

**INQUIRY INTO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND  
CARE SECTOR IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

With approximately 17 years of experience in the Early Childhood Sector, I have observed how it is suffocated by excessive red tape. While some regulations are vital for safety, much of it primarily seeks to control how we educate our children. Since childcare is not a form of mandatory schooling in the Australian education system, I strongly believe that relieving some of this pressure by removing mandatory curriculum frameworks such as the NQS and EYLF would empower educators to concentrate on what truly benefits the children, rather than getting overwhelmed with the requirement to document every detail of our interactions and program, including our conversations, to provide evidence during accreditation.

Reducing this burden would also improve staff retention, as childcare educators are under significant pressure in various aspects. Parents closely monitor their children, leading us to frequently address every minor detail of their lives. In this environment, genuine school readiness and education have taken a back seat, with much of our curriculum emphasising teaching children about their identity and relationships (Belonging, Being, Becoming). Moreover, the excessive emphasis on play-based learning has created a lack of structure in childcare, which can lead to difficulties when children transition to the more structured learning environment of kindergarten. Many primary teachers could vouch for the lack of concentration in the class.

We need to empower parents to fulfil their roles effectively, and the Department of Education should prioritise thorough screening of employees for child protection and safety matters. I propose that the curriculum be made optional rather than a mandatory requirement for accreditation, with regulatory standards focused primarily on health and safety as the foundation for accreditation.

Additionally, I recommend lifting mandatory qualification requirements. I frequently encounter educators who may pass exams and obtain university or diploma qualifications but struggle to provide quality care for children. It is rare to find someone with both the necessary skills and qualifications, leading to high competition for wages. This situation often forces childcare centres to hire individuals based solely on meeting qualification criteria rather than selecting those who are genuinely responsible and best suited for the children. Mothers with valuable real-world experience often care for children with great affection and dedication, yet many cannot pursue formal studies limiting the field even more.