

# Quality Assessment & Regulation Division

## Annual Report 2021



### Data Reliability Statement

Data included in this report is primarily sourced from the National Quality Agenda IT System. Data regarding previous years may be slightly different than previously published, as records may be updated for accuracy.

### Rounding

Percentages may not always sum up to 100% due to rounding.

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# Welcome from our Executive Director

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## I am pleased to present the Quality Assessment and Regulation Division (QARD) Annual Report for 2021.

2021 was another challenging year for services, educators and providers.

In the second year of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, early childhood services demonstrated their adaptability to COVID-19 health restrictions, continuing to operate where allowed, managing illness at the service and reductions to operations with more confidence. Services successfully took steps to manage risk in their services through physical distancing, increased cleaning, ventilation, mask wearing, and adjustments to their educational program (including greater use of outdoor space).

Throughout 2021, QARD continued its focus on its central objective: to ensure that the safety, health and wellbeing of children is maintained in early childhood services and that children receive quality educational programs. Throughout the year, we continued critical visits to services as well as investigations into serious incidents, notifications and complaints. We also provided support and guidance on COVID-19 and regulatory requirements.

QARD continued supporting the sector and families through the central and regional telephone lines and email channels, responding to queries about COVID-19 cases and other issues. Our engagement with providers and peak bodies also continued, sharing information, inviting feedback and responding to concerns.

When permitted, based on health advice and services' operational arrangements, assessment and rating visits continued in 2021. To manage risks to services and QARD staff, we adopted a hybrid approach to assessment and rating, combining online meetings with services' senior leadership and desktop reviews of documentation with more focused in-person observations of practice.

In 2021, we also supported children's services regulated under the *Children's Services Act 1996* to transition to the full, new legislative requirements for staffing, premises and policies and procedures by 1 January 2022.

Thank you to all those working in the early childhood sector. I recognise and appreciate the dedication, professionalism and hard work that went into providing early learning services to children and their families in 2021.



**Greg Norton**

Executive Director

Quality Assessment and Regulation Division





# About the regulator

## Strategic objectives

QARD's objectives and strategic plans are informed by broader departmental objectives and:

- the Department's strategic intent and strategic plan 2018–2022
- obligations and duties of the regulatory authority under the Education and Care Services National Law (National Law), the Education and Care Services National Regulations (National Regulations) and the Children's Services Act 1996 (CS Act) and Children's Services Regulations 2020 (CS Regulations)
- the Statement of Expectations (SoE) from the Minister for Education (the Minister)
- the National Law and CS Act objectives.

## Statement of Expectations

The administration and enforcement of our regulatory framework is guided by the **Statement of Expectations** (SoE) issued by the Minister which, along with the QARD response, is published on the Department's website. A Regulatory Risk Committee provides oversight of progress against the SoE. To read the SoE online see: [www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/which.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/which.aspx).

We continually evolve our approach to strengthen regulatory performance, and to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending early childhood services and improve educational and developmental outcomes. This report outlines our initiatives and regulatory performance against our objectives.

### Quality Assessment and Regulation Division objectives

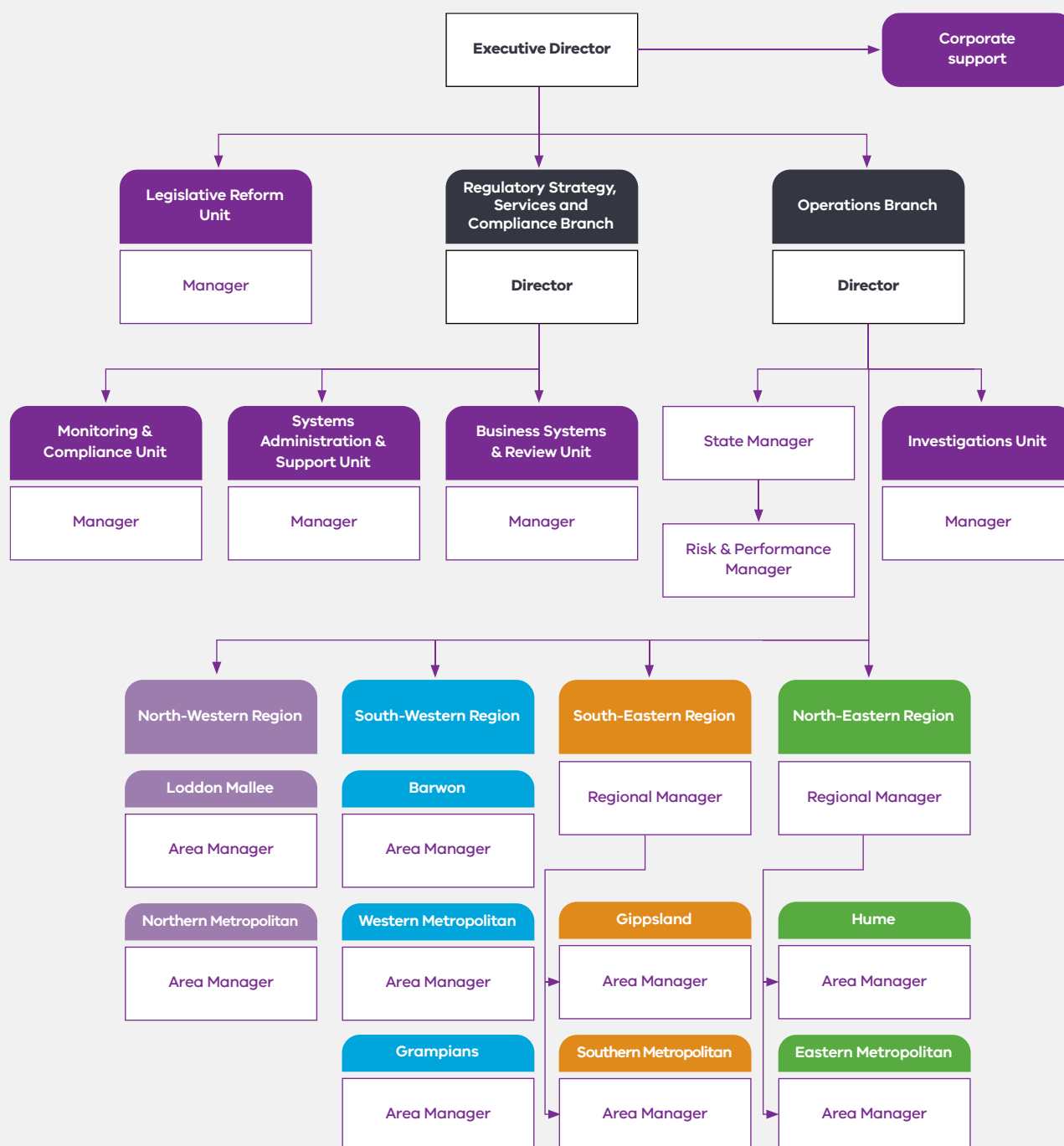
- **Confidence in the regulator:** Effective administration of our legislative frameworks to maintain community confidence in the system of regulation overseeing the provision of Victorian early childhood education and care.
- **Being a high-performing regulator:** Exemplifying best regulatory practice to efficiently deliver regulatory outcomes.
- **Engaging with the sector:** Engaging and guiding services to facilitate the provision of high-quality education and care services.
- **Supporting reforms and initiatives:** Being responsive to government reforms and initiatives, and community priorities.
- **Excellent workforce:** Developing a high-performing, valued and empowered workforce.





## Governance framework

QARD's governance framework is designed to ensure accountable and transparent management of regulatory risk, as well as oversight of performance, and engagement of staff in the formulation of regulatory policy and practice.



*\*As at September 2022*

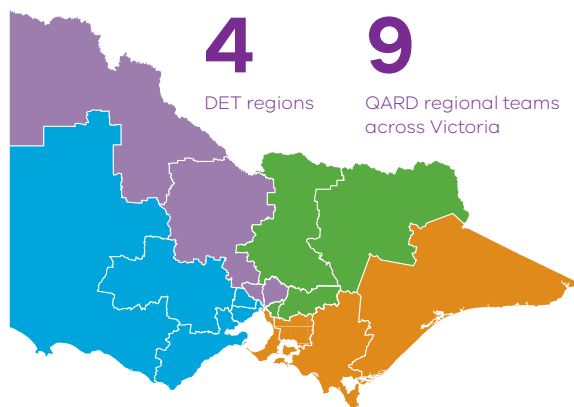


## Our operations

Part of the Early Childhood Education Group of the Department, QARD regulates services operating under the NQF and the CS Act and CS Regulations in Victoria under delegation from the Secretary. QARD comprises an Operations Branch (with nine regional area teams), a Regulatory Strategy, Services and Compliance Branch and a Legislative Reform Unit.

### Operations Branch

The Operations Branch manages and supports nine area-based regional teams. The teams comprise authorised officers and support staff who assess and rate NQF services against the National Quality Standard, conduct inspections to monitor compliance with regulatory requirements of the National Law and CS Act, as well as investigating alleged non-compliances. Regional teams engage with the sector through educative sessions and other opportunities to support and guide providers of early childhood services.



### QARD Regional Teams:

#### North-Western Victoria

- Loddon Mallee
- Northern Metropolitan

#### North-Eastern Victoria

- Eastern Metropolitan
- Hume

#### South-Western Victoria

- Barwon South West
- Grampians
- Western Metropolitan

#### South-Eastern Victoria

- Gippsland
- Southern Metropolitan

#### Investigations Unit (INVU):

located within the Operations Branch, this unit leads and manages serious and complex investigations. The unit conducts investigative planning, provides advice and recommendations on investigations, sanctions and other compliance matters. The unit also prepares and provides training and development material to support authorised officers in their regulatory functions.

### Regulatory Strategy, Services and Compliance Branch

#### Service Administration and Support Unit (SASU):

provides a first point of contact for prospective, new and existing providers of early childhood services through the administration and assessment of applications, notifications of change of circumstances, and assesses applicants' fitness and propriety.

#### Business Systems and Review Unit (BSRU):

maintains QARD's information management, provides user support, undertakes systems improvement, reporting, data analytics, business planning, budget planning, risk assurance and governance.

#### Monitoring and Compliance Unit (MCU):

manages and supports matters involving significant non-compliance and supports appropriate enforcement action.

### Executive

#### Legislative Reform Unit (LRU):

provides legislative policy advice and support on the National Law and National Regulations (where Victoria is the host jurisdiction) and the CS Act and CS Regulations. It also leads strategic stakeholder engagement and communications functions.

#### Corporate Support:

provides corporate and operational support for QARD in relation to people development and training, Freedom of Information request, briefing requests and emergency management

# Regulatory framework

**QARD is responsible for the approval and regulation of more than 4,700 early childhood services in Victoria. We regulate providers of early childhood services in Victoria with the objective of driving continuous improvement of quality in the provision of education and care.**

The Department's regulatory functions are established by the National Law and National Regulations, and the CS Act and CS Regulations.

As the regulatory authority for Victoria under the National Law, and the regulatory authority under the CS Act, the Secretary of the Department has delegated this responsibility to staff members of QARD.

Of the more than 4,700 early childhood services in Victoria at the end of 2021, around 4,430 were education and care services approved under the NQF, and around 270 were children's services approved under the CS Act.

## National Quality Framework

The NQF promotes high quality education and care services through a legislative framework which comprises:

- the National Law
- the National Regulations including the National Quality Standard (NQS).

Administratively, responsibility for implementing and administering the NQF is shared between State Regulatory Authorities and the National Authority, the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

### National Quality Framework objectives

- Ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending education and care services.
- Improve educational and developmental outcomes for children attending education and care services.
- Promote continuous improvement in the provision of quality education and care services.
- Reduce the regulatory and administrative burden for education and care services by enabling information to be shared between participating jurisdictions.

- Improve public knowledge, and access to information, about the quality of education and care services.

- Establish a system of national integration and shared responsibility between participating jurisdictions in the administration of the NQF

### Children's Services Act 1996 objectives

- The CS Act is aligned with the National Law, where appropriate including replicating the first three objectives of the NQF.





# About the sector

## What we regulate

Our regulatory approach is designed to facilitate and motivate service providers to provide high quality services that ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children and improve children's educational and developmental outcomes.

As the foundations for children's long-term development are laid in these early years, high quality education and care is crucial for the development of cognitive and emotional skills such as reasoning, problem solving, and how to get along with others. The pivotal time for the development of vision, emotional control and language is before the age of three, and the development of social skills is before the age of six. Participation in high quality early childhood education therefore supports children to develop important skills such as creativity, resilience and communication. Free universal kindergarten programs for Victorian children in the two years before they start school provides them with a strong foundation for further learning.

Victoria's early childhood education sector also plays a significant role in facilitating workforce participation by parents, as demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Education and care services regulated under the NQF

#### Centre-Based Care

Delivered on premises suitable for education and care, including:

##### Kindergarten/Pre-School:

- Program for young children delivered by qualified early childhood teachers and educators.
- Children go to a kindergarten program in the year before starting school, usually when they are four years old.
- In 2021, some kinders also offer kindergarten programs for three-year-old children as part of the new three-year-old program funded by the Victorian Government.
- The kindergarten program for three-year-old children is available across the State from 2022 and is being progressively expanded in Victoria.

