous communities.

South Australia

South Australia achieved full collection coverage for all Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) managed preschools, including funded non-government preschools through the Annual Census of Children's Services (ACCS). Full coverage was not achieved for community managed LDCs as participation in the ACCS was not compulsory for these services. With the inclusion of CCMS data in future collections, the majority of these providers will be included.

Several of the non-government school-based preschools that were licensed child care centres completed the ACCS. Non-government preschools either did not return the ACCS form or did not receive the form because they are not licensed by DECS.

Western Australia

Western Australia's collection covered all government preschools managed or regulated by the Department of Education and all non-government school-based preschools regulated by the Department of Education Services.

Preschool programs delivered by a qualified teacher in a LDC setting (unless the LDC was registered as a school) were not recognised by the state government, and were outside the Western Australian preschool collection scope. Plans are underway to include these preschool programs in future National ECEC Collections, by using CCMS data.



Tasmania

Tasmania’s collection covered all preschools managed or regulated by the Department of Education, which included all government preschools and non-government school-based preschools.

Preschool programs delivered by a qualified teacher in a LDC setting (unless the LDC was registered as a school) were not recognised by the state government, and hence were outside the Tasmanian preschool collection scope. Plans are underway to include these preschool programs in future National ECEC Collections, by using CCMS data.

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory (NT) achieved full coverage of government preschools managed by the Department of Education and Training (DET) through the Age/Grade Census.

Non-government preschools that were registered by DET were covered through the Age/Grade Census, however non-government data was less detailed. Non-government preschools that were not registered by DET were not covered by the Age/Grade Census.

There may be a small number of LDCs within the NT that offered preschool programs, as defined by this collection, however there was no data available for preschool services offered in these centres as they were not registered as preschools and did not receive any funding from DET.

The coverage gap in regards to preschools within LDCs will reduce when CCMS data becomes available.

Australian Capital Territory

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) achieved full coverage of government preschools managed by the Department of Education and Training (DET) through the annual August School Census.

The 2010 collection did not cover the ACT non-government preschool sector as these preschools only participated in the annual February School Census. Data were not available from non-government preschools during the ECEC August collection period. Planning is underway to include ACT non-government providers in future collections.

Preschool programs in a LDC setting were not recognised or funded by DET. Plans are underway to include these preschool programs in future National ECEC Collections using CCMS data.



COLLECTION DATE AND REFERENCE PERIOD

In 2010, the recommended collection date for the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection was the first Friday in August (6 August), with a reference week of 2–6 August 2010. However, not all jurisdictions were able to provide data for the first Friday in August and some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate different reference periods, to better reflect their attendance schedule. Jurisdictional collection dates and reference periods for 2010 are summarised in the table below.

2.1 JURISDICTION COLLECTION DATES AND REFERENCE PERIODS—2010
.....

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Collection Date</i>	<i>Reference Period</i>
New South Wales		
Community Services, Dept of Human Services	20 August	9 August–20 August(a)
Dept of Education and Training	6 August	2 August–6 August
Victoria	na(b)	12 April–7 May
Queensland	17 September	30 August–17 September(a)
South Australia	6 August	2 August–6 August
Western Australia	6 August	2 August–6 August
Tasmania	6 August	26 July–6 August(a)
Northern Territory	6 August	2 August–6 August
Australian Capital Territory	6 August	2 August–6 August

-
- na not available
 - (a) Jurisdiction collected data for a fortnightly reference period.
 - (b) Victoria did not have a specific collection date.

For the National ECEC Collection to be comparable across jurisdictions, it is necessary for all jurisdictions to have a comparable reference period and a consistent collection date. All jurisdictions are working towards collecting ECEC statistics on the first Friday in August for future collection cycles. Due to the different collection dates and reference periods used in 2010, data is not comparable across all jurisdictions. As a result, some jurisdictions are presented separately in the publication *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0).

Use of the recommended collection date of the first Friday in August will align the National ECEC Collection with the National Schools Statistics Collection, allowing jurisdictions to combine their data collection activities. Alignment of the collection date and jurisdictional collection reference periods will also increase the consistency and interpretability of jurisdictional ECEC statistics.

COLLECTION METHODS

Jurisdictions collect and report data for the National ECEC Collection through either a unit record level (URL) collection or an aggregate collection. A jurisdictional URL collection contains confidentialised child, teacher and service provider level data. An aggregate methodology supports the collection of information on child and teacher data at the service provider level. Those jurisdictions that were only able to provide aggregate ECEC data for 2010 are working towards collecting URL statistics for future cycles of the National ECEC Collection. Those jurisdictions that were able to provide URL data for 2010 are also working to enhance and expand the information that is collected and/or provided.

The collection of URL statistics for the National ECEC Collection is required to provide statistical functionality including spatial analysis. In order to accurately report on the number of children who have received early childhood education, an important goal of the collection is to count each child once. Given the complexity of the service delivery model for ECEC across Australia, it is a statistical challenge to ensure that duplicate records in these data sets are identified. URL collections with appropriate methodologies and protocols, assist in the identification of potentially different circumstances where duplicate records may exist. Further appropriate statistical methodologies can only then be applied to accurately derive and report broader child level information. Aggregate collection methodologies are often limited in capacity to accurately identify duplicate records. All data from jurisdictions with a collection process that produced aggregate data for the 2010 National ECEC Collection can only be presented in terms of episodes of preschool service provision. An episode is the count of the occurrence for a specific characteristic. For the National ECEC Collection, an episode refers to a preschool program provided to a child. When one child attends two different preschool programs, the child is attending two episodes of preschool. The following table shows the collection methodology used by each jurisdiction in 2010.

2.2 JURISDICTIONAL COLLECTION METHODOLOGIES—2010

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Collection Method</i>
New South Wales	Unit Record Level/ Aggregate
Victoria	Aggregate
Queensland	Aggregate
South Australia	Aggregate
Western Australia	Aggregate
Tasmania	Unit Record Level
Northern Territory	Unit Record Level
Australian Capital Territory	Unit Record Level

AGE REFERENCE DATE

The National ECEC Collection age reference date for aggregate collections is 1 July. In 2010, all states and territories that provided aggregate level data, collected age at this reference date, except South Australia, which collected 'age at last birthday' and Victoria, which collected age at 30 April. All jurisdictions are developing improvements to their data collections to enable the collection of date of birth, instead of age reference date, to ensure a more accurate measure of age.

NATIONAL
COMPARABILITY
*National Minimum Data
Set*

The Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) is a set of national data standards which has been established by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), in conjunction with the ABS, to guide jurisdictions in the collection of ECEC data. Compliance with these standards will mean ECEC data is consistent and comparable between state and territory jurisdictions. More information on the ECEC NMDS can be found on the AIHW website, <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au>>.

*Key methodological
differences*

For 2010, there were a number of different data collection methodologies employed by each jurisdiction. This has resulted in data not being as comparable as it would be if the collection methods were aligned across jurisdictions. In addition, some jurisdictions were not able to provide the ABS with certain data elements for the 2010 collection.

Data limitations for the 2010 collection include:

- Lack of comprehensive coverage of the preschool sector, for example limited non-government / long day care (LDC) coverage.
- URL data not currently available for all jurisdictions.
- Duplicate records not identifiable within all jurisdictions.
- Differences in data element collection methodologies across jurisdictions.
- Differences in collection dates, reference weeks and age reference dates across jurisdictions.

These differences in the collection and compilation of data means that for some jurisdictions, data did not fully comply with the standards set out in the ECEC NMDS. See Chapter 6, Collection Background and Governance, for more information on the ECEC NMDS. Further information on methodological differences between jurisdictions can be found in Chapter 4, Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements.

OVERVIEW

This chapter describes key concepts and definitions used in the 2010 National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection. Further terms and definitions are provided in the Glossary.

Early childhood education and care

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, the phrase 'Early Childhood Education and Care' incorporates all early childhood education programs (referred to within this manual as 'preschools'), whether they are delivered in an integrated child care service, a stand-alone preschool or a preschool within a school.

Responsibility for early childhood education and care (ECEC) is shared between the Australian Government and the state or territory governments, and is administered through a wide range of service providers including government, local government, community, schools (both government and non-government) and private organisations. There is a wide range of ECEC data already collected by government and non-government agencies for funding purposes. This is also partially due to the wide range of jurisdictional government departments and providers involved in service delivery (McEwin and Ryan, 2008).

Child care

Child care services directly provide care services to children at a specific location, and can include long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care, in-home care and occasional care services. Child care services may or may not offer additional preschool programs within their service. Child care services may be provided through a combination of private organisations, community and some state and local government initiatives.

The Commonwealth Government's primary role in child care is to assist parents with the out of pocket expenses associated with child care, through the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and the Child Care Rebate (CCR). The Commonwealth also provides some operational funding to service providers and administers the quality accreditation scheme. State and territory governments are responsible for licensing and regulating child care and also provide some direct funding. Families can claim the CCB and the CCR for care delivered by approved long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care, in-home care and occasional care services.

Preschool program

A preschool program is a structured, play based learning program, usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full-time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Depending on jurisdictional delivery models, preschool programs may be delivered through government or non-government schools, government or community preschools and for-profit child care providers. Early childhood education terminology differs across

*Preschool program
continued*

states and territories and across years and these differences are summarised in the following table.

3.1 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TERMINOLOGY, BY STATE AND TERRITORY

	<i>Program name</i>	<i>Age requirement(a)</i>
TWO YEARS BEFORE YEAR 1		
NSW	Preschool	3 and 4 years old(b)
Vic.	Kindergarten / Preschool	4 by 30 April
Qld	Kindergarten	4 by 30 June
SA	Preschool	After 4th birthday
WA	Kindergarten	4 by 30 June
Tas.	Kindergarten	4 by 1 January
NT	Preschool	4 by 30 June(c)
ACT	Preschool	4 by 30 April

(a) Sourced from the 2009 Report on Government Services.

(b) As a general rule.

(c) For Indigenous children in remote areas, age requirement is 3 years old by 30 June.

*Year before full-time
schooling*

The year before full-time schooling (YBFS - also referred to as the 'year before formal schooling') is a term used to describe the 'preschool' cohort, due to the varying models of early childhood education in the different jurisdictions (McEwin and Ryan, 2009). The year before a child begins full-time schooling is further defined as Year 1 (or Grade 1) minus 2 years. This cohort may be a combination of 4, 5 and sometimes 6 year old children. The 6 year old children are usually children who are repeating preschool, or they may have been held back from starting preschool at the usual age.

Service management type

The preschool management type refers to the legal or social entity responsible for managing the service. National ECEC preschool data is presented based on ECEC National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) categories, which include government managed, community managed, independent, private-for-profit or other.

Data in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) is presented hierarchically, by government or non-government managed in accordance with the definition in the 2010 ECEC NMDS, which is as follows:

- *Government managed preschools* include Australian, state and local government managed services. Government managed preschools may operate within a variety of settings depending on the jurisdiction, funding models and licensing regulations.
- *Non-government managed preschools* include:
 - Community managed, including not-for-profit services provided or managed by parents, churches or co-operatives;
 - Private-for-profit, including for-profit services provided or managed by a company or private individual;
 - Independent school, including non-government schools that are governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school;

Service management type
continued

- Other, including employer sponsored services.

For the 2010 National ECEC Collection, the ECEC NMDS categories for management type are based on a children's services background, which is distinct from an educational framework. Due to the diverse delivery models for preschool throughout Australia and the often difficult application of management type to a service, the ABS consulted with jurisdictions as to the most appropriate way to categorise services to align with the ECEC NMDS.

The National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) adopts a different distinction between government and non-government services which is based on licensing and legislation, rather than management type. The definitions for government and non-government services within the NSSC are as follows:

- *Government*: comprises all establishments (as defined) administered by the department/ministry of education under directors-general of education (or equivalent) (as defined by membership of the Conference of Education Systems Chief Executive Officers (CESCEO)).
- *Non-government*: comprises all such establishments not administered by the departments of education, including those establishments administered by any other government authority.

In future collections the ABS, in consultation with the AIHW and all jurisdictions, plans to review the current ECEC NMDS management type disaggregation and explore the relationship between the government and non-government definitions adopted for the NSSC, which may provide a more meaningful standard. This further work is aimed to assist jurisdictions to more accurately represent their services within appropriate categories, providing a representative and statistically accurate depiction of the provision of preschool within Australia.

For information on the jurisdictional inclusions adopted for the 2010 National ECEC Collection by management type within each jurisdiction, see Chapter 4, Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements.

Service activity type

The service activity type is the type of service provided by the children's service agency. Within a service provider setting, there may be one preschool program, multiple preschool programs or no preschool program. For example, a long day care (LDC) service may provide a preschool program as a sub-component of their service, therefore some children within that LDC would be receiving a preschool program, whereas others may not. This distinction is made by whether the program provided is a structured, play-based educational program, usually delivered by a qualified teacher.

The following categories are used in the National ECEC Collection, based on the ECEC NMDS. For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, only services which provide a preschool program are in-scope. These categories can be used to determine whether or not a service is in-scope, as well as providing information on the service activity type. For example, only preschools, centre-based long day care, occasional care and family day care can provide a preschool program. Therefore, if a service is identified as outside school hours care, vacation care or in-home care, it would be out of scope of the collection.

*Service activity type
continued*

CENTRE-BASED LONG DAY CARE

Centre-based long day care comprises services aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds that are provided in a centre usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. In some jurisdictions, primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations.

OCCASIONAL CARE

Occasional care comprises services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and are aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff.

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

Outside school hours care comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) outside school hours during term. Care may be provided on student free days and when school finishes early. For the purposes of this collection vacation care is recorded separately.

VACATION CARE

Vacation care comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) during vacation periods.

FAMILY DAY CARE

Family day care comprises services provided in the carer's own home. The care is largely aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Central co-ordination units in all states and territories organise and support a network of carers, often with the help of local governments.

IN-HOME CARE

In-home care comprises services where an approved carer provides care in the child's home. Families eligible for in-home care include families where the parent/s or child has an illness or disability; families in rural or remote areas; parents working shift work or non-standard hours; families with more than two children from a multiple birth and/or more than two children under school age; and families where a breastfeeding mother is working from home.

PRESCHOOL

Preschool comprises a structured educational program usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis in dedicated preschools. Similar educational programs or curricula may be provided in long day care and other settings. These are primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full-time schooling.

Service delivery setting

Service delivery setting refers to the type of setting in which the children's service activity can be provided. Children's services can be delivered in the following settings:

CENTRE-BASED—SCHOOL

Centre-based (school) refers to child care or preschool services delivered on school grounds, using school facilities (e.g. a building owned by the school).

CENTRE-BASED—OTHER

Centre-based (other) refers to a purpose built building or buildings where a child care or preschool service is delivered and the primary function of the building is non-residential (e.g. a child care centre, dedicated preschool etc.).

HOME-BASED—CHILD'S HOME

Home-based (child's home) refers to a private residential dwelling where the child lives.

HOME-BASED—OTHER

Home-based (other) refers to a private residential dwelling where a child care or preschool service is delivered by someone other than the child's parents, carers or guardians (e.g. a family day care caregiver's house).

GENERAL COMMUNITY SETTING

General community setting refers to child care or preschool services delivered at a general community infrastructure facility (e.g. a park, neighbourhood house, community hall, libraries, etc.).

Counts of children

A key outcome of the National ECEC Collection is to collect data on children enrolled and attending preschool programs, as well as episodes of preschool enrolment and attendance. In order to accurately report on the number of children who have received early childhood education, a requirement of the National ECEC Collection is to count each child once. Given the complexity of the service delivery models for ECEC across Australia, it is a statistical challenge to identify children attending multiple preschool programs within the collection reference period and then to accurately report the number of children enrolled or attending in a preschool program. For the purpose of reporting on hours or fees, total hours and total fees are counted for children attending multiple preschool programs within or across sectors. Below is a summary of the different ways that a child could be counted more than once.

ACROSS JURISDICTIONS

When children and their families move interstate during the reference period, they may still be on the old preschool enrolment list as well as the new preschool enrolment list. This issue is more prominent when the two jurisdictions involved have different collection reference periods (i.e. one in April and one in August).

CROSS BORDER ISSUES

Where a child is enrolled and attending two preschools in two separate jurisdictions (e.g. NSW and ACT). This could occur when a family lives near the state border and wish to increase their child's hours of preschool attendance.

*Counts of children
continued*

WITHIN A SECTOR

Where a child is enrolled and attending two preschool programs within a sector. Duplicates could be present because a child's family has decided to use two non-government services to increase their child's hours of preschool attendance.

ACROSS SECTORS

Where a child is enrolled and attending two preschool programs across sectors. Duplicates may exist because a child's family has chosen to use a combination of government preschool and a non-government preschool to increase their child's hours of preschool attendance.

ACROSS TIME

Where a child attends preschool for more than one year (e.g. a child repeats preschool or is enrolled in an 'early entry' preschool program).

Identification of unique records can be resolved by application of a statistical linkage key and through consultation with jurisdictions. For the 2010 National ECEC Collection, removal of duplication was partially achieved for some jurisdictions, however, for other jurisdictions it was not achieved. See Chapter 4, Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements for jurisdictional specific assessments of duplication.

*Episodes of
enrolment/attendance at a
preschool program*

An episode is the count of the occurrence of a specific characteristic. For the National ECEC Collection, an episode refers to a preschool program provided to a child. When one child attends two different preschool programs, the child is attending two episodes of preschool.

For the 2010 National ECEC Collection, not all jurisdictions were able to provide enough detail from administrative systems to accurately provide counts of children. For this reason, episodes of preschool delivery (not counts of children) were only reported for some jurisdictions for 2010.

KEY COLLECTION
DEFINITIONS

The following section defines key terms used in this manual.

Enrolment

A child is considered to be enrolled if they have been offered a place in a preschool program and are actively attending. Children who are absent in the reference period due to illness or holiday leave are considered to be enrolled if they are expected to return.

Attendance

A child is considered to be attending a preschool program if the child is present at least once during the reference period.

Teacher

For the purpose of the National ECEC Collection, a teacher is defined as the person or persons with a relevant university qualification who is delivering the preschool program. Delivery of a preschool program refers to face to face delivery by a primary contact worker of a preschool program that is a structured, play-based, educational program. A teacher is defined as delivering a preschool program if they delivered the program at least once within the reference period. Teachers who were on alternate duties during the reference period or were absent due to illness or extended holiday leave should not be included.

Preschool program fees

Fees refer to the 'out of pocket' expenses to the parent or guardian for the child to attend the preschool program, after subsidies have been paid/received. Preschool fees are collected differently for unit record level (URL) data and aggregate level data. For URL data, fee and subsidy information is collected at the child level. As this is not possible for aggregate collections, fee per child information is based on a service's schedule of fixed fees, for example a charge of \$150 per full term. The fee schedule can differ between programs, organisations and jurisdictions. Fees may be charged daily, weekly, annually, per session or per term. If data is collected or provided at any level other than weekly, the weekly fee is derived from the provided fee and fee schedule.

Hours

Information on preschool hours available, enrolled and attended is necessary to evaluate whether children have access to 15 hours of preschool per week and if so, whether they are enrolling and attending the program for those hours. Part of the Universal Access commitment is that by 2013 every child will have access to a preschool program for at least 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year.

Hours data is collected differently for URL data and aggregate level data. For URL data, hours information is collected at the child level. As this is not possible for aggregate collections, hours data are collected at the service provider level, and hours per child is derived.

Disadvantage

The National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE) outlines that preschool programs should be available to everyone, regardless of their income or background. The NP ECE also recognises that disadvantaged families often face barriers to accessing government services for various reasons.

Disadvantage continued

To measure the extent to which children from disadvantaged families are under represented in preschool programs, the National ECEC Collection uses usual residence, in conjunction with the geographically based Index of Relative Social Disadvantage (IRSD), which is one of four indexes of the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR AREAS

The SEIFA is a product developed especially for those interested in the assessment of the welfare of Australian communities. The ABS has developed four indexes to allow ranking of regions/areas, providing a method of determining the level of social and economic well-being in each region.

Each of the four indexes summarises different aspects of the socio-economic conditions of people living in an area; each is based upon a different set of social and economic information from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. The indexes provide more general measures of socio-economic status than is given by measuring, for example, income or unemployment alone. The IRSD is the SEIFA index used for the National ECEC Collection.

INDEX OF RELATIVE SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE

The IRSD summarises a range of information about the economic and social resources of people and households within an area. Unlike other indexes, this index includes only measures of relative disadvantage. Variables that comprise this index include; low income, no qualifications, unemployment, overcrowded housing, disability, no car, and Indigenous status.

Indigenous status

A goal of the Universal Access commitment is to provide equal access to all children, including improving preschool attendance rates for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children. A child is considered to be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander if he or she is identified by a parent/guardian as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. The National ECEC Collection uses the ABS standard Indigenous categories:

- Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin
- Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
- Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
- Not stated/inadequately described

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the methodology and quality of jurisdictional early childhood education and care data and the sources from which the data was obtained for the 2010 National Early Childhood Education Care (ECEC) Collection. As there is considerable variability in the data collected by each of the states and territories, this chapter aims to clarify the quality of the data and the mechanisms used for collecting the data.

It must be noted that data from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) were not available for the 2010 National ECEC Collection and therefore is not included in this chapter. More information about the CCMS can be found in Chapter 2, Collection Overview.

For some jurisdictions teacher level data was collected, however for the purposes of the 2010 National ECEC Collection this information was not disseminated. In 2010 teacher data was collected through the National Workforce Census, which was an initiative of the Australian Government in partnership with state and territory governments.

Management types

This outlines the nature of preschool delivery and the relevant management types for each jurisdiction, which may include information on legislation and licensing arrangements. The management type is then disaggregated by preschool or Long Day Care (LDC) as main service activity type. Management type is also further disaggregated by either government or non-government. This disaggregation aligns with table presentation from the publication *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0).

The distinction between a preschool and LDC main service activity type is as follows:

PRESCHOOL

Preschool comprises a structured educational program usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis in dedicated preschools. Similar educational programs or curricula may be provided in long day care and other settings and fall under this category if the main service activity type for these services are preschool.

LONG DAY CARE

Centre-based long day care comprises services aimed primarily at 0-5 year olds that are provided in a centre usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided based on the development needs, interests and experience of each child. In some jurisdictions, primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Services fall under this category if the main service activity type is LDC. These services may or may not deliver a preschool program.

<i>Institutional environment</i>	This dimension refers to the institutional and organisational factors which may have a significant influence on the effectiveness and credibility of the agency producing the statistics. This considers the surrounding context, which may influence the validity, reliability or appropriateness of the data.
<i>Relevance</i>	The assessment indicates how well the jurisdictional data source meets the needs of the National ECEC Collection in terms of the concepts measured, and the populations represented. This criteria also outlines the collection scope and coverage.
<i>Timeliness</i>	Timeliness refers to both the frequency with which a source is collected, and also the amount of time it takes to release the data once collected.
<i>Accuracy</i>	Data sources employ a range of methods to collect data, in this context accuracy refers to the degree to which the data correctly describes the phenomenon they were designed to measure. This is an important component of quality as it relates to how accurate the data is and impacts on how useful and meaningful the data will be for interpretation or further analysis. An assessment is made on the accessibility and availability of a source and the implications on statistics for the National ECEC Collection. To describe this dimension for the National ECEC Collection, information is provided on the collection mechanism, data processing and validation procedures.
<i>Coherence</i>	Coherence refers to the internal consistency of a statistical collection, product or release, as well as its comparability with other sources of information, within a broad analytical framework and over time. The use of standard concepts, classifications and target populations promotes coherence, as does the use of common methodology across collections. Coherence is an important component of quality as it provides an indication of whether the data set can be usefully compared with other sources to enable data compilation and comparison. In the context of the National ECEC Collection this assessment also examines changes in concepts and alignment with the ECEC National Minimum Data Set (NMDS).
<i>Interpretability</i>	Interpretability refers to the availability of information to help provide insight into the data. Assisting with the interpretation of the data may include the variables used, the availability of metadata, including concepts, classifications, and measures of accuracy.
<i>Accessibility</i>	Accessibility refers to the ease of access to data by users, including the ease with which the existence of information can be ascertained, as well as the suitability of the form or medium through which information can be accessed. For the purpose of the data quality framework, data accessibility relates to the publication <i>Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010</i> (cat. no. 4240.0) and the National ECEC Collection Manual.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Overview

In New South Wales (NSW), 'preschool' is the term used for the year before school and 'kindergarten' is the term used for the child's first year of school. There are a variety of preschool programs that children can attend to receive early childhood education in NSW, including community-based preschools, Department of Education and Training (DET) preschools, long day-care centres (LDCs) and preschools in non-government private schools.

Management types, legislation and licensing

All preschools in NSW comply with the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* (NSW) and the Children's Services Regulation 2004. Some school-based preschools (government or non-government managed) are also covered by the *Education Act 1990* (NSW), depending on the curriculum focus.

Community Services, Department of Human Services NSW (Community Services) licenses all children's services across NSW, including LDC, occasional day care, family day care, home-based care and preschool. Licenses are for a term of three years or less.

PRESCHOOL

Preschool in NSW consists of the following management types:

Government managed

Across NSW, the DET operate approximately 100 preschool services that are attached to government schools. These preschools are located on government school sites and deliver preschool programs to children one year prior to enrolment in kindergarten (the first year of full-time school). Services operated by DET are provided free of charge, although some may charge a voluntary nominal daily donation. Since July 2010, services operated by the DET are required to be licensed by NSW Community Services. Government school-based preschools may also be covered by the Education Act 1990, depending on the curriculum focus.

Non-government managed

In NSW, there are two types of non-government preschools - community and independent.

Community managed: NSW Community Services provides funding for community-based, not-for-profit preschools, which are owned and operated by community organisations or local government and have a main service activity type of preschool. These preschools are licensed, monitored and funded by NSW Community Services. In addition to funding provided by NSW Community Services, most of these services also charge tuition fees.

Independent school managed: There are a number of non-government private schools which also provide preschool. Non-government school-based preschools may be covered by the Education Act 1990, depending on the curriculum focus.

LONG DAY CARE

LDCs in NSW consist of the following management types:

*Management types,
legislation and licensing
continued*

LONG DAY CARE *continued*

Private for-profit managed: Commercial for-profit LDCs are managed by the private sector and have a main service activity type that is not preschool. These services do not receive funding from NSW Community Services. As this sector is largely unfunded by the government it was difficult to collect data from these providers in 2010. Therefore, NSW did not gain comprehensive coverage of these services.

Quality of data source

In 2010 NSW had two main sources for collection of data in relation to preschool services:

- Children's Services Data Collection - data collected at the unit record level (URL) and aggregate level.
- NSW Department of Education and Training Census - all data collected at the URL.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES DATA COLLECTION

Due to the inherent differences between URL and aggregate data collection methodologies, the ABS did not disseminate aggregate data collected by NSW Community Services for the 2010 National ECEC Collection, as it was not comparable with data collected through the URL collection. This aggregate component represented a small proportion of service providers in the overall collection.

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the Children's Services Data Collection was Community Services, Department of Human Services NSW (Community Services).

Relevance

The data collected by NSW Community Services was used for the NSW government's reporting commitments, and to assist with the evaluation and planning of service provision. For preschools, the information obtained was used to determine the funding that will be provided for the next year and the projected annual subsidy amounts for the Early Childhood Teacher Costs Contribution Scheme. This scheme offsets the cost for the employment and professional development of early childhood teachers. Data were also used for monitoring the Children's Services Program funded services and reporting to the Commonwealth on achievements against targets.

The Children's Services Data Collection included all children aged 0 to 6 years old attending an in-scope service who did not receive or were not eligible for the Child Care Benefit (CCB) or the Child Care Rebate (CCR). In-scope organisations for 2010 included:

- preschools that were licensed, monitored and funded by NSW Community Services;
- not-for-profit and community preschools, and LDCs, which were owned and operated by community organisations or local councils; and
- vacation care, occasional care and other early childhood programs.

Community managed preschools in NSW were mandated to participate in the annual data collection as they were licensed, monitored and funded by NSW Community Services, and therefore full coverage in the collection was achieved from these preschools. However, only children who did not receive or were not eligible for the CCB or the CCR were included in the collection.

*Quality of data source
continued*CHILDREN'S SERVICES DATA COLLECTION *continued*

A substantial proportion of preschools in NSW were commercial for-profit LDCs, managed by the private sector. These services do not receive funding from NSW Community Services and therefore it was difficult to collect data from them. All providers registered for the CCB and the CCR were excluded from the 2010 Children's Services Data Collection. The Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) defines that a preschool program can operate in an LDC if the program comprises a structured education program usually provided by a qualified teacher. Jurisdictional collections currently do not have full coverage of preschool programs being delivered in LDC as defined by the ECEC NMDS for the National ECEC Collection. Data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is required to achieve full coverage of preschool activity in LDC nationally. CCMS preschool data was not included in the 2010 collection due to the required information not being collected. In the future, the National ECEC Collection aims to include information on preschool programs provided within LDC through the CCMS.

The Children's Services Data Collection collected data at a range of levels at both URL and aggregate level as follows:

- *Preschool program*: information on service operations and characteristics;
- *Children enrolled in a preschool program*: information on child demographics, enrolment and attendance;
- *Staff*: at the person level, information on employment arrangements and qualifications.

Timeliness

The collection was undertaken on the NSW census date of 20 August 2010, for a representative fortnight of 9 August to 20 August 2010. The collection reference period adopted by NSW Community Services did not align with the recommended August collection reference period adopted by the other jurisdictions for the 2010 National ECEC Collection.

All service providers were required to return data to NSW Community Services by 10 September 2010. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

All providers funded by NSW Community Services and offering a preschool service were required to participate in the collection. In 2010 preschool service providers were encouraged to use a new online data entry system, however the existing online format also remained available for the 2010 collection, for those service providers that preferred that method.

The new on-line collection tool allowed preschool service providers to:

- Enter data for each child and staff member, and to automatically calculate totals.
- Commence entering individual child and staff member details during the representative fortnight.
- Generate a copy of the data that had been entered for their own records.

*Quality of data source
continued*

CHILDREN'S SERVICES DATA COLLECTION *continued*

Service providers entered data from child enrolment forms into their service provider data repository. During the collection period, data from this repository was used by the service provider to populate child enrolment information. Service providers also entered additional data into the on-line database at unit record level to meet the collection requirements. After this was completed, data entry requirement restrictions were used to ensure the required data were entered before the data could be submitted. The data was then sent to an off-line database (NSW Community Services data repository) for storage. The user then received an automatic report via e-mail confirming that data had been submitted successfully and received by NSW Community Services.

The 2010 data collection did not collect Statistical Linkage Key (SLK) information, therefore identification of duplicate records across multiple services was not possible. NSW plans to collect SLK information for 2011, which will make it possible to identify duplicate records.

NSW Community Services ensured that all services submitted compulsory data. The online form used by services contained some validation rules that prevented inconsistent and missing data. During the data collection period, services could call a 1300 phone number to clarify counting rules and data collection procedures. After the data collection period, services were able to change their data by notifying NSW Community Services if they identified an error.

In addition, all submitted data were cross-checked for consistency with operational characteristics such as approved number of places and opening hours at each service, so that obvious errors were identified. Previous years data were also compared and, where large variations had occurred, services were contacted to determine whether errors had occurred in current year's data. Regional staff also undertook random audits of services after the collection period.

Coherence

In 2010 NSW Community Services collected some data through the Children's Services Data Collection using an URL data collection methodology (i.e. if service providers opted to use the new on-line form).

In the collection reference period, a child may be enrolled and attend two or more preschool programs. In order to address key collection requirements, it is important to be able to count each child once. A child may be 'double counted' in a number of ways and a URL collection itself may not be able to completely address all the occurrences where double counting of a child may occur. Care needs to be taken when interpreting URL child data from NSW Community Services due to double counting that may have occurred:

- *Across jurisdictions:* where children and their families moved interstate during a preschool year. Eliminating this type of double counting was not achieved in 2010 as a common collection reference date for all jurisdictions was not achieved.

