

# National Quality Framework

## NQF Annual Performance Report 2020

This slide pack should be read in conjunction with the full Annual Performance Report

More details available at:  
[acecqa.gov.au/apr](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/apr)



Australian Children's  
Education & Care  
Quality Authority



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY



Australian Children's  
Education & Care  
Quality Authority

ACECQA acknowledges the traditional custodians of all lands across Australia.

We recognise and celebrate the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Australians, including their role in the education and care of children.

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# PURPOSE OF THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The **National Quality Framework (NQF)** represents a **nationwide commitment to quality education and care** for our youngest citizens. Ensuring their **health, safety and wellbeing** is the **first and foremost objective** of the NQF. Other important objectives include improving their **educational and developmental outcomes**, and **promoting continuous improvement in the quality of services**.

This year's Annual Performance Report **analyses these fundamental aspects of the NQF**, and includes a **special chapter** focussing on the recent challenges that have faced the sector, namely the **impact of COVID-19 and other natural disasters**.

ACECQA's role to report to governments on the **evaluation of the NQF** is guided by a shared [NQF Evaluation Framework](#). Reporting is done through quarterly [NQF Snapshots](#), national audits, [occasional papers](#), and [NQF Annual Performance Reports](#), as well as discrete research projects.

**Most of the data** used in this report is **sourced from the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA ITS)**, as at 30 June 2020. The data is also **published on [ACECQA's website](#)**.



# Overview of the children's education and care sector



## OVERVIEW OF THE SECTOR: PROVIDERS

As at **30 June 2020**:

- More than **7200 providers**, with **81% operating a single service**.
- The **13 largest providers** in Australia **operate more than 100 services each**, with a combined total of around **3500 services (22% of all approved services)**
- **Private for profit providers** operate:
  - **67% of long day care services**
  - **61% of family day care services**
  - **48% of outside school hours care services**
  - **2% of preschool/kindergarten services.**
- **‘Private not for profit community managed’ providers operate half of preschools/kindergartens**, with more than a fifth (**21%**) being **‘state/territory and local government managed’**.

## OVERVIEW OF THE SECTOR: SERVICES

As at **30 June 2020**:

- More than **16,100 children's education and care services** approved to operate under the National Quality Framework (NQF):
  - **50%** provide **long day care** services
  - **28%** provide **outside school hours care** services
  - **19%** provide **preschool/kindergarten** services
  - **3%** provide **family day care** services.
- **Four-fifths** of services **located in the three most populous states**: New South Wales (35%), Victoria (26%) and Queensland (19%).
- **More than 15,000 services** had a **published quality rating** against the National Quality Standard (NQS), with **81%** of these services **rated Meeting NQS or above**.

# REPORT SNAPSHOT



Service providers and staff have demonstrated considerable and prolonged resilience, commitment and innovation

**Chapter 1**  
Impact of COVID-19 and natural disasters



Ensuring the health and safety of children attending services is the first and most important objective of the NQF

**Chapter 2**  
Children's health and safety



The most challenging elements of quality continue to relate to the assessment and planning cycle, and critical reflection

**Chapter 3**  
Educational program and practice



There is a growing gap between the quality of services in the most disadvantaged and most advantaged areas