##### Long Day Care:

- Delivered by early childhood teachers and diploma and Certificate III level-qualified educators.
- Primarily aimed at children aged 0–6 years of age.
- Most often part-time or full-time education and care programs.

##### Outside School Hours Care:

- Usually located at or close to primary schools.
- Care provision for primary school aged children (5 to 12 years) outside school hours and during school holidays
- Education and care may also be provided on student free days and school holidays.

#### Family Day Care

- Program is based on the developmental needs, interests, and experiences of each child.
- Can be provided to children from birth through to school age.
- Generally provided by a single educator in their own home.
- May be available overnight/at weekends for families who are on-call or work shifts.





## Children's Services regulated under the *Children's Services Act 1996*

**Children's services regulated under the CS Act are specifically excluded from regulation under the NQF.**

All children's services provide centre-based care and include occasional care services, limited hours services, school holidays care services that operate for less than 28 days per year, early childhood intervention services, "mobile" services and former Budget Based Funded services.

There are two children's service approval types:



### Limited Hours Service

- Each child is cared for or educated for not more than three hours a day, and not more than a total of six hours a week.



### Occasional Care Service

- All other children's services that are not Limited Hours services.
- Provides care primarily on an ad hoc or casual basis which is not usually full-time, all day or on an ongoing basis.
- No limit to the number of hours children can be educated and cared for each week.
- Most of the children are not school children.





## Statistical overview



**1,894**

approved providers  
operating early  
childhood services  
in Victoria



**4,706**

approved early  
childhood services  
in Victoria



**383,677**

children attending  
NQF services



**302,668**

approved early  
childhood places  
in Victoria

**1,736**

approved providers  
operating NQF  
services in Victoria

**4,278**

centre-based services

**201,936**

children in centre-  
based care (long day  
care and occasional  
care)

**295,897**

for centre-based  
services

**481**

providers operate  
more than one NQF  
service

**157**

family day care  
services

**16,695**

children in  
kindergarten (long  
day care settings)

**6,771**

under the CS Act

**1,255**

single-service NQF  
providers

**271**

CS Act children's  
services

**49,806**

children in  
kindergarten (all other  
settings)

*\*Approved places not  
collected for FDC*

**190**

approved providers  
operating CS Act  
children's services

**88,879**

children in outside  
school hours care  
(including vacation  
care)

**71**

providers operate  
more than one CS Act  
service

**26,361**

children in family day  
care

**119**

single-service CS Act  
providers

**32**

approved providers  
operating both NQF  
and CS Act services

**Note:** Multi-service providers' refers to providers that provide more than one service nationally. Number of children in kindergarten refers to number of children enrolled in funded kindergarten in the year before school, using Victorian Department of Education and Training data. Number of children attending ECEC services refers to children 0–12 years attending Australian CCS approved child care services (excluding children enrolled in funded kindergarten), using national data.

## Sector profile

At the end of 2020 there were 4,706 approved early childhood services in Victoria providing 302,668 approved places.

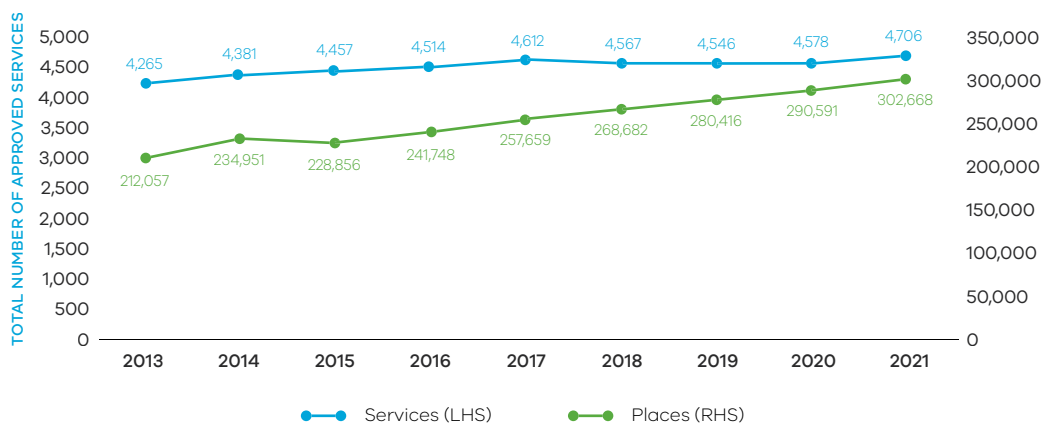
Overall, there was a 3% increase in the number of approved services in the early childhood sector, with a net additional 228 services in 2021 compared with 2020.

In line with previous years, there has been continued growth in the number of places available, as can be seen in Figure 1 below.

Approved places at a centre-based service or children's service reflect the maximum number of children that can be educated and cared for by the service at any one time.

Some services, like kindergartens, may also operate multiple daily sessions, so while approved for 60 places, they may operate twice daily for a total of 120 children.

**Figure 1: Number of approved ECEC services and places, 2013–2021**



**Note:** 'Places' only relates to centre-based services under the NQF and children's services regulated under the CS Act. Places data for FDC services is not collected. The number of places reflects services' approved capacity.

The total number of approved CS Act services has been declining in recent years, due to a range of factors including declining demand, changes in funding programs, and competition from NQF services (which can receive child care funding for short sessions of care).





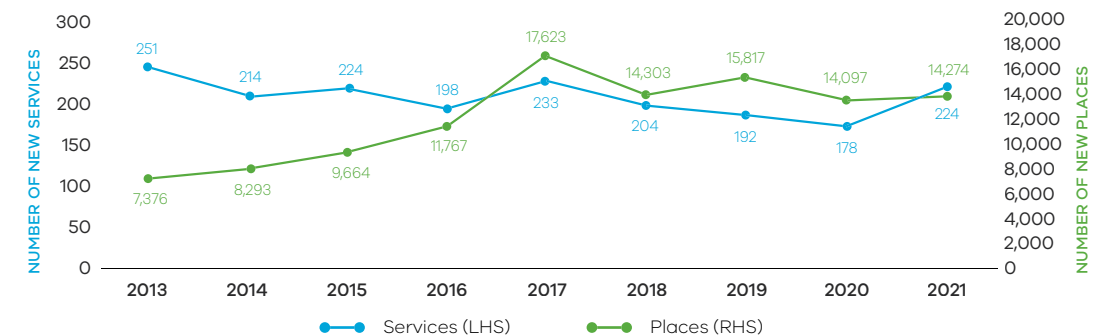
**Table 1: Number of approved CS Act services and places, 2013–2021**

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Services</b>	457	453	430	406	379	358	317	279	<b>271</b>
<b>Places</b>	11,248	11,078	10,569	10,103	9,516	9,140	8,002	7,039	<b>6,771</b>

The number of new NQF services approved per year has been declining since 2017 however increased in 2021 by 224 new services. The number of additional approved places has remained relatively stable after a decline in 2018. Of the new NQF places in 2021, 67% were provided in long day care.

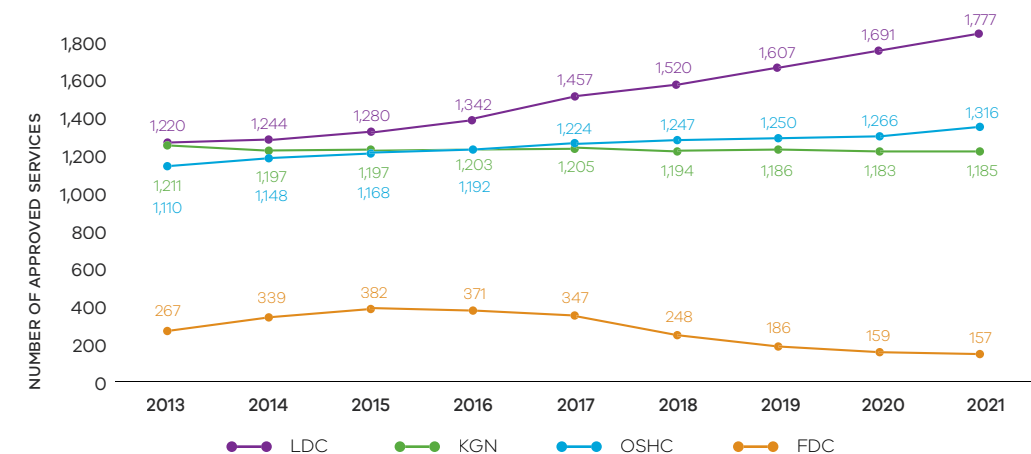
# 4,706

approved early  
childhood  
education  
and care  
services in  
Victoria at the  
end of 2020

**Figure 2: Number of new NQF services and places, 2013–2021**

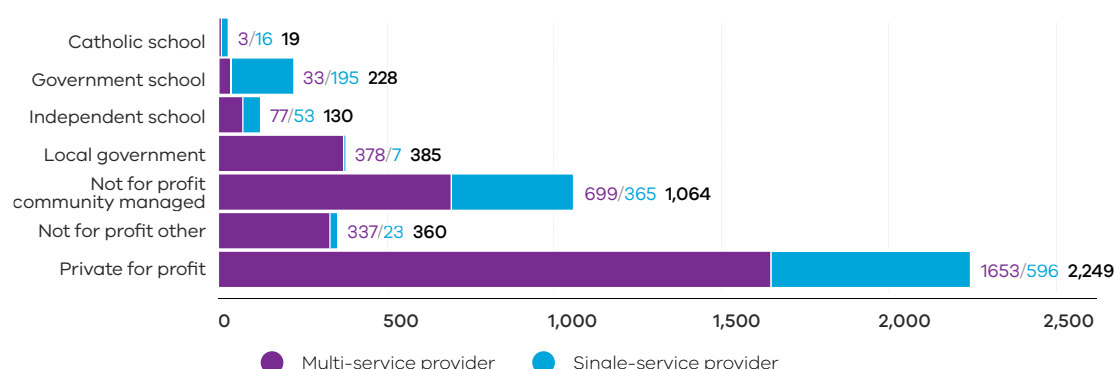
**Note:** Number of new services refers to services approved in that year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year.

While the number of LDC services continues to increase, the number of FDC services has declined and then stayed relatively constant, as can be seen in Figure 3. In 2021, there was a significant increase in the number of OSHC services as a result of the State Government's OSHC Establishment Grant Initiative.

**Figure 3: Number of approved NQF services by care type, 2013–2021**

For NQF services, private for profit is the largest single provider management type, operating 2,249 services (48%) of all NQF services in 2021, as can be seen in Figure 4. Of these, 1,600 (71%) are run by multi-service providers, many of whom also have services in other jurisdictions. Private for-profit type providers continue to grow steadily as a proportion of the sector, with the other management types remaining stable.

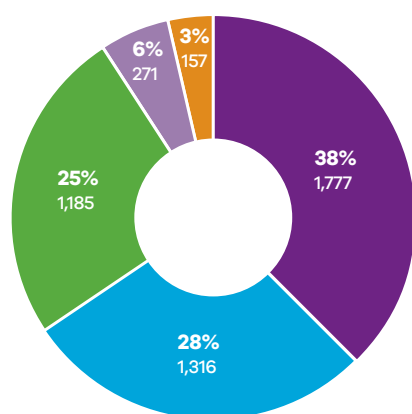
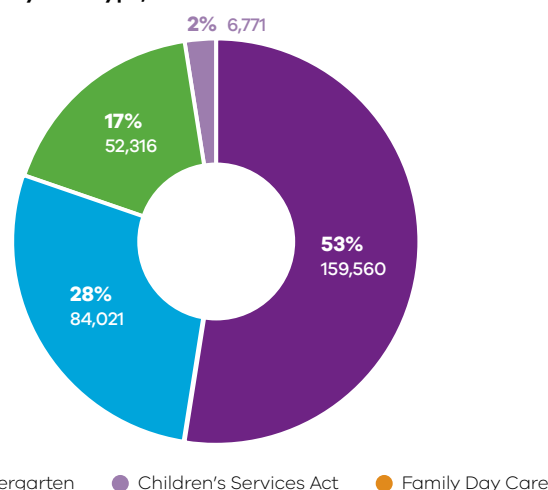


**Figure 4: Number of approved NQF services by provider management type, 2021**

**Note:** 'Multi-service providers' refers to providers that provide more than one service nationally.

Figure 4 shows a steady increase in private for-profit providers across both the NQF and the CS services (see Appendix Table 3).

Once again, in 2021 LDC is the largest care type, with the largest number of services and places (see Figures 5 and 6).

**Figure 5: Number of approved services by care type, 2021****Figure 6: Number of centre-based places by care type, 2021**

**Note:** 'Places' only relates to centre-based NQF services and services regulated under the CS Act. Places data is not collected for FDC services. The number of places reflects services' approved capacity.