*Quality of data source
continued*

CHILDREN'S SERVICES DATA COLLECTION *continued*

- *Across sectors:* where a family may be using a government preschool and a non-government preschool. Eliminating this type of double counting is only achievable where multiple URL collections across sectors within a jurisdiction are comparable and compliant with the National Minimum Data Set (NMDS). This was not achieved due to NSW adopting both URL and aggregate collection methodologies.
- *Across time:* where a child attends preschool for more than 1 year (e.g. a child repeats preschool, or was enrolled in an 'early entry' preschool program). Elimination of this type of double counting is only achieved through comparable, NMDS compliant time series, which was not achieved in the 2010 National ECEC Collection due to it being the inaugural collection.
- *Within sector:* where children are enrolled in more than one non-government preschool at once. Due to services within sectors being able to complete the collection with either aggregate or URL methodology and did not collect required information to produce a SLK, double counting within sectors in NSW was not addressed.

Further information on URL data elements:

- **Date of birth:** day of birth was not provided, only month and year.
- **Area of usual residence:** street address of the child was not provided. This affected the accuracy of NSW geo-coding performed by the ABS.
- **Indigenous status:** there was no breakdown into Indigenous status categories, only 'Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander' or 'Non-Indigenous' information was provided.
- **Hours attended:** Hours attended for each child were derived from the number of days attended in a fortnight.
- **Hours enrolled:** hours enrolled for each child were derived from the number of days enrolled in a fortnight.
- **SLK:** letters of family name and given name were not provided, significantly decreasing the ability to detect duplicate counts of children enrolled and attending.

NSW Community Services also collected some data using an aggregate data collection methodology (i.e. if service providers opted to use the existing online form). For the 2010 collection, the aggregate data collected by NSW Community Services was not disseminated as the data was not comparable with data collected through the URL collection. This aggregate component represented a small proportion of service providers in the overall collection.

Interpretability

NSW provided a range of key information via manuals and fact sheets, such as the 2010 Census Booklet and Coding Instructions, to assist in the reporting of data, correct interpretation and explanation of concepts.

Accessibility

National and jurisdictional level information is published in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) on the ABS website.

*Quality of data source
continued*

NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENSUS

Data from government preschools were collected from the Department of Education and Training Census.

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the Department of Education and Training Census was the NSW Department of Education and Training (DET).

Relevance

In 2010 the DET conducted a census on all preschools attached to government primary schools and achieved complete coverage of these service providers. The data collected by DET enabled reporting across the NSW ECEC sector for a variety of reporting requirements.

The scope of this collection included all children aged 3 to 6 years old who were attending a preschool program at a government school in NSW.

The scope of this collection included:

- *Preschools services funded and provided by DET, and located on government school sites:* information on service operations and characteristics;
- *Children enrolled at a DET preschool and aged 3 to 6 years old:* at unit record level, information on child demographics, enrolment and attendance;
- *Staff:* at the person level, information on employment arrangements and qualifications.

Timeliness

The collection was undertaken on the NSW DET census date at 6 August 2010 for a representative week of 2 August to 6 August 2010. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

All DET preschools were required to participate in the collection by completing a paper-based collection form. There were three sections to the preschool census collection:

- general preschool data (e.g. number of children enrolled, number of Indigenous children);
- class or group data (overall session details for service and individual attendance for children, along with date of birth, sex and special needs); and
- teacher data (e.g. qualifications and length of employment).

During the collection period, service providers completed collection forms by entering enrolment data and additional information to meet the collection requirements. Service providers uploaded the information from each child's enrolment form into the government service provider data repository. DET then supplied data from this repository to NSW Community Services, where it was stored in the NSW Community Services data repository.

*Quality of data source
continued*

NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENSUS *continued*

The ABS sources the data from this repository for the 2010 National ECEC Collection. Once data is received by the ABS, additional validation is carried out.

Coherence

In a collection reference period, a child may be enrolled in and attend two or more preschool programs. In order to address key collection requirements, it is important to be able to count each child once. A child may be 'double counted' in a number of ways and a URL collection itself may not be able to address all the occurrences where double counting of a child may occur. Care needs to be taken when interpreting URL child data from NSW DET due to double counting that may have occurred:

- *Across jurisdictions:* where children and their families moved interstate during a preschool year. Eliminating this type of double counting was not achieved in 2010 as a common collection reference date for all jurisdictions was not achieved.
- *Across sectors:* where a family may be using a government preschool and a non-government preschool. Eliminating this type of double counting is only achievable where multiple URL collections across sectors within a jurisdiction are comparable and compliant with the NMDS. This was not achieved due to NSW adopting URL and aggregate collection methodologies for on-government preschool data.
- *Across time:* where a child attends preschool for more than 1 year (e.g. a child repeats preschool, or was enrolled in an 'early entry' preschool program). Elimination of this type of double counting is only achieved through comparable, NMDS compliant time series, which was not achieved in the 2010 National ECEC Collection due to it being the inaugural collection.

NSW DET were able to identify double counting and apply appropriate methods for the following situations:

- *Within sector:* where children are enrolled in more than one government preschool at once. Due to the URL methodology and use of SLK, NSW DET data is unlikely to have any double counting occurring within the sector.

For 2010 DET data, the following data elements were not provided:

- Eligibility for subsidy indicator
- Maximum preschool hours available per week

Further information on data elements:

- Hours attended - Hours attended for each child were derived from the number of days attended
- Hours enrolled - Hours enrolled for each child were derived from the number of days enrolled

Interpretability

Limited information is known as to the types of explanatory fact sheets or manuals which assist in the collection of data.

*Quality of data source
continued*

NSW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENSUS *continued*

Accessibility

National and jurisdictional level information is published in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0), on the ABS website.

The information contained within this report has been sourced from NSW Community Services website and the Department of Education and Training website in addition to consultations held between NSW Community Services and the ABS. Further information is available at the NSW Community Services website

<<http://www.community.nsw.gov.au>> and DET website

<<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au>>.

VICTORIA

Overview

In Victoria, 'kindergarten' is the term used for a child's year before full-time schooling (referred to within this manual as 'preschool') and 'preparatory' is the term used for a child's first year of school. Children in Victoria are eligible to enrol in preschool at the beginning of the year if they turn 4 years old prior to 30 April of the same year.

Legislation and licensing

All Victorian preschools fall under the *Amended Children's Services Act 1996* (Vic.), *Children's Services Act 1996* (Vic.) and the Children's Services Regulations 2009 and are bound by the conditions of these Acts and Regulations. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) licenses child care services including preschool, long day care (LDC), family day care, in-home care, occasional care and outside school hours care. All regulations and conditions of applications for licenses are covered under the Children's Services Regulations 2009.

The Victorian state government provides contributory funding towards one year of preschool for each child in the year before they start school. To be in receipt of funding, preschools must be licensed under the Children's Services Act 1996, and operate a preschool program that meets the criteria for funding eligibility. Some children are funded for a second year of preschool if eligibility requirements are met.

Management types

In Victoria, there are a variety of program settings and physical settings for preschool programs. Victorian providers may operate their services from a stand-alone facility or in a LDC centre. The actual service model can be a sessional preschool program that is operated in a stand-alone setting or an LDC, or a preschool program which may be fully integrated as part of an LDC setting. Preschool programs may be delivered from a number of different types of physical setting which could include a school setting. These services may be government or non-government managed.

PRESCHOOL

Preschools in Victoria consist of the following management types:

Government managed

Government preschools in Victoria are those managed by local government.

Non-government managed

Community managed: Community managed preschools include those managed by parents, a church or co-operative, where the main service activity type is preschool.

Independent schools: Independent schools are schools that are governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school.

Private for-profit managed: Preschools managed by the private sector include for-profit private providers, companies or natural persons, where the main service activity type is preschool.

LONG DAY CARE

LDCs in Victoria consist of the following management types:

Community managed: Community managed LDCs include those managed by parents, a church or co-operative, where the main service activity type is not preschool.

*Management types
continued*

LONG DAY CARE *continued*

Private for-profit managed: LDCs managed by the private sector include for-profit private providers, companies or natural persons, where the main service activity type is not preschool.

Quality of data source

CONFIRMED KINDERGARTEN FUNDING DATA COLLECTION

In 2010 Victoria had one main source for the collection of data in relation to preschool programs, the Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection.

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection (the DEECD Collection) was the Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD).

Relevance

The data from the 2010 DEECD Collection enabled reporting across the Victorian ECEC sector for a variety of reporting requirements. The information was used by DEECD to make decisions about the level of funding each organisation was eligible to receive for each preschool child enrolment (per capita funding) and the number of children eligible to receive the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy.

The scope of this collection included all children aged 3 to 6 years old who were officially enrolled in a state funded preschool program during the collection period, that was provided by an organisation with a current Service Agreement with DEECD. These services with a current Funding and Service Agreement with DEECD were licensed and funded by DEECD, and therefore participation in the collection was a mandatory requirement.

For 2010, data were collected at the aggregate level for:

- *Preschool programs:* information on service operations and characteristics.
- *Children enrolled at a preschool program:* information on child characteristics, and enrolment, but not attendance.
- *Staff:* information on employment arrangements and qualifications.

There may be a small number of preschool programs that operated in LDCs that were not funded or licensed by the DEECD, and therefore were not included in the 2010 DEECD Collection. The Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS), defines that a preschool program can operate in an LDC if the program comprises a structured education program usually provided by a qualified teacher. Jurisdictional collections currently do not have full coverage of preschool programs being delivered in LDC as defined by the ECEC NMDS for the National ECEC Collection. Data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is required to achieve full coverage of preschool activity in LDC nationally. CCMS preschool data was not included in the 2010 collection due to the required information not being collected. In the future, the National ECEC Collection aims to include information on preschool programs provided within LDC through the CCMS.

*Quality of data source
continued*CONFIRMED KINDERGARTEN FUNDING DATA COLLECTION *continued**Timeliness*

Data for 2010 was collected during a 4 week period, beginning 12 April. The collection reference period adopted by Victoria did not align with the recommended August collection reference period adopted by the other jurisdictions for the 2010 National ECEC Collection.

In Victoria, it was a condition of preschool funding that organisations provide accurate information to DEECD by the due date. The timeliness and accuracy of data provided by each organisation is reviewed annually as part of a service agreement. If an organisation failed to provide accurate information or to return the forms to their regional office by the required date, DEECD may decide to delay or cease payments of funding.

The data processing and validation stages took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

Organisations with a current service agreement with DEECD and who continued to meet the eligibility requirements for funding, were required to submit data collection forms to their regional office. There are two data collections each year and organisations are required to provide data for both collections.

In the April 2010 collection, organisations were required to confirm the number of enrolments and the number of children receiving the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy who were enrolled and attending at the time of the collection. User and service characteristics were also provided at this time.

In the November 2010 collection, all organisations receiving preschool funding were required to complete a form to estimate the anticipated number of preschool enrolments, and the number of children eligible to receive the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy for the following year.

In April 2010, data were collected for the first time via an on-line form from the majority of service providers. A paper based form was used to collect information from a small number of providers. These forms were then included with data collected from the online form. Service providers were required to access the on-line form to record enrolment and attendance data for the reference week. The on-line form allowed service providers to type in information or select appropriate answers from available options by either ticking a box or selecting from a drop down list. Some information on the form was already pre-populated for the organisations. Pre-populated information was required to be checked for accuracy. Automatic alerts allowed the user to know if there were mismatches or errors in cross-referenced data, so that they could check their answers and edit if necessary.

*Quality of data source
continued*

CONFIRMED KINDERGARTEN FUNDING DATA COLLECTION *continued*

The process of obtaining and processing data in Victoria commenced with the service provider's entry of data into the 'Kindergarten Confirmed Funding Data Collection (Organisation) On-line Part A Form' and the 'Kindergarten Confirmed Funding Data Collection (Service Location) On-line Part B Form'. Once service providers completed these forms, they were returned to DEECD via the internet. Funding data from these collections was then entered and stored in the DEECD data repository, Children's Services Online (CHISOL).

In order to consolidate the CHISOL and on-line survey data, the Data and Evaluation Division matched data from the two sources to ensure there was no duplication. Data was then extracted from CHISOL for the 2010 National ECEC Collection.

Victoria carried out data validation in response to missing fields of data as well as cross checking data for accuracy. With the move to on-line data collection, many fields were entered via drop-down boxes containing only valid options. Intermediate totals were system calculated, rather than manually entered. DEECD staff performed verification checks on every preschool service submission, such as ensuring that no blanks occurred in data records, and comparing enrolments across years.

Coherence

In 2010 DEECD used an aggregate data collection methodology. Aggregate jurisdictional data collection methodologies using the 2010 ECEC Aggregate National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) did not allow for the identification of multiple enrolments for a single child. In the collection reference period, a child may be enrolled and attend two or more different preschool programs. Aggregate data from the 2010 DEECD Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection did not allow identification of unique records. This methodology can only produce episodes of attendance, and not the attendance of individual children. 2010 ECEC statistics from DEECD should be interpreted with care as they are not directly comparable with other jurisdictional data included in the 2010 National ECEC Collection.

Victoria was able to supply data on approved second year preschool enrolments, which provided further contextual information on preschool enrolments in Victoria. This information was not available for Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children for 2010, but will be available in future collections.

Due to expected developments to the Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection, a time series will not be achievable with 2010 data. It is anticipated that time series will be achieved in the future as the DEECD Collection develops in its capacity to capture unit record level child and staff data.

*Quality of data source
continued*CONFIRMED KINDERGARTEN FUNDING DATA COLLECTION *continued*

Further information on data elements:

- Preschool attendance hours was not provided (only preschool enrolment hours).
- LDC fee schedule was not disaggregated by age of children, as specified in the NMDS.
- Preschool fee schedule was not disaggregated by age of children, as specified in the NMDS.
- Child data was not disaggregated by sex. This impacts aggregate data on enrolment, attendance and Indigenous status of children.
- Child age was specified 'as at 30 April', not the recommended 'as at 1 July'.
- Indigenous data was not disaggregated by age.
- Attendance data was not supplied.

For LDC data, Victoria did not supply disaggregated data by the 'preschool program delivered by teacher indicator'. As a result, Victorian LDC providers represented in table disaggregations of service activity type within the publication *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be delivering a preschool program as defined by the collection. A preschool program is defined as a structured, play based learning program, usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full-time schooling.

Interpretability

Extensive explanatory information is provided on the collection form. Information such as a 'frequently asked questions' fact sheet on the data collection process was available from DEECD. If providers required clarification about a question they were able to contact a Children's Service Adviser in their regional office.

Accessibility

National and jurisdictional level information is published in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) on the ABS website.

The information contained within this report has been sourced from the DEECD website <<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/ecsmanagement/default.htm>>, and from consultations held between the DEECD and the ABS.

QUEENSLAND

Overview

In Queensland, 'kindergarten' is the term used to describe an early childhood education program (referred to within this manual as 'preschool'), in the year before full-time schooling (year 1 minus 2) and 'preparatory' is the term used for a child's first year of compulsory school (year 1 minus 1). Children in Queensland are eligible to enrol in a funded preschool program if they are at least 4 years of age prior to 30 June of that year.

The non-government preschool sector in Queensland comprises stand-alone centres, generally referred to as 'kindergartens', and preschool programs integrated into long day care (LDC) services.

Legislation and licensing

The Department of Education and Training (DET) in Queensland is responsible for the licensing and monitoring of child care services under the *Child Care Act 2002* (Qld.) and services are bound by the conditions of this Act. All services offering approved preschool programs are licensed under this legislation.

Management types

PRESCHOOL

Preschool in Queensland consists of the following management types:

Government managed

There are a small number of government managed schools that provide preschool programs in Queensland under the Bound for Success pre-prep program, which operates in 35 specific Indigenous communities. This program is offered in very remote communities where there are little or no early childhood education and care infrastructure. These programs are provided by the Queensland DET under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld.).

Non-government managed

Community managed: Community managed preschools include those managed by parents, a church or a cooperative, where the main service activity type is preschool. In 2010 the Queensland government funded the majority of non-government preschool programs through the Department of Education Community Kindergarten Assistance Scheme (DECKAS). From January 2011, existing funded services will transition to the new Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme, under which approved preschool program providers will receive a subsidy per eligible child enrolled.

Private for-profit managed: These are approved stand-alone preschools provided by non-government not-for-profit organisations or for-profit corporations, sole traders, individuals or entities, where the main service activity type is preschool. In 2010 for the first time, the Queensland government provided funding under the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme to LDCs that provided an approved preschool program.

Independent school managed: These are services providing approved preschool programs in registered non-government schools. Schools providing an approved program are eligible to apply for funding under the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme to receive a subsidy per eligible child enrolled.

*Management types
continued*

Non-government managed continued

Other (TAFE, university, corporate): Other management types include preschool programs delivered in educational facilities (for example TAFE or universities) or in corporate settings (for example preschools provided for employees of an organisation), where the main service activity type was preschool.

LONG DAY CARE

LDCs in Queensland consist of the following management types:

Private for-profit managed: These are approved integrated centre-based services provided by non-government not-for-profit organisations or for-profit corporations, sole traders, individuals or entities, where the main service activity type is not preschool. In 2010 for the first time, the Queensland government provided funding under the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme to LDCs that provided an approved preschool program.

Quality of data source

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES CENSUS

In 2010 Queensland had one main source for the collection of data in relation to preschool programs, the Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census (ECECSC).

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the 2010 ECECSC was the Department of Education and Training (DET).

Relevance

The data collected from this census enabled DET to report on a variety of matters, such as the performance of the early childhood education and care sector to the Queensland and Australian Government, and the community. The data were used to update Queensland's child care information system to ensure information was accurate and up to date and also assisted with program development and planning.

The collection included all children who were officially enrolled in a licensed child care service provider in Queensland. This included all services that were providing approved preschool programs and those children who were officially enrolled in a Bound for Success program at the time of the ECECSC. For the 2010 collection, the ECECSC did not achieve complete coverage, as participation in the census was voluntary for some service providers. The ECECSC was compulsory for Bound for Success programs in government managed schools and government funded preschool programs in LDC services.

In 2010 the ECECSC collected data at a range of levels from the service providers within government, non-government and for-profit service providers. Aggregate data were collected at the service, child, staffing and program levels as follows:

- *For licensed and/or funded services:* information on service operations and characteristics;
- *For children enrolled at a licensed and/or funded service:* aggregate information on personal characteristics, and enrolment and attendance;

*Quality of data source
continued*

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES CENSUS

continued

- *For staff:* at the person level, information on personal characteristics, employment arrangements and qualifications, for all staff who consented to their information being provided.
- *For preschool programs:* (i.e. Early Childhood Education and Care Programs – kindergarten and pre-prep) where these programs were provided in services, information on program operations and characteristics (including teacher qualifications), and aggregate information on child enrolment and attendance.

A small number of preschool programs in an LDC did not complete the ECECSC in 2010. The Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) defines that a preschool program can operate in an LDC if the program comprises a structured education program usually provided by a qualified teacher. Jurisdictional collections currently do not have full coverage of preschool programs being delivered in LDC as defined by the ECEC NMDS for the National ECEC Collection. Data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is required to achieve full coverage of preschool activity in LDC nationally. CCMS preschool data was not included in the 2010 collection due to the required information not being collected. In the future, the National ECEC Collection aims to include information on preschool programs provided within LDC through the CCMS.

Timeliness

The ECECSC was undertaken between 30 August and 17 September for a representative week or fortnight, depending on the service type. The collection reference period adopted by Queensland did not align with the recommended August collection reference period adopted by the other jurisdictions for the 2010 National ECEC Collection.

Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

For the 2010 ECECSC, service providers collected individual child information via a registration and/or enrolment form. In most instances, this information was stored in a data repository (government or non-government), however some information was stored as filed records. Service providers were required to record and keep details of staff qualifications. Data from the repository and files were then used by service providers to complete the relevant on-line ECECSC form. A limited number of services supplied the information through hard copy forms that were equivalent to the on-line form. This information was then stored in the ECECSC data repository. Data for the 2010 National ECEC Collection was sourced from the ECECSC data repository. The data collection processes may change in the future as Queensland moves to a unit record level data collection.

As part of the internal validation process for 2010, DET included explanatory notes with the on-line forms, which could be used by service providers to assist with definitions and responses. A limited number of edit checks were applied to the online form, which ensured that valid information was supplied.

Quality of data source
continued

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES CENSUS
continued

Data provided by services underwent a range of edit checks to ensure that the information was complete, internally consistent and fell within fixed known parameters for relevant questions. Where information was not supplied, services were contacted to collect the missing details where possible.

As the data collected on children is at the aggregate level, duplicate instances of participation in preschool programs during the ECECSC reference period cannot be identified for the 2010 Queensland data.

Coherence

In 2010 ECECSC data was collected using an aggregate collection methodology for child enrolment and attendance data. Aggregate jurisdictional data collection methodologies using the 2010 ECEC Aggregate National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) did not allow for the identification of multiple enrolments for a single child. In the collection reference period, a child may be enrolled and attend two or more different preschool programs. Aggregate data from the 2010 ECECSC did not allow identification of unique record. This methodology can only produce episodes of attendance, and not the attendance of individual children. 2010 ECEC statistics from Queensland should be interpreted with care as it is not directly comparable with other jurisdictional data included in the 2010 National ECEC Collection.

Due to expected developments to the ECECSC Queensland process, a time series can not be commenced with the 2010 data. It is anticipated that a time series will be achieved in the future as Queensland develops in its capacity to capture unit record level child data.

Further information on data elements:

- Data was not available by sex
- Indigenous status was only available by Indigenous and non-Indigenous categories.

LDC information for Queensland has been disaggregated using the 'preschool program delivered by teacher indicator'. This indicator enabled disaggregation by preschool program's in LDCs that were being delivered by a teacher with a relevant qualification and by the total number of preschool programs in LDCs. This disaggregation was presented for comparison with other jurisdictions that could only provide the total number of LDCs, but could not disaggregate by whether the program was delivered by a teacher.

Interpretability

Queensland provided a range of information to assist in the reporting of data, such as explanatory notes for providers.

Accessibility

Data from the ECECSC is published in sector fact sheets and various other forms on the Queensland DET website.

Quality of data source
continued

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES CENSUS
continued

A subset of the ECECSC, was used for the 2010 National ECEC Collection and is available at the national and jurisdictional level in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) on the ABS website.

The information contained within this report has been sourced from the Queensland DET website, <<http://education.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/>> and consultations held between the Queensland DET and the ABS.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Overview

In South Australia (SA), 'preschool' is the term used for the year before school and 'reception' is the term used for the first year of school. The majority of children in SA commence preschool at the beginning of the term following their 4th birthday.

Management types, legislation & licensing

The Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) licenses, regulates or operates all childcare and preschool centres in SA. The DECS licensing and standards unit collects information on child care services via licensing applications. DECS maintains a register of all services that are operated or funded by DECS and collects service, staff and child level data from these services through an annual census process.

PRESCHOOL

In SA there are both government and non-government managed preschools.

Government managed

DECS manages the majority of preschool programs in SA through a range of centres, including kindergartens, child-parent centres (CPCs), and integrated centres (for example Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting). All DECS preschools are subject to the department's quality assurance processes.

There are two models of preschool operations in the government managed sector:

- Stand-alone or integrated centre-based programs where the main service activity type is preschool. These preschools are operated under the provisions of the *Children's Services Act 1985 (SA)*.
- School-based programs attached to DECS schools. These preschools are operated under the provisions of the *Education Act 1972 (SA)*.

Non-government managed

Community managed: Community managed preschools include stand alone preschools and integrated centre-based programs where the main service activity type is preschool. Only a small number of these preschools receive funding from DECS. Non-government community managed providers (not attached to a school) are licensed as child care centres under the Children's Services Act 1985.

Independent (school-managed or other providers): Non-government preschools can be provided through independent private schools or other independent providers. Preschools attached to independent schools (who frequently incorporate "Early Learning Centre" as part of their name) are subject to the Education Act 1972.

LONG DAY CARE

LDCs in SA consist of the following management types:

Private for-profit managed: Private for-profit managed LDCs are those where the main service activity type is not preschool. LDCs that operate as private for-profit centres must be regulated by the Children's Services Act 1985 and the Children's Services (Child Care Centre Regulations) 1998. The majority are registered as a business, company or incorporated under the *South Australian Associates Incorporation Act 1985*.

Management types,
legislation & licensing
continued

LONG DAY CARE *continued*

Community managed: Community managed LDCs include those that are managed by parents, a church or a co-operative where the main service activity type is not preschool. Preschool programs can be managed and delivered in these community-based LDC settings. Non-government community managed providers (not attached to a school) are licensed as child care centres under the Children's Services Act 1985.

Quality of data source

ANNUAL CENSUS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

In 2010 SA had one main source for the collection of data in relation to preschool services, the Annual Census of Children's Services (ACCS).

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the ACCS was SA DECS.

Relevance

The ACCS encompassed all services managed by DECS across the preschool and child care sector, as well as grant funded non-government preschools. Unlicensed non-government school-based preschools did not receive the ACCS form. Information gathered from the census included patterns of service usage and characteristics of children and families. The data were required by the SA government for forward planning and the analysis of needs and gaps in current service provision. The data from this collection enabled reporting across the SA early childhood education and care sector for a variety of reporting requirements.

The scope of this collection included children aged 3 to 5 years old who were attending a government managed or government funded preschool, including government funded non-government preschools, community managed and private for-profit LDCs. In 2010 the ACCS achieved full collection coverage for all DECS managed preschools and grant funded non-government preschools. There were a small number of non-government preschool providers that are funded by DECS, and these providers were mandated to participate in the quarterly preschool data collections as well as the ACCS.

For these services that were mandated to complete the ACCS, data were collected at the following levels:

- *Preschool programs:* information on service operations and characteristics.
- *Children enrolled at a licensed service:* at an aggregate level, information on personal characteristics, enrolment and attendance.
- *Staff:* at the person level, information on personal characteristics, employment arrangements and qualifications, for all staff who have consented to their information being provided.

Participation in the ACCS was not compulsory for non-government independent preschool providers or un-funded community managed preschools or LDCs, which resulted in a low response rate. Therefore, coverage for these programs was low. For those non-mandated preschools that did participate, the data gathered was not necessarily provided at all levels, as was provided for mandated preschools. The Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) defines that a preschool program can operate in an LDC if the program comprises a structured

*Quality of data source
continued*ANNUAL CENSUS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES *continued*

education program usually provided by a qualified teacher. Jurisdictional collections currently do not have full coverage of preschool programs being delivered in LDC as defined by the ECEC NMDS for the National ECEC Collection. Data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is required to achieve full coverage of preschool activity in LDC nationally. CCMS preschool data was not included in the 2010 collection due to the required information not being collected. In the future, the National ECEC Collection aims to include information on preschool programs provided within LDC through the CCMS.

Timeliness

The collection was undertaken on the ACCS census date at 6 August 2010 for a representative week of Monday 2 August to Friday 6 August 2010. All service providers were required to return collection forms to DECS by 3 September 2010. The data processing and validation stages took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time data were delivered to the ABS. Total number of enrolments was not disseminated as enrolment data provided was collected in a different collection period.

Accuracy

The ACCS is conducted annually during the third preschool term. In 2010 a paper based form was used to gather information on the services and participation of children in the early childhood education sector. There were specific forms used for each sector, being preschools, child care, Montessori, integrated services and TAFE child care centres. Each sector also received a coding booklet which detailed the codes and definitions in relation to child, staff and service provider details to be used when completing the forms.

Service providers entered information from each child enrolment form into the census booklets. DECS then inputted this information into the DECS data repository, known as the Children Services Information System, or updated service provider details in the Location Sites and Services database, if required. Data for the 2010 National ECEC Collection were sourced from these databases.

A data validation database was utilised by DECS to ensure the quality of the data collected. Data validations were performed at the service provider, child and staff levels.

Coherence

In 2010 DECS used an aggregate data collection methodology. Aggregate data collection methodologies using the 2010 ECEC Aggregate National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) did not allow for the identification of multiple enrolments for a single child. In the collection reference period, a child may be enrolled and attend two or more different preschool programs. Aggregate data from the 2010 ACCS does not allow identification of unique record. This methodology can only produce episodes of attendance, and not the attendance of individual children. 2010 ECEC statistics from SA should be interpreted with care as they are not directly comparable with other jurisdictional data included in the 2010 National ECEC Collection.

*Quality of data source
continued*

ANNUAL CENSUS OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES *continued*

Due to expected developments to the 2011 ACCS, a time series will not be achievable with 2010 data. It is anticipated that time series will be achievable in the future as the SA DECS collection develops in its capacity to capture unit record level data.

Further information on data elements:

- Child age was recorded as at last birthday, rather than at 1 July 2010.
- Total number of enrolments was not disseminated as enrolment data provided was collected in a different collection period.
- For attendance data, Indigenous status was not disaggregated by ECEC NMDS requirements.
- Total preschool attendance hours was not collected.
- Maximum preschool program hours available was not disseminated.

For LDC data, SA did not supply disaggregated data by the 'preschool program delivered by teacher indicator'. As a result, SA LDC providers represented in table disaggregations of service activity type within the publication *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) may not be delivering a preschool program as defined by the collection.

Interpretability

SA provided a range of information to assist in the reporting of data, such as the 2010 ACCS Booklet and Coding Instructions. Key material was provided in the form of manuals and fact sheets to support the correct interpretation and explanation of concepts.

Accessibility

A subset of the ACCS, is used for the National ECEC Collection and is available at the national and jurisdictional level in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) on the ABS website.

The information contained within this report has been sourced from the DECS website and consultations held between DECS and the ABS. Further information is available at: <<http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/>>.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Overview

In Western Australia (WA), 'kindergarten' is the term used for a child's year before full-time schooling (referred to within this manual as 'preschool') and 'pre-primary' is the term used for the first year of full-time schooling. Children in WA are eligible to enrol in a preschool program at the beginning of the year if they are 4 years old on or prior to 30 June of the same year. The provision of preschool education is integrated with school education in WA.

Preschool is provided in nearly all schools which cater for WA primary school aged children. Preschool is provided in both the government and non-government sectors, and in a small number of community and independent preschools.

Legislation & licensing

Under WA legislation, the *School Education Act 1999* (WA), a program is only recognised as a preschool program if it is provided within a school setting. Therefore preschool programs provided in Long Day Care (LDC) settings or those not being provided within a school setting are not officially recognised as preschool in WA.

Management types

In WA, there are both government and non-government managed services providing preschool programs.

PRESCHOOL

Preschool in WA consists of the following management types:

Government managed

Government managed preschool programs are provided in all schools which cater for primary school aged children. Government preschools in WA are delivered and funded by the WA Department of Education (DoE) and are operated as part of public schools. Government provided preschool programs are provided free of charge in WA, although parents may be asked to pay a voluntary contribution per child, per annum. Government managed preschools which have been registered under the School Education Act 1999 are bound by this Act, as well as the School Education Regulations 2000.

WA also considers community-based preschools to be government preschools.

Community-based preschools are registered by the Minister of Education and are staffed, funded and quality assured by the public education system. Parent management committees are responsible for financial management and daily operations in these preschools. Community-based preschools are provided free of charge in WA, although parents may be asked to pay a voluntary contribution per child, per annum.

Community-based preschools which have been registered under the School Education Act 1999 are bound by the conditions of this Act, as well as the School Education Regulations 2000.

Non-government managed

Independent schools: Catholic and independent schools are registered by the Minister and their programs are quality assured either by the Catholic Education Office of WA or the WA Department of Education Services (DES). All non-government schools with preschool programs receive a per capita grant for age-eligible children enrolled at the school. The balance of funding is sourced from compulsory tuition fees and/or other sources. Non-government schools and independent preschools which have been

*Management types
continued*

Non-government managed continued

registered under the School Education Act 1999 are bound by the conditions of this Act, as well as the School Education Regulations 2000.

LONG DAY CARE

LDCs in WA consist of the following management types:

Private for-profit: Preschool programs provided in LDC settings are not officially recognised in WA as preschool, unless the LDC is also registered as a school. In this situation, the LDC would be included in the non-government school category. Other preschool programs in LDCs do not therefore receive funding from the WA DoE for their preschool programs. Education regulations and quality assurance mechanisms that apply to schools do not apply to preschool programs in LDCs. In particular, LDCs are not required to implement the WA curriculum framework and are not required to employ teachers who are members of the Western Australia College of Teachers. LDCs are bound by the *Childcare Service Act 2007* (WA), the Children's Services (Childcare) Regulations 2006 and the Childcare Services Regulations 2007.

Quality of data source

WA SCHOOL CENSUS

In 2010 WA had one main source for collection of data in relation to preschool programs, the WA School Census.

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the School Census is the WA Department of Education (DoE).

Relevance

The data collected through the School Census by the DoE was used to meet national reporting requirements, including the National Schools Statistics Collection and the National ECEC Collection. The data were also used to determine school operating grant allocations and planning for both sectors.