**Chapter 4**  
Children from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds



A new ten-year national workforce strategy is being developed in 2020/21

**Chapter 5**  
Workforce



# Impact of COVID-19 and natural disasters



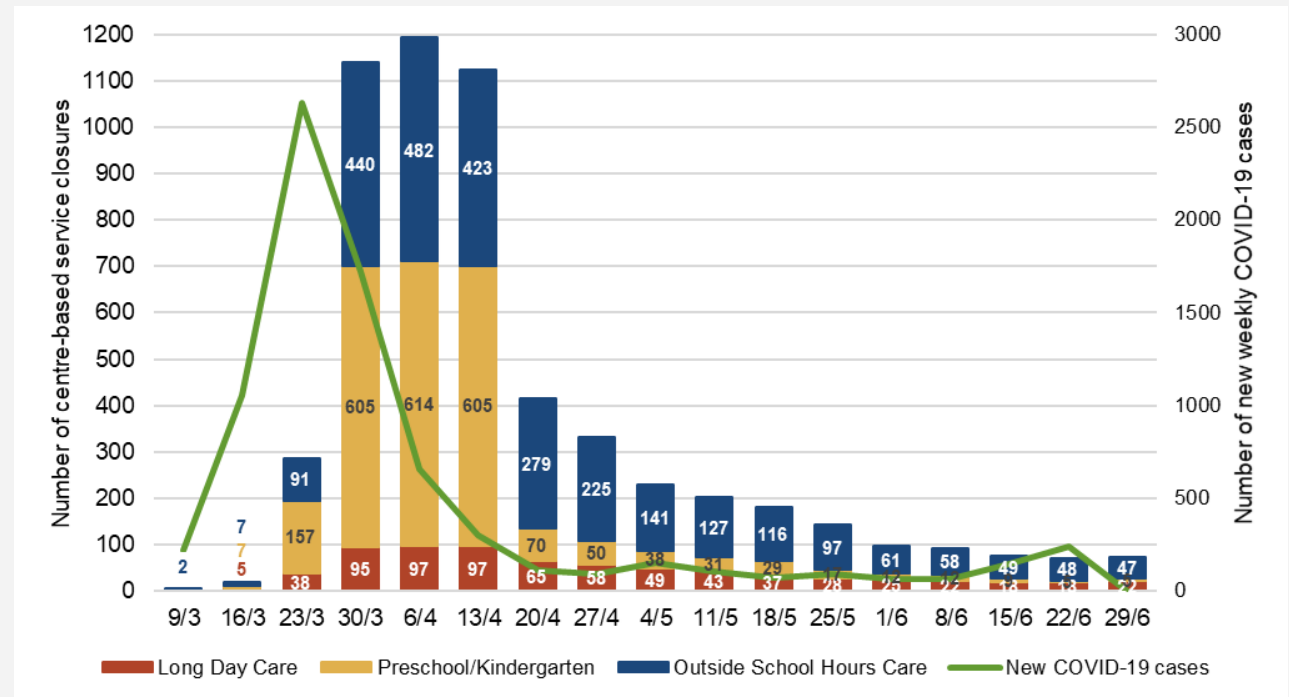
## Chapter 1



# IMPACT OF COVID-19 AND NATURAL DISASTERS

- During 2019-20, service providers and staff have demonstrated considerable and prolonged **resilience, commitment** and **innovation** in response to the challenges posed by the catastrophic bushfires and the global COVID-19 pandemic.
- **More than 1,100 centre-based temporary service closures related to the impact of COVID-19** were recorded in the NQA ITS at the start of three consecutive weeks in March and April, with most closures being services in Victoria.

**Figure 1: Number of centre-based service closures recorded in the NQA ITS at the start of each week, related to the impact of COVID-19**



# IMPACT OF COVID-19 AND NATURAL DISASTERS

As Australia recovers from COVID-19, **access to high quality education and care** will continue to be very important, **particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged children.**

Sector wide issues will also **require ongoing monitoring and attention** by all stakeholders, including:

- **workforce sustainability**
- **educator wellbeing**
- **provider and service viability**
- **skilled migration.**





# Children's health and safety



## Chapter 2



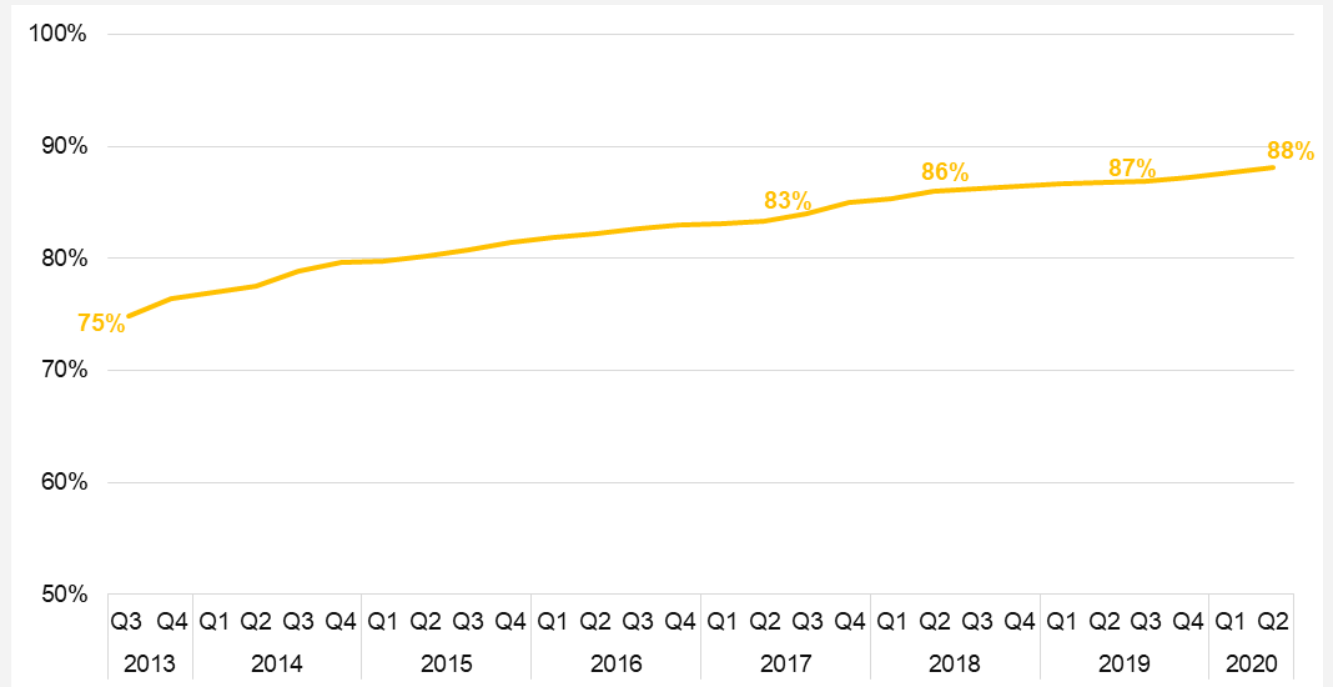
# CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Quality Area 2 of the NQS has two standards that address health and safety.