**Table 2: Number of approved services and places by care type, 2021**

Care type	Approved services	Approved places
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,706</b>	<b>302,668</b>
<b>NQF</b>	<b>4,435</b>	<b>295,897</b>
<b>Centre-Based Care</b>	<b>4,278</b>	<b>295,897</b>
Long day care	1,777	159,560
Kindergarten	1,185	52,316
Outside school hours care	1,316	84,021
<b>Family Day Care</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>–</b>
<b>CS Act</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>6,771</b>

**Note:** 'Places' only relates to centre-based services and services regulated under the CS Act. Places data is not collected for FDC. The number of places reflects services' approved capacity.

## Overall quality rating comparisons by care type



# 5

services received an Excellent rating in 2021, the highest rating possible under the NQF.

An objective of the NQF is to promote continuous improvement in the provision of quality education and care services, which is assessed by authorised officers during assessment and rating visits.

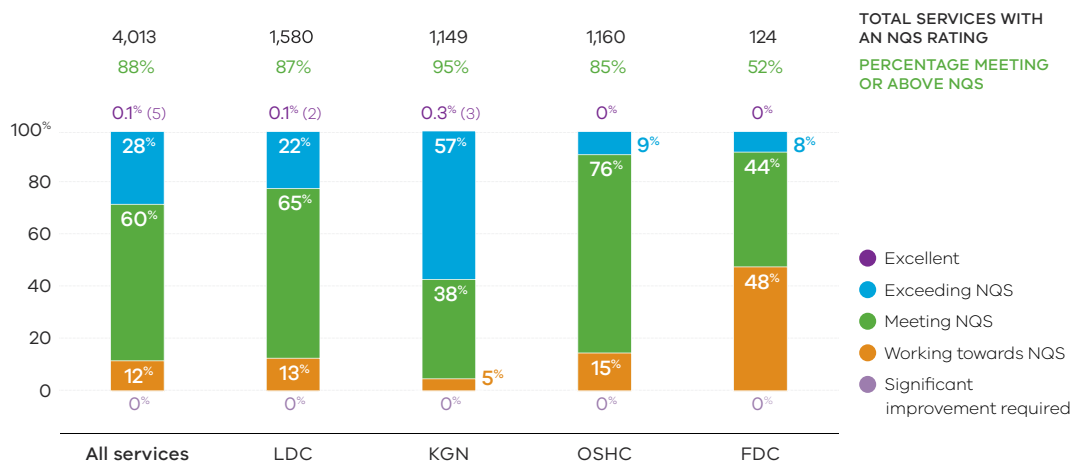
Assessment and rating visits in 2021 were impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, though the number of visits able to be conducted was more in line with previous years. As such, the 2021 data should not be compared to other jurisdictions that were not subject to prolonged COVID-19 restrictions.

The introduction in 2012 of the NQF requirement for services to deliver a program based on an approved learning framework raised the benchmark for educational programs and practice. Since May 2020 this requirement has also applied to CS Act services, although these services are not subject to the National Quality Standard (NQS) and do not undergo assessment and quality rating.

The quality of the ECEC sector continues to improve, with 88% of services rated meeting NQS or above in 2021.

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice is one of the most challenging quality areas for education and care services to meet. 92% of services in Victoria received a rating of Meeting NQS or above in 2021 compared to 90% of services nationally. The relatively stronger performance of Victorian services in Quality Area 1 can be attributed to the stronger performance of kindergartens and their historical focus on educational programs and practice delivered by early childhood teachers. 26% of Victorian services across all care types were rated Exceeding NQS in Quality Area 1 in 2021.

**Figure 7: Overall quality ratings by care type and rating level, 2021**



**92%**  
of services received a rating of Meeting NQS or above in 2021

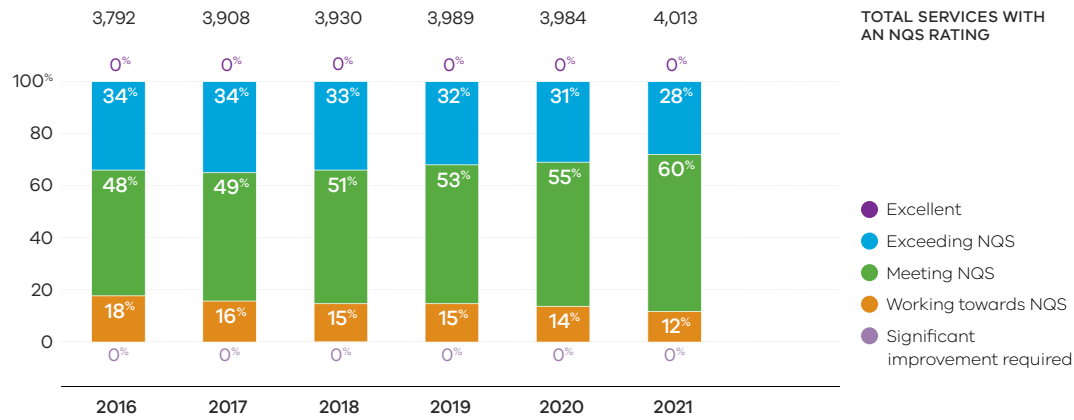
In 2021, no services received the rating of Significant Improvement Required (SIR), the rating given to services that pose an unacceptable risk to the safety, health or wellbeing of any child or children being educated and cared for at the service. Five services received an Excellent rating, the highest rating possible under the NQF, two LDC services and three kindergartens.





Overall, there has been a steady increase in the number of services receiving a rating of Meeting NQS or above since 2016. There has been a corresponding decrease in services receiving a rating of Working Towards NQS, as can be seen in Figure 8. There has also been a slight decline in the number of services achieving a rating of Exceeding NQS.

**Figure 8: Overall quality ratings by rating level, 2016–2021**



There has been a steady increase in the number of services receiving a rating of Meeting NQS or above since 2016.



## Centre-based care overview

### Long Day Care

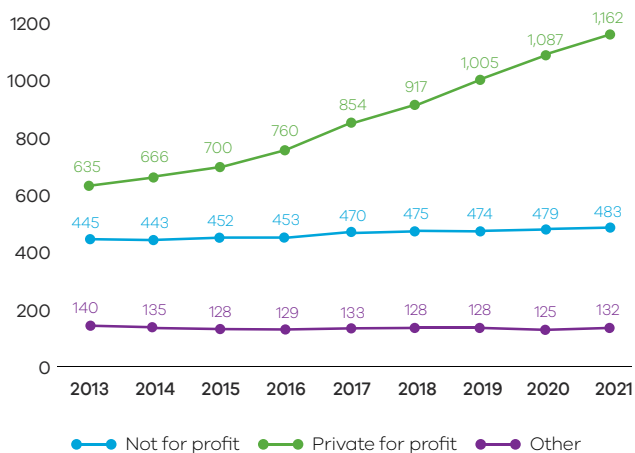
The LDC sector makes up the largest component (40%) of services under the NQF, offering around half of all NQF approved childcare places in Victoria. Most LDC services (86%) are funded on a per capita basis to provide a four-year-old kindergarten program.

**Table 3: Average number of new places approved within each year by care type, 2013–2021**

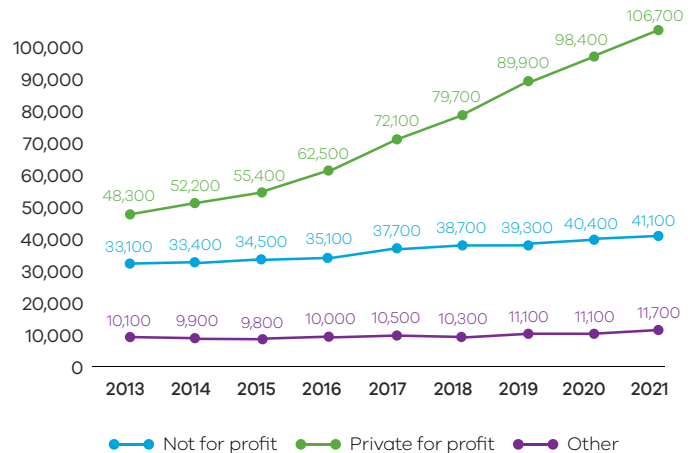
Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>NQF</b>	60	59	59	74	83	75	85	83	<b>67</b>
Long Day Care	93	97	79	98	104	105	112	103	<b>100</b>
Kindergarten	48	51	58	51	44	50	48	58	<b>50</b>
Outside School Hours Care	47	45	47	52	60	53	51	55	<b>39</b>
<b>CS Act</b>	na	na	27	22	26	30	26	18	<b>21</b>

There has been steady growth in the number of approved LDC services (see Figure 9) and the number of approved places in LDC as a result (see Figure 10).

**Figure 9: Number of approved LDC services, 2013–2021**

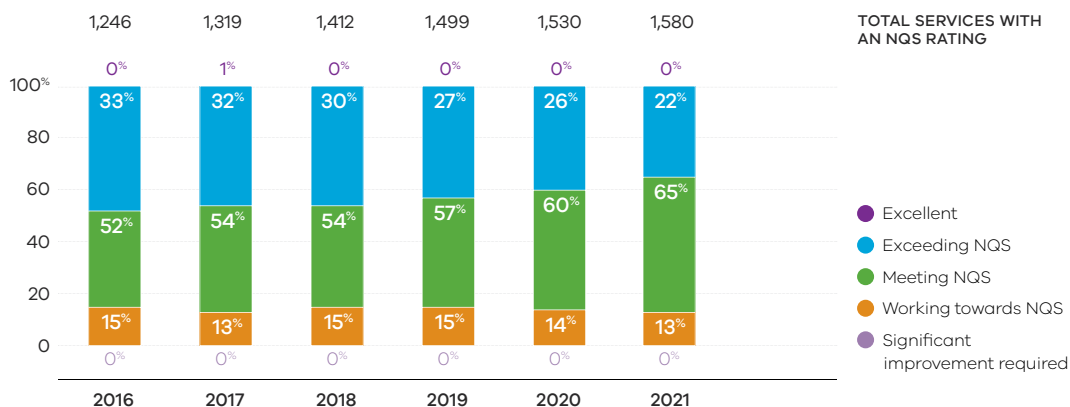


**Figure 10: Number of approved LDC places (rounded), 2013–2021**



### Long Day Care quality rating

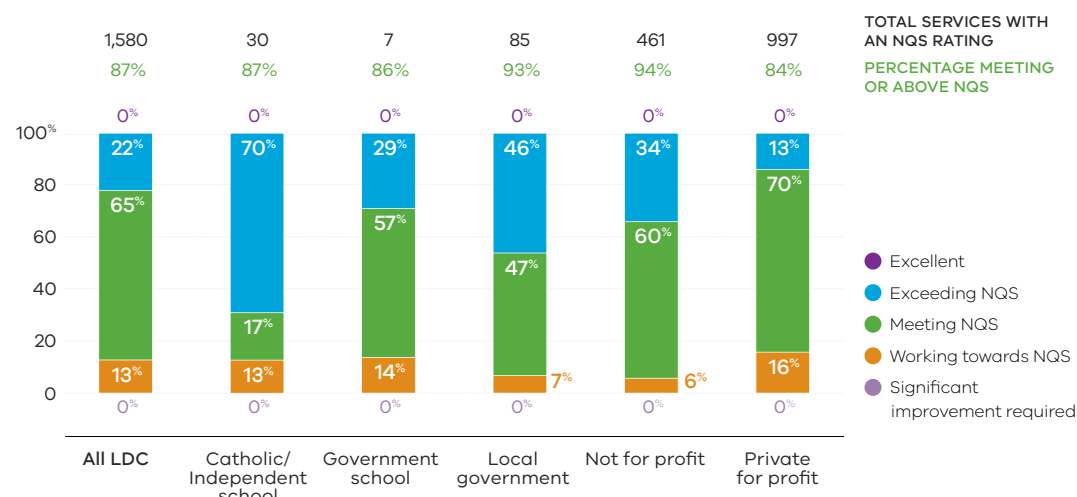
**Figure 11: Number and proportion of LDC services with quality ratings at the end of the year, by rating level 2016–2021**



Overall, there has been a positive trend with an increasing number of services receiving a rating of meeting NQS or above.

While there has been a small decline in the proportion of services receiving a rating of Exceeding NQS over time in Victoria, this is in line with the national trend, following changes made in 2018 to the new guidance for the Exceeding NQS rating.

**Figure 12: Overall LDC quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021**

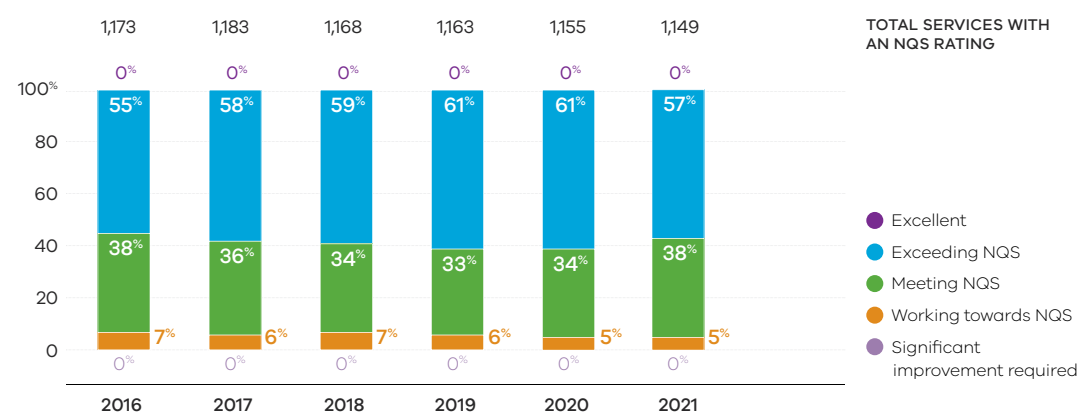


## Standalone kindergarten

The standalone kindergarten (KGN) sector in Victoria has been stable over time. The sector is almost exclusively operated by not-for-profit and local government managed providers (89% of all services as at 2021). Of these, 71% of services are managed by providers that operate more than one kindergarten service in Victoria.