The scope for the early childhood component of the School Census consisted of all children aged 3 to 6 years old who were attending a preschool program within a school, including government and non-government schools, and community-based preschools and independent preschools. Data was not collected from LDCs. Full coverage was achieved for all registered schools and community-based preschools.

In 2010 data from WA registered and funded preschool programs were collected at the aggregate level as follows:

- *Registered, DoE funded preschool programs:* information on service operations and characteristics.
- *Children enrolled at a registered or DoE funded preschool program:* information on child characteristics, including enrolment.
- *Staff:* information on employment arrangements and qualifications.

*Quality of data source
continued*

WA SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

Preschool programs in an LDC were not officially recognised as preschool (unless recognised as a school) by WA DoE, and therefore were not included in the 2010 School Census. The Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) defines that a preschool program can operate in an LDC if the program comprises a structured education program usually provided by a qualified teacher. Jurisdictional collections currently do not have full coverage of preschool programs being delivered in LDC as defined by the ECEC NMDS for the National ECEC Collection. Data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is required to achieve full coverage of preschool activity in LDC nationally. CCMS preschool data was not included in the 2010 collection due to the required information not being collected. In the future, the National ECEC Collection aims to include information on preschool programs provided within LDC through the CCMS.

Timeliness

The collection was undertaken on the DoE census date at 6 August 2010 for a reference week of 2 August to 6 August 2010. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

Government preschool data was obtained from government primary schools through an administrative system, the INTEGRIS Student Information System (SIS). The Census Module was run within SIS and fed data from the INTEGRIS SIS, into the Schools Census. All government schools were required to participate in the collection. They were also required to complete an aggregate level paper based collection form to meet additional collection requirements for the National ECEC Collection.

Non-government schools provided ECEC data on a WA Schools Census spreadsheet which was returned to the Schools Census team.

Government and non-government data collected through the Schools Census was then stored in the WA data repository, and extracted for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection.

Internal validation processes for the School Census occurred at three different points of the process. The Census module within SIS had a series of in-built validation rules, some of which required the school to edit data before continuing, while other rules generated warnings alerting the user to anomalies. These warnings allowed the user to decide whether data needed amending before the census return was submitted. WA schools commonly rang the Census team for advice at this stage. For government schools, a validation tool allowed administrators to check the integrity of bulk child date of birth data. This first level of validation only applied to WA government schools/preschools.

WA non-government schools used an Excel spreadsheet, which incorporated only internal consistency checks. For non-government schools, there was a checklist provided which listed suggestions for validations such as:

- Checking totals were correct
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal columns were equal to the total column

*Quality of data source
continued*

WA SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

- Preschool children were counted by year of birth

WA non-government school data was also subjected to general validation processes by the Schools Census team.

The second set of validation processes were run by the census team, using both routine and ad-hoc validation methods to examine data as it was assembled in working files. These processes were designed to be able to effectively investigate new issues.

The third set of validation rules were built into the custom software which loaded school census data into the data warehouse, or into the staging phase.

Coherence

In 2010 DoE supplied only aggregate level data for the National ECEC Collection. Aggregate data collection methodologies using the 2010 ECEC Aggregate National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) did not allow for the identification of multiple enrolments for a single child. Unit record level data was collected from government schools which enabled a degree of checking for duplicates within the government sector. In the collection reference period, a child may be enrolled and attend two or more different preschool programs. Aggregate data from the 2010 WA School Census did not allow identification of unique record. This methodology could only produce episodes of enrolment, and not the enrolment/ attendance of children. 2010 ECEC statistics from WA should be interpreted with care as it is not directly comparable with other jurisdictional data included in the 2010 National ECEC Collection.

Due to expected developments to the 2011 School Census, a time series will not be achievable with 2010 data. It is anticipated that time series will be achievable in the future as the WA DoE collection develops in its capacity to capture unit record level child and staff data.

Further information on data elements:

- For the 2010 National ECEC Collection, data from WA could only be presented in terms of enrolment.
- Children in non-government preschools were classified by age. If the child was 4 years old or younger at 1 July then they were classified as attending preschool, while those 5 years and older were classified as pre-primary (i.e., year 1 minus 1). This means that there were no 5 or 6 year olds in the non-government preschool data, and any 4 year olds who were actually in pre-primary were classified as being in preschool.
- Indigenous status was collected at the required categories, however only 'Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander' and 'non-Indigenous' categories were reported to the ABS due to WA's concerns about data quality between management types.

Interpretability

For government schools, a manual was provided to assist the user with the Census Module, including instructions and validation techniques. For non-government schools, a checklist was provided which included instructions and suggestions for validations.

*Quality of data source
continued*

WA SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

Accessibility

National and jurisdictional level information is published in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) and is available on the ABS website.

The information contained within this report has been sourced from the WA DoE website, and consultations held between DoE and the ABS. Further information is available on the WA DoE website <<http://www.det.wa.edu.au/>>.

TASMANIA

Overview

In Tasmania, 'kindergarten' is the term used for the year before compulsory school (referred to within this manual as 'preschool') and 'preparatory' is the term used for a child's first year of compulsory school (year 1 minus 1). Preschool programs are offered to children who are 4 years of age as at 1 January of the reference year. Exceptions may be granted for gifted children (they must be at least 3 years and 6 months of age as at 1 January of the reference year) and children previously enrolled in a government pre-school in another state.

Legislation and licensing

The *Education Act 1990* (Tas.) is the relevant legislation for preschool education provided by government and non-government schools, and LDCs in Tasmania. Under that legislation, a preschool can only operate within a registered school.

Preschools provided in government schools are regulated by the Department of Education (DoE). Non-government school and long day-care centres (LDCs) registered as a school are regulated by the Schools Registration Board. As preschools in Tasmania are registered or delivered as part of the school system (including preschool provided in LDCs registered as a school), all teachers are required to be qualified and registered. Most preschool teachers in Tasmania are trained in early childhood education as a part of their degree, but this is not mandatory.

Management types

In Tasmania, there are both government and non-government managed services providing preschool programs.

PRESCHOOL

Preschools in Tasmania consist of the following management types:

Government managed

Government preschools in Tasmania are delivered, funded and staffed by the Tasmanian DoE. All government preschools are integrated with a primary or district high school and are normally located on the same campus. The preschool curriculum is part of the school curriculum. Levies are payable for each child to attend a government preschool program, however for those families deemed low income families, no levy is payable.

Non-government managed

Independent schools: Most registered non-government schools with a primary school component provide preschool programs within their school curriculum and receive funding from DoE. These providers charge a fee per child to enrol in their preschool programs.

Long Day Care Centres: While Tasmania has a number of LDC providers, only one has a main service activity type of preschool. This LDC is regulated under the Education Act and is registered with the schools registration board, and is therefore registered as a school for the purposes of providing a preschool program. This LDC had no enrolled preschool students in 2010.

Management types

LONG DAY CARE

continued

Long Day Care Centres: There are a number of LDC's in Tasmania that have a main service activity type that is not preschool. These services are regulated under the *Child Care Act 2001* (Tas.). In 2010 Tasmania did not collect data from these LDCs.

Quality of data source

In 2010 for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, Tasmania had two separate collection methods for government and non-government data, the Government School Census and the Non-government Preschool Census.

Both the Government School Census and the Non-government Preschool Census collected data at the unit record level (URL).

Preschool programs in an LDC setting which were not registered with the Schools Registration Board, were not officially recognised as preschool by Tasmania, and therefore were not included in either the 2010 Government School Census or the Non-government Preschool Census. The Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) defines that a preschool program can operate in an LDC if the program comprises a structured education program usually provided by a qualified teacher. Jurisdictional collections currently do not have full coverage of preschool programs being delivered in LDC as defined by the ECEC NMDS for the National ECEC Collection. Data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is required to achieve full coverage of preschool activity in LDC nationally. CCMS preschool data was not included in the 2010 collection due to the required information not being collected. In the future, the National ECEC Collection aims to include information on preschool programs provided within LDC through the CCMS.

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL CENSUS

The majority of government preschool data were sourced from the Government School Census, which collected data at unit record level (URL).

Teacher qualifications were obtained by DoE from the Tasmanian Teacher Registration Board. Student fees data were obtained from an Internet and telephone survey of Tasmanian schools, and matched with whether an individual student was eligible for a subsidy or not.

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the Government School Census was the Tasmania Department of Education (DoE).

Relevance

The data collected by DoE in the School Census was used to report on Tasmanian and Commonwealth Government achievements against targets and to assist with the evaluation and planning of service provision. For preschools, the information obtained was used to determine the funding that would be provided to each service.

*Quality of data source
continued*

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

The scope for the early childhood component of the census, consisted of all children aged 3 to 6 years old who were attending a preschool program at a registered government school in Tasmania. All registered government schools in Tasmania participated in the census. Data from non-government preschools was collected in a separate census.

In 2010 for Tasmanian government preschool programs, data were collected at URL as follows:

- *Preschool programs*: information on service operations and characteristics.
- *Staff*: at the person level, information on type of work activity and teacher primary role.
- *Children aged between 3 to 6 years old and enrolled at a government service*: information on personal characteristics, enrolment and attendance. Early entry students were included if they were classified as:
 - *Gifted*: a child who had fulfilled the requirements of the guidelines for early school entry for students who are gifted.
 - *Interstate*: a child who had previously been enrolled in a preschool in another state or territory and who now resides in Tasmania.

Timeliness

The collection was undertaken on the Tasmanian School Census date at 6 August 2010, for a representative fortnight of 26 July to 6 August 2010. This representative fortnight was used by the ABS to derive a one week reference period to enable comparison with other jurisdictions. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

A census of government preschools is conducted annually in August, as part of the School Census. In 2010 all registered government providers offering a preschool program were required to participate in the census.

The process of obtaining and processing data in Tasmania commenced with service providers uploading information from each child enrolment form into the Government Schools Administrative Computer System, which stored the information in a data warehouse. The data warehouse had a number of inbuilt data quality checks that provided timely data feedback to schools. An exception report was produced daily, with the central business support unit following up all issues. Data from the warehouse was then used to populate the Schools Census. A reference table of students enrolled in Tasmanian government schools was then created in the DoE data repository.

The census data were reviewed and cleaned by DoE staff. This process included numerous quality checks such as confirming student ages, hours enrolled, and verifying duplicate enrolments across schools. A declaration report was sent to schools, which the principal reviewed and was required to declare that all data were true and correct. This set of students became the authoritative dataset for the census date. Tasmanian preschool students were extracted from this census dataset, to match with all other data

*Quality of data source
continued*GOVERNMENT SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

collated for the National ECEC Collection. Extensive quality assurance occurred for the attendance and qualification data, to ensure that the data were consistent with other DoE data sources.

Some specific validation methods for Tasmanian government preschools included:

- Identifying and investigating duplicate records.
- Verifying all addresses by child and service provider using specialised software.
- Ensuring data were within expected ranges.
- Ensuring counts (e.g. of males and females) summed to totals.

Coherence

In the collection reference period, a child may be enrolled and attend two or more preschool programs. In order to address key collection requirements, it is important to be able to count each child once. A child may be 'double counted' in a number of ways and a URL collection itself may not totally be able to address all the occurrences where double counting of a child may occur. Care needs to be taken when interpreting URL child data from Tasmanian DoE due to double counting that may have occurred:

- *Across jurisdictions:* where children and their families moved interstate during a preschool year. Eliminating this type of double counting was not achieved in 2010 as a common collection reference date for all jurisdictions was not achieved.

For 2010 data, Tasmanian DoE were able to identify double counting and apply appropriate methods for the following situations:

- *Across sectors:* where a family may be using a government preschool and a non-government preschool. Eliminating this type of double counting is only achievable where multiple URL collections across sectors within a jurisdiction are comparable and compliant with the National Minimum Data Set (NMDS). Due to collecting both government and non-government data and using a child SLK, this type of double counting were able to be identified.
- *Within sector:* where children are enrolled in more than one government preschool at once. Due to the URL methodology, double counting within sectors in Tasmania was unlikely.
- *Across time:* where a child attends preschool for more than 1 year (e.g. a child repeats preschool, or was enrolled in an 'early entry' preschool program). Elimination of this type of double counting in Tasmania was achieved through comparable time series for government preschool data.

Further information on data elements:

- The data elements preschool hours attended and enrolled were based on the number of sessions each child attended over a two week period. Absences for whole sessions were recorded.
- Preschool attendance hours were used as a proxy for maximum preschool program hours available per week.

Interpretability

An online training system was available to users of the SACS system.

Quality of data source
continued

GOVERNMENT SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

Accessibility

National and jurisdictional level information is published in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) on the ABS website.

NON-GOVERNMENT PRESCHOOL CENSUS

Data from non-government preschools were collected from the Non-government Preschool Census, which collected data at URL.

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the Non-government Preschool Census was the Tasmania Department of Education (DoE).

Relevance

The data collected by DoE were used to meet state and Commonwealth Government reporting commitments and to assist with the evaluation and planning of service provision. For preschools, the information obtained was used to determine the funding that would be provided to services. The data collected assisted in the calculation of the General Education Grant paid by the DoE for eligible students in non-government schools. The data were also used for reporting to the Commonwealth on achievements against reporting targets.

The scope of this collection consisted of all children aged 3 to 6 years old who were attending a preschool program that was part of a registered non-government school or registered LDC in Tasmania. All registered non-government schools providing a preschool program participated in the census. The one LDC registered with the Schools Registration Board participated in the census, however this LDC had no enrolled preschool students for 2010. Tasmania did not collect data from those LDCs that were not registered with the Schools Registration Board. For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, the ABS aims to collect data on preschool programs within a LDC in future collection cycles via the Child Care Management System. Data from government preschools was collected in a separate census.

In 2010 for Tasmanian non-government preschool programs, data were collected at URL level for:

- *Preschool programs*: information on service operations and characteristics;
- *Staff*: at the person level, information on type of work activity and teacher primary role.
- *Children aged between 3 to years old and enrolled at a non-government service*: information on personal characteristics, enrolment and attendance. Early entry students were included if they were classified as:
 - *Gifted*: a child who has fulfilled the requirements of the guidelines for early school entry for students who are gifted.
 - *Interstate*: a child who has previously been enrolled in a preschool in another state or territory and who now resides in Tasmania.

*Quality of data source
continued*

NON-GOVERNMENT PRESCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

Timeliness

The collection was undertaken on the Tasmania census date at 6 August 2010, for a representative fortnight of 26 July to 6 August 2010. This representative fortnight was used by the ABS to derive a one week reference period to enable comparison with other jurisdictions. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

In 2010 data from non-government preschools were collected via an Excel format spreadsheet. There were five worksheets to be completed by each service provider, which included details regarding the school, teachers, students, classes and attendance. Detailed explanations and definitions were provided for each question.

The process for collecting data from the non-government sector, commenced with service providers uploading information from each child enrolment form into the non-government service provider data repository. Data from the non-government data repository was then forwarded to the DoE data repository. Data for the 2010 ECEC Collection was sourced directly from the DoE data repository.

Once all Tasmanian data were received and quality assured, DoE reviewed the data and returned a summary to each service provider of the final enrolments.

Some specific validation methods for Tasmanian non-government preschools included:

- Identifying and investigating duplicate records.
- Ensuring all address data fields were populated, with no PO Box addresses. Data were reviewed to establish a valid CD.
- Ensuring data were within expected ranges.
- Ensuring counts (e.g. of males and females) summed to totals.
- Ensuring single sex schools were reported with only one sex.

Coherence

In the collection reference period, a child may be enrolled and attend two or more preschool programs. In order to address key collection requirements, it is important to be able to count each child once. A child may be 'double counted' in a number of ways and a URL collection itself may not totally be able to address all the occurrences where double counting of a child may occur. Care needs to be taken when interpreting URL child data from Tasmanian DoE due to double counting that may have occurred:

- *Across jurisdictions:* where children and their families moved interstate during a preschool year. Eliminating this type of double counting was not achieved in 2010 as a common collection reference date for all jurisdictions was not achieved.

*Quality of data source
continued*

NON-GOVERNMENT PRESCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

For 2010 data, Tasmanian DoE were able to identify double counting and apply appropriate methods for the following situations:

- *Across sectors:* where a family may be using a government preschool and a non-government preschool. Eliminating this type of double counting is only achievable where multiple URL collections across sectors within a jurisdiction are comparable and compliant with the NMDS. Due to collecting both government and non-government data and using a child SLK this type of double counting was able to be identified.
- *Within sector:* where children are enrolled in more than one non-government preschool at once. Due to the URL methodology, Tasmania was able to eliminate double counting within the non-government sector.
- *Across time:* where a child attends preschool for more than 1 year (e.g. a child repeats preschool, or was enrolled in an 'early entry' preschool program). Identification of this type of double counting in Tasmania was achieved through comparable time series for non-government preschool data.

Further information on data elements:

- The data elements preschool hours attended and enrolled were based on the number of sessions each child attended over a two week period. Absences for whole sessions are recorded.
- Preschool attendance hours were used as a proxy for maximum preschool program hours available per week.

Interpretability

The census spreadsheet provided to non-government preschools included a definitions page, which explained the relevant concepts and definitions for the census. A contact phone number and email were also provided to assist those completing the form.

Accessibility

National and jurisdictional level information is published in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0).

The information contained within this report has been sourced from the Tasmania DoE website <www.education.tas.gov.au/> as well as from consultations held between the DoE and the ABS.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Overview

In the Northern Territory (NT), 'preschool' is the term used for a child's year before full-time schooling and 'transition' is the term used for a child's first year of school. Children in the NT are eligible to enrol in preschool at the beginning of the year if they turn 4 years old on or prior to 30 June of the same year, or for Indigenous children living in remote areas if they turn 3 years old on or prior to 30 June. Children turning 4 years old after 30 June are eligible to enrol in a preschool program after their birthday, if places are available in a program and with the understanding that the child will access more than 12 months of preschool.

Management types, legislation & licensing

The NT Department of Education and Training (DET) is responsible for the registration of preschools and the licensing of long day care (LDC) services. There are both government and non-government managed services that provide preschool programs within the NT.

PRESCHOOL

Preschool in NT consists of the following management types:

Government managed

The majority of preschools are government preschools that are delivered, funded and staffed by the DET. They are provided either free of charge, or for a small voluntary fee. These government preschools are integrated with a primary school and are almost all located on the same site as the primary school, often with administrative and educational links to that school. While DET provides preschool in this sector, a range of management functions are delegated to school councils and parent management committees. Preschool programs operated in a government school setting in the NT are bound by the *Education Act (NT)* and the various Education Regulations.

In addition to on-site preschools, DET also funds satellite and mobile preschools which operate in a range of remote and very remote areas to service small communities. The mobile preschools visit their respective communities for about two days a week. They are staffed by qualified teachers (not necessarily an early childhood teacher) and on-site teacher assistants.

Non-government managed

Independent school managed: Non-government managed preschools are services delivered by registered Catholic (including Catholic Remote) and other registered Christian and independent schools. In the NT, only 4 Catholic Remote Indigenous Schools receive funding from DET for preschool services, with these preschools being provided to children on a non-fee paying basis. All other non-government independent school managed preschools are not funded by DET and charge fees specific to each provider. Preschool programs operated in a non-government school setting in the NT are bound by the Education Act and the various Education Regulations.

There are several independent schools that provide on-site services for children aged 3 to 5, providing LDC and/or sessional programs delivered by an early childhood qualified teacher, in lieu of registered preschools. These are informally known as early learning centres. These services are licensed and funded as children's services as defined by the

*Management types,
legislation & licensing
continued*

Non-government managed continued

NT *Care and Protection of Children Act* (NT). There are currently no data available for preschool programs offered in these centres as they are not registered as preschools.

LONG DAY CARE

LDCs in NT consist of the following management types:

Private for-profit, private not for-profit and community managed: There are a number of LDCs within the NT that operate under a range of management types including private for-profit, private not for-profit and community-based. There may be a number of LDCs which offer a sessional preschool program comprising of a structured educational programme usually provided by a qualified teacher. There is currently no data available for preschool services offered in these centres as they are not registered as preschools and do not receive any funding from DET. Child care services are registered and/or licensed under the *Care and Protection of Children Act* and the *Care and Protection of Children (Children's Services) Regulations*.

Quality of data source

AGE/GRADE CENSUS

In 2010 the NT had one main source for the collection of data in relation to preschool services, the Age/Grade Census, which collected data at unit record level (URL).

To assist with DET's national reporting requirements, the following additional on-line collections were conducted at the same time as the Age/Grade Census in 2010 to collect additional data items:

- Staff Census
- Preschool Survey

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the Age/Grade Census was the NT Department of Education and Training (DET).

Relevance

The data collected from the Age/Grade Census enabled reporting across the NT schools and early childhood education and care sector for a variety of reporting requirements. The data collected from this census was used for the National Preschool Census and the Report on Government Services, as well as government budget paper estimates and the DET annual report.

The scope of the Age/Grade census for the early childhood component of the census, consisted of all children aged 2 to 7 years old who attended a government and registered non-government preschool during the 4 week reference period. Data collected from non-government preschools was less detailed than data from government preschools due to different collection methodologies. Data from early learning centres was not within scope of this collection.

In 2010 the Age/Grade Census collected data at URL as follows:

- *Government and non-government schools including registered preschool programs:* information on service operations and characteristics.

*Quality of data source
continued*

AGE/GRADE CENSUS *continued*

- *Children enrolled:* at the URL, information on personal characteristics, and enrolment.
- *Staff:* at the person level, information on personal characteristics, employment arrangements and qualifications.

NT collection does not currently have complete coverage of the preschool programs. Data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is required to achieve a more comprehensive coverage of preschool activity in LDC nationally. CCMS preschool data was not included in the 2010 collection due to the required information not being collected. In the future, the National ECEC Collection aims to include information on preschool programs provided within LDC through the CCMS.

Timeliness

The collection was undertaken on the Age/Grade Census date at 6 August 2010, for a representative month prior to the census date (i.e. 14 June to 18 June 2010 and 19 July to 6 August 2010). The data used for the 2010 National ECEC Collection was for a recommended representative week of 2 August to 6 August 2010. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

The Age/Grade Census is an annual schools census conducted every August. It is designed to provide a yearly snap-shot of the NT education system. In 2010 data extracts of unit record level (URL) child information were submitted from each government and some non-government school's Student Administration and Management System (SAMS), with some non-government schools providing data via Excel spreadsheets. Additional data were collected through an online survey tool and data from both sources were processed centrally for inclusion in the census collection.

After data was processed by DET, service providers were required to check the data, edit if necessary, and confirm accuracy. Business rules guided the processing of data. Both the Student Census and the Staff Census required formal sign-off from school principals of the final reported data, stating it was a true and accurate reflection of their enrolments at that point in time. This ensured the quality and validity of the data being provided.

Internal validation for the Preschool Student Census and Staff Census was undertaken using a system that outlined how to validate and edit data.

Detailed validation processes used by the NT DET in 2010 were as follows:

- Schools validation: schools provided a validation report through the Business Intelligence Centre and were required to confirm the information was correct.
- Performance and Data Management validation: the validation process included historical comparison of trends, comparison of enrolments and schooling level proportions, cross checking missing data. Schools were also required to carry out validation reporting to maintain data quality, targeting such areas as child Indigenous status, gender and age.

Quality of data source
continued

AGE/GRADE CENSUS *continued*

Coherence

In the collection reference period, it is possible for a child to be enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs. In order to address key collection requirements, it is important to be able to count each child once. A child may be 'double counted' in a number of ways and a URL collection itself may not be able to address all the occurrences where double counting of a child may occur. Care needs to be taken when interpreting URL child data from the NT due to double counting that may have occurred:

- *Across jurisdictions:* where children and their families moved interstate during a preschool year. Eliminating this type of double counting was not achieved in 2010 as a common collection reference date for all jurisdictions was not achieved.
- *Across sectors:* where a family may be using a government preschool and a non-government preschool. Eliminating this type of double counting is only achievable where multiple URL collections across sectors within a jurisdiction are comparable and NMDS compliant. In 2010 this was not achievable as the NT did not collect an NMDS compliant Statistical Linkage Key from the non-government sector.

For 2010 data, the NT were able to identify double counting and apply appropriate methods for the following situations:

- *Across time:* where a child attends preschool for more than 1 year (e.g. a child repeats preschool, or was enrolled in an 'early entry' preschool program). Elimination of this type of double counting is only achieved through comparable, NMDS compliant time series. The NT achieved this in 2010 through a repeater flag that was supplied on the data set.
- *Within sector:* where children are enrolled in more than one government preschool at once. Due to the URL methodology and a student/client database, the NT is unlikely to have double counting occurring within sectors.

Further information on data elements:

- The data element maximum preschool hours available was not provided. Data was provided on the average number of hours per week that the preschool service was available to children, however this did not align with the NMDS.
- Geo-coding for some child addresses may have been less accurate in instances of remote residences or where street name was not supplied.
- Geo-coding for remote preschool addresses may have been less accurate where street address was not supplied.
- Where DOB was unavailable, it was estimated as 01/01/YYYY.
- The data element eligibility for subsidy indicator was not provided.
- The data element fees charged in the census week was not provided.
- The data element preschool hours attended was not provided.
- The data element preschool hours enrolled was not provided.
- For the data element preschool service received indicator, all children were indicated as 'receiving the preschool service'.

*Quality of data source
continued*

AGE/GRADE CENSUS *continued*

Interpretability

The NT provided a range of information to assist in the reporting of data, such as manuals and fact sheets, to support correct interpretation and definition of concepts. Instructional papers were provided to services to assist in entering data into the census. Detailed reports on the requirements, processes and rules for submitting data through the Age/Grade Census were also provided.

Accessibility

National and jurisdictional level information is published in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) on the ABS website.

The information contained within this report has been sourced from the NT DET website <www.det.nt.gov.au>, as well as consultations held between DET and the ABS.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL
TERRITORY

Overview

In the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), 'preschool' is the term used for a child's year before full-time schooling (year 1 minus 2) and 'kindergarten' is the term used for the first year of full-time school (year 1 minus 1). Children in the ACT are eligible to enrol in a preschool program at the beginning of the year if they turn 4 years old on or prior to 30 April of the same year. Children with special needs may be placed in a targeted preschool program from 3 years of age. Indigenous children, hearing impaired children, children for whom English is a second language and gifted children, are also eligible for early entry.

Legislation & licensing

The Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services (DHCS) in the ACT is responsible for the licensing and monitoring of child care and preschool services under the *Education Act 2004* (ACT). Licensed children's services include centre-based care (long day care and occasional care), school aged care, non-government preschools and play-schools. Teachers are required to have teaching qualifications, but do not need to have early childhood qualifications to be eligible for teaching in a preschool.

Management types

PRESCHOOL

In the ACT, there are both government and non-government managed services providing preschool programs.

Government managed

ACT government preschools are delivered and funded by the ACT Department of Education and Training (DET). These government preschools are amalgamated with primary schools and are staffed by the DET. There is no compulsory levy payable by children attending a government preschool program in the ACT.

Non-government managed

Community (not for-profit): Providers within this sector include churches and community groups. These services do not receive funding from the ACT government.

Private for-profit: Private for-profit providers include corporations, sole traders, individuals or entities, which do not receive funding from the ACT government.

Independent schools / Catholic schools: These preschool programs are provided by registered non-government schools. These services do not receive funding from the ACT government and set their own fees.

LONG DAY CARE

LDCs in ACT can operate within the following settings:

Community (not for-profit): Providers within this sector include churches and community groups. These services do not receive funding from the ACT government.

Private for-profit: Private for-profit providers include corporations, sole traders, individuals or entities, which do not receive funding from the ACT government.

Independent schools / Catholic schools: These preschool programs are provided by registered non-government schools. These services do not receive funding from the ACT government and set their own fees.

Quality of data source

ACT SCHOOL CENSUS

In 2010 the ACT had one main source for the collection of data in relation to preschool programs, the ACT School Census, which collected data at unit record level (URL) from government preschools. Data on school information and staffing qualifications were obtained from other ACT administrative data sets.

Non-government data were collected by DET in the February School Census at URL, however this was not comparable to URL government data collected in the August School Census due to the timing of the two collections. Therefore, only government preschools were included for the 2010 National ECEC Collection. Negotiations are currently occurring to work towards gaining access to non-government URL data for future inclusion in the National ECEC Collection.

Institutional environment

The organisation responsible for the School Census was the ACT Department of Education and Training (DET).

Relevance

The data collected from the ACT School Census enabled reporting across the ACT ECEC sector for a variety of reporting requirements and was used to ensure effective delivery of children's education services.

The scope for the early childhood component of the census, included all children in the year before full-time schooling, who were officially enrolled in a government school on the school census day and who were actively attending in a preschool program at that school. Jervis Bay School was included in the census, as the ACT DET administers the Jervis Bay School for the Australian Government under a service agreement. Children who were absent for more than 4 continuous school weeks prior to the census date were included if the principal received written documentation signed by the child's guardian indicating that the child would return to school.

In 2010 for ACT government preschool programs, data were collected at URL as follows:

- *Preschool programs*: information on service operations and characteristics;
- *Children enrolled at a government service*: at URL, information on personal characteristics, and enrolment and attendance;
- *Staff*: at the person level, information on type of work activity and teacher primary role.

Non-government preschool data were not able to be provided for the 2010 National ECEC Collection, however there are plans to include this in the future.

Preschool programs in an LDC were not officially recognised as preschool by ACT DET, and therefore were not included in the 2010 School Census. The Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) defines that a preschool program can operate in an LDC if the program comprises a structured education program usually provided by a qualified teacher. Jurisdictional collections currently do not have full coverage of preschool programs being delivered in LDC as defined by the ECEC NMDS for the National ECEC Collection. Data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) is required to achieve full coverage of preschool activity in LDC nationally. CCMS preschool data was not included in the 2010 collection due to the

*Quality of data source
continued*

ACT SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

required information not being collected. In the future, the National ECEC Collection aims to include information on preschool programs provided within LDC through the CCMS.

Timeliness

The collection was undertaken on the ACT School Census date at 6 August 2010, for a representative week of 2 August to 6 August 2010. Completion of data processing and validation stages took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

In 2010 public preschool data were obtained from a point in time sweep of enrolment and attendance data stored in a school-based child data management system called MAZE, an administrative data recording system. Individual child information was captured from data supplied via an enrolment form which was entered into MAZE by school staff. Additional data were sourced from the human resources database.

The process of obtaining data in the ACT was managed through the MAZE system. Each ACT government school had access to their own MAZE database, where teachers or administrators uploaded information on each child enrolment. The principal of each school was required to sign off on their school's total enrolment count by sex and year level. Any inconsistencies were followed up. Every school's MAZE system was linked to a central database, which could only be accessed by central office staff. At census time, child enrolment information was extracted from the central database and cross checked with schools.

The following list includes key approaches undertaken by the ACT in managing the quality of its data processing for 2010:

- ACT's system included automatic edits and mandatory fields, such as date of birth, sex, family details, attendance status and Indigenous status.
- ACT cross checked addresses for the preschools ensuring one existed for each service provider.
- Addresses for Koori preschools (preschool programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children) were manually added as they were not in the system.
- Addresses were geo-coded against ACT block data to ensure the address was valid.
- A MAZE manual was available to users to assist in data entry and extraction. Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs guidelines were also used for instances where key data items were unknown. In addition to this, face-to-face training was provided to users of the MAZE system in both entering data and also extracting data, including training on extracting non-routine data.

The ACT carried out validation of the data in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- Manual data entry was avoided where possible through an automatic transfer of child information when the child had previously attended another ACT government school.

*Quality of data source
continued*

ACT SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

- Addresses could be updated through a geo-coding cross check.
- Date of birth was checked against year level and outliers were followed up.
- Duplicate records of one child attending two schools were followed up.
- Data checks included matching back to the original census data and running aggregate counts for each field.

Coherence

In the collection reference period, a child may be enrolled and attend two or more preschool programs. In order to address key collection requirements, it is important to be able to count each child once. A child may be 'double counted' in a number of ways and a URL collection itself may not totally be able to address all the occurrences where double counting of a child may occur. Care needs to be taken when interpreting URL child data from the ACT DET due to double counting that may have occurred:

- *Across jurisdictions:* where children and their families moved interstate during a preschool year. Eliminating this type of double counting was not achieved in 2010 as a common collection reference date for all jurisdictions was not achieved.
- *Across sectors:* where a family may be using a government preschool and a non-government preschool. Eliminating this type of double counting is only achievable where multiple URL collections across sectors within a jurisdiction are comparable and compliant with the National Minimum Data Set (NMDS). This is not relevant to ACT data for 2010, because data from non-government preschools were not provided.