As at 30 June 2020:

- Almost nine out of ten (88%) services are rated Meeting NQS or above for Quality Area 2, up from 87% in 2019, 86% in 2018 and 83% in 2017.

Figure 2: Proportion of services rated Meeting NQS or above for Quality Area 2





# Educational program and practice



## Chapter 3

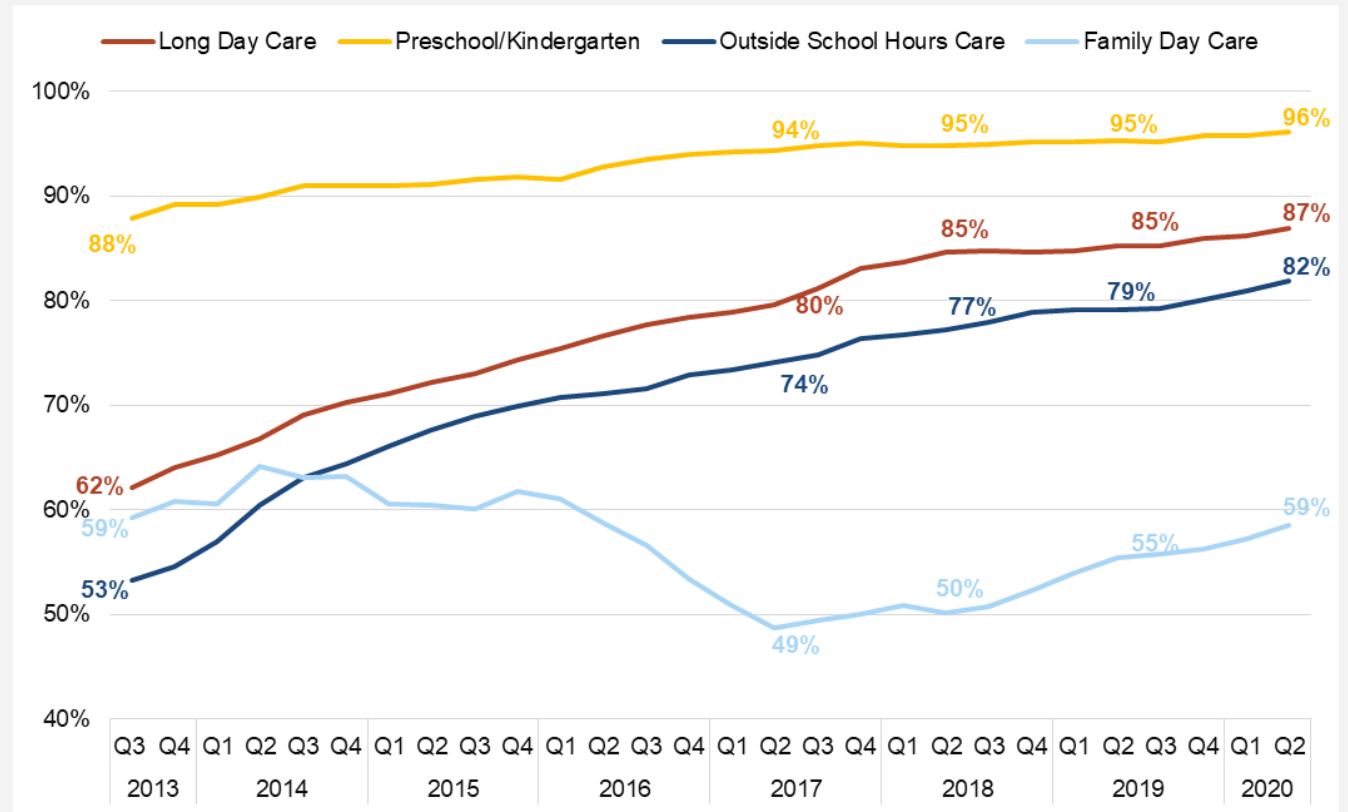


# EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND PRACTICE

As at 30 June 2020:

- **87% of services are rated Meeting NQS or above for Quality Area 1**
- **Preschools/kindergartens (96%) continue to have the highest proportion of services rated Meeting NQS or above.**