Victoria regulates the highest number of standalone kindergartens across Australia, with 1,185 approved services at the end of 2021, compared with New South Wales (767 services), Queensland (491 services) and South Australia (407 services).

**Figure 13: Number and proportion of kindergarten services with quality ratings at the end of the year, by rating level, 2016–2021**



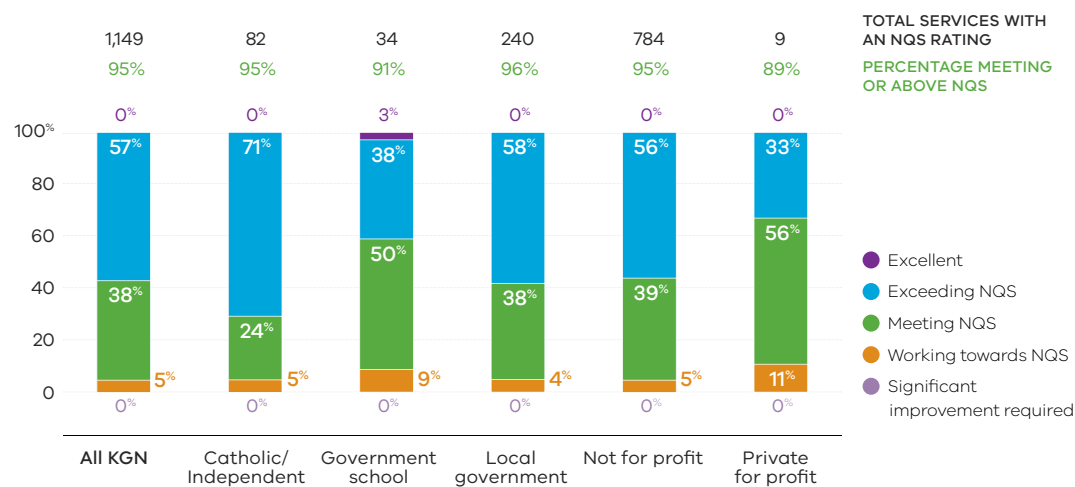
Standalone kindergarten services have the highest quality ratings compared with other service types, in both Victoria and nationally. The vast majority (95%) of these services in Victoria had a rating of Meeting NQS or above at the end of 2021 (see Figure 7). Kindergarten services tend to have a higher proportion of services rated Exceeding NQS compared to other service types.



Almost all rated standalone kindergarten services are Meeting NQS or Exceeding NQS in Quality Area 3 Physical environment (99%), Quality Area 4 Staffing arrangements (98%), Quality Area 5 Relationships with children (98%) and Quality Area 6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities (99%).

Services that are funded to provide four-year-old kindergarten programs perform better in all quality areas (including kindergarten programs provided within LDC services). The difference is most marked in Quality Area 1 Educational Program and Practice (92% of funded services compared with 82% of non-funded services), Quality Area 2 Children's Health and Safety (93% of funded services compared with 88% of non-funded services) and Quality Area 7 Governance and Leadership (93% of funded services compared with 81% of non-funded services), compared with LDC and kindergarten services that do not receive this funding.

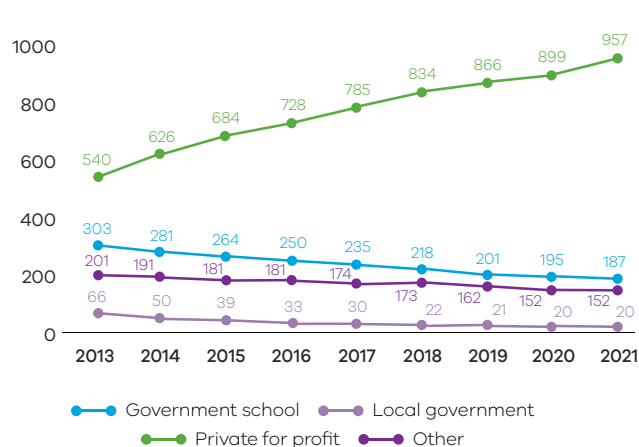
**Figure 14: Overall kindergarten quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021**



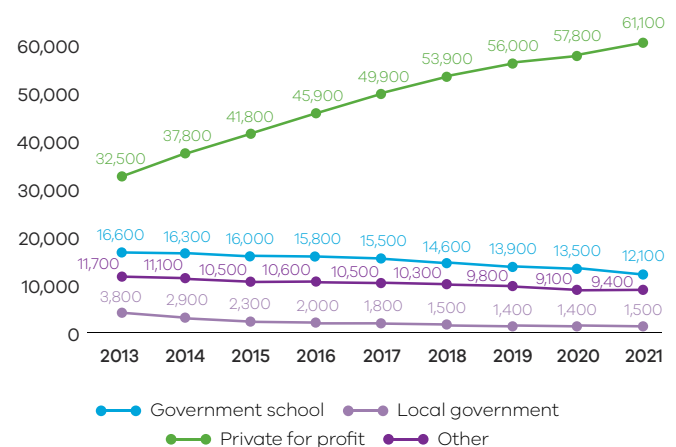
## Outside School Hours Care

Most schools engage third party providers to deliver their OSHC programs. The main operators in Victoria are private for-profit providers with 957 services in 2021. Multi-service, private for-profit providers manage two-thirds (75%) of OSHC services, while government schools managed 14 % of these services in 2021.

**Figure 15: Number of approved OSHC services, 2013–2021**

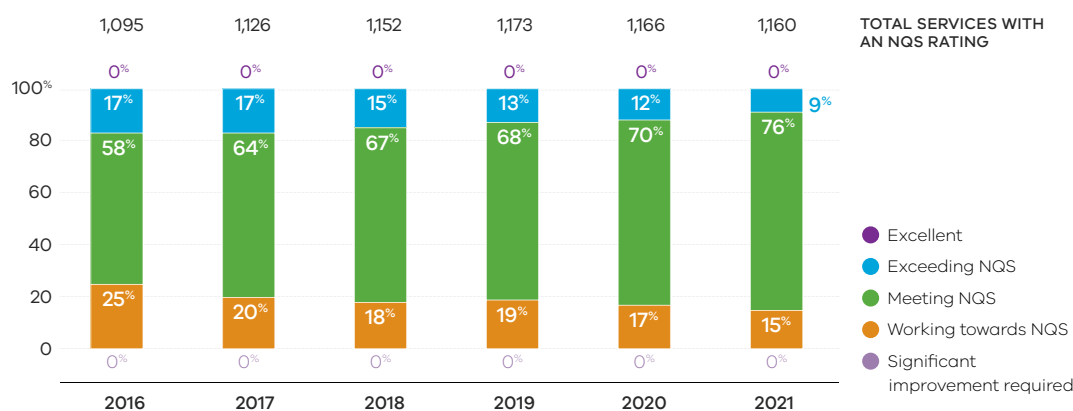


**Figure 16: Number of approved OSHC places (rounded), 2013–2021**



## Outside School Hours Care quality rating

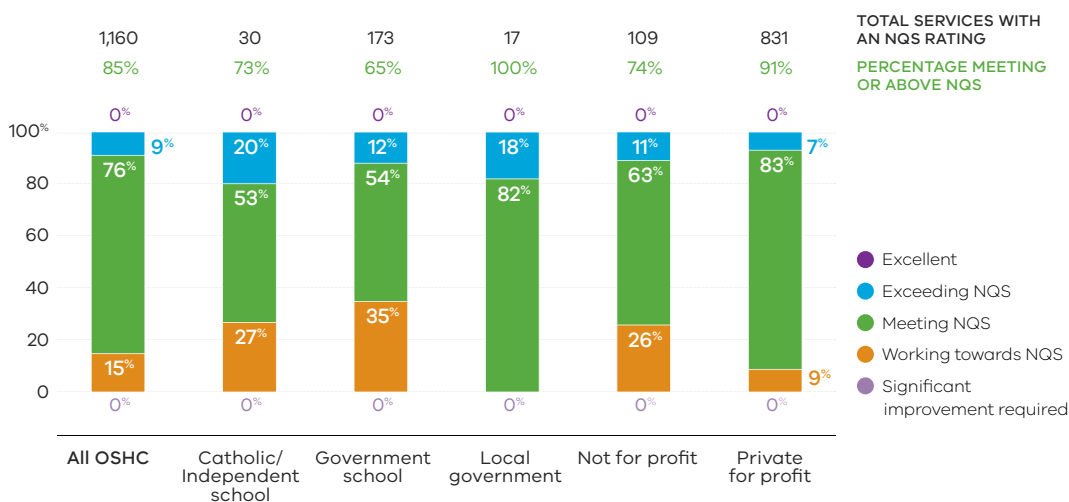
**Figure 17: Number and proportion of OSHC services with quality ratings at the end of the year, by rating level, 2016–2021**



Victoria has one of the highest proportion of OSHC services Meeting or Exceeding NQS compared with other jurisdictions with 85% of OSHC services in Victoria had a quality rating of Meeting NQS or above at the end of 2021, compared with 83% nationally.

The proportion of OSHC services rated as Working Towards NQS has continued to decrease over time and those rated as Meeting NQS has continued to increase, as the OSHC sector has matured in Victoria.

**Figure 18: Overall OSHC quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021**



In particular, Victorian OSHC services have performed better than the national OSHC average in the following quality areas:

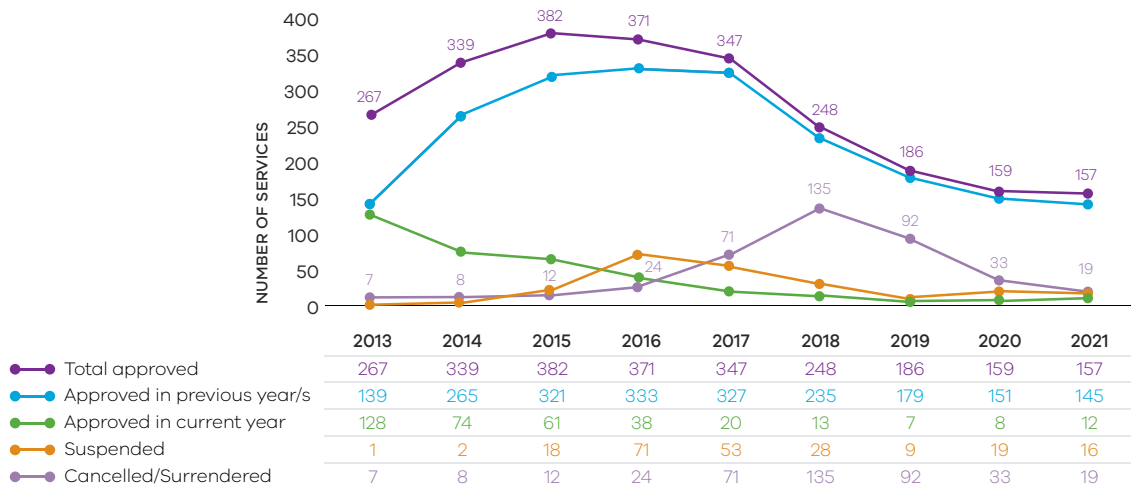
- **Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities** – 97% of rated services Meeting or Exceeding NQS compared with 95% nationally
- **Quality Area 3 – Physical environment** – 96% of rated services Meeting or Exceeding NQS compared with 94% nationally
- **Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice** – 90% of rated services Meeting or Exceeding NQS compared with 88% nationally.

## Family day care

Family day care (FDC) is regulated under the National Law. Traditionally, the FDC model was a popular way for local providers such as local councils to increase access to affordable and flexible early learning and care for their communities.

The rapid growth in the number of approved FDC services seen between 2013–2015 has slowed, with the number of services falling each year since the peak of 382 services in 2015 to 157 at the end of 2021.

