



Out-of-scope (licensed) services Networking meeting

Communique 3 – November 2022

Attendees:

Chair	Liz McNally, Operations Manager Compliance
Jenea Airey and Nanette Botha	Beehive Play Centre
Nicole Thompson	Kingston Child Care Centre
Tanya Greenwood	Fingal Valley Neighbourhood House Play Centre
Casey Reid-Stanek	Tasmanian Aboriginal Child Care Association (TACCA)
Tracey Roberts	Wombats Child Care Centre and ECU Stakeholder Reference Group member out-of-scope (licensed) services
Jodi Geard	West Moonah Community Preschool
Louise Adams and Di Aurik	Legana Play Centre
Joanne Nash	Possums Play Centre
Justin Abrahams and Samantha Sutcliffe	Bridgewater Police and Community Youth Club Outside School Hours Care (BPCYC)
Marie Wilson and Janine Heath	Pilgrim Uniting Early Learning
Department for Education, Children and Young People (DECYP)	Jane Jepson, Authorised Officer (Licensing Officer)
	Ingrid McGinniss, Grants Officer
	Elli Liddell, Project and Administration Officer

Apologies

Janelle Brennan	Acting Manager, Education and Care
Annette Fuhr-Evitt	Tarremah Steiner School Early Childhood Centre
Natalia Clarke and Angie Garwood	Devonport Play Centre
Jacqueline King	Grasshoppers Play Centre
Kate Lee	Midlands Rural and Remote Child Care Services Avoca and Cressy
Renee Holubnystchyj and Alice Wallen	Wanslea In Home Care Service - Tasmania
Michelle Mallett	Tasmanian Aboriginal Child Care Association (TACCA)
Lisa Coulson	Aboriginal Children's Centre
Kathy Cripps, Courtney Hobbs and Kristy Wallis	Lady Gowrie Frederick Street Child Centre
Sarah Bennett	Wombats Child Care Centre
Peta Griffiths	Riana Early Learning Centre
Jennifer Heawood	Brighton Play Centre
Mariah Terry	Fingal Valley Neighbourhood House Play Centre
Harriet Thyne and Leonie McNair	The Launceston Preparatory School Early Learning Centre
Matthew Saward and Donna House	Circular Head Christian School Early Learning Centre

The ECU and representatives from out of scope (licensed) services connected in a face-to-face meeting on 4 November 2022. The information below reflects the discussion and outcomes from the meeting:

1 ECU Update

Ben Kikkert and Pamela Hollins have been appointed as Authorised Officers, based in the South and North of the state respectively. Recruitment is underway to replace Bryan Cheong in the position of Policy and Communication Officer.

The Manager of the ECU, Vidhya Chelliah, is currently engaged in focussed work across a number of national working groups, and as such Janelle Brennan will be Acting Manager until 31 January 2023.

The new **Department for Education, Children and Young People** (DECYP) was established on 1 October 2022. It includes the Department of Education and some areas from the Department of Communities Tasmania. There will be no change to the ECU's role and service delivery as the regulatory body for the ECEC sector. Follow [this link to the DECYP website](#) for more information.

2 Legislation Changes to the CBC5 Licensing Standards

The Education and Care sector is currently experiencing workforce challenges. The Education and Care Unit (ECU) is committed to working with the sector while promoting high quality education and care including, but not limited to children's health, safety and wellbeing outcomes.

The ECU has considered proposed changes through the 2019 NQF review regarding primary teaching qualifications and the current workforce challenges faced by services licensed under the Child Care Act. The ECU has considered the Licensing Standard requirements for qualifications, and how this supports outcomes for children attending these services.

In response to this, changes to the Tasmanian Licensing Standards for Centre Based Care Class 5 (CBC5) came into effect from 1 October 2022. The amendment recognises teachers with a tertiary education in primary education as approved to care for children aged 3 years and older (previous requirement was restricted to children aged 4 years and older).

Please visit the ECU website for the updated [CBC5 Licensing Standards](#) and an [Information Sheet on the changes to Staff Qualifications](#).

3 Minor Infrastructure Grants Round 2022-2023

ECU Grants Officer Ingrid McGinniss advised service representatives that the Minor Infrastructure Grants (MIG) round 2022-2023 is now open, with applications closing on Thursday, 1 December 2022. The focus for this round is on initiatives that are designed to protect and improve the health and safety of children.

For further information including an information sheet, application guidelines and application example see the [news post on the ECU website](#). You can contact Ingrid on (03) 6165 5437 or at grants.ECU@decyp.tas.gov.au.