For 2010 data, the ACT DET were able to identify double counting for the following situations:

- *Within sector:* where children are enrolled in more than one government preschool at once. Due to the URL methodology and a student/client database, the ACT was able to eliminate double counting within the government sector.
- *Across time:* where a child attends preschool for more than 1 year (e.g. a child repeats preschool, or was enrolled in an 'early entry' preschool program). Elimination of this type of double counting was achieved as ACT had a comparable time series for government preschool data.

Further information on data elements:

- Maximum preschool program hours available per week was calculated by the number of weeks that the preschool service is available. The NMDS requires that data on the maximum hours available to each individual child be provided.
- Hours of attendance are derived from the number of sessions each child attends, rather than actual hours of attendance.
- Preschool program delivered by teacher indicator is based on the assumption that all government sector preschools programs in the ACT are delivered by four year trained teachers.
- The role of early childhood education and care worker indicator is based on the assumption that the teachers employed by each service provider are undertaking the role of teacher within that service.

Quality of data source
continued

ACT SCHOOL CENSUS *continued*

Interpretability

In 2010 the ACT DET provided face-to-face training in the MAZE system, as well as providing a handbook, which outlined how to enter data, extract data, find data and validate data.

Accessibility

National and jurisdictional level information is published in *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) on the ABS website.

The information contained within this report has been sourced from the ACT DET website and consultations held between the ACT DET and the ABS. Further information is available at: <<http://www.det.act.gov.au/>>.

CHAPTER 5

DATA AVAILABILITY

EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA SOURCES

The publication *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 4240.0) contains data from the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection.

The benefits of the National ECEC Collection will result in broader research and analytical potential. Although these data quality goals have not all been achieved for the 2010 collection, data development activities are progressing towards these goals. More information regarding future collection improvements are outlined in Chapter 2, Collection Overview.

The ABS and non-ABS products discussed in this chapter have different strengths and limitations, and represent a summary of the ECEC related information available from other sources.

RELATED PRODUCTS

The following section summarises related surveys and sources of ECEC data. Although there are other data sources on ECEC available, the National ECEC Collection aims to provide information annually, which supports the reporting requirements of the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care.

ABS products

ABS products that present information related to early childhood education statistics include *Childhood Education and Care, Australia* (cat. no. 4402.0) (formerly called *Child Care, Australia* (cat. no. 4402.0)), and data from the Census of Population and Housing.

THE CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SURVEY

From 1969 to 2005 the ABS conducted 12 Child Care Surveys (CCS) and consequently has a rich time series available. The Childhood Education and Care Survey (CEaCS) was conducted throughout Australia in June 2008 as a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey. CEaCS was developed from the CCS.

The major aims of CCS were to provide information on the use of, and need for, child care and early childhood education for children aged under 13 years. Information was also collected on the use of the Child Care Benefit and the income, educational attainment and working arrangements of parents with children aged under 13 years. In 2008, CEaCS also collected data on the informal learning activities in which children may participate with parents or other people. CEaCS examines participation in early childhood education in both preschools and child care settings. The survey also allows assessment of needs for preschool programs and provides information on communication of learning outcomes to parents. This survey provides a timely picture of early childhood education, to inform debate and decision-making in this area.

*ABS products continued*THE CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SURVEY *continued*

CEaCS is a sample survey, which comes with sampling error as well as non-sampling error. It is also only carried out every four years. In contrast, the National ECEC Collection will allow an annual time series. The National ECEC Collection is an administrative collection and unlike surveys, does not have any sampling error. Data can be collected at the unit record level (URL), which allows analysis at a lower level geography and therefore assists in the reporting of classifications such as disadvantage status.

THE CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING

The Census of Population and Housing provides limited ECEC information, such as data on unpaid child-care and attending an education institution (preschool). The Census also provides a snapshot of the social and cultural composition of Australian families and households, including language spoken at home, country of birth, ancestry and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status. The Census is carried out every five years, where as the National ECEC Collection will be conducted annually.

Non-ABS products

REPORT ON GOVERNMENT SERVICES

The annual *Report on Government Services* (ROGS), is produced by the Productivity Commission. The ROGS publishes data on the equity, efficiency and cost effectiveness of government services. The ROGS draws data together to provide key indicators of the performance of specified government agencies and programs in delivering services to Australians. The report is used for strategic budgeting, policy planning and evaluation. ROGS includes a range of data on the early childhood education sector including attendance, hours of attendance, staff qualifications, children with special needs and information on Indigenous preschool participation.

The ROGS only reports information on government-funded or government provided preschools. In contrast, the National ECEC Collection has a broader scope, including all non-government preschools.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF DATA ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Further information on the limitations of existing early childhood data sources can be found in a report by McEwin and Ryan, called *Improving the quality of data on early childhood education, 2008*, available on the DEEWR website: <www.deewr.gov.au>.

SUPPORTING MATERIAL

The following section summarises related products and material supporting the National ECEC Collection.

Metadata Online Registry

The Metadata Online Registry (METeOR) is a resource which defines the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) data elements and collection methods for both URL data and aggregate data. The METeOR can be accessed on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's website, <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/181162>>.

Child Care Management System

In future collection cycles of the National ECEC Collection, additional data on child care services will be sought from the Child Care Management System (CCMS). More information on the CCMS can be found on the Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations' website, <<http://www.deewr.gov.au>>.

SPECIAL DATA SERVICES

The ABS offers specialised consultancy services to assist clients with more complex statistical information needs. It must be noted that data may not be available at detailed levels due to small cell counts and confidentiality. All specialist consultancy services attract a service charge and clients will be provided with a quote before information is supplied. For further information, contact ABS information consultants on 1300 135 070 (international callers +61 2 9268 4909).

THE NATIONAL
PARTNERSHIP
AGREEMENT ON EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

In an effort to deliver significant improvements and outcomes for all Australians, in 2007 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) established a partnership between the Commonwealth and the state and territory governments to encourage substantial reform in the areas of education, skills and early childhood development. Following this, in 2008 COAG endorsed a comprehensive set of goals, outcomes, progress measures and future policy directions in the area of early childhood education (ECE). Among other outcomes, COAG made a commitment to ensure that every child has universal access to a quality ECE program (COAG, 2008a). This Universal Access commitment will ensure that by 2013, each child will have access to a preschool program delivered:

- in the 12 months prior to full-time schooling (also referred to as the year before formal schooling);
- by a four-year university-qualified early childhood teacher;
- for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year;
- across a diversity of settings;
- in a form that meets the needs of parents; and
- at a cost that does not present a barrier to participation (COAG, 2008a).

In November 2008, COAG endorsed the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). Under the NP ECE the Commonwealth, state and territory governments committed to improving the supply and integration of early childhood services, including child care and early learning and development. This will be achieved through the delivery of the universal access commitment (COAG, 2008a).

This commitment provides a comprehensive and national approach to preschool education in Australia. It aims to increase participation rates of young children in preschool, particularly for Indigenous and disadvantaged children, ensuring that cost is not a barrier to access. Universal access extends to providing an increase in program hours available to children, and to strengthening the quality and consistency of preschool programs (COAG, 2008a). The commitment is closely underpinned by other elements of the Australian Government's early childhood reform agenda, including the development of the Early Years Learning Framework, early childhood workforce reforms and the development of the National Quality Standards for child care and preschool (COAG, 2008b, DEEWR, 2009). Together, the intention of these reforms is to raise the quality of ECE delivered across Australia, regardless of the setting, and to improve access for disadvantaged children to early learning opportunities.

Under the NP ECE, the states and territories have agreed to individual Bilateral Agreements with the Commonwealth. These Agreements specify the actions and strategies to be undertaken by each jurisdiction to achieve universal access to ECE. The actions and strategies vary across jurisdictions to take into account the different challenges facing each jurisdiction. The Agreements also detail performance benchmarks, that each state and territory has committed to achieving, including

THE NATIONAL
PARTNERSHIP
AGREEMENT ON EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
continued

participation rates (with an emphasis on children from disadvantaged backgrounds and Indigenous children), hours, teachers and cost. The Bilateral Agreements specify that universal access will be achieved if 95% (or more) of children in Australia are enrolled and attending a preschool program that meets the universal access criteria, in the year before full-time schooling. The benchmark of 95% was chosen because attendance at a preschool program is not compulsory in any state or territory in Australia. For more information on the Bilateral Agreements, see the Federal Financial Relations website:

<<http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au>>.

The National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection was conducted for the first time through jurisdictional administrative collections in 2010, as a data improvement project under the NP ECE and the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC).

NATIONAL INFORMATION
AGREEMENT ON EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
AND CARE

There are a number of challenges in measuring progress against the performance indicators, foremost being the current lack of nationally comparable data. The National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC) was formed to facilitate and improve the collection, sharing and reporting of early childhood education and care information. The agreement has facilitated an important step in improving the quality and reliability of ECEC data (MCEECDYA 2010). The agreement was developed in consultation with the Australian Government, state and territory governments, and key data agencies such as the ABS and AIHW.

The NIA ECEC provides a framework for cooperation between the Commonwealth, state and territory governments and information agencies to develop the ECEC information base required to support the COAG early childhood education reform agenda. To ensure the effective collection and reporting of ECEC information, jurisdictions have agreed to adopt a cooperative approach, so that accurate, reliable, timely and nationally consistent ECEC data is available nationwide. The ability to provide quality ECEC data will also enable development of an evidence base for assessing outcomes and informing future policy developments in this area (MCEEDYA, 2010). The activities covered by the NIA ECEC are intended to build a common, shared infrastructure to ensure nationally consistent ECEC data across jurisdictions within the ECEC sector.

EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION AND CARE
NATIONAL MINIMUM DATA
SET

A key activity under the NIA ECEC is the development and implementation of agreed data standards through the ECEC National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) (MCEECDYA, 2010). The AIHW has been commissioned to undertake this work within their existing data repository, the Metadata Online Registry (METeOR). The ECEC NMDS includes a set of national data standards and protocols for the purpose of reporting against the NP ECE performance indicators. The ABS is assisting the AIHW in working towards further development and implementation of the ECEC NMDS.

A detailed description of each of the unit record level (URL) and aggregate ECEC NMDS data elements is provided in Chapter 8, Data Element Collection Instructions. Further information is also available on the AIHW website:

- The URL ECEC NMDS is available at:
<<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/396792>>.

EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION AND CARE
NATIONAL MINIMUM DATA
SET *continued*

- The aggregate ECEC NMDS is available at:
<<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/388507>>.

Each jurisdiction in Australia is currently at different stages of implementing improvements to their ECEC data collection mechanisms, so as to align with ECEC NMDS. For the 2010 collection no jurisdiction is currently achieving complete alignment with the national standards. As systems and procedures for collecting data to the necessary quality standards are still evolving, it will not be possible to produce statistics for all the performance indicators by each jurisdiction in the first year of the collection.

The extent to which jurisdictions meet the ECEC NMDS standards is summarised in Chapter 4, Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements.

OUTCOMES AND
PERFORMANCE
INDICATORS

Two outcomes underpin performance measures for the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (COAG, 2008a), which are outlined below.

Outcome 1

ALL CHILDREN HAVE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION IN THE YEAR BEFORE FULL-TIME SCHOOLING.

This outcome is defined under the NP ECEC and will be achieved when:

- All children have universal access to a preschool program for 15 hours per week, 40 weeks per year.
- Universal access to a preschool program is delivered across a range of settings at a cost which is not a barrier to access.
- Disadvantaged children have universal access to a preschool program (COAG, 2008a).

Outcome 2

ALL INDIGENOUS FOUR YEAR OLDS IN REMOTE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES HAVE ACCESS TO A QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM.

This outcome will be achieved when all Indigenous children (including those in remote Indigenous communities) have access to affordable, quality early childhood education in the year before full-time schooling (COAG, 2008a).

To enable jurisdictions to measure progress towards the NP ECEC outcomes throughout the duration of the Agreement, six performance indicators were developed.

Performance indicators

1. The proportion of children who are enrolled in (and attending where possible to measure) a preschool program.
2. The number of teachers delivering preschool programs who are four year university trained and early childhood qualified.
3. Hours per week of attendance (where possible to measure) at a preschool program
4. Distribution of children who attend a preschool program by weekly cost per child (after subsidies) as defined by jurisdictions.
5. The proportion of disadvantaged children enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) a preschool program.

*Performance indicators
continued*

6. The proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location as identified by the Australian Standard Geographic Classification), who are enrolled in (and attending, where possible to measure) a preschool program (COAG, 2008a).

Since the implementation of the NP ECE, the ECDSG have endorsed the use of operational performance indicators to report on the NP ECE performance indicators.

*Operational performance
indicators*

1.1 Proportion of children who are enrolled in a preschool program.

1.2 Proportion of children who are attending a preschool program.

2.1 The proportion of teachers delivering preschool programs who are four year university trained and early childhood qualified.

3.1 The proportion of children enrolled in a preschool program that is available for at least 15 hours per week

3.2 Average number of hours per week of attendance at a preschool program.

4.1 Distribution of children who attend a preschool program by weekly cost per child (after subsidies).

5.1 Proportion of disadvantaged children who are enrolled in a preschool program.

5.2 Proportion of disadvantaged children who are attending a preschool program.

6.1 Proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are enrolled in a preschool program.

6.2 Proportion of Indigenous children (by geographic location) who are attending a preschool program.

Due to current data limitations, ECE data from the 2010 National ECEC Collection will not be used to calculate the performance indicators.

FILE FORMAT AND SPECIFICATIONS

For the National ECEC Collection, jurisdictions are required to provide unit record level (URL) data. Where this is not possible, aggregate data will be accepted.

Unit record level data

Jurisdictions that provide URL data are required to provide:

1. Person/Child URL data covering the agreed Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) items, including the following additional data elements requested by the ABS for 2010:

- Child - Address line
- Child - Preschool program received by teacher indicator
- Repeat year indicator - As children can repeat preschool, it is important that these child records be identified so that when calculating the number of children who attend preschool in the year before full-time schooling the child is recorded once, not both years that he/she attends preschool.

2. Service provider level data covering the agreed ECEC NMDS items, including the following additional data elements requested by the ABS for 2010:

- Address line
- Australian state/territory identifier
- Organisation name

3. Person/Teacher (employed) level data covering the agreed ECEC NMDS items.

For a full list and detailed descriptions of all URL data items, see the ECEC NMDS on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) website <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/396792>>.

Aggregate data

Jurisdictions that provide aggregate level data are required to provide:

1. Service provider aggregate data covering the agreed ECEC NMDS items for enrolments, cross-classified by the following data elements:

- Age
- Indigenous status
- Sex (additional requested data element)
- Children enrolled receiving a preschool program from qualified teacher (additional requested data element)

2. Service provider aggregate data covering the agreed ECEC NMDS items for attendance, cross-classified by the following data elements:

- Age
- Indigenous status
- Sex (additional requested data element)

Aggregate data continued

- Children attending receiving a preschool program from a qualified teacher (additional requested data element)

3. Service provider aggregate data covering the agreed ECEC NMDS items for geography and operational data including:

- Organisation ID
- Organisation name (additional requested data element)
- Address line
- Suburb/town/locality name
- Australian state/territory identifier
- Postcode
- Geographic location of organisation (CD)
- Management type
- Service activity type
- Service delivery setting
- Eligibility for subsidy indicator
- Preschool program hours enrolled
- Preschool program hours attended
- Maximum preschool program hours available per week
- Fee schedule (children's service centre-based long day care)
- Fee schedule (children's service preschool service)
- Fee schedule amount
- Service operation weeks

4. A teacher aggregate file covering five data elements:

- Field of highest relevant qualification
- Level of highest qualification
- Role
- Type of work activity
- Preschool program delivered by teacher indicator

Further descriptions of aggregate data items are available within the ECEC NMDS on the AIHW website <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/388507>>.

DATA EDITING AND
CHECKING BY
JURISDICTIONAL
AGENCIES

The ABS requests that jurisdictions carry out the following validation processes:

- *Validity checks:* Ensure that values entered for each data element are valid. The valid range of attributes or codes for each data element are specified in the ECEC NMDS and should be followed unless prior arrangements have been made with the ABS for alternative formats to be supplied.
- *Range checks:* Ensure dates are within an acceptable range for the required data.
- *Frequency counts:* Undertake frequency counts on values for all data elements to identify invalid codes and also unexpected or unusual frequencies for particular codes. Frequency counts provided by jurisdictions are used by the ABS as an initial data consistency check.

DATA EDITING AND
CHECKING BY
JURISDICTIONAL
AGENCIES *continued*

- *Logic checks*: Ensure internal consistency between responses within individual child records. In a child URL file for example, the 'preschool service received indicator' cannot be 'Yes' if the 'preschool service enrolment indicator' is 'No' for a given service provider. In an aggregate service provider file, the sum of Indigenous enrolments and non-Indigenous enrolments must equal the total number of preschool enrolments (including valid 'not stated/inadequately described' domain values).

- *Additional URL quality checks (child level)*:

- *Sex*: Ensure the appropriate numeric attribute value is used, as per the ECEC NMDS (i.e. 1 or 2, not 'M' or 'F').
- *Area of Usual Residence*: Ensure the Collection District (CD) geo-code of the child is used, and not the CD geo-code of the service provider. If the child's address is known but the CD code is not, jurisdictions should provide the child's full address to ABS to enable accurate coding to CD.
- *Maximum preschool program hours available per week*: Ensure that the hours available to the child per week are reported. The maximum hours available to the child may be less than the opening hours of the service, but may exceed the number of hours the child is enrolled for or attended during the reference period.
- *Statistical Linkage Key (SLK581)*: Ensure that the 5-8-1 format for letters of family name, given name, date of birth and sex are used so that episodes of duplicates within sectors and across sectors can be identified by the ABS. An example SLK for a female child named Jane Smith, with a date of birth of the 01/01/2007, would be MIHAN010120072.
 - *Family Name*: Ensure that the 2nd, 3rd and 5th letter of the child's family name is used for the SLK. If the child's family name includes non-alphabetic characters - for example hyphens, apostrophes or blank spaces - these non-alphabetic characters should be ignored when counting the position of each character. Regardless of the length of a person's name, the reported value should always be three characters long. If the legal family name is not long enough to supply the requested letters, then agencies should substitute the number '2' to reflect the missing letters. The placement of a number '2' should always corresponded to the same space that the missing letter would be placed within the 3-digit field. If a child's family name is missing altogether the agency should record the number 999 (not 222).
 - *Given Name*: Ensure that the 2nd and the 3rd letter of the child's given name is used for the SLK. Regardless of the length of a person's given name, the reported value should always be two characters long. If the given name of the person is not long enough to supply the requested letters, then the number '2' is substituted to reflect the missing letters. For example: If the person's legal name is Jo then the value reported would be O2 because the 2 is substituting for the missing 3rd letter of the given name. The placement of a number '2' should always corresponded to the same space that the missing letter would be placed within the 2-digit field. If the person's given name is missing altogether, the agency should record 99 for the two spaces associated with the given name.

DATA EDITING AND
CHECKING BY
JURISDICTIONAL
AGENCIES *continued*

- *Date of Birth*: Ensure that date of birth is represented by 8 numeric characters that comprise DDMMYYYY.
- *Sex*: Ensure that sex is coded to a single digit code in accordance with the ECEC NMDS.

- *Duplicate record*: Each child (URL) should ideally have one record of attendance for the reference period unless clearly linked by a statistical linkage key to multiple service providers. The ABS will request clarification from jurisdictions for all instances of a child SLK that has multiple service providers or multiple addresses.
- *Missing data*: Ensure there is no missing data. Where information is unknown, the appropriate attribute value for 'unknown' or 'inadequately described' should be used rather than leaving a cell blank.

Where provided data is inconsistent, incorrect or missing, the ABS will confer with the relevant jurisdiction to validate supplied data.

TRANSFER OF DATA TO
THE ABS

Jurisdictions are asked to notify the ABS of their representative prior to the data delivery date. The ABS will then contact the representative to provide instructions and a password for the Secure Deposit Box, which enables respondents to provide data securely on-line.

Security arrangements

Completed national ECEC data is transferred from each jurisdiction to the ABS under secure arrangements. Comprehensive security arrangements are implemented in the ABS information technology environment. These include the use of regularly changed passwords, access control and audit trails. Jurisdictions are instructed to lodge data through the ABS Secure Deposit Box. On lodging statistical files into the Secure Deposit Box, the files are encrypted and immediately moved into a secure location where its content is automatically scanned for viruses and filed in the National ECEC Collection.

Respecting privacy and confidentiality are fundamental to the way in which the ABS conducts its business. Therefore, it is important to emphasise safeguards that are used for the National ECEC Collection process to ensure the anonymity of individuals.

RETURN OF DATA TO
SOURCE

The ABS is committed to returning jurisdictional data sets and the method of 'returning to source' involves returning to each jurisdiction:

- Jurisdiction-specific ECEC data sets,
- Information about processes used to reconcile data and
- Quality issues such as 'flagging edits', and any apparent data discrepancies and duplicates.

Although section 19 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* prohibits the ABS from disclosing information held under the Act, returning information to the person from whom it was obtained (return to source) is an exception to that prohibition. It is ABS policy that in the case of administrative datasets or register-based information, the source is regarded as the organisation (often a government agency) that provided the information to the ABS, not the person or business who originally provided the information to the government agency.

RETURN OF DATA TO
SOURCE *continued*

Accordingly, jurisdictions only receive their own data sets under the return to source provisions for the National ECEC Collection. The ABS return of data to source provisions do not allow for anything other than the original data itself being returned to the source.

The ABS can return to a jurisdiction, information that has been coded or edited for internal consistency using information already supplied by the same agency, such as calculating age from date of birth. However, when multiple sources of data have been used by the ABS to obtain full data coverage, jurisdictions will not receive the resultant data. In this situation, jurisdictions will not be able to calculate complete derivations based on their own data sets. Under the return to source provisions of subsection 19(1) of the Census and Statistics Act, jurisdictions will only receive their own data sets from the ABS and these data sets will not include any derivations or edits which were the result of combining other sources of data.

DATA ELEMENT SUMMARY
INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an in-depth overview of each data element in the 2010 National ECEC Collection. This is an ABS interpretation of the ideal data collection framework relating to the 2010 ECEC National Minimum Data Set (NMDS). This is not a formally agreed position and is only represented as an indicative understanding. This framework will be further adapted and used to form the basis for 2011 development work.

Identifying attribute and meaning

Technical name: A succinct title of the data element, briefly describing the object class, e.g. Child - preschool program hours attended per week, total hours N[N]. This is the same name that is used in the ECEC NMDS technical name attribute.

METeOR identifier: The code assigned to the data element in the AIHW Metadata Online Registry (METeOR), e.g. 390310. If there is no METeOR identifier assigned, the data element was not included in the 2010 ECEC NMDS and was an additional data element requested by the ABS for 2010.

METeOR link: A web link to the data element in METeOR. If there is no METeOR link, the data element was not included in the 2010 ECEC NMDS and was an additional data element requested by the ABS for 2010.

Definition: A description of the meaning of the data element, e.g. The number of hours of a preschool program that a child has attended in the census week, in total hours from 0 to 60. This is the same definition as that used in the ECEC NMDS.

Components: Related properties which come together to comprise the data element, e.g. Report the total hours of preschool program attendance only for the child in the reference period.

Rationale: The reason for including this data element in the overall data set, e.g. to identify the number of hours that the child has attended a preschool program in the reference period.

Inclusions: Information or guidance on components to be included within a given context for the data element. This relates closely to the outcome of the intended usage of the data, which at this stage is more specific and filtered, e.g. include the total hours, from 0 to 60 hours, that the child actually attended the preschool program in the reference period.

Exclusions: Information or guidance on components not to be included in a given context for the data element. Appropriately stated exclusions will further define the input components, e.g. exclude non-preschool program hours.

*Identifying attribute and
meaning continued*

Data values: Specifies the representation class of data such as date, text, code, identifier or numeric total. Data element values can be enumerated (e.g. total hours) or non-numerical (e.g. Sex, M/F). Also summarises the permissible data types, e.g. Date, Number, String. This is the same representation class as that used in the ECEC NMDS.

Format: Specifies the presentation structure of the data value, e.g. for date of birth, DDMMYYYY, for Family name, text X[X(40)], for Preschool service received indicator, yes/no, code N. This is the same format as that used in the ECEC NMDS.

Counting rules: Collection standards which ensure that the correct properties and related attributes for the data element are obtained. Counting rules aim to ensure consistency and comparability of data, e.g. Derive child age in completed years so that if a child is aged 4 years and 9 months as at 1 July, record the child's age as '4' for the purpose of this collection.

UNIT RECORD LEVEL DATA Data elements to be collected by jurisdictions using a unit record level (URL) methodology in the 2010 National ECEC Collection are as follows:

Person/Child:

- Address line (additional data element requested in 2010)
- Area of usual residence
- Australian state/territory identifier
- Date of birth
- Eligibility for subsidy indicator
- Fees charged in the census week
- Indigenous status
- Letters of family name
- Letters of given name
- Maximum preschool program hours available per week
- Postcode
- Preschool program hours attended (total)
- Preschool program hours enrolled (total)
- Preschool service enrolment indicator
- Preschool service received indicator
- Preschool program received by teacher indicator (additional data element requested in 2010)
- Sex
- Statistical linkage key 581
- Suburb/town/locality

Person/Teacher:

- Field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care)
- Level of highest qualification in employment field
- Preschool program delivered by teacher indicator
- Role of early childhood education and care worker
- Type of work activity

Service provider:

- Address line (additional data element requested in 2010)
- Australian state/territory identifier (additional data element requested in 2010)
- Geographic location of organisation (CD)
- Management type
- Organisation identifier
- Organisation name (additional data element requested in 2010)
- Postcode - Australian (service provider organisation)
- Service activity type
- Service delivery setting (children's service)
- Service operation weeks
- Suburb/town/locality name (service provider organisation)

Further information on the 2010 ECEC URL NMDS is available on the AIHW website:
<<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/396792>>

AGGREGATE LEVEL DATA

Data elements to be collected by jurisdictions using an aggregate methodology in the 2010 National ECEC Collection are as follows:

Person/Child:

- Age
- Indigenous status
- Sex (additional data element requested in 2010)

Person/Teacher:

- Field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care)
- Level of highest qualification in employment field
- Preschool program delivered by teacher indicator
- Role of early childhood education and care worker
- Type of work activity

Service provider:

- Address line
- Australian state/territory identifier
- Eligibility for subsidy indicator
- Fee schedule (children's service centre-based long day care)
- Fee schedule (children's service preschool service)
- Fee schedule amount
- Geographic location of organisation (CD)
- Management type
- Maximum preschool program hours available per week
- Number of children attending preschool
- Number of Indigenous children attending preschool
- Number of Indigenous children enrolled in preschool
- Number of preschool enrolments at the service provider level
- Number of preschool program hours enrolled per week
- Organisation identifier
- Organisation name (additional data element requested in 2010)
- Postcode - Australian (service provider organisation)
- Service activity type
- Service delivery setting (children's service)
- Service operation weeks
- Suburb/town/locality name (service provider organisation)
- Total preschool attendance hours

Due to the nature of aggregate data, a combination of multiple aggregate items are requested for the 2010 National ECEC Collection. The nature of this request can be found within Chapter 7, Collection Specifications. The descriptions within each data element also acknowledge the disaggregation required.

Further information on the 2010 ECEC Aggregate NMDS is available on the AIHW website: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/388507>>

PERSON/CHILD LEVEL
DATA ELEMENTS - URL

The following descriptions outline the ECEC NMDS URL person/child level data element summaries.

Address line

Technical name: Child - address line, text [X(180)]

METeOR identifier: No corresponding METeOR identifier. This is an additional data element, requested for the purpose of geo-coding to Collection District (CD).

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - address line

Definition: The composite of one or more standard address components for the child's place of usual residence, as represented by text.

Components: Report the address line which identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian.

Rationale: To record the address line which identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian. When combined with the 'suburb/town/locality', 'postcode' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' child level data elements, this information enables identification of the 'area of usual residence (CD)' code.

Inclusions: Address line information, which may include:

- Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
- House/property number
- Street name

Exclusions: The post office box or other non-residential address of the child's parent or guardian.

Representation class: Text

Data type: String

Format: [x(180)] 0 -180 characters, for example: Unit 1, 10 High Street.

Maximum character length: 180

Supplementary responses: 'Unknown' responses reported as '9999899'.

Counting rules:

- Collect comprehensive details which identify the place of usual residence of the child's parent of guardian.
- The address line indicated must correspond to all other address related information collected, which may include:
 - Suburb, town, locality name
 - Postcode
 - Australian state/territory identifier
- Do not report the address line of the post office box or other non-residential address of the child's parent or guardian.
- Identify the place of usual residence of the parent or guardian with whom the child spends the majority of their time.
- For boarders at a boarding school, report the address of the boarding school or college.

Address line continued

- Include those children who are living outside of the jurisdiction's borders, if the child attends preschool within the jurisdiction.

Additional information:

- When collecting the geographical location of a person's usual place of residence, the ABS recommends that 'usual' be defined as: 'the place where the person has or intends to live for 6 months or more, or the place that the person regards as their main residence or, where the person has no other residence, the place they currently reside.'
- One complete identification/description of an address can comprise of one or more than one instance of address line. Instances of address lines are commonly identified in electronic information systems as Address-line 1, Address-line 2, etc.
- The format of data collection is less important than consistent use of conventions in recording of address data. Hence, address may be collected in an unstructured manner but should ideally be stored in a structured format.
- Where address line is collected as a stand-alone item, the address line details should be separated into sub-components. Multiple address lines may be recorded as required.
- Where the address is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

If a jurisdiction is able to accurately code address to CD and provide detailed information on coding process and validations made, there is no requirement to provide this data element.

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Area of usual residence

Technical name: Person - area of usual residence, geographical location CD code (ASGC 2009) NNNNNNN

METeOR identifier: 397211

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/397211>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - Geographic location of organisation (CD)

Definition: The geographical location of the usual residence of the person, using a seven-digit numerical code which indicates the CD within the state or territory of Australia.

Components: The seven-digit ASGC code which identifies the area of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian, comprising a single-digit code to indicate state or territory, and a six-digit code for the Collection District (CD) within the state/territory.

Rationale: The CD code is used to determine the socio-economic status of the area in which the child resides. This information assists in the derivation of disadvantage status and the disaggregation of Indigenous children by geographic location.

Inclusions: The ASGC CD code indicating the area of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian.

Exclusions: The CD code for the post office box or other non-residential address of the child's parent or guardian.

Classification scheme: Australian Standard Geographical Classification

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: NNNNNNN, for example: 4052030

Maximum character length: 7

Supplementary values: For unknown CD code, the following 9 digit values should be used:

199999899 - New South Wales - unknown CD
 299999899 - Victoria - unknown CD
 399999899 - Queensland - unknown CD
 499999899 - South Australia - unknown CD
 599999899 - Western Australia - unknown CD
 699999899 - Tasmania - unknown CD
 799999899 - Northern Territory - unknown CD
 899999899 - Australian Capital Territory - unknown CD
 999999899 - Other Territories - unknown CD

Counting rules:

- Code the area of usual residence to CD using the child's address line, postcode, suburb/town/locality name and Australian state/territory identifier.
- Identify the place of usual residence of the parent or guardian with whom the child spends the majority of their time.

Area of usual residence
continued

- For boarders at a boarding school, report the address of the boarding school or college.
- Include those children that are living outside of the jurisdiction's borders, if the child attends a preschool located within the jurisdiction.

Additional information:

- When collecting the geographical location of a person's usual place of residence, the ABS recommends that 'usual' be defined as: 'the place where the person has or intends to live for 6 months or more, or the place that the person regards as their main residence, or where the person has no other residence, the place they currently reside.'
- Where the address is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

MapInfo Professional is the Geographic Information System (GIS) software that is most widely used within the ABS for coding addresses to CD. Jurisdictions wishing to undertake their own coding should contact the ABS for further information about this product.

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Australian state/territory identifier

Technical name: Person - Australian state/territory identifier, code N

METeOR identifier: 286919

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/286919>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - Australian state/territory identifier

Definition: The Australian state or territory where a person can be located, as represented by a code.