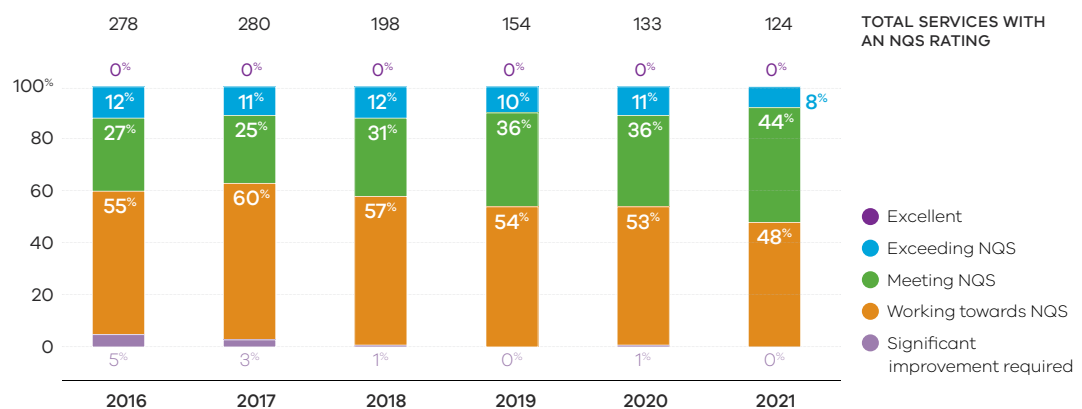
**Figure 19: Number of FDC services, 2013–2021**



## Family day care quality ratings

Parts of the FDC sector continue to experience challenges achieving the quality of service provision expected under the NQS. However, quality has improved gradually over time, based on the increases in proportions of FDC services with a Meeting NQS rating (and declines in the Working Towards NQS rating).

**Figure 20: Number and proportion of FDC services with overall quality ratings at the end of the calendar year, by rating level, 2016–2021**

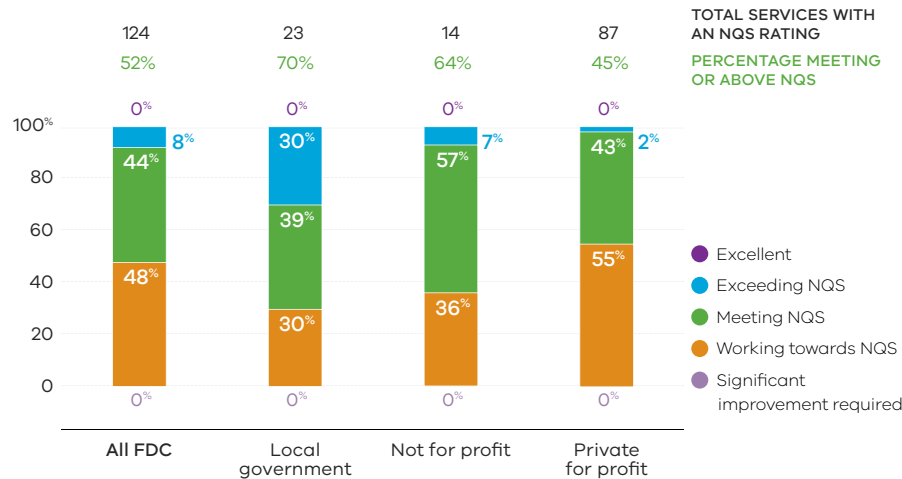


Following QARD's work to improve the integrity and quality of the FDC sector, the number of FDC services receiving a Significant Improvement Requirement (SIR) rating has reduced and in 2022 no FDC service received a SIR rating.



Local government operated FDC services with a quality rating continued to out-perform those operated by private for profit, with 70% in 2021 receiving a rating of meeting or above NQS, compared with 45% of for-profit services (see Figure 21).

**Figure 21: Overall FDC quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021**



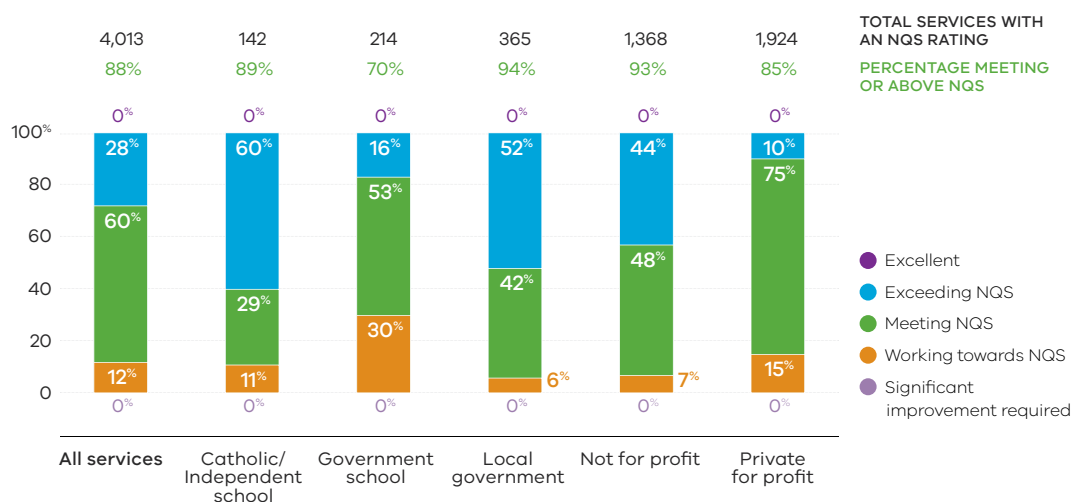
**88%**

of services in Victoria were rated as meeting or above NQS in 2021

## Overall rating comparisons by provider type – all service types

Quality ratings in 2021 were consistent with those in 2020, with all providers performing well across all care types. 88% of services in Victoria were rated as meeting or above NQS, compared to 87% of services nationally.

**Figure 22: Overall quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021**



## Supporting the sector

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**QARD seeks to improve early childhood education and care for children in Victoria through providing targeted education sessions, guidance and individual support to services.**

### Enquiries and support

QARD provides a dedicated 1300 number telephone line and email to respond to enquiries from the ECEC sector and other stakeholders.

In 2021, 11,704 calls were received and managed from educators, service staff and members of the public making enquiries about service operations or requirements. Depending on the nature of these enquiries, callers are provided information, directed towards resources or referred to an authorised officer for detailed guidance or support.

The number of calls received in 2021 was slightly lower than 2020 (12,042), though still an increase on 2019 call numbers. Many calls can be attributed to enquiries made regarding service operational and notification requirements resulting from the impacts of COVID-19.

### Quality Assessment and Regulation Update newsletter

QARD maintains a monthly email newsletter to inform providers and services of current regulatory issues and opportunities for improvement.

In 2021, due to continuing COVID-19 constraints, there were nine editions of the Quality Assessment and Regulation Update newsletter published.

Each newsletter was distributed to more than 4,500 sector contacts.

Topics covered in 2021 included:

- guidance on coronavirus, and the impact on services
- emergency management, including bushfire and grassfire risks
- safety issues including water activities, safe sleep and transportation
- educator resources, requirements, professional development opportunities
- reminders about immunisation, health and hygiene, healthy eating, and licensing Issues
- law reform i.e. the 2019 NQF Review.

Throughout 2021 the Department provided frequent emails to the early childhood sector covering COVID-19 related health advice and restrictions, and this also included regulatory information where relevant.





## Information sessions

### New applicants

In 2021 more than 150 primary schools received establishment grants from the Victorian State Government to increase the availability of OSHC services as part of a program designed to support increased workforce participation, particularly amongst women. QARD provides information sessions for prospective approved providers to explain the obligations and responsibilities of being an approved provider of an education and care service and to explain and help simplify processes for new provider and new services applications. The information sessions provide the prospective operators with prerequisite knowledge for operating a service in compliance with the NQF.

### Regional sessions

The QARD regional teams and authorised officers engage regularly with local services and educators to ensure a better understanding of the NQF and encourage compliance with regulatory obligations. They provide information sessions focused on current issues and areas of change, such as the NQF and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, and encourage dialogue and information sharing among our team, services and partners.

## Early childhood website

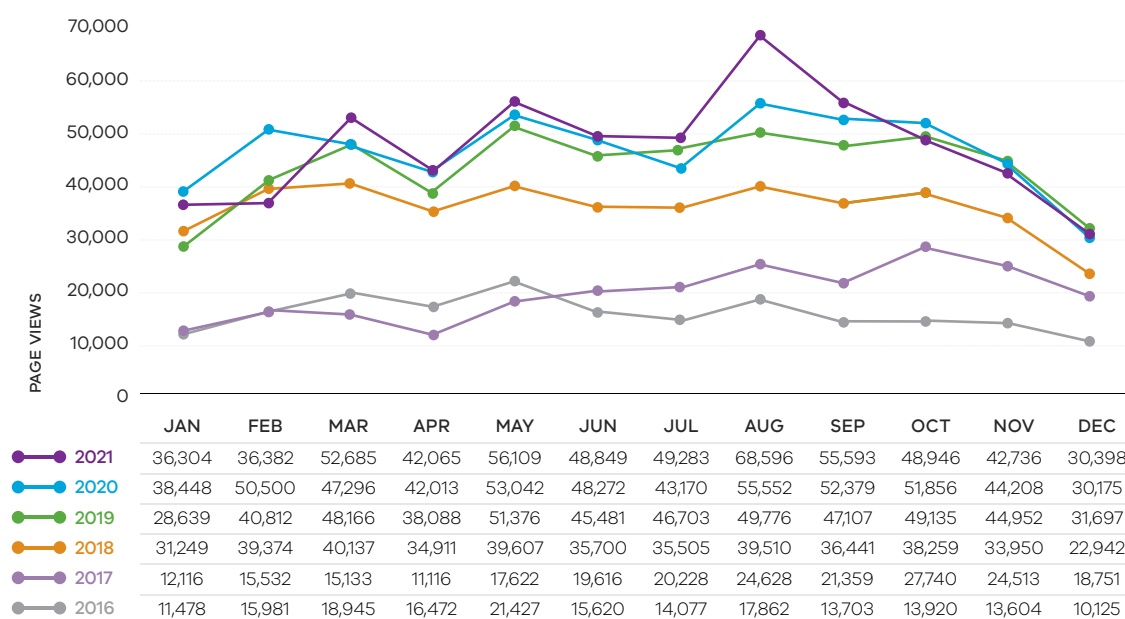
QARD uses the DET website ([www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood)) to provide resources and guidance to providers and services. In 2021 website traffic increased slightly compared to 2020 levels, reaching a high of 68,596 views in August 2021 (see Figure 23 below). The majority of website traffic came from search engines (80%), while 8% of our audience visited us directly by using a URL, 13% resulted from referral traffic (websites that linked to Regulation pages), and less than one percent from email links.

## Sector reference groups

QARD continued to strengthen relationships with stakeholders in 2021, despite the challenges of COVID-19 restrictions. The Early Childhood Education and Care Regulatory Reference Group, consisting of key industry representatives, met in November 2021 via an online platform to discuss trends and issues within the sector. The scheduled meeting in March 2021 was replaced by an online information session on the 2019 NQF Review specifically targeted to the Reference Group.

In addition to meeting with this group, QARD senior executives met with peak bodies and representatives on a fortnightly, sometimes weekly basis in 2021, to answer questions on COVID-19 requirements and provide support.

**Figure 23: QARD Regulation pages on DET website – page views per month, 2016–2021**



## Red tape reduction

QARD continually works to improve processes and reduce red tape. We provide ongoing support for improvements to the NQA ITS public portal through a workplan coordinated and managed by ACECQA to streamline and standardise data capture for service providers.

Throughout 2021, QARD worked to further improve delivery of online provider assessment sessions to new applicants, enabling this work to progress despite COVID-19 restrictions.



### Stakeholder Satisfaction Survey

**In 2021, QARD conducted its annual stakeholder satisfaction survey to gauge the quality of its compliance-related assistance and advice. Information received from the survey is used to improve QARD's delivery in these areas. The survey was distributed to all services and providers under both regulatory regimes.**

The 2021 response rate of 828 was slightly lower compared to the previous year (1076 responses in 2020) however it was in line with the 2019 survey which had 905 responses, and significantly higher than the first survey in 2018 which had only 497 responses.

The format for some questions in the survey was amended in 2021. As a result, some responses cannot be compared directly to previous years.

Qualitative responses indicate that QARD continues to be accessible and receptive to the sector.

#### Overall satisfaction with QARD's regulatory support and guidance:

**74%** satisfied (+1%)

**21%** neutral (+4%)

**5%** dissatisfied (-2%)

*The results in the following three topics are lower than expected in 2021 due to a change in the way that survey questions were drafted. In 2021, respondents were provided with a neutral option, rather than in previous years where they were required to choose a negative or positive option.*

#### Effective and efficient systems and processes:

**67%** of respondents (strongly and somewhat) agreed that QARD uses effective IT solutions and that the public portal is easy to use (not comparable with 2020)

#### Providing compliance assistance and advice:

**73%** of respondents agreed that QARD staff are knowledgeable and responsive when providing information (not comparable with 2020)

#### Communicating with and engaging stakeholders:

**74%** of respondents agreed that QARD communicates simply using relevant formats and provides opportunities to engage with stakeholders (not comparable with 2020)

#### Experience of regulatory practices:

**83%** of respondents were satisfied with their experience of QARD's regulatory practices (-2%)

**89%** of respondents agreed that regulatory requirements were clear (-1%)

**85%** of respondents agreed that compliance assistance and advice were clear (-2%)

**Note:** Bases used to calculate percentages vary depending on number of responses provided. Some measures are composite measures.