4 Licensed services survey information

Ingrid provided a reminder that the licensed service survey is currently open and encouraged completion as the responses will assist the ECU to direct the future grants program.

5 Reflective Practices on Managing Risks

Liz presented a short information session covering the legislative requirements outlined in the *Child Care Act 2001* regarding the management of risk. Discussion included unpacking the requirements of sections;

- Section 29 – Safe and suitable child care
- Standard 11- Safe Environment

Liz outlined common risks and mitigation strategies in the service environment, discussed the concepts of hazard versus risk, and covered the use of a risk matrix to assess hazards outlining the importance of identifying when a risk needs to be eliminated or removed, or when strategies can be implemented to lessen the consequence where the benefit of the experience or learning outweighs the risk.

The ECU encourages services to undertake frequent risk assessments in their service and where the process identifies health and safety hazards in the environment, consider if this is something that the MIG program may be able to address.

6 2024 Working Together Program Expansion

Tania Ackerly from the Working Together (WT) program team gave an overview of the current program and proposed 2024 program expansion.

- The WT initiative offers funded education and care places for eligible children in their year before Kindergarten. It also offers children and their families additional wrap around support to access care and participate in the program.
- The Request for Information (RFI) for services to express interest in providing additional places in the 2024 expansion of WT has closed. Tania encouraged services that may have missed this RFI process to reach out to the WT team.

To discuss opportunities for involvement, or for any questions, please contact the WT team at wt@decyp.tas.gov.au or by [direct message on Facebook](#).

7 Workforce Employment Discussion

The complex issues surrounding workforce challenges being experienced by the ECEC sector are the focus of current national and state initiatives.

- The National Workforce Strategy is a ten-year plan to ensure a sustainable, high quality ECEC workforce. You can read more about the [National Workforce Strategy on the ACECQA website](#).
- The Early Years and School Aged Care (EYSAC) Workforce Strategy is a Tasmanian project with the aim of building workforce capacity and resources within the state. Visit the [EYSAC website](#) for various training resources and guides with a focus on attracting the right people, training, retaining, and upskilling.

The ECU is drafting an information sheet for licensed services to support conversations with Registered Training Organisations (RTO) regarding potential student placements. Please email Jane at jane.jepson@decyp.tas.gov.au or on (03) 6165 5676 with any suggestions for inclusions.

Liz acknowledged the pressure and stress experienced by staff working in the ECEC sector and asked for feedback from service representatives on the issues and challenges, as well as potential retention strategies. Feedback included:

- Opportunity for a sector managed relief staff pool to cover
- Challenge faced by casual staff often working two or more jobs and the high tax threshold.
- Administration cost challenges
- Request for NDIS and allied health staff to provide training for ECEC services with regards to caring for children with complex needs and additional resource made available.
- Increased access to professional learning opportunities in the area of meeting complex needs. This was identified as a staff capacity opportunity.
- Opportunity for delivery through self-paced online modules or weekend/evening workshops suit the workforce.
- Request for funding to cover time to complete training and access already available resources. would also increase opportunities to access the resources which are already in place.

8 Beehive Play Centre Inclusive Practices – programs promoting the dignity and rights of each child

Guest speakers Jenea and Nanette from Beehive Play Centre shared a presentation with ECU and service representatives around their reflective practices and educational programs in supporting and promoting the dignity and rights of every child.

Following an engaging practical exercise which illustrated the experience of neuro-diverse children in education and care settings, Jenea and Nanette spoke about their understanding of children's diverse needs and how this informs their practice. Strategies include; use of routine, visual cues and references, transition cues, managing expectations, and use of modelling or roleplay.

This inspiring and engaging presentation and group discussion that followed fostered valuable knowledge sharing among all service representatives. We are keen to accommodate similar contributions from other services in future meetings. If you have any particular aspect of your service delivery that you would like to share with the group please contact Jane to discuss.

9 ECU Stakeholder Reference Group update

Tracey Roberts, the OOS representative for the ECU Stakeholder Reference Group (SRG) shared a brief update on the items discussed at the recent SRG meetings held in June and September 2022.

Should you wish to raise any issues for consultation or have information provided to the ECU at SRG meetings, Tracey can be contacted at: troberts4@iprimus.com.au

An SRG Communique is developed after each meeting to share relevant points of discussion. This Communique is distributed via email to all providers and services within the Tasmanian education and care sector.

10 Next Meeting

The next OOS meeting is proposed to be held in Campbell Town in March 2023, date to be confirmed.

Janelle Brennan
Acting Manager, Education and Care Unit
Department for Education, Children and Young People