Components: The Australian state or territory which identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian.

Rationale: To record the state or territory which identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian. When combined with the 'suburb/town/locality', 'postcode' and 'address line', this information enables identification of the 'area of usual residence (CD)' code.

Inclusions: All Australian states and territories including Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Christmas Island and Jervis Bay Territory.

Exclusions: Nil

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 2

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - New South Wales
- 2 - Victoria
- 3 - Queensland
- 4 - South Australia
- 5 - Western Australia
- 6 - Tasmania
- 7 - Northern Territory
- 8 - Australian Capital Territory
- 9 - Other Australian territories

Counting rules:

- Record the Australian state or territory of the child by collecting comprehensive address details which identify the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian.
- The Australian state/territory identifier must correspond to all other address related information collected, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
 - House/property number
 - Street name

*Australian state/territory
identifier continued*

- Suburb, town or locality
- Postcode
- Confirm that 'address line', 'suburb/town/locality name' and 'postcode' data elements correspond with an address located within the jurisdiction specified by this data element.
- Only include those children identified as living outside of the jurisdiction's borders, if the child attends a preschool located within the jurisdiction.

Additional information: When collecting the geographical location of a person's usual place of residence, the ABS recommends that 'usual' be defined as: 'the place where the person has or intends to live for 6 months or more, or the place that the person regards as their main residence, or where the person has no other residence, the place they currently reside.'

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Date of birth

Technical name: Person - date of birth, DDMMYYYY

METeOR identifier: 287007

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/287007>>

Related aggregate data element: Person - age

Definition: The date of birth of the person.

Components: The date of birth of the child.

Rationale: To identify and record the date of birth of the child, which will be used to derive the child's age as at 1 July of the collection year.

Inclusions: The day, month and year of birth of the child, concatenated in that order to form the child's date of birth.

Exclusions: Nil

Representation class: Date

Data type: Date/time

Format: DDMMYYYY, for example: 21012005

Maximum character length: 8

Supplementary response: 'Unknown' response reported as 999 - for instances where the date of birth of the child is unknown.

Counting rules:

- In instances where the jurisdiction can provide the month and year of birth but are unable to provide the day of birth for the child, the day of birth should be coded to the first day of the month (i.e. 01).
- The Jurisdiction should clearly indicate in supporting documentation, any estimated or coded dates of birth.

Additional information:

As a quality check at the time of enrolment, service providers should check that the date of birth provided by the parent or guardian corresponds to the date of birth on the child's birth certificate.

Where the date of birth is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow up processes undertaken.

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Eligibility for subsidy indicator

Technical name: Child - eligibility for subsidy indicator, code N

METeOR identifier: 401343

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/401343>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - eligibility for subsidy indicator

Definition: Whether the child is receiving subsidies that are not available generally to other children who are attending preschool at this service, as represented by a code.

Components: Subsidies paid on behalf of the child, to reduce out of pocket costs for preschool programs.

Rationale: To identify and record whether the child is eligible for subsidies that are not generally available to all other children who are attending the preschool program.

Inclusions:

- Children who are eligible for preschool subsidies being paid direct to service providers.
- Children who have social assistance benefits paid directly to their family to make preschool more affordable.
- Children who do not qualify for preschool subsidies.

Exclusions: Subsidies available to all children attending the preschool program.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Boolean

Format: N, for example: 1

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Yes: the child is eligible for a subsidy in relation to the preschool program.
- 2 - No: the child is not eligible for a subsidy in relation to the preschool program.

Counting rules: Where the response for this indicator is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

Additional information:

Eligible subsidies: Operational subsidies paid to service providers on behalf of a child to reduce the running costs of preschool programs. Service providers must receive operational subsidies on a per child basis, subject to Commonwealth, state/territory and local government eligibility criteria. The subsidy must be in relation to the preschool program, must not be accessible to all children and must reduce the cost of the child attending the preschool program during the reference period. For example, the Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a means tested Australian government payment to assist working families meet the costs of child care, which in some cases is paid directly to the service provider and flows on to families through a reduction in fees payable. CCB, Child Care Rebate (CCR) and other subsidies must also be included if paid directly to the child's

*Eligibility for subsidy
indicator continued*

parent or guardian by the responsible government agency and if the service provider is aware of these subsidies.

Ineligible subsidies: Subsidies available to all children attending the preschool program. Social assistance benefits such as pensions and carer allowances.

The eligibility for subsidy indicator will undergo further development for the 2011 collection.

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Fees charged in the census week

Technical name: Child - fees charged in the census week, total Australian currency
N[N(8)]

METeOR identifier: 401478

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/401478>>

Related aggregate data elements:

- Service provider organisation - fee schedule (children's service centre-based long day care)
- Service provider organisation - fee schedule (children's service preschool service)
- Service provider organisation - fee schedule amount

Definition: The actual tuition fees charged per week for the child to attend preschool at this service, measured in Australian dollars (AU\$).

Components: Net weekly costs (i.e. tuition fees only) charged for the child to attend the preschool program.

Rationale: To identify and record the affordability of preschool programs by identifying out of pocket costs to the parent or guardian towards the payment of tuition fees for the child to attend the preschool program.

Inclusions: Services should report their standard fee, that is, the tuition fee only, charged to each child to attend the preschool program.

Exclusions: Exclude fees charged for the child to attend other non-preschool programs with the service provider, such as out of school hours care. Exclude other fees which are not tuition fees such as application fee, enrolment fee, resources fee, IT fee, capital fee, credit card fee, uniform, books, stationary and library fees, etc.

Representation class: Total

Data type: Currency

Format: N[NNNNNN].NN, for example: \$12.55

Maximum character length: 9

Unit of measure: Australian currency (AU\$)

Supplementary values: NA - If there are no fees payable for the child to attend the preschool program.

Counting rules:

- Count the net weekly costs that are charged for the child to attend the preschool program.
- Count fees that are charged to the child's parent or guardian, irrespective of whether the fees are actually paid (i.e. if payment of the fee is not compulsory or is not followed up or enforced by the service provider).
- If subsidies are included in the calculation of the fees charged to the child, report the fees charged after deducting eligible subsidies.
- Only count the fees charged for the child to attend the preschool program. Do not count fees charged for the child to attend other programs with the service provider, such as out of school hours care.

*Fees charged in the
census week continued*

- Donations paid by parents should not be included, nor should additional charges for service components such as nappy supplies, meals or transportation.
- If net fees are charged on a per term or per year basis, the pro-rata equivalent weekly fee should be derived having regard to weeks per term and/or weeks per year that the preschool program is in operation. This can be derived from the service operation weeks data element. The jurisdiction must inform the ABS of any such derivations.
- The ABS asks that the format of \$\$\$.cc is used (even though this is not specifically outlined in the 2010 NMDS).

Additional information: The ABS has requested that the relevant reference period for the data is also provided. For example, some jurisdictions may record term fees, whilst others may record weekly fees. This needs to be specified so that the ABS can derive fees to a weekly reference period if necessary. Jurisdictions may collect this information over multiple weeks due to variable delivery methods. This may mean that presenting the data over a week period will necessitate an average statistic being derived.

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*Indigenous status**Technical name:* Person - Indigenous status, code N*METeOR identifier:* 291036*METeOR link:* <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/291036>>*Related aggregate data elements:*

- Service provider organisation - number of Indigenous children attending preschool
- Service provider organisation - number of Indigenous children enrolled in preschool

Definition: Whether a person identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, as represented by a code.*Components:* Report whether the child's parent or guardian identifies the child as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin in accordance with the ABS standard for Indigenous status (ABS, 1999) classified as:

- Aboriginal, but not Torres Strait Islander origin
- Torres Strait Islander, but not Aboriginal origin
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
- Non-Indigenous: Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin

Rationale: To identify and record children who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, as identified by the child's parent or guardian.*Inclusions:* Whether the child's parent or guardian identifies the child as being Indigenous or non-Indigenous.*Exclusions:* Nil*Representation class:* Code*Data type:* Number*Format:* N, for example: 3*Maximum character length:* 1*Permissible values:*

- 1 - Aboriginal, but not Torres Strait Islander origin
- 2 - Torres Strait Islander, but not Aboriginal origin
- 3 - Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
- 4 - Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin

Supplementary values:

- 8 - Aboriginal, not further defined
- 9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- The Indigenous status of the child must be the status as identified by the child's parent or guardian.
- Code multiple responses where respondent marks 'No' and either 'Aboriginal' or 'Torres Strait Islander' as either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander as indicated and disregard the 'No' response.
- Code multiple responses where respondent marks both 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' as 'Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander'.

Indigenous status
continued

- Code multiple responses where respondent marks all three boxes 'No', 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' as 'Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin' and disregard the 'No' response.
- Supplementary values such as 'Not stated/inadequately described' should not be available as valid responses but can be used in data collections for operational purposes.
- The value 'Aboriginal, not further defined' should only be used in instances where breakdown by Indigenous status is not available.

Additional information: The standard classification for Indigenous status has a hierarchical structure comprising two levels. There are 4 categories at the detailed level of the classification which are grouped into two categories at the broader level. The classification is as follows:

Indigenous:

- 1 - Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin
- 2 - Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin
- 3 - Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin

Non-Indigenous:

- 4 - Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin

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Letters of family name

Technical name: Person - letters of family name, text XXX

METeOR identifier: 349481

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/349481>>

Definition: The combination of the 2nd, 3rd and 5th letters of a person's family name.

Components: Collect the child's family name or surname.

Rationale: The 2nd, 3rd, and 5th letters of the child's family name are used to compose a section of the Statistical Linkage Key (SLK) 581. The selected 'Letters of family name' can be used in combination with 'Letters of given name', 'Date of birth' and 'Sex' to develop a SLK for the child to facilitate the linkage of records for statistical purposes only.

Inclusions: The 2nd, 3rd, and 5th letters of the child's family name or surname.

Exclusions: The 1st, 4th, 6th, and any subsequent letters of the child's family name.

Representation class: Text

Data type: String

Format: XXX, for example: HOP

Maximum character length: 3

Supplementary values: 999 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- Count the 2nd, 3rd, and 5th letters of the child's family name. For example, if the child's family name is Thompson, the reported value should be HOP. If the child's family name is Brown, the reported value should be RON.
- If the child's family name includes non-alphabetic characters such as hyphens (as in Lee-Archer), apostrophes (as in O'Mara), or blank spaces (as in De Vries), these should be ignored when counting the position of each character.
- Regardless of the length of a person's family name, the reported value should always contain three characters. If the legal family name is not long enough to supply the requested letters (i.e. a legal family name of less than five letters) then agencies should substitute the number '2' to reflect the missing letters.
 - The placement of a number '2' should always correspond to the same space that the missing letter would have been positioned within the 3-digit field. A number (rather than a letter) is used for such a substitution in order to clearly indicate that an appropriate corresponding letter from the child's name is not available. For example: If a child's family name is Farr, the value reported would be AR2 because the 2 is substituting for a missing 5th letter of the family name. Similarly, if the person's family name was Hua, then the value reported would be UA2 because the 2 is substituting for the missing 5th letter of the family name.

Letters of family name
continued

- In some cultures it is traditional to state the family name first. To overcome discrepancies in recording/reporting that may arise as a result of this practice, agencies should always ask the child to specify their legal first name and their legal family name separately. These should then be recorded as first given name and family name as appropriate, regardless of the order in which they may be traditionally given.
- If the child's family name is missing altogether, the agency should record the number 999 for all three spaces associated with the family name (not the number 2).

Additional information: Where the name is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow up processes undertaken.

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Letters of given name

Technical name: Person - letters of given name, text XX

METeOR identifier: 349483

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/349483>>

Definition: The combination of the 2nd and 3rd letters of a person's given name.

Components: Collect the child's full given name or first name.

Rationale: The 2nd and 3rd letters of the child's given name are used to compose a section of the Statistical Linkage Key (SLK) 581. The selected 'Letters of given name' can be used in combination with 'Letters of family name', 'Date of birth' and 'Sex' to develop a SLK to facilitate the linkage of records for statistical purposes only.

Inclusions: The 2nd and 3rd letters of the child's given name.

Exclusions: The 1st, 4th, and any subsequent letters of the child's given name.

Representation class: Text

Data type: String

Format: XX

Maximum character length: 2

Supplementary values: 99 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- Count the 2nd and 3rd letters of the child's given name or first name. For example, if the child's given name is Elizabeth, the reported value should be LI. If the child's given name is Robert the reported value should be OB. If the child's given name includes non-alphabetic characters such as hyphens (as in Jo-Anne) or apostrophes (as in D'Arcy), these non-alphabetic characters should be ignored when counting the position of each character.
- Regardless of the length of a person's given name, the reported value should always be two characters long. If the given name of the person is not long enough to supply the requested letters (i.e. a name of less than three letters) then agencies should substitute the number '2' to reflect the missing letters.
 - The placement of a number '2' should always correspond to the same space that the missing letter would have within the 2-digit field. A number (rather than a letter) is used for such substitutions in order to clearly indicate that an appropriate corresponding letter from the person's name is not available. For example: If the person's legal name was Jo then the value reported would be O2 because the 2 is substituting for the missing 3rd letter of the given name.
- In some cultures it is traditional to state the family name first. To overcome discrepancies in recording/reporting that may arise as a result of this practice, agencies should always ask the person to specify their given name and their family name separately. These should then be recorded as first given name and family name as appropriate, regardless of the order in which they may be traditionally given.
- If the person's given name is missing altogether the agency should record 99 for the two spaces associated with the given name (not the number 2).

*Letters of given name
continued*

Additional information: Where the name is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow up processes undertaken.

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Maximum preschool program hours available per week

Technical name: Child - maximum preschool program hours available per week, total hours N[N]

METeOR identifier: 397151

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/397151>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - maximum preschool program hours available per week

Definition: The maximum number of hours of preschool program available to the child at this service per week, in total hours from 0 to 60.

Components: The maximum hours available per week for the child to attend the preschool program at the service.

Rationale: To identify and record the maximum hours available per week for the child to attend the preschool program. This will allow identification of the proportion of children enrolled in preschool programs that are available for at least 15 hours per week.

Inclusions: Total hours available per week for the child to attend the preschool program at the service, up to a maximum of 60 hours.

Exclusions: Exclude non-preschool program hours. Where the facility provides other integrated child care services, the hours associated with these services should be excluded.

Representation class: Total

Data type: Number

Format: N[N], for example: 15

Maximum character length: 2

Unit of measure: Hour (h)

Counting rules:

- Count the maximum hours available that the child is able to attend the preschool program at the service.
- Where this data element is not able to be reported accurately at an individual child level, for each preschool program, count the total hours enrolled for the child with the highest enrolment hours during the reference period, and record this total for all children enrolled in that preschool program.

Additional information:

The maximum hours available may be less than or equal to the opening hours of the service, but may exceed the number of hours the child is enrolled for at the service. This number may also be greater than the hours actually attended in the reference period.

The maximum preschool program hours available to the child are the maximum hours for which the child could enrol in the reference period at that service. The maximum preschool program hours available could be impacted by a range of factors such as the structure of the preschool program, resources available at the service, the age and preschool readiness of the child and so on.

*Maximum preschool
program hours available
per week continued*

Parents may choose to enrol the child for hours that are equal to or less than the maximum hours the preschool program is available.

Ensure that reported values fall between 0 and 60 hours per week. Hours in excess of 60 hours per week should be manually capped at 60 by the jurisdiction.

Jurisdictions may collect this information over multiple weeks due to variable delivery methods. This may mean that presenting the data over a week period will necessitate an average statistic being derived.

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Postcode

Technical name: Person (address) - Australian postcode, code (Postcode datafile)
{NNNN}

METeOR identifier: 287224

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/287224>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation (address) - postcode - Australian

Definition: The numeric descriptor for a postal delivery area, aligned with locality, suburb or place for the address of a person.

Components: Report the postcode which identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian. Postcode data involves a conversion from postcodes to the Australian Bureau of Statistics postal area.

Rationale: To identify and record the postcode that identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian. This information, when combined with the 'address line', 'suburb/town/locality' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' child level data elements, can be used to identify the 'area of usual residence (CD)' code.

Inclusions: Include the postcode which identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian.

Exclusions: Exclude the postcode for a post office box or other non-residential address of the child's parent or guardian.

Classification scheme: Postcode datafile

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: {NNNN}, for example: 5118

Maximum character length: 4

Supplementary value: 9999 - Unknown

Counting rules:

- Collect comprehensive details which identify the place of usual residence of the child's parent of guardian.
- The postcode must correspond to all other address related information collected, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
 - House/property number
 - Street name
 - Suburb, town or locality
 - Australian state/territory identifier
- Do not collect the post office box or other non-residential address of the child's parent or guardian.
- Identify the place of usual residence of the parent or guardian with whom the child spends the majority of their time.

Postcode continued

- For boarders at a boarding school, report the address of the boarding school or college.
- Include those children who are living outside of the jurisdiction's borders, if the child attends preschool within the jurisdiction.

Additional information:

When collecting the geographical location of a person's usual place of residence, the ABS recommends that 'usual' be defined as: 'the place where the person has or intends to live for 6 months or more, or the place that the person regards as their main residence, or where the person has no other residence, the place they currently reside.'

If a jurisdiction is able to accurately code address to CD and provide detailed information on coding process and validations made, there is no requirement to provide this data element.

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Preschool program hours attended

Technical name: Child - preschool program hours attended per week, total hours N[N]

METeOR identifier: 390310

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/390310>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - total preschool attendance hours

Definition: The number of hours of a preschool program that a child has attended in the census week, in total hours from 0 to 60.

Components: Report the total hours of preschool program attendance only for the child in the reference period.

Rationale: To identify and record the number of hours that a child has attended a preschool program in the reference period.

Inclusions: Include the total hours, from 0 to 60 hours, that the child actually attended the preschool program in the reference period.

Exclusions: Exclude non-preschool program hours. Where the facility provides other integrated child care services, the hours associated with these services should be excluded. Exclude hours that the child was absent.

Representation class: Total

Data type: Number

Format: N[N], for example: 15

Maximum character length: 2

Unit of measure: Hour (h)

Counting rules:

- Count the number of whole hours that the child is in attendance at the preschool program.
- Include hours attended in non-instructional activities such as recess, tea breaks and lunch breaks if the child remained under the supervision of the service provider for these activities.
- Attendance hours should not be derived by recording the number of sessions attended by the child and deriving hours from the usual length of each session. The actual hours that each child attended must be recorded. For example, in the case of a part day attendance, the actual hours the child attended could be less than the usual length of a part day session.

Additional information:

The number of hours that the child is in attendance at the preschool program is obtained by the service provider initially recording start and finish times for each child's attendance and then rounding to whole hours.

Ensure that reported values fall between 0 and 60 hours per week. Hours in excess of 60 hours per week should be manually capped at 60 by the jurisdiction.

*Preschool program hours
attended continued*

The ABS has requested that the relevant reference period for the data is also provided. For example, some jurisdictions may record fortnightly attendance hours, whilst others may record weekly attendance hours. This needs to be specified so that the ABS can derive hours to a weekly reference period if necessary.

Jurisdictions may collect this information over multiple weeks due to variable delivery methods. This may mean that presenting the data over a week period will necessitate an average statistic being derived.

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Preschool program hours enrolled

Technical name: Child - preschool program hours enrolled per week, total hours N[N]

METeOR identifier: 390305

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/390305>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - number of preschool program hours enrolled per week

Definition: The number of hours of a preschool program that a child is enrolled to receive, in the reference week, in total hours.

Components: Report the total hours that the child is enrolled at the preschool program.

Rationale: To identify and record the total hours that the child is enrolled to receive the preschool program.

Inclusions: Include the total hours, from 0 to 60 hours, that the child is enrolled in the preschool program in the reference period.

Exclusions: Exclude non-preschool program hours. Where the facility provides other integrated child care services, the hours the child is enrolled with these services should be excluded.

Representation class: Total

Data type: Number

Format: N[N], for example: 15

Maximum character length: 2

Unit of measure: Hour (h)

Counting rules:

- Enrolment hours can be derived by recording the number of sessions the child is enrolled and deriving hours from the usual length of each session.
- Include hours enrolled in non-instructional activities such as recess, tea breaks and lunch breaks if the child will remain under the supervision of the service provider for these activities.
- The child must have been offered a place at the preschool and be actively attending to be counted. See 'Preschool service enrolment indicator' for further information on this concept.
- Children who are absent in the reference period due to illness or extended holiday leave are considered to be enrolled if they are expected to return.

Additional information:

The hours the child is enrolled may be less than or equal to the maximum number of hours available for the child to attend the preschool program, but may exceed the number of hours the child attended the program during the reference period.

Ensure that reported values fall between 0 and 60 hours per week. Hours in excess of 60 hours per week should be manually capped at 60 by the jurisdiction.

*Preschool program hours
enrolled continued*

The ABS has requested that the relevant reference period for the data is also provided. For example, some jurisdictions may record fortnightly enrolment hours, whilst others may record weekly enrolment hours. This needs to be specified so that the ABS can derive hours to a weekly reference period if necessary.

Jurisdictions may collect this information over multiple weeks due to variable delivery methods. This may mean that presenting the data over a week period will necessitate an average statistic being derived.

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*Preschool service
enrolment indicator*

Technical name: Child - preschool service enrolment indicator, code N

METeOR identifier: 387977

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/387977>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - number of preschool enrolments at the service provider level

Definition: Whether the child was enrolled in a preschool program, as represented by a code.

Components: Indicate whether the child is enrolled in the preschool program.

Rationale: This data element identifies whether the child is enrolled and actively attending in the preschool program.

Inclusions: Indicate whether the child is enrolled and actively attending the preschool program.

- Report a 'Yes' response if the child has been offered a place at the preschool and is actively attending.
- Report a 'No' response if the child is enrolled but not actively attending the preschool program, or is only enrolled in a child care program at an LDC but not in the LDC's integrated preschool program.

Exclusions: Nil

Representation class: Code

Data type: Boolean

Format: N, for example: 1

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Yes: child is enrolled in the preschool program.
- 2 - No: child is not enrolled in the preschool program.

Counting rules:

- To be considered as enrolled, the child must have been offered a place at the preschool and be actively attending. A child is considered to be actively attending if they have attended a preschool session at least once within the previous month (the 4 weeks prior to the collection date). Children who are absent in the previous month due to illness, extended holiday leave or for cultural reasons are considered to be enrolled if they are expected to return.
- For all preschool programs delivered in school settings, count the 4 weeks prior to the collection date, excluding weeks when the school is closed for school holidays, to determine whether the child is actively attending.
- For all preschool programs delivered in non-school settings, count the 4 weeks prior to the collection date, including only those weeks when the service is operational, to determine whether the child is actively attending in the preschool program.

Additional information: Nil

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Preschool service received indicator

Technical name: Child - preschool service received indicator, code N

METeOR identifier: 357010

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/357010>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - number of children attending preschool

Definition: Whether a child received a preschool service, as represented by a code.

Components: Indicate whether the child attended a preschool program during the reference period.

Rationale: This data element identifies whether the child attended a preschool program during the reference period.

Inclusions: Indicate whether the child attended the preschool program during the reference period.

- Report a 'Yes' response if the child attended a preschool program at least once within the reference period.
- Report a 'No' response if the child did not attend a preschool program during the reference period or was absent due to illness or extended holiday leave.

Exclusions: Exclude children attending only for other child care services at LDCs with an integrated preschool program.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Boolean

Format: N, for example: 1

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Yes: child did attend a preschool program during the reference period.
- 2 - No: child did not attend a preschool program during the reference period.

Counting rules:

- To be considered as attending, the child must have attended at least once within the reference period.
- Children who were absent during the reference period due to illness or extended holiday leave should be classified as not attending.

Additional information: Nil

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Preschool program received by teacher indicator

Technical name: Child - preschool program received by teacher indicator, code N

METeOR identifier: No corresponding METeOR identifier. This is an additional requested data element.

Related aggregate data element: Person (employed) - preschool program delivered by teacher indicator

Definition: An indicator that the child received face to face delivery of a preschool program by a teacher with a relevant university qualification, as represented by a code.

Components: Report whether or not the preschool program received by the child was delivered (face to face) by a teacher with a relevant university qualification.

Rationale: To identify and record whether or not the child received a structured, play-based, educational preschool program, delivered by a teacher with a relevant university qualification.

Inclusions: Indicate whether the child received a preschool program that was delivered by a teacher with a relevant university qualification:

- Report a 'Yes' response if the child is receiving a preschool program that is being delivered by a person with a relevant university qualification.
- Report a 'No' response if the child is receiving a preschool program that is not being delivered by a person with a relevant university qualification.

Exclusions: Exclude other programs that the child is receiving at the service that are non-preschool programs.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 1

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Yes: The child received a preschool program that was delivered by a person with a relevant university qualification.
- 2 - No: The child received a preschool program that was not delivered by a person with a relevant university qualification.

Supplementary values: 9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- A child is counted as having received a preschool program from a qualified teacher if the teacher had face to face contact with the child at least once during the reference period and the teacher had a relevant university qualification.
- For example, in a long day care setting, a care worker delivers a 'preschool program' to the child, however the care worker does not hold a relevant qualification. This would result in a 'No' response as the program is not being delivered by a teacher with relevant qualifications. Alternatively, a 'Yes' response would be inputted if a teacher with relevant qualifications is delivering the preschool program to the child.

*Preschool program
received by teacher
indicator continued*

- 'Once' during the reference period is to be defined as at least one whole session of the preschool program.

Additional information: Where the indicator response is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Sex

Technical name: Person - sex, code N

METeOR identifier: 287316

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/287316>>

Related aggregate data element: Person - sex

Definition: The biological distinction between male and female, as represented by a code.

Components: Report the sex of the child.

Rationale: To identify the sex of the child which is a component of the SLK.

Inclusions: Indicate the sex of the child.

Exclusions: Nil

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 2

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Male
- 2 - Female
- 3 - Intersex or indeterminate

Supplementary values:

- 9 - Not stated/inadequately described: this classification is not to be used on primary collection forms. It is for use mainly in administrative collections when transferring data from data sets where the item has not been collected.

Additional information: Where the sex is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

The intersex or indeterminate classification is normally used for babies for whom sex has not been determined for whatever reason. It should not generally be used on data collection forms completed by the respondent. It should only be used if the person or respondent volunteers that the person is intersex or where it otherwise becomes clear during the collection process that the individual is neither male nor female.

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Statistical Linkage Key
581

Technical name: Record - linkage key, code 581 XXXXXDDMMYYYYN

METeOR identifier: 349895

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/349895>>

Definition: A key that enables two or more records belonging to the same individual to be brought together. It is represented by a code consisting of the 2nd, 3rd and 5th characters of a person's family name, the 2nd and 3rd letters of the persons' given name, the day, month and year that the person was born and the sex of the person, concatenated in that order.

Components: Report the statistical linkage key for the child.

Rationale: The intention of this data element is to create a unique key for each child, however in practice, it is possible for more than one child to have identical SLK. This level of accuracy still allows the SLK to be used in data linkage for statistical analysis, for which 100% accuracy in matching is not required, however it is not possible to use the SLK in data matching for administrative purposes.

Inclusions: Include in the following order:

- the 2nd, 3rd and 5th characters of the child's family name,
- the 2nd and 3rd characters of the child's given name,
- the day, month and year that the child was born, and
- the sex of the child.

Exclusions: Exclude the following components:

- the 1st, 4th, 6th and subsequent characters of a child's family name, and
- the 1st, 4th and subsequent characters of the child's given name.

Representation class: Code

Data type: String

Format: XXXXXDDMMYYYYN, for example BGRUK021120072

Maximum character length: 14

Counting rules:

- Ensure that each associated data element is collected using the appropriate collection instructions. Refer to the individual data element summaries for further information:
 - Date of birth
 - Letters of family name
 - Letters of given name
 - Sex

Additional information: The linkage key makes it possible to count the number of children and the services they received, without counting the same child more than once. It can also be used for linking to other related data collections.

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Suburb/town/locality

Technical name: Person (address) - suburb/town/locality name, text [A(50)]

METeOR identifier: 287326

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/287326>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - suburb/town/locality name

Definition: The full name of the locality contained within the specific address of a person, as represented by text.

Components: Report the suburb/town/locality name which identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian.

Rationale: To identify and record the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian. This information, when combined with the 'address line', 'postcode' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' child level data elements, can be used to identify the corresponding 'area of usual residence (CD)' code.

Inclusions: Include the suburb, town or locality name which identifies the place of usual residence of the child's parent or guardian.

Exclusions: The suburb of a post office box or other non-residential address of the child's parent or guardian.

Representation class: Text

Data type: String

Format: [A(50)], for example, Gawler

Maximum character length: 50

Supplementary inputs:

- 'Not stated/inadequately described'
- 'Unknown' - where the address of the child is unknown
- 'Overseas address' - where the child's place of usual residence is located overseas
- 'No fixed address' - where the child has no fixed address or is homeless

Counting rules:

- The locality name may be a town, city, suburb or commonly used location name such as a large agricultural property or Aboriginal community.
- Collect comprehensive details which identify the place of usual residence of the child's parent of guardian.
- Suburb/town/locality name information must correspond to all other address information collected, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
 - House/property number
 - Street name
 - Postcode
 - Australian state/territory identifier

Suburb/town/locality
continued

- Do not collect the suburb of the post office box or other non-residential address of the child's parent or guardian.
- Identify the place of usual residence of the parent or guardian with whom the child spends the majority of their time.
- For boarders at a boarding school, report the address of the boarding school or college.
- Include those children who are living outside of the jurisdiction's borders if the child attends preschool within the jurisdiction.

Additional information:

When collecting the geographical location of a person's usual place of residence, the ABS recommends that 'usual' be defined as: 'the place where the person has or intends to live for 6 months or more, or the place that the person regards as their main residence, or where the person has no other residence, the place they currently reside.'

If a jurisdiction is able to accurately code address to CD and provide detailed information on coding process and validations made, there is no requirement to provide this data element. Where the address is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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PERSON/TEACHER LEVEL
DATA ELEMENTS - URL

The following descriptions outline the ECEC NMDS URL person/teacher level data element summaries.

Field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care)

Technical name: Person (employed) - education field of highest relevant qualification, early childhood education and care field of qualification code N[N]

METeOR identifier: 388641

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/388641>>

Related aggregate data element: Person (employed) - field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care)

Definition: The field of education in which a person has attained their highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care, as represented by a code.

Components: Report the field of education in which a person has attained their highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care.

Rationale: To identify and record the field of the highest relevant qualification held by workers employed by the service provider who are providing face to face delivery of a preschool program.

Inclusions: For each person employed by the service provider who is providing face to face delivery of a preschool program, report the highest field of qualification held in accordance with the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) codes:

- Teaching – early childhood related
- Teaching – primary
- Teaching – other (includes special education and English as a second language)
- Child care
- Nursing
- Other human welfare studies and services
- Behavioural science
- Other early childhood related
- Other qualification/field

Exclusions: Qualifications held by workers employed by the service provider who are not providing face to face delivery of a preschool program. Any person who is not employed by the service provider that may attend and assist in the provision of services, such as volunteer or a parent.

Classification scheme: Australian Standard Classification of Education

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N[N], for example: 2

Maximum character length: 2

Field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care) continued

Permissible values:

- 1 - Teaching (early childhood related)-(ASCED 070101)
- 2 - Teaching (primary)-(ASCED 070103)
- 3 - Teaching (other)-(ASCED 070105-070199)
- 4 - Child Care - maps to children's services-(ASCED 090503)
- 5 - Nursing (including mothercraft nursing)-(ASCED 0603)
- 6 - Other human welfare studies and services-(ASCED 090501, 090505-090599)
- 7 - Behavioural science-(ASCED 090701-090799)
- 8 - Other early childhood related
- 9 - Other qualification/field

Supplementary values:

- 97 - Not applicable (no qualification)
- 98 - Unknown (qualification unknown)
- 99 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- Ensure that the field of education recorded is in relation to the person's highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care. For example, a worker delivering the preschool program may have a Bachelor degree (honours) in Finance and a Certificate level 3 in Child Care. In this situation the highest relevant qualification is the Certificate level 3 in Child Care. Record 'Child Care' as the field of highest relevant qualification for this worker.
- The qualification status of a worker relates to the worker's currently held relevant qualifications, i.e. only completed qualifications should be reported.
- Record only one qualification for each teacher, i.e. each teacher can have only one highest relevant qualification.
- The response recorded for this data element must relate directly to the response recorded for the 'Level of highest qualification in employment field' data element.