# Regulatory performance

## Risk-based regulator

Our primary objective as the regulator of early childhood services is to ensure they protect children's safety, health and wellbeing and deliver quality education and care to support children's learning and developmental outcomes.

We are committed to exemplifying best practice regulation across our regulatory functions and activities. To meet our objectives and deliver outcomes efficiently and effectively, we apply risk-based approaches to focus attention on areas or problems that present the greatest risk to the safety, health and wellbeing of children.

Our actions are responsive and proportionate to the problem being addressed.

QARD is responsible for:

- assessing an applicant's suitability to operate an early childhood education and care service
- assessing the suitability of premises for providing education and care services, supporting and guiding service providers and staff to meet their regulatory obligations
- assessing and rating service quality against the NQS through the assessment and rating process
- receiving and investigating notifications of incidents and complaints
- monitoring compliance with, and enforcing requirements of, the National Law and Regulations and CS Act and CS Regulations.

## Applications and notifications

QARD is responsible for assessing and determining licensing applications, notifications of change of circumstances and applicants' fitness and propriety.

### Applications

Overall, QARD received a similar number of licensing related applications in 2021 as in 2020 (1,863 applications in 2021 compared with 1,981 in 2020).

There was a sharp increase in the number of new provider and new service applications approved in 2021. A large component of the increase can be attributed to the Victorian State Government's Establishment Grants program discussed at page 30. In 2021 there were 199 new provider applications approved in 2021, an increase of 38 percent (38%) from 2020, and 364 new service applications approved, an increase of 94 percent (94%) from 2020.

Applications for amendment to provider or service approvals (amendment applications) continue to account for the largest number of applications received (approximately 28%).  
(See Figure 24 below.)



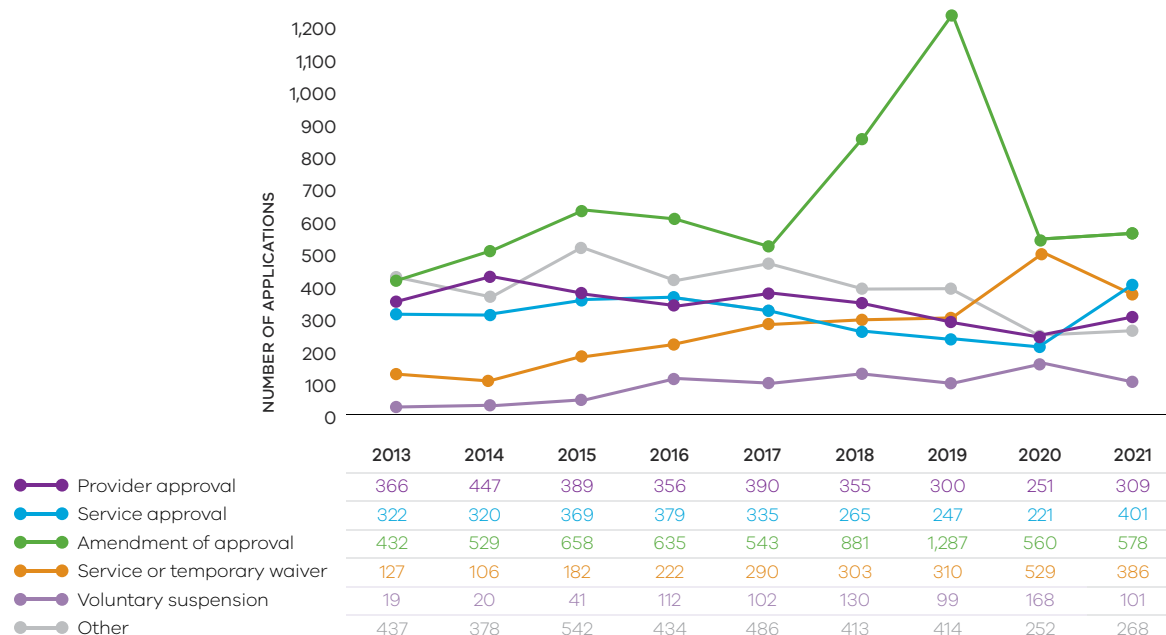


Applications for amendment to approval are used for changes to maximum number of approved places, removal of existing conditions, service name changes, and changes to approved provider details. Some application types, such as amendments to approvals by the regulatory authority, are internally generated to facilitate system driven administrative processes.

Waiver applications (service or temporary) also reduced significantly from the spike of 529 in 2020 to 386 in 2021. Most waiver applications in 2021 continued to relate to COVID-19 impacts throughout the year, most significantly in relation to meeting early childhood teacher staffing qualifications as well as the temporary closure of services.

The number of voluntary suspension applications returned to historical levels.

**Figure 24: Number of applications submitted by application type, 2013–2021**



## Retrofitting existing multi-storey buildings

**There is limited vacant land available in inner urban areas to build new early childhood services.**

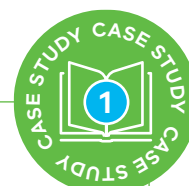
As a result, approved providers often retrofit existing buildings, many of which are multi-storey. These buildings may also have local government heritage overlays that limit the changes that can be made to external facades or the building structure. These constraints can present design obstacles that make it difficult to create education and care premises that meet the requirements of the National Regulations and the quality outcomes required under the National Quality Standard (NQS).

Faced with these constraints, many approved providers apply for a service waiver (see Glossary) as they believe the proposed service premises cannot meet specific regulatory requirements under the National

Regulations. Waivers from regulatory requirements for services premises are only considered in exceptional circumstances, and QARD encourages applicants to identify alternative ways to provide children access to outside space, ventilation and natural light by other means, rather than relying on a waiver.

QARD worked closely with an approved provider that sought approval for a new service for 120 children over three levels within a retrofitted building in inner city Melbourne. They submitted a waiver application to avoid providing outdoor space, natural light and ventilation for children for portions of the space on the lower levels of the premises. Instead of approving the waiver, QARD worked with the approved provider until they found a solution that would satisfy the needs of children and the NQS.

QARD granted a service approval for 104 places with a partial waiver to allow the service to operate with the agreed modifications and meet all the quality outcomes for children.





## Notifications of change of circumstances

QARD receives and processes notifications of changes of certain circumstances and information about services regulated under both the NQF and the CS Act. These notifications include changes in the management or control of an approved provider or responsible persons at the service, surrenders of service or provider approval, and change of information about an early childhood service.

There were more than 10,000 notifications of change of circumstances received by QARD in 2021, down from 11,000 in 2020. Of these, notifications 66% were related to changes to services, with most related to the changes in nominated supervisors of services. A further 26% related to change of contact details, most of them related to services' contact details. Many of these related to OSHC services that did not operate during the pandemic.

## Notification of serious incidents

The National Law and CS Act outline the circumstances under which services must notify QARD of a complaint or an incident. These include:

- the death of a child
- any incident involving serious injury or trauma to, or illness of, a child
- any incident where the attendance of emergency services was required
- any circumstance where a child being educated and cared for by an early childhood education and care service appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for.

In addition, QARD is required to be notified of incidents affecting the hours and days of operation of a service, any circumstance that poses a risk to a child and matters related to FDC venues.

**Table 4: Number of reported serious incidents per 100 services by care type, 2018–2021**

Care type	2018	2019	2020	2021
Long day care	150	158	148	<b>196</b>
Kindergarten	61	57	44	<b>53</b>
Outside school hours care	38	46	31	<b>38</b>
Family day care	40	56	48	<b>47</b>
CS Act service	3	3	3	<b>7</b>

**Note:** Some serious incidents may relate to services that were not operating at the end of each year.

In 2021 QARD received 4,704 serious incident notifications from Victorian education and care services, a large increase over 2020 (3,394). This increase appears to reflect a complex set of factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic. A large proportion of the increase of serious incident notifications in 2021 relate to reports of injury or trauma described as a fall or trip, and accounted for 40% of all serious incidents notified across all NQF services. See Appendix Table 35.





## Other incidents

Excluding serious incidents, other incident notifications increased to 6,233 in 2021 (up from 4,590 in 2020). Of the other incident notifications in 2021, around 2,800 related to notifications of service closures or reduced numbers of children attending due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to the extended COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria, schools and recreational facilities were largely closed, which impacted OSHC services and children's services operating under the CS Act in particular. Many kindergartens were also closed and some long day care services were forced to close due to illness. The higher number of other incident notifications also appears to be related to services incorrectly reporting closures on holidays. Of the remaining other incident notifications, approximately 1,000 were related to circumstances that posed a risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or children at the service. This category includes a wide range of situations including accidents, injuries, illness ('gastro', rashes, unwell children), facilities issues (gas leaks, water leaks, emergency services attending, floods and storms), inadequate supervision and others. In 2021 about 18 percent (18%) of other

incident notifications were related to positive covid-19 tests of children or staff at services. There was also a large number of notifications due to 'gastro' illness in particular. All incident notifications are assessed by QARD for further action.

## Complaints

QARD receives complaints about services both directly from parents and members of the public, and through notifications from service providers. Providers are required to notify the regulatory authority of complaints they have received from parents at a service. All complaints are assessed and investigated as required.

In 2021 QARD received 1,985 complaints in total, 515 were direct complaints and 1,470 indirect notifications of complaints (up by 308 compared to 2020). Of the 1,985 total complaints, 1,972 about services operating under the NQF, five about services operating under the CS Act and eight about alleged unapproved services (see Appendix Table 39). The largest number came from LDC services, which are the largest segment of the ECEC market in Victoria.



## Assessment and rating

Assessment and rating is a core regulatory activity for QARD in delivering the NQF's continuous improvement objective. The assessment and rating process involves authorised officers conducting a service visit to discuss and observe practice, and to assess service quality against the 40 elements of the NQS in accordance with the National Law. Authorised officers also review required documentation, policies and procedures, and meet with senior leaders to discuss governance and systems.

Following analysis, authorised officers then determine a quality rating and report the outcome to service providers including identifying areas for improvement. Prior to the rating being finalised, the approved provider is issued with a draft rating report and may provide feedback.

The assessment and rating system aims to promote continuous improvement and to improve knowledge, and access to information about the quality of education and care services for parents and the community.

In 2021, as with 2020, assessment and rating visits were significantly impacted across Victoria by the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of assessment and rating visits was lower than pre-pandemic levels, though higher than in 2020 (see Appendix Tables 32 and 33). Visits were undertaken where permitted, in line with the Chief Health Officer's advice and depending on services' operational arrangements. Normal scheduling of visits resumed in November 2021. Due to staff shortages and fewer children attending, many services sought to delay their assessment and rating visit.

Visits followed the process established in 2020 to align with health advice and personal safety. Authorised officers requested and assessed documents prior to the service visit and held leadership discussions virtually or by telephone. These documents were in addition to the existing desktop review of the service's quality improvement plans, history of compliance and other relevant information. Physical visits to services continued and focussed on observations, reviewing sample documentation and testing evidence at the service collected as part of the pre-visit assessment.

### Spotlight on Excellence: Yuille Park Children's Centre, Wendouree

**Yuille Park Children's Centre (Yuille Park) in Wendouree was awarded the Excellent rating by ACECQA in June 2021. The centre, part of Yuille Park Community College in Ballarat, delivers three year and four year old kindergarten programs on the same site as the P-8 government school.**

Yuille Park was recognised by ACECQA for its collaborative partnerships with professional, community or research organisations and its role as a leader in the sector.

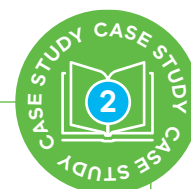
The service partners with the school's specialist teachers to support children's transition to school, and identifies any children with trauma or additional needs that would benefit from targeted interventions by an above-ratio part-time educator. The service also uses the school speech therapist to assist children.

YPCC supports families to improve children's health and wellbeing through a holistic approach, partnering with the City of Ballarat Council's Wendouree Early Years Network and Wendouree Improvement Team.

This links families with the Maternal and Child Health team, the Ballarat and Districts Aboriginal Cooperation, the Salvation Army and supported playgroups. They also created a 'Give what you can' program that provides a Breakfast Club, Meals Program and other items such as a Food Bank, clothes and shoes which are donated by local businesses. In this way and many others, barriers to participation are reduced for all families and children.

Yuille Park published a joint Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) on the Narragunnawali platform with the school in 2020. The service acknowledges the importance of embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures into their practice, creating a culturally safe environment, building strong relationships with families and community. This approach has seen increasing enrolments by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families at the service. The service established and leads an online RAP Group which aims to support other services across the State to develop their own RAPs.

The ACECQA Board acknowledged Yuille Park's excellent practice, and their commitment to sharing their practice with the school and other services, that ensures their positive impact reaches beyond the children and families that attend the service.





Clarendon Children's Centre is one of only 5 services in Australia to have received the Excellent rating 3 times

## Excellent rated services

At the end of 2021, five Victorian services were rated as Excellent, three kindergartens and two LDC services. An Excellent rating, the highest rating possible under the NQF, is assessed and determined by ACECQA following application from a service. The service must be rated Exceeding NQS in all quality areas in order to apply for an Excellent rating.