**Figure 3: Proportion of services rated Meeting NQS or above for Quality Area 1**





# Children from vulnerable and disadvantaged backgrounds



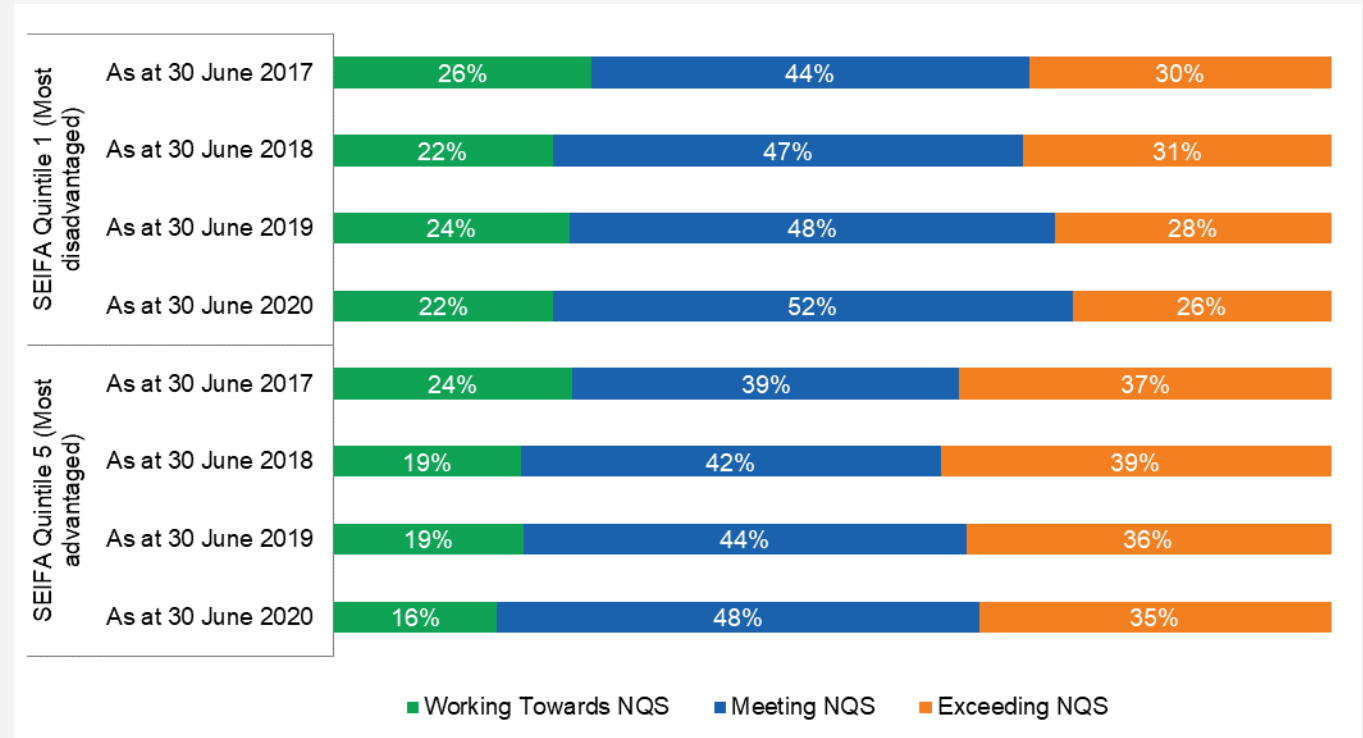
## Chapter 4



# CHILDREN FROM VULNERABLE AND DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS

- Children from more disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be **developmentally vulnerable**, and receive the **greatest benefits** from attending **high quality education and care**.
- There's a **growing gap** between the quality of services in the most disadvantaged and most advantaged areas. There is also a **marked difference** in the **proportion of high quality services**, with services in the most advantaged areas notably more likely to achieve the Exceeding NQS rating.