Additional information: Where the field of qualification is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Level of highest qualification in employment field

Technical name: Person (employed) - level of highest qualification in employment field, early childhood education and care code N[N]

METeOR identifier: 396927

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phpml/itemId/396927>>

Related aggregate data element: Person (employed) - level of highest qualification in employment field

Definition: The highest level of qualification a person employed in early childhood education and care has attained in the relevant field, as represented by a code.

Components: Report the level of qualification in which a person has attained their highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care.

Rationale: To identify and record the level of the highest relevant qualification held by workers employed by the service provider who are providing face to face delivery of a preschool program.

Inclusions: For each person employed by the service provider who is providing face to face delivery of a preschool program, report the highest level of qualification held by the person in accordance with the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED) codes:

- Postgraduate degree
- Graduate diploma or graduate certificate level
- Bachelor degree (honours)
- Bachelor degree pass (4 years or equivalent)
- Bachelor degree pass (3 years or equivalent)
- Advanced diploma
- Diploma
- Certificate level 3 or 4
- Certificate level 1 or 2
- Other certificate

Exclusions: Qualifications for workers employed by the service provider who are not providing face to face delivery of a preschool program. Any person who is not employed by the service provider that may attend and assist in the provision of services, such as volunteer or a parent.

Classification scheme: Australian Standard Classification of Education

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N[N]

Maximum character length: 2

Level of highest qualification in employment field continued

Permissible values:

- 1 - Postgraduate degree. This level includes Doctorates and Masters degrees, either by research or course work. Common entry requirements are completion of a Bachelor degree (with or without Honours) and a qualifying year or equivalent, or a research based Graduate diploma.
- 2 - Graduate diploma and Graduate certificate level. The Graduate diploma is usually the equivalent of one year of full time study, while the Graduate certificate is usually the equivalent of six months of full time study. Entry to a Graduate diploma or Graduate certificate is usually through satisfactory completion of a Bachelor degree or an Advanced diploma, and demonstrated potential to complete work at this level. Postgraduate certificates and diplomas are also included in this category.
- 3 - Bachelor degree (honours). Honours is the extended period of study in a specialised field which is offered to students in some courses achieving outstanding results in a relevant discipline or demonstrating outstanding achievement in the early years of a Bachelor program.
- 4 - Bachelor degree pass (4 years or equivalent). Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 12 or equivalent, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 5 - Bachelor degree pass (3 years or equivalent). Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 12 or equivalent, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 6 - Advanced diploma. Education at this level includes analysing information and concepts at an abstract level and executing judgements across a range of technical and management functions. Entry to this level is enabled via various pathways which may include the completion of Year 12 or equivalent, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 7 - Diploma. Education at this level may also develop basic management or administrative skills. Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 12 or equivalent, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 8 - Certificate level 3 or 4. Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 10 or equivalent, or higher, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 9 - Certificate level 1 or 2. Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 10 or equivalent, or higher, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 10 - Other certificate. Any certificate not covered by the previous two categories.

Supplementary values:

- 97 - Not applicable. Use this code when there is no qualification
- 98 - Unknown. Use this code when the qualification is unknown
- 98 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- The qualification status of a worker relates to the worker's currently held relevant qualifications, i.e. only completed qualifications should be reported.

Level of highest qualification in employment field continued

- A four or three year university qualification refers to the length of the qualification if the whole program was studied full-time.
- A 'Bachelor degree pass (3/4 year or equivalent)' includes staff who have been deemed to have the necessary skills and qualifications to be employed as a 3/4 year degree qualified teacher by the jurisdiction.
- Ensure that the level of education recorded is in relation to the person's highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care. For example, a worker delivering the preschool program may have a Bachelor degree (honours) in Finance and a Certificate level 3 in Child Care. In this situation the highest relevant qualification is the Certificate level 3 in Child Care. Record 'Certificate level 3' as the level of highest relevant qualification for this worker.
- The response recorded for this data element must relate directly to the response recorded for the 'Field of highest relevant qualification' data element.

Additional information: Where the level of qualification is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Preschool program delivered by teacher indicator

Technical name: Person (employed) - preschool program delivered by teacher indicator, code N

METeOR identifier: 401322

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/401322>>

Related aggregate data element: Person (employed) - preschool program delivered by teacher indicator

Definition: An indicator of face to face delivery of a preschool program by a person with a relevant university qualification, as represented by a code.

Components: Report whether or not the preschool program is being delivered (face to face) by a person with a relevant university qualification.

Rationale: To identify and record whether or not a structured, play-based, educational preschool program is delivered by a teacher with a relevant university qualification.

Inclusions: Indicate whether a preschool program is delivered by a teacher (or employed person) with a relevant university qualification:

- Report a 'Yes' response if the preschool program is being delivered by a person with a relevant university qualification.
- Report a 'No' response if the preschool program is not being delivered by a person with a relevant university qualification.

Exclusions: Exclude other programs delivered at the service that are non-preschool programs.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 1

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Yes: Preschool program was delivered by a teacher with a relevant university qualification.
- 2 - No: Preschool program was not delivered by a teacher with a relevant university qualification.

Supplementary values: 9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- A teacher is to be counted as delivering a preschool program if they delivered the program at least once within the reference week. For example, in a long day care setting, a care worker delivers a 'preschool program', however the care worker does not hold a relevant qualification. This would result in a 'No' response as the 'program' is not being delivered by a teacher with relevant qualifications. Alternatively, a 'Yes' response would be inputted if a teacher with relevant qualifications is delivering the preschool program.
- 'Once' during the reference week is to be defined as at least one whole session of the preschool program.

*Preschool program
delivered by teacher
indicator continued*

Additional information: Where the indicator response is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Role of early childhood education and care worker

Technical name: Person - role of early childhood education and care worker, code N.

METeOR identifier: 401020

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/401020>>

Related aggregate data element: Person - role of early childhood education and care worker

Definition: The usual role of the person in the course of their employment in early childhood education and care, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information relating to the usual role performed by the person employed at the service.

Rationale: To identify and record the usual role performed by the person at the service. The role that each ECE worker undertakes will determine whether or not they are involved in delivery of the preschool program.

Inclusions: Include all persons employed by the service provider and assign their usual role undertaken as one of the following:

- Director, coordinator or teacher in charge
- Group leader/teacher
- Assistant/aide
- Other contact worker
- Non-contact workers

Exclusions: Any person who is not employed by the service provider that may attend and assist in the provision of services, such as a volunteer or a parent.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 2

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Director/coordinator/teacher in charge: A person with overall responsibility for managing the service.
- 2 - Group leader/teacher: A teacher responsible for a group of young children.
- 3 - Assistant/aide: A contact worker who helps the teacher/group leader.
- 4 - Other contact worker: Includes people who provide additional or supplementary services for children, such as a dance teacher, music therapist, disability support worker, librarian or speech therapist.
- 5 - Non contact worker: Workers who have no direct contact with children and primarily contribute to the running of the service or provide support services.

Supplementary values: 9 - Not stated/inadequately described

*Role of early childhood
education and care worker
continued*

Counting rules:

- Count the usual role that the employed person undertakes on a day to day basis. For example, if a person spends 70% of their time undertaking the role of a non contact worker and 30% of their time as a teacher (i.e. as a relief teacher), record the main role of the person as a 'non contact worker'.

Additional information: Where the role of the person is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Type of work activity

Technical name: Person (employed) - type of work activity, early childhood education and care code N

METeOR identifier: 396951

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/396951>>

Related aggregate data element: Person (employed) - type of work activity

Definition: The type of work performed by a person in the course of their employment in early childhood education and care, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information relating to the usual work activity performed by the person employed at the service.

Rationale: To identify and record the usual work activity performed by the person at the service. The activity that each worker undertakes will determine whether or not they are involved in delivery of the preschool program.

Inclusions: Include all persons employed by the service provider and assign their usual work activity as one of the following:

- Primary contact work
- Other contact work
- Administration only
- Other work

Exclusions: Any person who is not employed by the service provider that may attend and assist in the provision of services, such as a volunteer or a parent.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Primary contact work: Involves mainly direct contact with children receiving services. Workers who fall into this category include child care workers, teachers, teachers' assistants and aides, specialist teachers and therapists.
- 2 - Other contact work: Where there are some duties involving direct contact with children, but dealing mainly with staffing or management issues, for example, supervising staff or handling queries from parents. This may include preschool centre managers and coordinators.
- 3 - Administration only: Where there is no direct contact with children. Work could include clerical or receptionist duties, filing, keeping financial records etc.
- 4 - Other work: Includes support services such as cooking, cleaning or gardening. This may include drivers, cooks, cleaners and maintenance staff.

Supplementary values: 9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Type of work activity
continued

Counting rules:

- Count the usual work activity that the employed person undertakes on a day to day basis. For example, if a person spends 70% of their time dealing with administration tasks and 30% of their time as a teacher in direct contact with the children receiving the preschool program (i.e. as a relief teacher), record the type of work activity of the person as 'Administration only'.

Additional information: Where the type of work activity is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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SERVICE PROVIDER LEVEL The following descriptions outline the ECEC NMDS URL service provider level data
DATA ELEMENTS - URL element summaries.

Address line

Technical name: Service provider organisation (address) - address line, text [X(180)]

METeOR identifier: No corresponding METeOR identifier. This was an additional 2010 data element.

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation (address) - address line

Definition: A composite of one or more standard address components, as represented by text.

Components: Report the address line which identifies the geographical location of the service provider.

Rationale: To identify and record the complete street address of the service provider. This information, when combined with the 'suburb/town/locality', 'postcode' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' service provider level data elements, can be used to identify the 'geographical location of organisation (CD)' code of the service provider.

Inclusions: Address line information, which may include:

- Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
- Street/property number
- Street name

Exclusions: The post office box or other non-geographic address of the service provider.

Representational class: Text

Data type: String

Format: [X(180)], for example: 25 Todd Street

Maximum character length: 180

Supplementary responses:

- 'Not stated/inadequately described'
- 'Unknown' - where the address of the service provider is unknown

Counting rules:

- Collect comprehensive details which identify the geographical location of the service provider.
- The address line indicated must correspond to all other address related information, which may include:
 - Suburb, town or locality
 - Postcode
 - Australian state/territory identifier
- Do not collect the address line for a post office box or other non-residential address of the service provider.
- One complete identification/description of an address can comprise of one or more than one instance of an address line.

Address line continued

- Instances of address lines are commonly identified in electronic information systems as Address-line 1, Address-line 2, etc. The format of data collection is less important than consistent use of conventions in recording of address data. Hence, address may be collected in an unstructured manner but should ideally be stored in a structured format.
- Where address is collected as a stand-alone item, the address line details should be separated into sub-components.

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

If a jurisdiction is able to accurately code address to CD and provide detailed information on coding process and validations made, there is no requirement to provide this data element.

Where the address is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Australian state/territory identifier

Technical name: Service provider organisation - Australian state/territory identifier, code N

METeOR identifier: No corresponding METeOR identifier. This was an additional 2010 data element.

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - Australian state/territory identifier

Definition: An identifier of the Australian state or territory where an organisation or agency can be located, as represented by a code.

Components: The Australian state or territory where the service provider can be located.

Rationale: The state and territory identifier provides a further ability to identifying the geographical location of a service provider. This information, when combined with the 'suburb/town/locality', 'postcode' and 'address line' service provider level data elements, can be used to identify the 'geographical location of organisation (CD)' code of the service provider.

Inclusions: All Australian states and territories including Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Christmas Island and Jervis Bay Territory.

Exclusions: No Australian state or territory will be excluded.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 2

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - New South Wales
- 2 - Victoria
- 3 - Queensland
- 4 - South Australia
- 5 - Western Australia
- 6 - Tasmania
- 7 - Northern Territory
- 8 - Australian Capital Territory
- 9 - Other territories (Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Christmas Island and Jervis Bay Territory)

Counting rules:

- Record the Australian state or territory where the service provider is located by collecting comprehensive details which allow identification of the geographical location of the service provider.
- The Australian state/territory identifier indicated must correspond to all other address related information of the service provider, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
 - Street/property number

*Australian state/territory
identifier continued*

- Street name
- Suburb, town or locality
- Postcode

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

Confirm that 'Address line', 'Suburb/town/locality' name and 'Postcode' data elements correspond with an address located within the jurisdiction specified by this data element.

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Geographic location of organisation (CD)

Technical name: Service provider organisation - geographic location CD, code (ASGC 2009) NNNNNNN

METeOR identifier: 397266

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/397266>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - geographic location of organisation (CD)

Definition: The geographical location of an agency using a seven digit numerical code which indicates the Collection District (CD) within the state or territory of Australia.

Components: The seven-digit ASGC code which identifies the geographical location of the service provider, comprising a single-digit code to indicate state or territory, and a six-digit code for the CD within the state/territory.

Rationale: The CD code is used to determine the socio-economic status for the area in which the service provider is located. This information assists in derivation of disadvantage status and the disaggregation of Indigenous students by geographic location.

Inclusions: The ASGC 2009 CD code indicating the geographical location of the organisation.

Exclusions: CD codes pertaining to a post office box location or other non-residential address of the service provider.

Classification scheme: Australian Standard Geographical Classification 2009

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: NNNNNNN, for example: 397266

Maximum character length: 7

Supplementary value: 'Unknown' responses reported as '9999899'

Counting rules:

- Code the geographical location of the service provider to CD using the service provider's address line, postcode, suburb/town/locality name and Australian state/territory identifier.

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.
- Where the address is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

*Geographic location of
organisation (CD)
continued*

MapInfo Professional is the Geographic Information System (GIS) software that is most widely used within the ABS for coding addresses to CD. Jurisdictions wishing to undertake their own coding should contact the ABS for further information about this product.

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Management type

Technical name: Service provider organisation - management type, early childhood education and care code N

METeOR identifier: 395206

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phpml/itemId/395206>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - management type

Definition: The type of legal or social entity responsible for managing a service, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information on the legal or social entity responsible for managing the service.

Rationale: To identify and record the type of entity responsible for managing the preschool program. This data element is used, in conjunction with other data elements about service provision, to obtain a more detailed appraisal of service availability and how services are provided.

Inclusions: Include the management type of the service provider as one of the following:

- Community managed: not-for-profit services provided, or services managed by parents, churches or co-operatives;
- Government managed: Australian, state and local government managed services;
- Private for-profit: for-profit services provided or managed by a company or private individual;
- Independent school: a non-government school that is governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school;
- Other (e.g. employer sponsored services);

Exclusions: Exclude any legal or social entity associated with the service that does not have management responsibilities with that service.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 3

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Community managed: not-for-profit services provided or services managed by parents, churches or co-operatives
- 2 - Government managed: Australian, state/territory and local government managed services
- 3 - Private-for profit: for-profit service provided or managed by a company or private individual
- 4 - Independent school: a non-government school that is governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school
- 5 - Other: (e.g. employer sponsored services)

Supplementary values:

- 9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Management type
continued

Counting rules:

- Record the type of entity responsible for managing the preschool program.

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

Where the name of the management type is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Organisation identifier

Technical name: Service provider organisation - organisation identifier, X(15)

METeOR identifier: 397155

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/397155>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - organisation identifier

Definition: A unique identifier assigned to each service which delivers child care or preschool services to children.

Components: Assign a unique identifier to each service provider.

Rationale: The organisation identifier is used to enable accurate identification of the service provider. Ideally, it should include components that identify state/territory, the main service type and an individual number for each service. The number may be used to identify particular records that require some follow-up contact with services to resolve any queries on the data reported. Each service included in the ECEC Collection should have a unique identifier at the national level.

Inclusions: Include a unique identifier for each service provider.

Exclusions: Exclude identifiers belonging to a registered business owner or funded organisation operating the service, where different from the identifier assigned to the individual service provider.

Representational class: Identifier

Data type: String

Format: X(15), for example: SAG0502691

Maximum character length: 15

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

Further information on the collection of this data element will be provided for the 2011 collection.

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Organisation name

Technical name: Service provider organisation - Organisation name

METeOR identifier: No corresponding METeOR identifier. This is an additional 2010 data element.

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - Organisation name

Definition: The operating or trading name of the service which delivers a preschool program to children.

Components: Report the operating or trading name of the service which delivers a preschool program to children.

Rationale: The name by which a service provider is known or called, to allow accurate identification of each individual service provider.

Inclusions: The service provider's full operating or trading name.

Exclusions: The registered business name, where materially different from the name of the children's services institution(s) that it manages or owns.

Representational class: Text

Data type: String

Format: [X(180)], for example: Gum Tree Kindergarten - Gawler Centre

Maximum character length: 180

Supplementary values:

- 'Not stated/inadequately described'
- 'Unknown'

Counting rules:

- The centre may operate under multiple names or registered business names, however record only the operating or trading name of the service provider.
- Do not use the registered business name, as it often reflects the organisational owner(s) which may be the parent company of multiple preschool facilities.
- The name of the institution may or may not include a Pty Ltd business name.
- Campus name should also be supplied where multiple campuses have the same name of services. If a single service provider operates a number of preschool programs at different centres, record an individual name for each individual centre. For example, Gum Tree Kindergarten may operate two different preschool programs at centres located in different geographical areas. Each centre must have an individual name recorded, such as Gum Tree Kindergarten - City Centre and Gum Tree Kindergarten - Gawler Centre.

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

Organisation name
continued

Where the name of the service provider is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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*Postcode - Australian
(service provider
organisation)*

Technical name: Service provider organisation (address) - Australian postcode, code (Postcode datafile) {NNNN}

METeOR identifier: 290064

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/290064>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation (address) - postcode - Australian

Definition: The numeric descriptor for a postal delivery area, aligned with locality, suburb or place for the address of an organisation, as represented by a code.

Components: Report the postcode which identifies the geographical location of the service provider. Postcode data involves a conversion from postcodes to the Australian Bureau of Statistics postal areas.

Rationale: To identify and record the postcode that identifies the geographical location of the services provider. This information, when combined with the 'address line', 'suburb/town/locality' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' service provider level data elements, can be used to identify the 'geographic location of organisation (CD)' code.

Inclusions: Include the postcode which identifies the geographical location of the service provider.

Exclusions: The postcode of a post office box or other non-geographic address of the service provider.

Classification scheme: Postcode datafile

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: {NNNN}, for example: 5118

Maximum character length: 4

Supplementary responses:

- 'Not stated/inadequately described'
- 'Unknown' - where the postcode of the service provider is unknown

Counting rules:

- Collect comprehensive details which identify the geographical location of the service provider.
- The postcode indicated must correspond to all other address related information for the service provider, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
 - Street/property number
 - Street name
 - Suburb, town or locality
 - Australian state/territory identifier
- Do not collect the post office box or other non-residential address of the service provider.

*Postcode - Australian
(service provider
organisation) continued*

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

If a jurisdiction is able to accurately code address to CD and provide detailed information on coding process and validations made, there is no requirement to provide this data element. Where the postcode is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Service activity type

Technical name: Service provider organisation - service activity type, children's service code N

METeOR identifier: 354632

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/354632>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - service activity type

Definition: The type of service available or provided by a children's service agency, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information on the main type of service available or provided by the service provider.

Rationale: To identify and record the main service activity type of the service provider. The range of activity types in which a preschool program may be delivered are quite diverse across jurisdictions. This data element is used, in conjunction with other data elements about service provision, to obtain a more detailed appraisal of service availability and provision.

Inclusions: Include the main service activity type of the service provider from the following:

- Centre-based long day care
- Preschool
- Occasional care
- Outside school hours care
- Vacation care
- Family day care
- In-home care

Exclusions: Exclude other activity types offered by the service provider which are not the service provider's main activity type.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 7

Maximum character length: 1

Service activity type
continued

Permissible values:

- 1 - Centre-based long day care: comprises services aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds that are provided in a centre usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. In some jurisdictions, primary school children may also receive care before and after school and during school vacations.
- 2 - Occasional care: comprises services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for example parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and are aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff.
- 3 - Outside school hours care: comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) outside school hours during term. Care may be provided on student free days and when school finishes early. For the purposes of this collection vacation care is recorded separately.
- 4 - Vacation care: comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) during vacation periods.
- 5 - Family day care: comprises services provided in the carer's own home. The care is largely aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Central co-ordination units in all states and territories organise and support a network of carers, often with the help of local governments.
- 6 - In-home care: comprises services where an approved carer provides care in the child's home. Families eligible for in-home care include families where the parent/s or child have an illness or disability; families in rural or remote areas; parents working shift work or non-standard hours; families with more than two children from a multiple birth and/or more than two children under school age; and families where a breast-feeding mother is working from home.
- 7 - Preschool: comprises a structured educational programme usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis in dedicated preschools. Similar educational programs or curricula may be provided in long day care and other settings. These are primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full-time schooling.

Supplementary values: 9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- Each service provider should indicate the main activity type provided at their service.
- Multiple responses to this data element are not encouraged.
- For a preschool program delivered in a long day care centre, record a code of 7 = Preschool.

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.

Service activity type
continued

- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.
- Certain 'In-home care' activity types may be relevant where a child with an illness or disability receives a sessional preschool program. Similarly, children in rural or remote areas receiving a sessional preschool program (e.g. school of the air) as part of broader in-home care services will be eligible for inclusion.

Where the activity type is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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*Service delivery setting
(children's service)*

Technical name: Service provider organisation - service delivery setting, children's services code N

METeOR identifier: 315173

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phpml/itemId/315173>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - service delivery setting (children's service).

Definition: The type of setting in which children's service activities are provided or could be provided by a service provider, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information on the type of setting in which the children's service activities are provided by the service provider.

Rationale: To identify and record the type of setting in which children's service activities are provided. The range of service settings in which a preschool program may be delivered are quite diverse across jurisdictions. This data element is used, in conjunction with other data elements about service provision, to obtain a more detailed appraisal of service availability and how services are provided.

Inclusions: Include the service delivery setting of the service provider from the following:

- Centre-based - school
- Centre-based - other
- Home-based - child's home
- Home-based - other
- General community setting

Exclusions: Exclude services not providing a preschool program.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 5

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Centre-based - school: refers to child care or preschool programs delivered on school grounds, using school facilities e.g. a building owned by the school.
- 2 - Centre-based - other: refers to a purpose built building or buildings where a child care or preschool program is delivered and the primary function of the building is non-residential, e.g. a child care centre, dedicated preschool etc.
- 3 - Home-based - child's home: refers to a private residential dwelling where the child lives.
- 4 - Home-based - other: refers to a private residential dwelling where a child care or preschool program is delivered by someone other than the child's parents, carers or guardians, e.g. a family day care caregiver's house.
- 5 - General community setting: refers to child care or preschool programs delivered at a general community infrastructure facility (e.g. a park, neighbourhood house, community hall, library etc.)

Service delivery setting
(children's service)
continued

Supplementary values:

9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- The service provider should include only one response to this data element.

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

Where the service delivery setting is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Service operation weeks

Technical name: Service provider organisation - number of service operation weeks (calendar year), total NN

METeOR identifier: 270377

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/270377>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation - service operation weeks

Definition: The actual number of weeks per year that the agency is open for the provision of service.

Components: Collect the number of weeks per year that the service provider is open for provision of the preschool program.

Rationale: To identify and record the number weeks per year that a service is open for provision of a preschool program.

Inclusions: Include the total number of weeks that the service provider is open per year and providing a preschool program.

Exclusions: Exclude weeks during the year in which the service provider is not offering a preschool program or is not operational.

Representational class: Total

Data type: Number

Format: NN, for example: 40

Maximum character length: 2

Supplementary values:

90 - No regular pattern of operation through a year

99 - Not stated/inadequately described

Unit of measure: Week

Counting rules:

- Count the weeks during which the preschool component of the service is provided.
- Do not include weeks when the preschool program is not being delivered. For example, if the preschool program is operated in a school setting, do not count weeks during school holiday periods when the centre is only open for administrative purposes. This would not be relevant for an LDC if the preschool program continued to operate during the school holidays.
- A week is measured from 12.00 AM (midnight) Monday morning to 11.59 PM the following Sunday. If a service operates within this period then it is counted as having operated during that week. Therefore if an agency operates for only a short time for one of the days within a week, it is counted as operating during that week.

Additional information:

- Record responses to this data element in numeral values of 01 to 52.
- Ensure that the number of operational weeks per service provider does not exceed 52.

*Service operation weeks
continued*

- Services operating for nil or a very low numbers of weeks should be investigated and resolved at the jurisdiction level prior to submission.
- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

Where the operation weeks are unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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*Suburb/town/locality name
(service provider
organisation)*

Technical name: Service provider organisation (address) - suburb/town/locality name, text [A(50)]

METeOR identifier: 290059

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/290059>>

Related aggregate data element: Service provider organisation (address) - suburb/town/locality name

Definition: The full name of the general locality containing the specific address of an organisation, as represented by text.

Components: Report the suburb/town/locality name which identifies the general locality of the service provider.

Rationale: To identify and record the general locality of the service provider. This information, when combined with the 'address line', 'postcode' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' service provider level data elements, can be used to identify the 'geographic location of organisation (CD)' of the service provider.

Inclusions: Include the suburb/town/locality name which identifies the general locality of the service provider organisation.

Exclusions: Exclude the suburb relating to a post office box or other non-geographic address of the service provider.

Representational class: Text

Data type: String

Format: [A(50)], for example: Gawler

Maximum character length: 50

- Supplementary responses:
 - 'Not stated/inadequately described'
 - 'Unknown' - where the address of the service provider is unknown

Counting rules:

- Collect comprehensive details which identify the geographical location of the service provider.
- The suburb indicated must correspond to all other address related information, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
 - Street/property number
 - Street name
 - Postcode
 - Australian state/territory identifier

The locality name may be a town, city, suburb or commonly used location name such as a large agricultural property or Aboriginal community.

Suburb/town/locality name
(service provider
organisation) *continued*

Additional information:

- When populating the data set, jurisdictions should ensure that this data element is reported against each child enrolled in a preschool program.
- All children attending the same service should have the same response to this data element.

Where the suburb is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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PERSON/CHILD LEVEL
DATA ELEMENTS -
AGGREGATE

The following descriptions outline the ECEC NMDS aggregate person/child level data element summaries.

Age

Technical name: Person - age, total years N[NN]

METeOR identifier: 303794

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/303794>>

Related URL data element: Person - date of birth

Definition: The age of the person in (completed) years at a specific point in time.

Components: The number of children aged between 3 and 6 years old, in completed years as at 1 July, disaggregated by single year of age, Indigenous status, sex, total enrolments and total attendances.

Rationale: Calculate age disaggregations, which will provide contextual information about Indigenous status and sex, and totals for enrolment and attendance data.

Inclusions: The total number of children within the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6, in completed years of age as at 1 July of the collection year, disaggregated by Indigenous status, sex, total enrolments and total attendances.

Exclusions: Nil

Format: Age should be reported as the number of children within the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years, in completed years of age as at 1 July of the collection year, disaggregated by sex for the following service provider level data elements:

- Number of children attending preschool
- Number of preschool enrolments at the service provider level
- Number of Indigenous children enrolled in preschool
- Number of Indigenous children attending preschool
- Fee schedule (children's service centre-based long day care)
- Fee schedule (children's service preschool service)
- Fee schedule amount

Counting rules:

- Age is calculated as at 1 July of the collection year.
- Collect the age of each child in completed years. For example, if a child is aged 4 years and 9 months as at 1 July of the collection year, the child would be recorded as being aged 4 years for the purposes of this collection.
- Collect the number of children for the age groups 3, 4, 5, and 6 years old, disaggregated by Indigenous status, sex, total enrolments and total attendances for each service provider.

Additional information: Where the age is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow up processes undertaken.

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Indigenous status

Technical name: Person - Indigenous status, code N

METeOR identifier: 291036

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/291036>>

Related URL data element: Person - Indigenous status

Definition: Whether a person identifies as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, as represented by a code.

Components: Report the number of children that identify as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin in accordance with the ABS standard for Indigenous status, disaggregated by single year of age, sex, total enrolments and total attendances.

Rationale: To identify and record the number of children who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin.

Inclusions: The number of children who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin, disaggregated by single year of age, sex, total enrolments and total attendances.

Exclusions: Nil

Format: Indigenous status should be reported as the number of children within the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years, in completed years of age as at 1 July of the collection year, disaggregated by sex and Indigenous status for the following service provider level data elements:

- Number of Indigenous children enrolled in preschool
- Number of Indigenous children attending preschool

Counting rules:

- Collect the number of children for the following age groups: 3, 4, 5, and 6 year olds, disaggregated by Indigenous status, sex, total enrolments and total attendances for each service provider.
- Service providers should record the Indigenous status of each child enrolled in a preschool program and record the total number of children for the following categories:
 - Aboriginal, but not Torres Strait Islander origin
 - Torres Strait Islander, but not Aboriginal origin
 - Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
 - Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
 - Not stated/inadequately described
 - Aboriginal, not further defined (only to be used in instances where breakdown by Indigenous status is not available).
- The Indigenous status of the child must be the status as identified by the child's parent or guardian.
- Code multiple responses where respondent marks 'No' and either 'Aboriginal' or 'Torres Strait Islander' as either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander as indicated and disregard the 'No' response.
- Code multiple responses where respondent marks both 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' as 'Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander'.

*Indigenous status
continued*

- Code multiple responses where respondent marks all three boxes 'No', 'Aboriginal' and 'Torres Strait Islander' as 'Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin' and disregard the 'No' response.

Additional information: Supplementary values such as 'Not stated/inadequately described' should not be available as valid responses but can be used in data collections for operational purposes.

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Sex

Technical name: Person - sex, code N

METeOR identifier: No corresponding METeOR identifier. This is an additional 2010 data element.

Related URL data element: Person - sex

Definition: The biological distinction between male and female, as represented by a code.

Components: Report the number of male children and the number of female children, disaggregated by single year of age, Indigenous status, total enrolments and total attendances.

Rationale: To identify and record the number of male children and the number of female children.

Inclusions: The number of female children and the number of male children, disaggregated by single year of age, Indigenous status, total enrolments and total attendances.

Exclusions: Nil

Format: Sex should be reported as the number of children within the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years, in completed years of age as at 1 July of the collection year, disaggregated by sex and Indigenous status for the following service provider level data elements:

- Number of children attending preschool
- Number of preschool enrolments at the service provider level
- Number of Indigenous children enrolled in preschool
- Number of Indigenous children attending preschool
- Fee schedule (children's service centre-based long day care)
- Fee schedule (children's service preschool service)
- Fee schedule amount

Counting rules:

- Collect the number of children for the age groups 3, 4, 5, and 6 years old, disaggregated by Indigenous status, sex, total enrolments and total attendances for each service provider.
- Service providers should record the sex of each child enrolled in a preschool program as follows:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Not stated/inadequately described
 - Intersex or indeterminate

Additional information: Note that the classification of 'Intersex or indeterminate' is normally used for babies for whom sex has not been determined. It should not generally be used on data collection forms completed by the respondent. It should only be used if the person or respondent volunteers that the person is intersex or where it otherwise becomes clear during the collection process that the individual is neither male nor female. This classification is not to be used on primary collection forms. It is primarily for

Sex continued

use in administrative collections when transferring data from data sets where the item has not been collected.

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PERSON/TEACHER LEVEL
DATA ELEMENTS -
AGGREGATE

The following descriptions outline the ECEC NMDS aggregate person/teacher level data element summaries.

Field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care)

Technical name: Person (employed) - education field of highest relevant qualification, early childhood education and care field of qualification code N[N]

METeOR identifier: 388641

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/388641>>

Related URL data element: Person (employed) - field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care).

Definition: The field of education in which a person has attained their highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care (ECEC), as represented by a code.

Components: Report the field of education in which a person has attained their highest qualification relevant to ECEC.

Rationale: To identify and record the field of the highest relevant qualification held by workers employed by the service provider who are providing face to face delivery of a preschool program.

Inclusions: Include the total number of teachers who have the following as their field of highest relevant qualification and who are providing face to face delivery of a preschool program:

- Teaching – early childhood related
- Teaching – primary
- Teaching – other (includes special education and English as a second language)
- Child care
- Nursing
- Other human welfare studies and services
- Behavioural science
- Other early childhood related
- Other qualification/field
- Not applicable (no qualification)

Exclusions: Qualifications held by workers employed with the service provider who are not providing face to face delivery of a preschool program. Any person who is not employed by the service provider that may attend and assist in the provision of services, such as volunteer or a parent.