Those services were:

- Albert Park Preschool Centre
- Balnarring Pre-School
- Clarendon Children's Centre Co-operative
- Gowrie Victoria Broadmeadows Valley
- Yuille Park Children's Centre.

## Significant Improvement Required

At the end of 2021, Victoria had no services with a Significant Improvement Required (SIR) rating for not meeting the NQS and there being a significant risk to the safety, health and wellbeing of children.

In early 2021, the two services that had previously received a SIR rating in 2020 were re-assessed and rated, achieving Working Towards NQS and Meeting NQS ratings respectively.

## A journey from Significant Improvement Required to Meeting NQS

**The turningpoint Church operates a LDC service in Cranbourne, educating and caring for children from birth to school age.**

In January 2020, the service was rated as Working Towards NQS in four quality areas, and Significant Improvement Required (SIR) for a further two quality areas. SIR is the lowest possible rating in the NQS, and indicates that the health, safety and wellbeing of children could be at risk. At the time there were serious non-compliances identified in relation to supervision, the service's understanding of child protection and Child Safe Standards obligations. There were also significant concerns with the educational program being delivered, educators' interactions with children and the service's governance systems/arrangements.

QARD took immediate action to address the risks to children, and placed the service on a Compliance Monitoring Plan (Plan). The Plan placed conditions on the service's approval requiring the approved provider to respond to the identified non-compliances and employ a Diploma-qualified person with more than 3 years' experience in the position of a second nominated supervisor. It also imposed a routine of

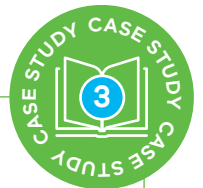
regular compliance monitoring visits every six weeks to ensure that all issues were addressed.

During the follow up visits, the QARD provided advice and guidance to the service leadership and educators, supporting them to improve their systems and practices. QARD representatives, together with specialist departmental regional staff, also delivered a tailored educative session to ensure the service leadership group and the Church Board clearly understood their roles and legal obligations.

In addition to these actions, QARD coordinated assistance from the other parts of the Department's Early Childhood Group to support the service. A School Readiness Funding Plan was tailored to the service's specific needs for additional resources. The service took part in the Department's Kindergarten Quality Improvement Program (KQIP) that focussed on both leadership and educational programs. QARD also referred the service to Gowrie Victoria for professional support that focused on ongoing quality improvement.

QARD officers established a strong professional relationship with the nominated supervisor and discussed their concerns, helping to answer many queries.

The service was re-assessed in March 2021, and was rated Meeting NQS in all quality areas. This demonstrated the service's commitment to ongoing improvement.





## Reviews of ratings

The National Law allows service providers to request a review of the service's rating if the provider disagrees with the rating given.

The review of ratings by the regulatory authority is referred to as a 'first tier review'. Four ratings given in 2021 resulted in a first tier review.

Approved providers have applied for a first tier review for less than 2% of ratings in the last six years. If the approved provider is still not satisfied after the first tier review, they may apply to the National Authority (ACECQA) for a further review (a 'second tier review') by a ratings review panel. There were no second tier reviews of a service in Victoria undertaken by the ratings review panel in 2021, and only one in each of the years since 2018.

**Table 5: Proportion of ratings with a first or second tier review, 2016–2021**

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Second tier reviews	0	0	1	1	1	0
First tier reviews	12	15	14	12	5	4
Ratings given	838	979	1003	999	257	587
Proportion of ratings resulting in a first tier review	1.4%	1.5%	1.4%	1.2%	1.9%	0.7%

**Note:** Count of ratings given excludes partial reassessment and re-ratings. Ratings relate to those finalised in that year, where some visits were completed in the previous year.



## Monitoring and compliance

QARD implements a range of strategies to motivate compliance with legislative requirements, as set out in our new *Monitoring Compliance Policy* (Policy) [published online](#) during 2021.

The Policy describes QARD's risk-based approach to regulating services and providers. It outlines the schedule we follow for conducting monitoring visits and what happens during a visit. Importantly, it also sets out what we do when unsatisfactory compliance is detected, and the actions providers and services are expected to take.

QARD addresses and deters non-compliance through regular compliance visits and educative support. Where serious non-compliance is identified at a visit or through notifications and complaints, a range of responses are considered. When deciding on the appropriate response a key consideration is the risk to children.

In 2021, QARD fined tuned its approach to driving change and compliance in services. Where appropriate, services with ongoing compliance issues are given a 'Service Improvement Plan' (the Plan) which requires the Approved Provider to complete various actions to address non-systemic issues at the service. Compliance with the Plan is

imposed as a condition on service approval, and failure to comply with the condition can be enforced under the National Law or CS Act. This approach can be actioned quickly, rather than waiting for the outcome of legal action, and is flexible enough to address a wide range of issues. It has been an effective in driving improvement in compliance and educator practice, and in creating positive outcomes for children in early childhood services.

In 2021, authorised officers completed a total of 2,475 compliance inspection visits to services. 2,353 were to services operating under the NQF and 122 were to services operating under the CS Act.

**Table 6: Number of compliance visits completed per 100 services by care type, 2018–2021**

Care type	2018	2019	2020	2021
Long day care	86	88	70	<b>72</b>
Kindergarten	42	40	38	<b>40</b>
Outside school hours care	55	54	36	<b>41</b>
Family day care	69	76	38	<b>36</b>
CS Act service	47	40	26	<b>45</b>

**Note:** A compliance visit is defined here as any of the following visit types in NQA ITS: application/assessment, change of ownership, complaint, incident, investigation and post-approval. Some compliance visits relate to services that were cancelled or surrendered by the end of each year.



## Enforcement

QARD uses a range of regulatory tools to address non-compliance, ranging from providing information and guidance through to prosecution before a court or cancelling a provider's approval to operate. Enforcement actions are proportionate to the seriousness of the non-compliance, risk and the potential harm to the safety and wellbeing of children attending a service.

Where services fall into serious non-compliance QARD will take enforcement action. This includes imposing conditions on service approvals, or statutory sanctions such as suspending or cancelling provider and service approvals. Individuals can also be prohibited from working in early childhood services or operating them. Prosecution action is also taken for the most serious non-compliance where appropriate.

In 2021, the Regulatory Authority issued 27 statutory sanctions against providers and services regulated under the NQF. The sanctions included 4 cancellations of provider approvals, 10 compliance notices, 8 amendment of service approvals, 2 emergency action notices, 1 suspension of provider approval, 1 compliance direction and 1 completed prosecution.

Issues in FDC service remain significant with 9 of the sanctions in 2021 issued to FDC services and educators. 14 sanctions were issued to LDC services, 3 OSHC services and 1 Preschool/Kindergarten. The Regulatory Authority also suspended the service approval of a service regulated under the CS Act.

Throughout COVID restrictions, investigators and authorised officers continued to investigate notifications and complaints to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of children in services across the State.

### Supporting a service to operate in compliance with the National Law

**In February 2021, QARD received a notification about an incident and quickly scheduled a compliance visit to the service to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children and to investigate the incident.**

The visit uncovered a number of non-compliances relating to inadequate staff arrangements, no programming cycle being implemented, insufficient materials and equipment, and equipment that was not safe, clean and in good repair. The program being offered to children was not based on the developmental needs, interests and experiences of each child, resulting in children being disruptive and disengaged. Educators appeared unmotivated and did not engage in open-ended two-way conversations with children to support their learning. Governance and leadership issues were also identified, where service educators were not supported in their role nor provided with professional development opportunities to guide their practice.

A compliance direction was issued to the approved provider to direct them to take steps to comply with the National Law. A regional meeting was held with the approved provider to develop a service improvement plan to address all non-compliances and the service was placed on additional monitoring.

Following QARD's actions, the approved provider established a new leadership team to guide educator practice and committed to create an environment where children could learn and grow. An experienced educational leader, of a service run by the same provider nearby, worked with the service educators to support them to deliver an engaging program based on the approved learning frameworks to meet the needs of all children. With the support of QARD, the service engaged with the Department's Kindergarten Quality Improvement Program (KQIP).

At a following visit to the service the QARD authorised officer found educators were enthusiastic and proud of their work, and children appeared engaged and interested. New resources had been purchased, and the service had employed external cleaners to ensure educators could be present and interact with children at all times. The allocation of educator planning time and team meetings had been established to support critical reflective practice. The service's active participation in the KQIP was evident in the changes occurring at the service.

Six months after QARD's initial visit to the service, additional monitoring could be ceased. The authorised officer found the service operating in compliance with the National Law, with educators working as a team to provide positive outcomes to children. The leadership team continued to provide guidance and training through the educational leader, improving educator practice in turn seeing children happy, engaged and learning. Educators appeared to work closely as a united team feeling valued and supported. Children's agency and choice was fostered with an engaging indoor outdoor program being offered at all times.





# Reforms and initiatives

## NQF Review 2019

The second five-yearly review of the NQF began in 2019, led by a national working group chaired by New South Wales. A dedicated website was established at [www.nqfreview.com.au](http://www.nqfreview.com.au) to support community engagement on the review, including on the first phase of public consultation on an initial Issues Paper.

Following a pause in 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, a Consultation Regulation Impact Statement (CRIS) setting out proposed options for regulatory change and their potential impact on the sector and families was released for public consultation during March – April 2021.

There was a high level of engagement with the online information sessions held in Victoria, with more than 380 people attending one of nine sessions. Victorian respondents completed 478 sector surveys (17% of the total received) and 60 family surveys (10% of total received) in addition to 3 submissions. This number does not include providers that operate nationally or in multiple jurisdictions.

Feedback received through the CRIS consultation surveys and submissions was for analysed and included in the Decision Regulation Impact Statement (DRIS), that will assist government decision making on the review. The Review outcomes, including recommendations for change and the DRIS, were published on 8 June 2022. The recommended changes are expected to be implemented in mid-2023.

## Children's services law reform implementation

The Victorian children's services regulatory regime was reformed in 2019–20 to align it with the NQF, where appropriate. Changes to the CS Act, and new CS Regulations, came into effect together on 17 May 2020.

The reform simplified licensing arrangements for service providers and ensures more consistent minimum standards across all Victorian early childhood services. It also included phasing out Approved associated children's services (AACS) by May 2022. Transitional provisions applied for existing services until 1 January 2022, to assist them to adapt and meet the new requirements such as new educator to child ratios, programming using an approved learning framework, and implementing additional policies and procedures.

During 2021 QARD continued to develop information, resources and guidance to support children's services to understand and prepare to meet the new regulatory requirements. QARD continued to visit children's services, and provide information on changes, when they were operating.





Key resources for children's services published in 2021 include:

- *Planning and delivering a program in a children's service*, a guide to assist services and educators in unpacking the new programming and documentation requirements.
- Information for Children's Services considering moving to the National Quality Framework, a Fact Sheet with information for providers of children's services.

## Co-regulatory partners

QARD works with national and state regulatory authorities to support the successful implementation of the NQF. This includes regular interaction with all jurisdictions and ACECQA regarding the effectiveness of operational policy, training, systems, business processes, information management and sector support. We collaborate within a 'Community of practice' designed to improve regulatory practice, identify emerging issues and reduce risk.

We also collaborate with other state and national regulators to promote coherence through information sharing, enforcement and to build capability within the education and care sector.

## Commission for Children and Young People

QARD has continued to hold regular meetings and share information with the CCYP on a number of different issues including reportable conduct, and the new Victorian Child Safe Standards (CSS) that commenced on 1 July 2022.

In 2021, QARD continued to manage referrals from the CCYP to determine services' compliance with the CSS, and monitors aspects of services' compliance with the CSS as part of the assessment and rating process for services. QARD will continue to work with the CCYP to regulate the new Standards until 1 January 2023, when QARD becomes the integrated sector regulator of the CSS in the early childhood sector.

From 1 January 2023, QARD will cooperate with other sector regulators of the CSS where an organisation operates across more than one sector.

## Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority

QARD continues to work closely with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) as a co-regulator. Information is shared and joint investigations carried out into OSHC providers, sometimes operated by school councils registered by the VRQA, and early childhood-related qualifications by Registered Training Organisations also regulated by the VRQA.





## Department of Health

QARD works closely with the Department of Health to support and facilitate the implementation of a number of policy areas, most importantly in 2021 in relation to COVID-19.

QARD continues to work closely with the Department of Health to support the requirements of the No Jab, No Play (NJNP) legislation.

During visits to services, authorised officers continue to monitor services' compliance with the NQF and the CS Act by checking children's enrolment records to ensure the required documentation is in place to meet NJNP requirements.

QARD responds regularly to individual services' issues and requests for information regarding NJNP, and continues to ensure providers are aware of the requirements under the NJNP.

## Department of Justice and Community Safety

QARD shares information with Department of Justice and Community Safety where there are concerns a relevant person may not hold, or be eligible to hold, a Working with Children Clearance.

## WorkSafe Victoria

Collaboration with WorkSafe Victoria ensures issues of shared interest impacting on the safety, health and wellbeing of children are addressed. We also collaborate when both agencies are investigating the same matter.

## Victorian Institute of Teaching

QARD maintains a close relationship with the Victorian Institute of Teaching through an established Memorandum of Understanding and regular liaison over the registration of early childhood teachers.