**Figure 4: Overall quality ratings of services by SEIFA quintiles 1 and 5**





# Workforce



## Chapter 5

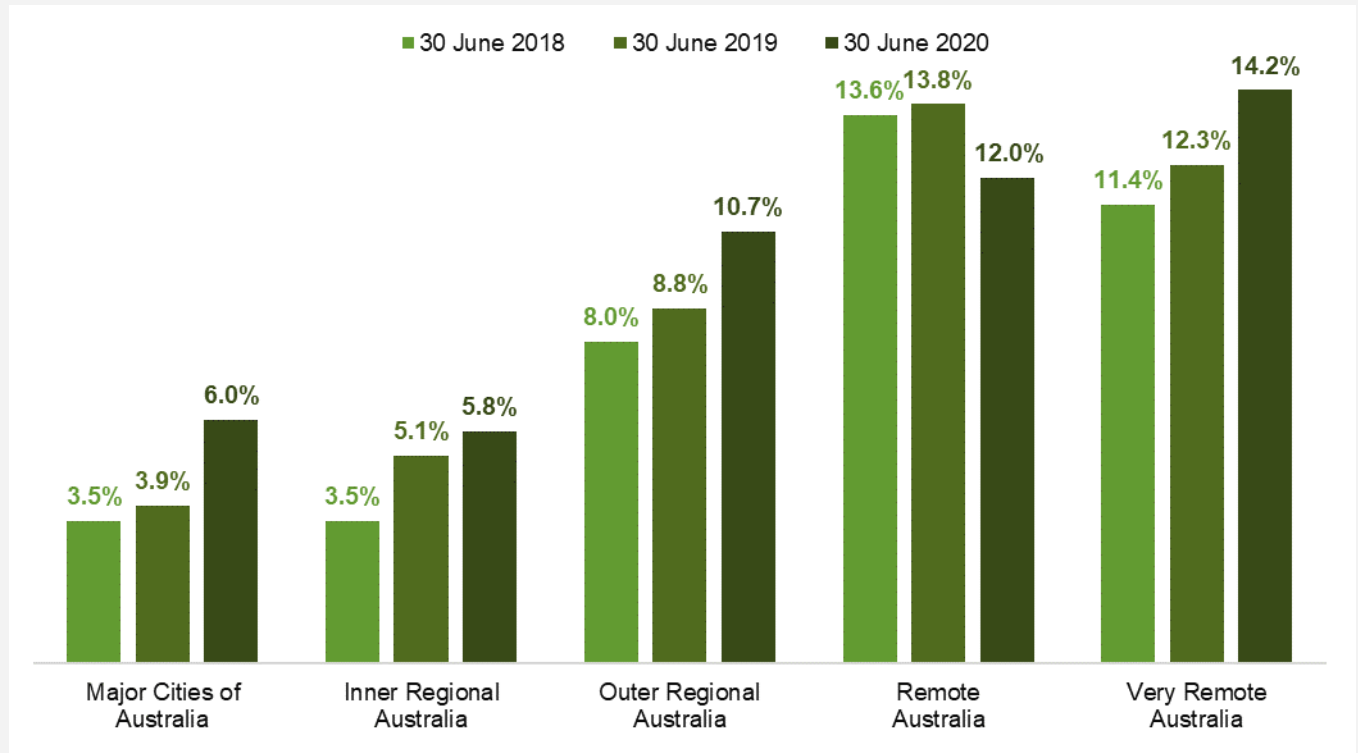




# WORKFORCE

- **Improved educator to child ratios and educator qualifications contribute to higher quality education and care**
- **Services in remote areas** continue to have the **highest proportion of staffing waivers**, reflecting the increased difficulty of recruiting and retaining teachers and educators in those locations.

Figure 5: Proportion of services with a staffing waiver by remoteness classification



## WORKFORCE

In December 2019, **Education Ministers endorsed the development of a new national workforce strategy** to support the recruitment, retention, sustainability and quality of the children's education and care workforce. The **new strategy is anticipated to be finalised and published in the second half of 2021.**

[acecqa.gov.au/national-workforce-strategy](https://www.acecqa.gov.au/national-workforce-strategy)



**Progressing a national approach to the children's education and care workforce**

Workforce report  
November 2019



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