Classification scheme: Australian Standard Classification of Education

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N[N], for example: 2

Maximum character length: 2

Field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care) continued

Permissible categories:

- 1 - Teaching (early childhood related)-(ASCED 070101)
- 2 - Teaching (primary)-(ASCED 070103)
- 3 - Teaching (other)-(ASCED 070105-070199). This field includes:
 - special education
 - teaching English as a second language
- 4 - Child Care - maps to Children's services-(ASCED 090503). Examples of subjects in this detailed field include:
 - Storytelling
 - Infant and child care and development
 - Early childhood research
 - Understanding and guiding children's behaviour
 - Play and learning environment
- 5 - Nursing (including mothercraft nursing)-(ASCED 0603)
- 6 - Other human welfare studies and services-(ASCED 090501, 090505-090599). This field includes:
 - Social work (090501)
 - Youth work (090505)
 - Care for the disabled (090509)
 - Residential client care (090511)
 - Counselling (090513)
 - Welfare studies (090515)
 - Human welfare studies and services (090599)
- 7 - Behavioural science-(ASCED 090701-090799). This field includes:
 - Psychology (090701)
 - Behavioural science (090799)
- 8 - Other early childhood related. This includes other early education and care related fields not classifiable in any of the above categories
- 9 - Other qualification/field. This includes other fields of education not classifiable in any of the above categories.

Supplementary categories:

- 97 - Not applicable (no qualification). Use this code when there is no qualification
- 98 - Unknown (qualification unknown). Use this code when the qualification is unknown
- 99 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- Record each teacher only once within the total for each qualification, i.e. each teacher can have only one highest relevant qualification.
- The qualification status of a worker relates to the worker's currently held relevant qualifications, i.e. only completed qualifications should be reported.
- Ensure that the field of education recorded is in relation to the person's highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care. For example, a worker delivering the preschool program may have a Bachelor degree (honours) in Finance and a Certificate level 3 in Child Care. In this situation the highest relevant qualification is the Certificate level 3 in Child Care. Record 'Child Care' as the field of highest relevant qualification for this worker.

Field of highest relevant qualification (early childhood education and care) continued

- The response recorded for this data element must relate directly to the response recorded for the 'Level of highest qualification in employment field' data element.

Additional information: Where the field of qualification is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Level of highest qualification in employment field

Technical name: Person (employed) - level of highest qualification in employment field, early childhood education and care code N[N]

METeOR identifier: 396927

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/396927>>

Related URL data element: Person (employed) - level of highest qualification in employment field

Definition: The highest level of qualification a person employed in early childhood education and care (ECEC) has attained in the relevant field, as represented by a code.

Components: Report the level of qualification in which a person has attained their highest qualification relevant to ECEC.

Rationale: To identify and record the level of the highest relevant qualification held by workers employed by the service provider who are providing face to face delivery of a preschool program.

Inclusions: Include the total number of teachers who have the following as their level of highest qualification and who are providing face to face delivery of a preschool program:

- Postgraduate degree,
- Graduate diploma or graduate certificate level,
- Bachelor degree (honours),
- Bachelor degree pass (4 years or equivalent),
- Bachelor degree pass (3 years or equivalent),
- Advanced diploma,
- Diploma,
- Certificate level 3 or 4,
- Certificate level 1 or 2,
- Other certificate,
- Not applicable (no qualification),

Exclusions: Qualifications for workers employed by the service provider who are not delivering a face-to-face preschool program. Any person who is not employed by the service provider that may attend and assist in the provision of services, such as volunteer or a parent.

Classification scheme: Australian Standard Classification of Education

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N[N], for example: 2

Maximum character length: 2

Level of highest qualification in employment field continued

Permissible categories:

- 1 - Postgraduate degree. This level includes Doctorates and Masters degrees, either by research or course work. Common entry requirements are completion of a Bachelor degree (with or without Honours) and a qualifying year or equivalent, or a research based Graduate diploma.
- 2 - Graduate diploma and graduate certificate level. The Graduate diploma is usually the equivalent of one year of full time study, while the Graduate certificate is usually the equivalent of six months of full time study. Entry to a Graduate diploma or Graduate certificate is usually through satisfactory completion of a Bachelor degree or an Advanced diploma, and demonstrated potential to complete work at this level. Postgraduate certificates and diplomas are also included in this category.
- 3 - Bachelor degree (honours). Honours is the extended period of study in a specialised field which is offered to students in some courses achieving outstanding results in a relevant discipline or demonstrating outstanding achievement in the early years of a Bachelor program.
- 4 - Bachelor degree pass (4 years or equivalent). Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 12 or equivalent, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 5 - Bachelor degree pass (3 years or equivalent). Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 12 or equivalent, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 6 - Advanced diploma. Education at this level includes analysing information and concepts at an abstract level and executing judgements across a range of technical and management functions. Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 12 or equivalent, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 7 - Diploma. Education at this level may also develop basic management or administrative skills. Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 12 or equivalent, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 8 - Certificate level 3 or 4. Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 10 or equivalent, or higher, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 9 - Certificate level 1 or 2. Entry to this level is by various pathways which may include the completion of Year 10 or equivalent, or higher, or completion of a recognised program and/or recognition of prior learning.
- 10 - Other certificate. Any certificate not covered by the previous two categories.

Supplementary categories:

- 97 - Not applicable: Use this code when there is no qualification
- 98 - Unknown: Use this code when the qualification is unknown
- 99 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- Record each teacher only once within the total for each level of qualification, i.e. each teacher can have only one level of highest relevant qualification.
- Four or three year university qualified refers to the length of the qualification if the whole program was studied full-time.

Level of highest qualification in employment field continued

- The qualification status of a worker relates to the worker's currently held relevant qualifications, i.e. only completed qualifications should be reported.
- A 'Bachelor degree pass (3/4 year or equivalent)' includes staff who have been deemed to have the necessary skills and qualifications to be employed as a 3/4 year degree qualified teacher by the jurisdiction.
- Ensure that the level of education recorded is in relation to the person's highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care. For example, a worker delivering the preschool program may have a Bachelor degree (honours) in Finance and a Certificate level 3 in Child Care. In this situation the highest relevant qualification is the Certificate level 3 in Child Care. Record 'Certificate level 3' as the level of highest relevant qualification for this worker.
- The response recorded for this data element must relate directly to the response recorded for the 'Field of highest relevant qualification' data element.

Additional information: Where the level of qualification is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Preschool program delivered by teacher indicator

Technical name: Person (employed) - preschool program delivered by teacher indicator, code N

METeOR identifier: 401322

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phpml/itemId/401322>>

Related URL data element: Person (employed) - preschool program delivered by teacher indicator

Definition: An indicator of face to face delivery of a preschool program by a person with a relevant university qualification, as represented by a code.

Components: Report whether or not the preschool program is being delivered (face to face) by a person with a relevant university qualification.

Rationale: To identify and record whether or not a structured, play-based, educational preschool program is delivered by a teacher with a relevant university qualification.

Inclusions: Indicate whether a preschool program is delivered by a teacher (or employed person) with a relevant university qualification:

Yes - Report the total number of teachers who deliver a face-to-face preschool program and hold a relevant university qualification

No - Report total number of teachers who deliver a face-to-face preschool program but do not hold a relevant university qualification

Exclusions: Exclude other programs delivered at the service that are non-preschool programs. See Chapter 1, Collection Scope and Coverage, and Chapter 3, Concepts and Definitions, for more information on the definition of a preschool program.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 1

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible categories: An indicator of face-to-face delivery of a preschool program by a person with a relevant university qualification, as represented by a code:

1 - Teacher delivers a face-to-face preschool program and holds a relevant qualification

2 - Teacher delivers a face-to-face preschool program but does not hold a relevant qualification

Counting rules:

A teacher is to be counted as delivering a preschool program if they delivered the program at least once within the reference period. For example, in a long day care setting, a care worker delivers a 'preschool program', however the care worker does not hold a relevant qualification. This would result in a 'No' response as the program is not being delivered by a teacher with relevant qualifications. Alternatively, a 'Yes' response would be supplied for a teacher with relevant qualifications delivering the preschool program.

*Preschool program
delivered by teacher
indicator continued*

'Once' within the reference period is defined as at least one whole session of the preschool program.

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*Role of early childhood
education and care worker*

Technical name: Person - role of early childhood education and care worker, code N.

METeOR identifier: 401020

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/401020>>

Related URL data element: Person - role of early childhood education and care worker

Definition: The usual role of the person in the course of their employment in early childhood education and care, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information relating to the usual role performed by the person employed at the service.

Rationale: To identify and record the usual role performed by the person at the service. The role that each ECEC worker undertakes will determine whether or not they are involved in delivery of the preschool program.

Inclusions: Include the total number of teachers who have the following as their usual role:

- Director, coordinator or teacher in charge
- Group leader/teacher
- Assistant/aide
- Other contact worker
- Non-contact workers

Exclusions: Any person who is not employed by the service provider that may attend and assist in the provision of services, such as a volunteer or a parent.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 2

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible categories:

1 - Director/coordinator/teacher-in-charge: i.e. a person with overall responsibility for managing the service.

2 - Group leader/teacher: i.e. a teacher responsible for a group of young children.

3 - Assistant/aide: i.e. a worker who helps the main teacher/group leader.

4 - Other contact worker: i.e. includes people who provide additional or supplementary services for children, such as a dance teacher, music therapist, disability support worker, librarian or speech therapist.

5 - Non contact worker: i.e. workers who have no direct contact with children and primarily contribute to the running of the service or provide support services.

Supplementary categories:

9 - Not stated/inadequately described

*Role of early childhood
education and care worker
continued*

Counting rules:

- Record each teacher only once within the total for each role, i.e. each teacher can have only one usual role. Count the usual role that the employed person undertakes on a day to day basis. For example, if a person spends 70% of their time undertaking the role of a non contact worker and 30% of their time as a teacher (i.e. as a relief teacher), record the main role of the person as a 'non contact worker'.

Additional information: Where the role of the person is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Type of work activity

Technical name: Person (employed) - type of work activity, early childhood education and care code N

METeOR identifier: 396951

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/396951>>

Related URL data element: Person (employed) - type of work activity

Definition: The type of work performed by a person in the course of their employment in early childhood education and care, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information relating to the usual work activity performed by the person employed at the service.

Rationale: To identify and record the usual work activity performed by the person at the service. The activity that each worker undertakes will determine whether or not they are involved in delivery of the preschool program.

Inclusions: Include the total number of teachers who have the following as their usual type of work activity:

- Primary contact work
- Other contact work
- Administration only
- Other work

Exclusions: Any person who is not employed by the service provider that may attend and assist in the provision of services, such as a volunteer or a parent.

Representation class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 1

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible categories:

1 - Primary contact work - involves mainly direct contact with children receiving services. Workers who fall into this category include child care workers, teachers, teachers' assistants and aides, specialist teachers and therapists.

2 - Other contact work - where there are some duties involving direct contact with children, but dealing mainly with staffing or management issues e.g. supervising staff, handling queries from parents. This may include centre managers and coordinators.

3 - Administration only - where there is no direct contact with children. Work could include clerical or receptionist duties, filing, keeping financial records etc.

4 - Other work - includes support services such as cooking, cleaning or gardening. This may include drivers, cooks, cleaners and maintenance staff.

Supplementary categories:

9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Type of work activity
continued

Counting rules:

- Record each teacher only once within the total for each type of work activity, i.e. each teacher can have only one usual type of work activity.
- Count the usual work activity that the employed person undertakes on a day to day basis. For example, if a person spends 70% of their time dealing with administration tasks and 30% of their time as a teacher in direct contact with the children receiving the preschool program (i.e. as a relief teacher), record the type of work activity as 'Administration only'.

Additional information: Where the type of work activity is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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SERVICE PROVIDER LEVEL
DATA ELEMENTS -
AGGREGATE

The following descriptions outline the ECEC NMDS aggregate service provider level data element summaries.

Address line

Technical name: Service provider organisation (address) - address line, text [X(180)]

METeOR identifier: 290315

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/290315>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation (address) - address line

Definition: A composite of one or more standard address components, as represented by text.

Components: Report the address line which identifies the geographical location of the service provider.

Rationale: To identify and record the complete street address of the service provider. This information, when combined with the 'suburb/town/locality', 'postcode' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' service provider level data elements, can be used to identify the 'geographic location of organisation (CD)' code of the service provider.

Inclusions: Address line information, which may include:

- Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
- Street/property number
- Street name

Exclusions: The post office box or other non-geographic address of the service provider.

Representational class: Text

Data type: String

Format: [X(180)], for example: 25 Todd Street

Maximum character length: 180

Supplementary responses:

- 'Not stated/inadequately described'
- 'Unknown' - where the address of the service provider is unknown

Counting rules:

- Collect comprehensive details which identify the geographical location of the service provider.
- The address line indicated must correspond to all other address related information, which may include:
 - Suburb, town or locality
 - Postcode
 - Australian state/territory identifier
- Do not collect the address line for the post office box or other non-residential address of the service provider.

Address line continued

- One complete identification/description of an address can comprise of one or more than one instance of address line. Instances of address lines are commonly identified in electronic information systems as Address-line 1, Address-line 2, etc.
- The format of data collection is less important than consistent use of conventions in recording of address data. Hence, address may be collected in an unstructured manner but should ideally be stored in a structured format.
- Where address is collected as a stand-alone item, the address line details should be separated into sub-components.
- Where the address is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

Additional information: If a jurisdiction is able to accurately code address to CD and provide detailed information on coding process and validations made, there is no requirement to provide this data element.

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Australian state/territory identifier

Technical name: Service provider organisation - Australian state/territory identifier, code N

METeOR identifier: 289083

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/289083>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation - Australian state/territory identifier

Definition: An identifier of the Australian state or territory where an organisation or agency can be located, as represented by a code.

Components: The Australian state or territory where the service provider can be located.

Rationale: To identify the geographical location of a service provider. This information, when combined with the 'suburb/town/locality', 'postcode' and 'address line' service provider level data elements, can be used to identify the 'geographic location of organisation (CD)' code of the service provider.

Inclusions: All Australian states and territories including Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Christmas Island and Jervis Bay Territory.

Exclusions: No Australian state or territory will be excluded.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 2

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - New South Wales
- 2 - Victoria
- 3 - Queensland
- 4 - South Australia
- 5 - Western Australia
- 6 - Tasmania
- 7 - Northern Territory
- 8 - Australian Capital Territory
- 9 - Other territories (Cocos (Keeling) Islands, Christmas Island and Jervis Bay Territory)

Counting rules:

- Record the Australian state or territory where the service provider is located, by collecting comprehensive address details which allow identification of the geographical location of the service provider.
- The Australian state/territory identifier indicated must correspond to all other address related information for the service provider, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/flat/unit number (if any)
 - Street/property number

*Australian state/territory
identifier continued*

- Street name
- Suburb, town or locality
- Postcode

Additional information: Confirm that 'Address line', 'Suburb/town/locality' name and 'Postcode' data elements correspond with an address located within the jurisdiction specified by this data element.

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Eligibility for subsidy indicator

Technical name: Service provider organisation - eligibility for subsidy indicator, yes/no code N

METeOR identifier: 395878

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/395878>>

Related URL data element: Child - eligibility for subsidy indicator

Definition: Whether a service provider organisation is entitled to receive subsidies, as represented by a code.

Components: Operational subsidies paid to service providers to reduce running costs for preschool programs.

Rationale: To identify and record whether the service provider is eligible to receive subsidies on behalf of children attending the centre that are not generally available to all children.

Inclusions: Include:

- Service providers that are eligible for preschool operational subsidies being paid on behalf of children attending the preschool program, where the subsidies are not generally available to all children.
- Service providers that are not eligible for preschool operational subsidies being paid on behalf of children attending the preschool program.

Exclusions: Exclude subsidies available to all children attending the preschool program.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Boolean

Format: N, for example: 1

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Yes: service provider is eligible to receive subsidies paid on behalf of children in the preschool program.
- 2 - No: the service provider is not eligible to receive subsidies paid on behalf of children in the preschool program.

Counting rules: To be eligible to receive subsidies, the service provider may be registered to receive the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) on behalf of children in the preschool program, or receive further funding for example from state governments to reduce the cost of preschool.

Additional information:

Eligible subsidies:

- Operational subsidies paid to service providers on behalf of a child to reduce the running costs of preschool programs.
- Service providers must receive operational subsidies on a per-child basis, subject to Commonwealth, state/territory and local government eligibility criteria.

*Eligibility for subsidy
indicator continued*

- The subsidy must be in relation to the preschool program, must not be accessible to all children, and must reduce the cost for the child to attend the preschool program during the reference period. For example, the CCB is a means tested Australian government payment to assist working families meet the costs of child care, which in some cases is paid directly to the service provider and flows on to families through a reduction in fees payable. CCB, CCR and other subsidies must also be included if paid directly to the child's parent or guardian by the responsible government agency and if the service provider is aware of these subsidies.

Ineligible subsidies: Subsidies available to all children attending the preschool program and social assistance benefits such as pensions and carer allowances.

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Fee schedule (children's service centre-based long day care)

Technical name: Service provider organisation - fee schedule for activity type, children's service centre-based long day care, code N

METeOR identifier: 326621

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/326621>>

Related URL data element: Child - fees charged in the census week

Definition: The standard fee schedule type reported by a children's service whose main service activity type is centre-based long day care, as represented by a code.

Components: The type of fees charged by a service provider whose main service activity type is centre-based long day care.

Rationale: To identify and record the affordability of preschool programs in long day care (LDC) settings.

Inclusions: Include the type of fee charged by a service provider for all preschool programs undertaken in LDC settings.

Exclusions: Exclude the type of fee charged by a service provider for all other programs undertaken in LDC settings that are not preschool programs. Exclude preschool programs that aren't undertaken within a LDC setting.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 2

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Daily fee for child aged under 2 years
- 2 - Daily fee for child aged 2 years and over
- 3 - Weekly fee for child aged under 2 years
- 4 - Weekly fee for child aged 2 years and over
- 5 - No fee: this option should be chosen if no fees are charged for the main service activity type.

Supplementary values:

- 9 - Not applicable

Counting rules:

- The fee schedule must relate to the reported fee schedule amount.
- The daily fee must relate to a fee charged for a full day attendance, not a part day attendance.
- The weekly fee must relate to a fee charged for a full week attendance, not a part week attendance.
- A full day or week of attendance must relate to the maximum hours any one child can participate in the preschool program.

*Fee schedule (children's
service centre-based long
day care) continued*

Additional information: Input a response of '9' if the main service activity type is preschool.

This is going to be further developed for the 2011 collection.

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Fee schedule (children's service preschool service)

Technical name: Service provider organisation - fee schedule for activity type, children's service preschool service code N

METeOR identifier: 326675

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/326675>>

Related URL data element: Child - fees charged in the census week

Definition: The standard fee schedule type reported by a children's service whose main activity type is preschool service, as represented by a code.

Components: The type of fees charged by a service provider whose main service activity type is preschool program.

Rationale: To identify and record the affordability of preschool programs in preschool settings.

Inclusions: Include the type of fee charged by a service provider for all preschool programs undertaken in preschool settings.

Exclusions: Exclude the type of fee charged by a service provider for all other programs undertaken in preschool settings that are not preschool programs. Exclude preschool programs undertaken within a long day care setting.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 2

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Daily fee for child aged 3 years
- 2 - Daily fee for child aged 4 or 5 years
- 3 - Sessional fee for child aged 3 years
- 4 - Sessional fee for child aged 4 or 5 years
- 5 - Term fee for child aged 3 years
- 6 - Term fee for child aged 4 or 5 years
- 7 - No fee: this option should be chosen if no fees are charged for the main service activity type.

Supplementary values:

- 9 - Not applicable

Counting rules:

- The fee schedule must relate to the reported fee schedule amount.
- The daily fee must relate to a fee charged for a full day attendance, not a part day attendance.
- The sessional fee must relate to a fee charged for a full session attendance, not a part session attendance.
- The term fee must relate to a fee charged for a full term attendance, not a part term attendance.

*Fee schedule (children's
service preschool service)
continued*

- A full day, session or term of attendance must relate to the maximum hours any one child can participate in the preschool program.

Additional information: Input a response of '9' if the main service activity type is LDC.

This is going to be further developed for the 2011 collection.

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Fee schedule amount

Technical name: Service provider organisation - fee schedule amount, total Australian currency N[NNNNN].NN

METeOR identifier: 354640

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/354640>>

Related URL data element: Child - fees charged in the census week

Definition: The standard fee schedule amount reported by an agency, measured in Australian dollars and cents.

Components: Net weekly costs (i.e. tuition fees only), charged to children attending the preschool program.

Rationale: To identify and record the affordability of preschool programs by identifying out of pocket costs to parents or guardians towards the payment of tuition fees for children to attend the preschool program.

Inclusions: Services should report their standard fee, that is, the tuition fee only, charged for children to attend the preschool program, disaggregated by service activity type and age of the child.

Exclusions: Exclude fees charged for the child to attend other non-preschool programs with the service provider, such as out of school hours care. Exclude other fees which are not tuition fees such as application fee, enrolment fee, resources fee, IT fee, capital fee, credit card fee, uniform, books, stationary and library fees, etc.

Representational class: Total

Data type: Currency

Format: N[NNNNN].NN, for example: \$51.85

Maximum character length: 8

Unit of measure: Australian currency (AU\$)

Unit of measure precision: 2

Supplementary values:

- NA

Counting rules:

- Count the net costs, that are charged for children to attend the preschool program.
- The fee schedule amount must relate to the reported fee schedule:
 - Fee schedule (children's service centre-based long day care)
 - Fee schedule (children's service preschool service)
- If subsidies are included in the calculation of the fees charged to children, report the fees charged after deducting eligible subsidies.
- Count fees that are charged to the child's parent or guardian, irrespective of whether the fees are actually paid (i.e. if payment of the fee is not compulsory or payment of the fee is not enforced or followed up by the service provider).

*Fee schedule amount
continued*

- Only count the fees charged for the child to attend the preschool program component of the service. Do not count fees charged for the child to attend other programs with the service provider, such as out of school hours care.
- Donations paid by parents should not be included, nor should additional charges for service components such as nappy supplies, meals or transportation.

Additional information: Input a response of 'NA' if there are no fees payable for children to attend the preschool program.

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Geographic location of organisation (CD)

Technical name: Service provider organisation - geographic location (CD), code (ASGC 2009) NNNNNNN

METeOR identifier: 397266

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/397266>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation - geographic location of organisation (CD)

Definition: The geographical location of an agency using a seven-digit numerical code which indicates the Collection District (CD) within the state or territory of Australia.

Components: The seven-digit ASGC code which identifies the geographical location of the service provider, comprising a single-digit code to indicate state or territory, and a six-digit code for the CD within the state/territory.

Rationale: The CD code is used to determine the socio-economic status for the area in which the service provider is located. This information assists in derivation of disadvantage status and the disaggregation of Indigenous students by geographic location.

Inclusions: ASGC CD code indicating the geographical location of the organisation

Exclusions: The post office box or other non-street addresses of the service provider.

Classification scheme: Australian Standard Geographical Classification 2009

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: NNNNNNN, for example: 397266

Maximum character length: 7

Supplementary values: For unknown CD code, the following values should be used:

1999499 - New South Wales - unknown CD

2999499 - Victoria - unknown CD

3999499 - Queensland - unknown CD

4999499 - South Australia - unknown CD

5999499 - Western Australia - unknown CD

6999499 - Tasmania - unknown CD

7999499 - Northern Territory - unknown CD

8999499 - Australian Capital Territory - unknown CD

9999499 - Other Territories - unknown CD

Counting rules:

- Code the geographical location of the service provider to CD using the service provider's address line, postcode, suburb/town/locality name and Australian state/territory identifier.

Additional information:

- Where the address is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

*Geographic location of
organisation (CD)
continued*

MapInfo Professional is the Geographic Information System (GIS) software that is most widely used within the ABS for coding addresses to CD. Jurisdictions wishing to undertake their own coding should contact the ABS for further information about this product.

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Management type

Technical name: Service provider organisation - management type, early childhood education and care code N

METeOR identifier: 395206

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/395206>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation - management type

Definition: The type of legal or social entity responsible for managing a service, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information on the legal or social entity responsible for managing the service.

Rationale: To identify and record the type of entity responsible for managing the preschool program. This data element is used, in conjunction with other data elements about service provision, to obtain a more detailed appraisal of service availability and how services are provided.

Inclusions: Include the management type of the service provider as one of the following:

- Community managed: includes not-for-profit services provided or services managed by parents, churches or co-operatives;
- Government managed: includes Australian, state and local government managed services.
- Private for-profit: includes for-profit services provided or managed by a company or private individual.
- Independent school: includes non-government schools that are governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school.
- Other (e.g. employer sponsored services).

Exclusions: Exclude any legal or social entity associated with the service that does not have management responsibilities with that service.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 3

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Community managed: not-for-profit services provided or managed by parents, churches or co-operatives.
- 2 - Government managed: Australian, state/territory and local government managed services.
- 3 - Private-for profit: for-profit service provided or managed by a company or private individual.
- 4 - Independent school: non-government schools that are governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school.
- 5 - Other (e.g. employer sponsored services).

Management type
continued

Supplementary values:

9 - Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- Record the type of legal or social entity responsible for managing the preschool program.

Additional information: Where the name of the management type is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Maximum preschool program hours available per week

Technical name: Service provider organisation - maximum preschool program hours available per week, total hours N[N]

METeOR identifier: 401541

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phpml/itemId/401541>>

Related URL data element: Child - maximum preschool program hours available per week

Definition: The maximum number of hours available to children to attend the preschool program at this service per week, in total hours from 0 to 60.

Components: The maximum number of hours available to all children to attend the preschool program per week.

Rationale: To identify and record the maximum preschool program hours available per week to children at the service. This will allow identification of the proportion of children enrolled in preschool programs that are available for at least 15 hours per week.

Inclusions: Include the maximum preschool program hours available per week to all children at the service, in hours listed from 0 up to a maximum of 60.

Exclusions: Exclude hours available in non-preschool programs. Where the facility provides other integrated child care services, the hours associated with these services should be excluded.

Representational class: Total

Data type: Number

Format: N[N], for example: 15

Maximum character length: 2

Unit of measure: Hour (h)

Counting rules:

- Count the maximum hours available that all children at the service are able to attend the preschool program.

Additional information:

The maximum hours available may be less than or equal to the opening hours of the service, but may exceed the number of hours children are enrolled at the service. This number may also be greater than the hours actually attended by children in the reference period.

The maximum preschool program hours available to children are the maximum hours for which children could enrol in the reference period at that service. The maximum preschool programs hours available could be impacted by a range of factors such as the structure of the preschool program, resources available at the service, the age and preschool readiness of the children and so on.

Parents may choose to enrol the child for hours that are equal to or less than the maximum hours the preschool program is available.

*Maximum preschool
program hours available
per week continued*

Ensure that reported values fall between 0 and 60 hours per week. Hours in excess of 60 hours per week should be manually capped at 60 by the jurisdiction.

Jurisdictions may collect this information over multiple weeks due to variable delivery methods. This may mean that presenting the data over a week period will necessitate an average statistic being derived.

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Number of children attending preschool

Technical name: Service provider organisation - number of children attending preschool, total N[NNNN]

METeOR identifier: 390939

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/390939>>

Related URL data element: Child - preschool service received indicator

Definition: The total number of children who attended preschool at the service.

Components: Report the total number of children who attended the preschool program in the reference period, disaggregated by sex, and reported by the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years of age.

Rationale: Identify and record the total number of individual child attendances at the preschool program recorded for each service provider during the reference period.

Inclusions: Include the number of children attending a preschool program, disaggregated by sex and single year of age.

Exclusions: Exclude children who did not attend the preschool program during the reference period.

Representational class: Count

Data type: Number

Format: N[NNNN], for example: 12

Maximum character length: 5

Counting rules:

- Count the total number of children that attended a preschool program for each service provider, disaggregated by sex and single year of age in completed years as at 1 July of the collection year, by the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years old.
- Only one attendance per child is counted for the purposes of capturing the number of preschool attendances within the reference period.
- To be considered as attending, the child must have attended at least once within the reference period.
- Children who were absent during the reference period due to illness or extended holiday leave should be classified as not attending.

Additional information: This data element relates directly to the components 'Age' and 'Sex'.

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Number of Indigenous children attending preschool

Technical name: Service provider organisation - number of Indigenous children attending preschool, total N[NNNN]

METeOR identifier: 401435

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/401435>>

Related URL data elements: Child - preschool service received indicator and Person - Indigenous status.

Definition: The total number of Indigenous children who attended preschool at the service.

Components: Report the total number of Indigenous children who attended the preschool program in the reference period, disaggregated by sex, and reported by the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years of age.

Rationale: Identify and record the total number of Indigenous children who attended the preschool program in the reference period.

Inclusions: Include the total number of Indigenous children who attended the preschool program in the reference period, disaggregated by sex and single year of age.

Exclusions:

- Exclude the number of Indigenous children who did not attend the preschool program during the reference period.
- Exclude the number of children that fall within the category 'non-Indigenous'.

Representational class: Count

Data type: Number

Format: N[NNNN], for example: 15

Maximum character length: 5

Counting rules:

- Count the total number of Indigenous children who attended the preschool program during the reference period, by sex and single year of age in completed years as at 1 July of the collection year, by the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years old.
- Only one attendance per child is counted for the purposes of capturing the number of preschool attendances within the reference period.
- To be considered as attending, the child must have attended at least one session of the preschool program within the reference period.
- Children who were absent during the reference period due to illness or extended holiday leave should be classified as not attending.

Additional information: This data element relates directly to the components 'Age', 'Indigenous status' and 'Sex'.

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Number of Indigenous children enrolled in preschool

Technical name: Service provider organisation - number of Indigenous children enrolled in preschool, total N[NNNN]

METeOR identifier: 401419

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/401419>>

Related URL data element: Child - preschool service enrolment indicator and Person - Indigenous status.

Definition: The total number of individual preschool enrolments of Indigenous students recorded at the service provider level.

Components: Report the total number of Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program, disaggregated by sex, and reported by the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years of age.

Rationale: Identify and record the total number of Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program at each service provider.

Inclusions: Include the total number of Indigenous children enrolled in the preschool program, disaggregated by sex and single year of age.

Exclusions: Exclude the number of children that fall within the category 'non-Indigenous'.

Representational class: Count

Data type: Number

Format: N[NNNN], for example: 15

Maximum character length: 5

Counting rules:

- Count the total number of Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program during the reference period, by sex and single year of age in completed years as at 1 July of the collection year, by the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years old.
- Only one enrolment per child is counted for the purposes of capturing the number of preschool enrolments within the reference period.
- To be considered as enrolled, the child must have been offered a place at the preschool and be actively attending. A child is considered to be actively attending if they have attended a preschool session at least once within the previous month (the 4 weeks prior to the collection date). Children who are absent in the previous month due to illness, extended holiday leave or for cultural reasons are considered to be enrolled if they are expected to return.
- For all preschool programs delivered in school settings, count the 4 weeks prior to the collection date, excluding weeks when the school is closed for school holidays, to determine whether the child is actively attending.
- For all preschool programs delivered in long day care settings, count the 4 weeks prior to the collection date, including only those weeks when the service is operational, to determine whether the child is actively attending.

Additional information: This data element relates directly to the components 'Age', 'Indigenous status' and 'Sex'.

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Number of preschool enrolments at the service provider level

Technical name: Service provider organisation - number of preschool enrolments, total
N[NNNN]

METeOR identifier: 390341

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/390341>>

Related URL data element: Child - preschool service enrolment indicator

Definition: The total number of individual preschool enrolments recorded at the service provider level.

Components: Report the total number of children enrolled in a preschool program, disaggregated by sex, and reported by the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years of age.

Rationale: Identify and record the total number of child enrolments in a preschool program recorded at each service provider.

Inclusions: Include the total number of children enrolled in the preschool program, by sex and single year of age.

Exclusions: Nil

Representational class: Count

Data type: Number

Format: N[NNNN], for example: 15

Maximum character length: 5

Counting rules:

- Count the total number of children enrolled in a preschool program for each service provider, disaggregated by sex and single year of age in completed years as at 1 July of the collection year, by the age groups 3, 4, 5 and 6 years old.
- To be considered as enrolled, the child must have been offered a place at the preschool and be actively attending. A child is considered to be actively attending if they have attended a preschool session at least once within the previous month (the 4 weeks prior to the collection date). Children who are absent in the previous month due to illness, extended holiday leave or for cultural reasons are considered to be enrolled if they are expected to return.
- For all preschool programs delivered in school settings, count the 4 weeks prior to the collection date, excluding weeks when the school is closed for school holidays, to determine whether the child is actively attending.
- For all preschool programs delivered in LDC settings, count the 4 weeks prior to the collection date, including only those weeks when the service is operational, to determine whether the child is actively attending.

Additional information: This data element relates directly to the components 'Age' and 'Sex'.

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Number of preschool program hours enrolled per week

Technical name: Service provider organisation - number of preschool program hours enrolled per week, total hours N[NNNN]

METeOR identifier: 397196

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/397196>>

Related URL data element: Child - preschool program hours enrolled (total)

Definition: The total number of hours that children are enrolled in a preschool program delivered by a service provider organisation, in a given week.

Components: Report the total hours that all children are enrolled in the preschool program component of the service in a given week.

Rationale: To identify and record the total number of hours that all children are enrolled in the preschool program component of the service in the reference period.

Inclusions: Include the total number of hours that all children are enrolled in the preschool program component of the service in the reference period. Non-instructional times such as recess, tea breaks and lunch breaks should be included if children remain under the supervision of the service provider during these times.

Exclusions: Exclude non-preschool program hours. Where the facility provides other integrated child care services, the hours enrolled associated with these services should be excluded.

Representational class: Total

Data type: Number

Format: N[NNNN], for example: 150

Maximum character length: 5

Unit of measure: Hour (h)

Counting rules:

- Count the number of whole hours that each child is enrolled in the preschool program and from this derive the total hours all children are enrolled in the preschool program. Include hours enrolled in non-instructional activities such as recess, tea breaks and lunch breaks if the children will remain under the supervision of the service provider for these activities.
- To be considered as enrolled, the child must have been offered a place at the preschool and be actively attending. A child is considered to be actively attending if they have attended a preschool session at least once within the previous month (the 4 weeks prior to the collection date). Children who were absent in the previous month due to illness, extended holiday leave or for cultural reasons are considered to be enrolled if they are expected to return.
- For all preschool programs delivered in school settings, count the 4 weeks prior to the collection date, excluding weeks when the school is closed for school holidays, to determine whether the child is actively attending.

*Number of preschool
program hours enrolled
per week continued*

- For all preschool programs delivered in a long day care settings, count the 4 weeks prior to the collection date, including only those weeks when the service is operational, to determine whether the child is actively attending.

Additional information: The ABS has requested that the relevant reference period for the data is also provided. For example, some jurisdictions may record fortnightly enrolment hours, whilst others may record weekly enrolment hours. This needs to be specified so that the ABS can derive hours to a weekly reference period if necessary.

Jurisdictions may collect this information over multiple weeks due to variable delivery methods. This may mean that presenting the data over a week period will necessitate an average statistic being derived.

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Organisation identifier

Technical name: Service provider organisation - organisation identifier, X(15)

METeOR identifier: 397155

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/397155>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation - organisation identifier

Definition: A unique identifier assigned to each service which delivers child care or preschool services to children.

Components: Assign a unique identifier to each service provider.

Rationale: The organisation identifier is used to enable accurate identification of the service provider. It should include components that identify the main service type, state/territory and an individual number for each service. Each service included in the ECEC Collection should have a unique identifier at the national level.

Inclusions: Include a unique identifier for each service provider.

Exclusions: Exclude identifiers assigned to the registered business or the organisation operating the service, if different from the individual service provider.

Representational class: Identifier

Data type: String

Format: X(15), for example: 2691GWL

Maximum character length: 15

Counting rules: Currently, there is no uniform method for assigning the organisation identifier. States and territories should adopt a consistent approach to assigning identifiers within their jurisdiction. Further information on the collection of this data element will be provided for the 2011 collection.

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Organisation name

Technical name: Service provider organisation - Organisation name

METeOR identifier: No corresponding METeOR identifier. This is an additional 2010 data element.

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation - organisation name

Definition: The operating or trading name of the service which delivers a preschool program to children.

Components: Report the operating or trading name of the service which delivers a preschool program to children.

Rationale: The name by which a service provider is known or called, to allow accurate identification of each individual service provider.

Inclusions: The service provider's full operating or trading name.

Exclusions: The registered business name, where materially different from the name of the children's services institution(s) that it manages or owns.

Representational class: Text

Data type: String

Format: [X(180)], for example: Gum Tree Kindergarten - Gawler Centre

Maximum character length: 180

Supplementary values:

- 'Not stated/inadequately described'
- 'Unknown'

Counting rules:

- The centre may operate under multiple names or registered business names, however record only the operating or trading name of the service provider.
- Do not use the registered business name, as it often reflects the organisational owner(s) which may be the parent company of multiple preschool facilities.
- The name of the institution may or may not include a Pty Ltd business name.
- Campus name should also be supplied where multiple campuses have the same name of services. If a single service provider operates a number of preschool programs at different centres, record an individual name for each individual centre. For example, Gum Tree Kindergarten may operate two different preschool programs at centres located in different geographical areas. Each centre must have an individual name recorded, such as Gum Tree Kindergarten - City Centre and Gum Tree Kindergarten - Gawler Centre.

Additional information: Where the name of the service provider is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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*Postcode - Australian
(service provider
organisation)*

Technical name: Service provider organisation (address) - Australian postcode, code (Postcode datafile) {NNNN}

METeOR identifier: 290064

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/290064>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation (address) - postcode - Australian

Definition: The numeric descriptor for a postal delivery area, aligned with locality, suburb or place for the address of an organisation, as represented by a code.

Components: Report the postcode which identifies the geographical location of the service provider. Postcode data involves a conversion from postcodes to the Australian Bureau of Statistics postal areas.

Rationale: To identify and record the postcode that identifies the geographical location of the services provider. This information, when combined with the 'address line', 'suburb/town/locality' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' service provider level data elements, can be used to identify the 'geographic location of organisation (CD)' code.

Inclusions: Include the postcode which identifies the geographical location of the service provider.

Exclusions: The postcode for a post office box or other non-geographic address of the service provider.

Classification scheme: Postcode datafile

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: {NNNN}, for example: 5118

Maximum character length: 4

Supplementary responses:

- 'Not stated/inadequately described'
- 'Unknown' - where the postcode of the service provider is unknown

Counting rules:

- Collect comprehensive details which identify the geographical location of the service provider.
- The postcode indicated must correspond to all other address related information for the service provider, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
 - Street/property number
 - Street name
 - Suburb, town or locality
 - Australian state/territory identifier
- Do not collect the post office box or other non-residential address of the service provider.

*Postcode - Australian
(service provider
organisation) continued*

- Where the postcode is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

Additional information: If a jurisdiction is able to accurately code address to CD and provide detailed information on coding process and validations made, there is no requirement to provide this data element.

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Service activity type

Technical name: Service provider organisation - service activity type, children's service code N

METeOR identifier: 354632

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/354632>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation - service activity type

Definition: The type of service available or provided by a children's service agency, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information on the main type of service available or provided by the service provider.

Rationale: To identify and record the main service activity type of the service provider. The range of activity types in which a preschool program may be delivered are quite diverse across jurisdictions. This data element is used, in conjunction with other data elements about service provision, to obtain a more detailed appraisal of service availability and how services are provided.

Inclusions: Include the main service activity type of the service provider from the following:

- Centre-based long day care
- Preschool
- Occasional care
- Outside school hours care
- Vacation care
- Family day care
- In-home care

Exclusions: Exclude other activity types offered by the service provider which are not the service provider's main activity type.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 7

Maximum character length: 1

Service activity type
continued

Permissible values:

- 1 - Centre-based long day care: comprises services aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds that are provided in a centre usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. In some jurisdictions, primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations.
- 2 - Occasional care: comprises services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and are aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff.
- 3 - Outside school hours care: comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) outside school hours during term. Care may be provided on student free days and when school finishes early. For the purposes of this collection vacation care is recorded separately.
- 4 - Vacation care: comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) during vacation periods.
- 5 - Family day care: comprises services provided in the carer's own home. The care is largely aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Central co-ordination units in all states and territories organise and support a network of carers, often with the help of local governments.
- 6 - In-home care: comprises services where an approved carer provides care in the child's home. Families eligible for in-home care include families where the parent/s or child has an illness or disability; families in rural or remote areas; parents working shift work or non-standard hours; families with more than two children from a multiple birth and/or more than two children under school age; and families where a breast feeding mother is working from home.
- 7 - Preschool: comprises a structured educational program usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis in dedicated preschools. Similar educational programs or curricula may be provided in long day care and other settings. These are primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full-time schooling.

Supplementary values: Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- Each service provider should indicate the main activity type provided at their service.
- Multiple responses to this data element are not encouraged.
- For a preschool program delivered in a long day care centre, record a code of 7.

Additional information:

- Where the activity type is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

*Service activity type
continued*

Certain 'In-home care' activity types may be relevant where a child with an illness or disability receives a sessional preschool program. Similarly, children in rural or remote areas receiving a sessional preschool program (e.g. school of the air) as part of broader in-home care services will be eligible for inclusion.

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*Service delivery setting
(children's service)*

Technical name: Service provider organisation - service delivery setting, children's service code N

METeOR identifier: 315173

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phpml/itemId/315173>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation - service delivery setting (children's service)

Definition: The type of setting in which children's service activities are provided or could be provided by a service provider, as represented by a code.

Components: Report information on the type of setting in which the children's service activities are provided by the service provider.

Rationale: To identify and record the type of setting in which children's service activities are provided. The range of service settings in which a preschool program may be delivered are quite diverse across jurisdictions. This data element is used, in conjunction with other data elements about service provision, to obtain a more detailed appraisal of service availability and how services are provided.

Inclusions: Include the service delivery setting of the service provider from the following:

- Centre-based - school,
- Centre-based - other,
- Home-based - child's home,
- Home-based - other,
- General community setting

Exclusions: Exclude services not providing a preschool program.

Representational class: Code

Data type: Number

Format: N, for example: 5

Maximum character length: 1

Permissible values:

- 1 - Centre-based - school refers to child care or preschool programs delivered on school grounds, using school facilities (e.g. a building owned by the school).
- 2 - Centre-based - other refers to a purpose built building or buildings where a child care or preschool program is delivered and the primary function of the building is non-residential (e.g. a child care centre, dedicated preschool etc.).
- 3 - Home-based - child's home refers to a private residential dwelling where the child lives.
- 4 - Home-based - other refers to a private residential dwelling where a child care or preschool program is delivered by someone other than the child's parents, carers or guardians (e.g. a family day care caregiver's house).
- 5 - General community setting refers to child care or preschool programs delivered at a general community infrastructure facility (e.g. a park, neighbourhood house, community hall, library etc.).

*Service delivery setting
(children's service)
continued*

Supplementary values: Not stated/inadequately described

Counting rules:

- The service provider should include only one response to this data element.

Additional information: Where the service delivery setting is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Service operation weeks

Technical name: Service provider organisation - number of service operation weeks (calendar year), total NN

METeOR identifier: 270377

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phpml/itemId/270377>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation - service operation weeks

Definition: The actual number of weeks per year that the agency is open for the provision of service.

Components: Collect the number of weeks per year that the service provider is open for provision of the preschool program.

Rationale: To identify and record the number weeks per year that a service is open for provision of a preschool program.

Inclusions: Include the total number of weeks that the service provider is open per year and providing a preschool program.

Exclusions: Exclude weeks during the year in which the service provider is not offering a preschool program or is not operational.

Representational class: Total

Data type: Number

Format: NN, for example: 40

Maximum character length: 2

Supplementary values:

- 90 - No regular pattern of operation through a year
- 99 - Not stated/inadequately described

Unit of measure: Week

Counting rules:

- Count the weeks during which the preschool component of the service is provided. Do not include weeks when the preschool program is not being delivered, for example if the preschool program is operated in a school setting, do not count weeks during school holiday periods when the centre is only open for administrative purposes. This would not be relevant for an LDC if the preschool program continued to operate during the school holidays.
- A week is measured from 12.00 AM (midnight) Monday morning to 11.59 PM the following Sunday. If a service operates within this period then it is counted as having operated during that week. Therefore if an agency operates for only a short time for one of the days within a week, it is counted as operating during that week.

Additional information:

- Record operation weeks in numeral values of 01 to 52.
- Ensure that the number of operational weeks per service provider does not exceed 52.

*Service operation weeks
continued*

- Services operating for nil or a very low number of weeks should be investigated and resolved at the jurisdiction level prior to submission.

Where the operation weeks are unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

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Suburb/town/locality name
(service provider
organisation)

Technical name: Service provider organisation (address) - suburb/town/locality name, text [A(50)]

METeOR identifier: 290059

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/290059>>

Related URL data element: Service provider organisation (address) - suburb/town/locality name

Definition: The full name of the general locality containing the specific address of an organisation, as represented by text.

Components: Report the suburb/town/locality name which identifies the general locality of the service provider.

Rationale: To identify and record the general locality of the service provider. This information, when combined with the 'address line', 'postcode' and 'Australian state/territory identifier' service provider level data elements, can be used to identify the 'geographic location of organisation (CD)' code of the service provider.

Inclusions: Include the suburb/town/locality name which identifies the general locality of the service provider.

Exclusions: Exclude the suburb for the post office box or other non-geographic address of the service provider.

Representational class: Text

Data type: String

Format: [A(50)], for example: Gawler

Maximum character length: 50

Supplementary responses:

- 'Not stated/inadequately described'
- 'Unknown' - where the address of the service provider is unknown

Counting rules:

- The locality name may be a town, city, suburb or commonly used location name such as a large agricultural property or Aboriginal community.
- Collect comprehensive details which identify the geographical location of the service provider.
- The suburb indicated must correspond to all other address related information, which may include:
 - Address line:
 - Apartment/Flat/Unit number (if any)
 - Street/property number
 - Street name
 - Postcode
 - Australian state/territory identifier

*Suburb/town/locality name
(service provider
organisation) continued*

Additional information: Where the suburb is unknown, identify the reason for the unknown response and document any follow-up processes undertaken.

<Back to data element list>

Total preschool attendance hours

Technical name: Service provider organisation - preschool attendance hours, total hours
N[NNNN]

METeOR identifier: 397219

METeOR link: <<http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/397219>>

Related URL data element: Child - preschool program hours attended (total)

Definition: The total number of hours that children attend a preschool program delivered by a service provider organisation, in a given week.

Components: Report the total hours that all children have attended at a preschool program at the service in the reference period.

Rationale: To identify and record the total number of hours that all children have attended at the preschool program component of the service in the reference period.

Inclusions: Include the total number of hours that all children have attended at the preschool program component of the service in the reference period. Non-instructional times such as recess, tea breaks and lunch breaks should be included if children were under the supervision of the service provider.

Exclusions: Exclude non-preschool program hours. Where the facility provides other integrated child care services, the hours associated with these services should be excluded.

Representational class: Total

Data type: Number

Format: N[NNNN], for example: 150

Maximum character length: 5

Unit of measure: Hour (h)

Counting rules:

- Count the number of whole hours that children are in attendance at the preschool program.
- Include hours attended in non-instructional activities such as recess, tea breaks and lunch breaks if the children remained under the supervision of the service provider for these activities.
- To be considered as attending, the child must have attended at least once within the reference period.
- Children who were absent during the reference period due to illness or extended holiday leave should be classified as not attending.

Additional information:

The number of hours that the child is in attendance at the preschool program is obtained by the service provider initially recording start and finish times for each child's attendance and then rounding to whole hours.

*Total preschool
attendance hours
continued*

The ABS has requested that the relevant reference period for the data is also provided. For example, some jurisdictions may record fortnightly attendance hours, whilst others may record weekly attendance hours. This needs to be specified so that the ABS can derive hours to a weekly reference period if necessary.

Jurisdictions may collect this information over multiple weeks due to variable delivery methods. This may mean that presenting the data over a week period will necessitate an average statistic being derived.

<Back to data element list>

OVERVIEW

The ABS protects and maintains the confidentiality of all information received from data providers, and this is assured by provisions of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. In accordance with the Census and Statistics Act, the ABS is bound not to disclose information in a manner which would enable the identification of a particular person or organisation to which it relates. The dissemination of data under the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection fully complies with all legal and legislative obligations, and will not be disseminated in such a way as to enable particular individuals to be identified.

Under clause 5.4 of the National Information Agreement for Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC):

- 5.4.1 All Parties will respect the rights to privacy of any person or organisation named or otherwise identified in any information source.
- 5.4.2 Information will be collected, disseminated, used and secured in such a way as to protect the privacy and confidentiality of any individual and/or organisation to which it may refer. In particular, all state/territory and Commonwealth privacy and confidentiality legislation and established ethical guidelines and practices will be complied with under this Agreement.
- 5.4.3 The Parties acknowledge that data holders will comply with the provision of the Commonwealth *Privacy Act 1988* as amended, and any other Commonwealth, state or territory legislation relevant to the confidentiality or privacy of the data. The Australian Bureau of Statistics will collect, compile and disseminate statistical information in accordance with the provisions of the Commonwealth Census and Statistics Act 1905.

COLLECTION OF DATA BY JURISDICTIONS

Data collected by jurisdictions for the National ECEC Collection is subject to state and territory legislation, which applies to the collection and on-providing of data to the ABS. The federal Privacy Act does not regulate state or territory agencies, except for the Australian Capital Territory. The remaining states and territories operate under their own privacy requirements, which are based on the National Privacy Principles.

All jurisdictions guarantee that relevant state and territory legislation requirements have been acknowledged and addressed to ensure that correct procedures and protocols are followed in collecting unit record information.

ON-PROVIDING DATA TO THE ABS

Under the requirements of the NIA ECEC, each jurisdiction is required to forward their data collections to the ABS. All states and territories acknowledge that they are aware of the implications of sharing data with the ABS in terms of relevant jurisdictional privacy and confidentiality legislation requirements, and have investigated whether permission is required to be obtained from parents or guardians. The provision of data to the ABS by jurisdictions is covered under the Census and Statistics Act, however data may also be

ON-PROVIDING DATA TO
THE ABS *continued*

covered by other relevant state and territory legislation. The ABS complies with the requirements of the Act in all interactions with the data.

Section 19 of the Census and Statistics Act imposes obligations on the Statistician and ABS officers in relation to the protection of the confidentiality of data. In publishing and disseminating the results of analyses of statistical information, section 12 ensures that the ABS will not publish information in a manner that is likely to enable the identification of a person or organisation.

In accordance with the requirements of the Census and Statistics Act, the ABS guarantees to:

- Remove all directly identifying information prior to release. This includes name, date of birth, address and any other information that identifies particular persons or organisations.
- Release information only in a manner that is not likely to enable the identification of the particular person or organisation to which it relates.

As a Commonwealth agency, the ABS must also comply with the 11 Information Privacy Principles (IPPs) as set out in the Privacy Act. The IPPs give protection to the confidentiality of a range of personal material and impose obligations regarding the storage and use of personal information. All ABS practices in relation to the care and control of personal information must, as a minimum, comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act.

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GLOSSARY

Administrative data	Administrative data is information recorded in administrative records, systems or reports, primarily collected for the purpose of record-keeping.
Aggregate data	Refers to data where units are grouped together and summed into broader categories. Jurisdictions collect and report data for the National ECEC Collection through either an aggregate or Unit Record Level (URL) collection. In terms of the National ECEC Collection, a jurisdictional aggregate collection contains data at the teacher and service provider organisation level.
Attendance	For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, a child is considered to be attending if they are enrolled and have attended the preschool program at least once in the reference period.
Australian Standard Geographical Classification	The Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) was developed by the ABS for the collection and dissemination of geographical statistics. It is a hierarchically structured classification with a number of spatial units to satisfy different statistical purposes. For more information see <i>Australian Standard Geographical Classification</i> (cat. no. 1216.0). The ASGC will be replaced by the Australian Statistical Geographic Standard (ASGS) in July 2011. More information can be found on the ABS website < http://www.abs.gov.au/ >.
Child Care Management System	<p>The Child Care Management System (CCMS) is a national child care computer system that enables child care services to exchange child care information online with the government. It enables the payment of the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR) fee reduction on behalf of parents to approved child care services. It also provides for the collection of information about the supply and usage of child care across Australia.</p> <p><i>Child Care Benefit:</i> Child Care Benefit (CCB) is a payment made to eligible parents or guardians, to assist with the cost of child care for long day care, family day care, occasional care, outside school hours care, vacation care and registered care. Eligibility is based on an income and eligibility test.</p> <p><i>Child Care Rebate:</i> Child Care Rebate (CCR) is a payment available to eligible parents or guardians, who are working or studying, to assist with the out-of-pocket cost of approved child care services.</p>
Collection district	The smallest geographic area defined in the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). Collection districts (CDs) serve as the basic building block in the ASGC and are used for the aggregation of statistics to larger ASGC areas, and some non-ASGC areas.
Collection date	The recommended collection date is the common date to collect data. For the 2010 National ECEC Collection, this was the Friday 6 August however, not all jurisdictions were able to comply with this collection date. See Chapter 2, Collection Overview for more information on jurisdictional specific collection dates. For future National ECEC collections, the collection date will continue to be the first Friday in August.
Council of Australian Governments	Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia, comprising the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA). The role of COAG is to initiate, develop and monitor the implementation of policy reforms that are of national significance and which require cooperative action by Australian governments.

Counting rule	Counting rules aim to ensure consistency and comparability of data. The rules contained within this manual provide instructions at the jurisdictional level on the acceptable method for collecting and reporting each data element.
Coverage	Coverage explains the extent to which the scope is complete.
Data element	A unit of data for which the definition, identification, representation and permissible values are specified by at least one or more data items. Data elements for the National ECEC Collection are detailed within the National Minimum Data Set for Early Childhood Education and Care (NMDS ECEC).
Data item	A particular characteristic of units in a population which is measured or observed. For the National ECEC Collection data items have been adopted by the ABS where appropriate for conducting the collection and for processing activities.
Data processing	The preparation of data for analysis. Data processing involves five steps: data coding, data input, data editing, data cleaning and data modification.
Data validation	A method of confirming the reliability of data through a checking process, to ensure that the data is free of systematic error. A validation study compares data collected using a collection instrument with data considered to represent the "true value" of the data.
Delivery setting	<p>The type of setting in which children's service activities are provided or could be provided by a service provider, as defined within the NMDS ECEC, 2010:</p> <p><i>Centre-based (school)</i>: refers to child care or preschool services delivered on school grounds, using school facilities.</p> <p><i>Centre-based (other)</i>: refers to a purpose built building or buildings where a child care or preschool service is delivered and the primary function of the building is non-residential eg. a child care or dedicated preschool.</p> <p><i>Home-based (child's home)</i>: child's home, refers to a private residential dwelling where the child lives.</p> <p><i>Home-based (other)</i>: refers to a private residential dwelling where a child care or preschool service is delivered by someone other than the child's parents, carers or guardians.</p> <p><i>General community setting</i>: refers to child care or preschool services delivered at a general community infrastructure facility.</p>
Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set	<p>ECEC National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) is the document of agreed standards, definitions, classifications and protocols required for nationally comparable ECEC data. Entities within the NMDS are at the following levels:</p> <p><i>Person/ child</i>: refers to the person or child receiving the preschool service.</p> <p><i>Person/ teacher</i>: see definition for teacher below.</p> <p><i>Service provider organisation</i>: refers to the service provider that delivers the preschool program.</p>
Episode of enrolment/attending a preschool program	An episode is the count of the occurrence of a specific characteristic. For the National ECEC Collection, an episode refers to a preschool program provided to a child. When one child attends two different preschool programs, the child is attending two episodes of preschool.
Enrolment	A child is considered to be enrolled if they have been offered a place in a preschool program and are actively attending. Children who are absent in the reference period due to illness or holiday leave are considered to be enrolled if they are expected to return.
Estimated resident population	The estimated resident population (ERP) is the official measure of the population of Australia and is based on the concept of usual residence. It refers to all people, regardless of nationality, citizenship or legal status, who usually live in Australia, with the exception of foreign diplomatic personnel and their families. It includes usual residents

Estimated resident population <i>continued</i>	<p>who are overseas for less than 12 months. It excludes overseas visitors who are in Australia for less than 12 months.</p> <p>Estimates of the Australian resident population are generated on a quarterly basis by adding natural increase (the excess of births over deaths) and net overseas migration (NOM) occurring during the period to the population at the beginning of each period. For more information, see <i>ABS Australian Demographic Statistics</i> (cat. no. 3101.0).</p>
Fees	Fees refer to the 'out of pocket' expenses to the parent or guardian for the child to attend the preschool program, after subsidies have been paid/received.
Indigenous status	<p>For the purpose of the National ECEC Collection, the Indigenous status of the child is as identified or stated by the child's parent or guardian. The Indigenous status categories included in the National ECEC collection are as follows:</p> <p>Indigenous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Aboriginal, but not Torres Strait Islander origin; ■ Torres Strait Islander, but not Aboriginal origin; ■ Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin; <p>Non-Indigenous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Neither Aboriginal nor Torres Strait Islander origin.
Jurisdiction	Jurisdiction is defined for the National ECEC Collection as Commonwealth Government or a state and territory within Australia.
Licensed service providers	Service providers that have been issued with a license by the relevant department or authority which grants legal approval or accreditation to operate their service or a particular component of their service, such as a preschool program or child care centre.
Management type	<p>The preschool management type refers to the legal or social entity responsible for managing the service. Data presented from the National ECEC Collection is based on ECEC NMDS categories, which include government managed, community managed, independent, private-for-profit or other. Early childhood services may be provided by a number of legal and social entities. The management type categories used in the National ECEC Collection are:</p> <p><i>Government managed</i></p> <p>Government managed: includes Commonwealth, state, territory governments and local government managed services.</p> <p><i>Non-government managed</i></p> <p>Community managed: includes not-for-profit services provided or managed by parents, churches or co-operatives.</p> <p>Private for profit managed: includes for-profit services provided or managed by a company or private individual.</p> <p>Independent school managed: a non-government school which is governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school.</p>
Metadata Online Registry (METeOR)	Metadata Online Registry (METeOR) is an online repository for national metadata standards for health, housing and community services statistics and information. It is the resource which holds all NMDS data elements and associated metadata.
Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs	The Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) was established on 1 July 2009 following agreement of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to a realignment of the roles and responsibilities of two previously existing councils - the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) and the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE). Main areas of responsibility covered by the Council are primary, secondary, international and early childhood education. For more information see the MCEECDYA website: < http://www.mceecdya.edu.au >.

Performance indicator	A measurement indicator used to assess the progress of the National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE) and calculated using ECEC data. Performance Indicators relating to the NP ECE are further described in detail in Chapter 6, Collection Background and Governance.
Preschool program	A preschool program is a structured, play-based learning program, usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis, primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full-time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institutions that provide it or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Depending on jurisdictional delivery models, preschool programs may be delivered through government schools or preschools, non-government schools, community preschools and for-profit child care providers. Early childhood education terminology of a preschool program differs across states and territories.
Reference period	The period of time for which the data are collected and/or compiled (e.g. calendar year, financial year, last week, last fortnight or a specific day of the month etc.). The reference period may vary for each data element within a collection. For the 2010 ECE collection the recommended reference period was 2 August to 6 August 2010.
Service activity type	<p>The service activity type is the type of service available or provided by the children's service agency. Definitions of service activity types include:</p> <p><i>Centre-based long day care:</i> comprises services aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds that are provided in a centre usually by a mix of qualified and other staff. Educational, care and recreational programs are provided based on the developmental needs, interests and experience of each child. In some jurisdictions, primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations.</p> <p><i>Occasional care:</i> comprises services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to, for example, attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and are aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff. Occasional Care services may operate independently as a stand-alone Occasional Care service or can be collocated with a Long Day Care service as permitted by relevant state/territory regulations for Occasional Care.</p> <p><i>Outside school hours care:</i> comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) outside school hours during term. Care may be provided on student free days and when school finishes early. For the purposes of this collection vacation care is recorded separately.</p> <p><i>Vacation care:</i> comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) during vacation periods.</p> <p><i>Family day care:</i> comprises services provided in the carer's own home. The care is largely aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school vacations. Central co-ordination units in all States and Territories organise and support a network of carers, often with the help of local governments.</p> <p><i>In-home care:</i> comprises services where an approved carer provides care in the child's home. Families eligible for in-home care include families where the parent/s or child has an illness or disability; families in rural or remote areas; parents working shift work or non-standard hours; families with more than two children from a multiple birth and/or more than two children under school age; and families where a breast feeding mother is working from home.</p>

Service activity type <i>continued</i>	<i>Preschool:</i> comprises a structured educational program usually provided by a qualified teacher on a sessional basis in dedicated preschools. Similar educational programs or curricula may be provided in long day care and other settings. These are primarily aimed at children in the year or two before they commence full-time schooling.
Socio-economic indexes for areas	<p>The SEIFA is a product developed especially for those interested in the assessment of the welfare of Australian communities. SEIFA is a suite of four summary measures that have been created from 2006 Census information. The indexes can be used to explore different aspects of socio-economic conditions by geographic areas. For each index, every geographic area in Australia is given a SEIFA number which shows how disadvantaged that area is compared with other areas in Australia. The indexes provide more general measures of socio-economic status than is given by measuring, for example, income or unemployment alone. The SEIFA index used for the National ECEC Collection is the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD).</p> <p><i>Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage</i></p> <p>The IRSD summarises a range of information about the economic and social resources of people and households within an area. Unlike other indexes, this index includes only measures of relative disadvantage. Variables that comprise this index include; low income, no qualifications, unemployment, overcrowded housing, disability, no car, and Indigenous status.</p>
Subsidy	Subsidies are defined as state and territory government funding for preschools and/or preschool programs, as well as any additional financial support provided by the Commonwealth, state and territory and local governments to eligible families to make preschool affordable.
Teacher	For the purpose of the National ECEC Collection, a teacher is defined as the person or persons with a relevant university qualification who is delivering the preschool program. Delivery of a preschool program refers to face to face delivery by a primary contact worker of a preschool program that is a structured, play-based, educational program. A teacher is defined as delivering a preschool program if they delivered the program at least once within the reference period. Teachers who were on alternate duties during the reference period or were absent due to illness or extended holiday leave should not be included.
Unit Record Level	Data for individual population members. Jurisdictions collect and report data for the National ECEC Collection through either a Unit Record Level (URL) collection or an aggregate collection. In terms of the National ECEC Collection, a jurisdictional URL collection contains individual child, teacher and service provider level data. The collection of URL statistics is required to provide statistical functionality including spatial analysis and data linking. URL methodologies allow for the potential identification of duplicate records (where the same child may attend multiple services in the reference period).
Usual Residence	The place where the person has or intends to live for six months or more, or the place the person regards as their main residence, or where the person has no other residence, the place they currently reside.
Work activity	<p>The work activity type refers to the type of work performed by a person in the course of their employment in early childhood education and care.</p> <p><i>Primary contact work:</i> the worker mainly has direct contact with children. This may include but is not limited to teachers, teachers assistants/ aides, specialist teachers and therapists.</p> <p><i>Other contact work:</i> the worker has some duties involving direct contact with children, but deals mainly with staffing or management issues such as supervising staff and handling queries from parents. This may include but is not limited to principals, deputy principals, centre managers and coordinators.</p>

Work activity continued	<p><i>Management / administration only work:</i> a staff member who mainly performs management or administration work that contributes to the running of the preschool service and has no direct contact with children. Work may include clerical or receptionist duties, filing, keeping financial records, staffing and management issues.</p> <p><i>Other work:</i> any worker who provides support services such as cooking, cleaning and gardening. This may include drivers, cooks, cleaners and maintenance staff.</p>
Year before full-time schooling	<p>The year before full-time schooling (YBFS - also referred to as the 'year before formal schooling') is a term used to describe the 'preschool' cohort, due to the varying models of early childhood education in the different jurisdictions (McEwin and Ryan, 2009). The year before a child begins full-time schooling is further defined as Year 1 (or Grade 1) minus 2 years. This cohort may be a combination of 4, 5 and sometimes 6 year old children. The 6 year old children are usually children who are repeating preschool, or they may have been held back from starting preschool at the usual age.</p>

FOR MORE INFORMATION . . .

INTERNET **www.abs.gov.au** the ABS website is the best place for data from our publications and information about the ABS.

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