## Commonwealth Department of Education

Regular collaboration and information sharing between QARD and the Commonwealth Department of Education contributes to the identification of non-compliant services and providers. Sanctions taken by the Commonwealth in relation to child care funding are considered, and action taken to cancel provider approvals as appropriate.

## Victoria Police

QARD works closely with Victoria Police on alleged criminal matters as required.



# Glossary

Term	Acronym	Meaning
Approved provider		An entity which holds a provider approval under the NQF or the CS Act.
Approved service		An approved early childhood education and care service for which a service approval exists under the NQF. An approved children's service for which a service approval exists under the CS Act.
Assessment and Rating	A&R	The process by which NQF services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS and given a rating for each of the seven quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.
Care type classification		Centre-based services offering more than one type of service are classified as follows: services which provide long day care in addition to any other service type are classified as long day care services; services which provide kindergarten services as well as outside school hours care services are classified as kindergarten services; services which provide outside school hours care services only are classified as outside school hours care services.
Centre-based service		An education and care service other than a family day care service. This includes most long day care, preschool/kindergarten and outside school hours care services that are delivered at a centre.
Complaint		Includes concerns raised about the safety, health or wellbeing of children, the behaviour and practices of staff an early childhood service, allegations that incidents of physical and sexual abuse of a child at an early childhood service, and allegations that either the National Law or CS Act have been contravened.
Children's service		A service regulated under the <i>Children's Services Act 1996</i> for which a service approval exists.
Early childhood education and care services/early childhood services	ECEC	Blanket terms, used in reference to all early childhood education and care services under both the NQF and CS Act.
Incident notification		See <i>Notification</i>
Limited hours service		One of two types of service approval prescribed in the Children's Services Regulations 2020. Children's services with a Limited Hours service approval can provide education and care to a child for up to three hours per day to a maximum of six hours per week. They are often located in sports and leisure centres where the child's parent is a patron.
National Law		The NQF operates under an applied law system, comprising the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The purpose of the applied law system is to set a national standard for children's education and care across Australia. In effect it means the same law is applied in each state and territory, but with some varied provisions as applicable to the needs of each state or territory. Victoria is the host jurisdiction of the Education and Care Services National Law which is set out in a Schedule to the <i>Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic)</i> . Application provisions in this Act apply the National Law in Victoria. Other jurisdictions adopted the National Law through an Application Act or passed corresponding legislation.
National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care	NQA	The overarching name given to the quality reforms to early childhood education care, which incorporate the NQS, including the Early Years Learning Framework, the assessment and rating system and the National Regulations.
National Quality Framework	NQF	The NQF covers services providing or intending to provide education and care on a regular basis to children under the age of 13 years. This includes family day care services, long day care services, outside school hours care services and preschools (kindergartens). The NQF comprises the National Law, National Regulations and the NQS.
National Quality Standard	NQS	The NQS sets a high national benchmark for early childhood education and care and outside school hours care services in Australia. The NQS includes 7 quality areas that are important outcomes for children. Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS and given a rating for each of the 7 quality areas and an overall rating based on these results.

Term	Acronym	Meaning
No Jab, No Play	NJNP	Under the No Jab, No Play legislation, before enrolling a child, early childhood education and care services must first obtain evidence that the child is up to date with all vaccinations that are due for their age, or that they are able to receive. There is provision to allow enrolment of children whose immunisation documentation has not been provided if they are experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.
Notification		Approved providers are required to notify the regulatory authority about incidents, complaints and changes to information.
National Quality Agenda IT System	NQA ITS	A web-based information system to assist state and territory regulatory authorities and ACECQA to manage the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of children's education and care services. The system also enables NQF services, providers and educators to submit application and notification forms online to regulatory authorities and ACECQA.
Occasional Care		One of two types of service approval prescribed in the Children's Services Regulations 2020. Children's services with an Occasional Care service approval can provide education and care to a child on an ad hoc, irregular basis.
Outside School Hours Care	OSHC	Regulated under the NQF. Not defined in the National Law or National Regulations. A service that provides care for primary school aged children (typically 5 to 12 years) before and after school and can also operate during school holidays (vacation care) and on pupil free days. Outside school hours care services are usually provided from primary school premises. Services may also be located in child care centres or community facilities.
Places		Places only relates to centre-based services under the National Law and children's services regulated under the <i>Children's Services Act 1996</i> . The maximum number of children who can be educated and cared for by a service at any one time, stated on the service approval. Number of places reflects services' approved capacity. Places data for FDC services is not collected.
Preschool		Not defined in the National Law or Regulations. A service that provides an early childhood education program, delivered by a qualified teacher, often but not necessarily on a sessional basis in a dedicated service. Alternative terms used for preschool in some jurisdictions include kindergarten, pre-preparatory and reception.
Provider management type		The type of legal or social entity responsible for managing the delivery of an early childhood education and care service or children's service.
Provider		See <i>Approved provider</i>
Quality Improvement Plan	QIP	The approved provider of an NQF service must ensure a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) is in place for each service. The aim of a QIP is to help providers self-assess their performance in delivering quality education and care, and to plan future improvements. The QIP also helps regulatory authorities with assessing the quality of the service.
Reportable Conduct Scheme		Scheme to improve oversight of how organisations respond to allegations of child abuse and child-related misconduct. Requires some organisations to respond to allegations made against their workers and volunteers, and to notify the Commission for Children and Young People of any allegations.
School holidays care service		Cares for or educates children for 4 weeks or more during school holidays under the National Law, or up to 4 weeks per calendar year under the <i>Children's Services Act 1996</i> . Also referred to as vacation care.
Serious incident		Serious incidents that occur while a child is being educated and cared for by an education and care service include: the death of a child; a serious injury or trauma to a child; the serious illness of a child requiring hospital attendance; an emergency for which emergency services attended; circumstances where a child is missing or unaccounted for/is taken or removed/is mistakenly locked in or out of the service/service premises.
Service approval		A person must have service approval to operate an education and care service under the National Law or a children's service under the <i>Children's Services Act 1996</i> . Regulatory authorities are responsible for assessing and determining applications for service approval.
Waiver		An exemption from a requirement that an approved education and care service comply with a prescribed element(s) of the NQS or regulation of the National Regulations, or and approve children's service comply with a prescribed regulation of the Children's Services Regulations 2020. While a waiver is in force, the approved service is not required to comply with the element(s) or regulation(s) specified in the waiver.



# Data tables

DATA IN THIS APPENDIX RELATE ONLY TO VICTORIAN SERVICES.

**Appendix Table 1: Number of new ECEC services by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>NQF services:</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>Centre-based care</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>212</b>
• Long day care	34	36	54	75	116	81	105	97	95
• Kindergarten	31	23	30	22	19	22	23	20	20
• Outside school hours care	58	81	79	63	78	88	57	53	97
<b>Family day care</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>CSA services</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4</b>

**Note:** This table only counts services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year. Total new services for 2013 and 2014 excludes new CSA services.

**Appendix Table 2: Number of new places for centre-based services by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total places</b>	<b>7,376</b>	<b>8,293</b>	<b>11,433</b>	<b>12,308</b>	<b>18,319</b>	<b>14,760</b>	<b>16,177</b>	<b>14,273</b>	<b>14,356</b>
<b>NQF places:</b>	<b>7,376</b>	<b>8,293</b>	<b>9,664</b>	<b>11,767</b>	<b>17,623</b>	<b>14,303</b>	<b>15,817</b>	<b>14,097</b>	<b>14,274</b>
• Long day care	3,172	3,501	4,246	7,348	12,092	8,520	11,777	10,007	9,526
• Kindergarten	1,474	1,166	1,731	1,117	828	1,107	1,110	1,159	1,008
• Outside school hours care	2,730	3,626	3,687	3,302	4,703	4,676	2,930	2,931	3,740
<b>CSA places</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>1,769</b>	<b>541</b>	<b>696</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>82</b>

**Note:** This table only counts places for services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year. Total new places for 2013 and 2014 excludes new CSA places.

**Appendix Table 3: Number of new ECEC services by provider management type, 2013–2021**

Provider type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>214</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>228</b>
Catholic school	1	0	2	2	2	1	0	0	<b>1</b>
Government school	10	7	6	5	4	5	3	4	<b>13</b>
Independent school	5	3	2	7	5	4	4	2	<b>5</b>
Local government	7	10	31	11	9	12	8	9	<b>10</b>
Not-for-profit community managed	34	27	56	34	37	36	20	24	<b>19</b>
Not-for-profit other	4	5	15	5	16	13	11	11	<b>10</b>
Private for profit	190	162	174	159	187	148	160	138	<b>170</b>
Other	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

**Note:** This table only counts services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year. Total new services for 2013 and 2014 excludes new CSA services.

**Appendix Table 4: Number of new places for centre-based services by provider management type, 2013–2021**

Provider management type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total places</b>	<b>7,376</b>	<b>8,293</b>	<b>11,433</b>	<b>12,308</b>	<b>18,319</b>	<b>14,760</b>	<b>16,177</b>	<b>14,273</b>	<b>14,356</b>
Catholic school	40	0	35	65	86	20	0	0	<b>80</b>
Government school	389	290	186	191	117	214	45	175	<b>277</b>
Independent school	343	170	69	294	309	192	320	31	<b>403</b>
Local government	659	630	1,832	574	386	520	777	616	<b>495</b>
Not-for-profit community managed	1,946	956	2,461	1,476	1,960	1,939	1,199	1,417	<b>919</b>
Not-for-profit other	281	216	548	213	2,182	759	674	1,149	<b>850</b>
Private for profit	3,718	6,031	6,270	9,495	13,279	11,116	13,162	10,885	<b>11,332</b>
Other	0	0	32	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>

**Note:** This table only counts places for services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year. Total new places for 2013 and 2014 excludes new CSA places.

**Appendix Table 5: Number of approved ECEC services by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services</b>	<b>4,265</b>	<b>4,381</b>	<b>4,457</b>	<b>4,514</b>	<b>4,612</b>	<b>4,567</b>	<b>4,546</b>	<b>4,578</b>	<b>4,706</b>
<b>NQF services:</b>	<b>3,808</b>	<b>3,928</b>	<b>4,027</b>	<b>4,108</b>	<b>4,233</b>	<b>4,209</b>	<b>4,229</b>	<b>4,299</b>	<b>4,435</b>
<b>Centre-based care</b>	<b>3,541</b>	<b>3,589</b>	<b>3,645</b>	<b>3,737</b>	<b>3,886</b>	<b>3,961</b>	<b>4,043</b>	<b>4,140</b>	<b>2,501</b>
• Long day care	1,220	1,244	1,280	1,342	1,457	1,520	1,607	1,691	1,777
• Kindergarten	1,211	1,197	1,197	1,203	1,205	1,194	1,186	1,183	1,185
• Outside school hours care	1,110	1,148	1,168	1,192	1,224	1,247	1,250	1,266	1,316
<b>Family day care</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>339</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>CSA services</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>379</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>271</b>

**Note:** This table only counts services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year.

**Appendix Table 6: Number of approved places for centre-based ECEC services by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total places</b>	<b>212,057</b>	<b>234,951</b>	<b>228,856</b>	<b>241,748</b>	<b>257,659</b>	<b>268,682</b>	<b>280,416</b>	<b>290,591</b>	<b>302,668</b>
<b>NQF approved places:</b>	<b>200,809</b>	<b>223,873</b>	<b>218,287</b>	<b>231,645</b>	<b>248,143</b>	<b>259,542</b>	<b>272,414</b>	<b>283,552</b>	<b>295,897</b>
• Long day care	91,493	109,743	99,683	107,605	120,343	128,664	140,255	149,891	159,560
• Kindergarten	44,736	46,101	48,077	49,811	50,099	50,567	51,073	51,798	52,316
• Outside school hours care	64,580	68,029	70,527	74,229	77,701	80,311	81,086	81,863	84,021
<b>CSA licensed places</b>	<b>11,248</b>	<b>11,078</b>	<b>10,569</b>	<b>10,103</b>	<b>9,516</b>	<b>9,140</b>	<b>8,002</b>	<b>7,039</b>	<b>6,771</b>

**Note:** This table only counts places for services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year.

**Appendix Table 7: Number of approved ECEC services by provider management type, 2013–2021**

Provider management type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services</b>	<b>3,808</b>	<b>3,928</b>	<b>4,457</b>	<b>4,514</b>	<b>4,612</b>	<b>4,567</b>	<b>4,546</b>	<b>4,578</b>	<b>4,706</b>
Catholic school	44	41	41	39	33	29	26	20	19
Government school	338	320	309	295	279	260	244	236	228
Independent school	133	129	123	127	132	131	131	129	131
Local government	458	433	496	484	467	456	440	438	432
Not-for-profit community managed	1,130	1,114	1,294	1,281	1,285	1,261	1,221	1,203	1,191
Not-for-profit other	312	309	373	363	375	379	374	355	378
Private for profit	1,393	1,582	1,818	1,922	2,040	2,051	2,110	2,197	2,326
Other	0	0	3	3	1	0	0	0	1

**Note:** This table only counts services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year.

**Appendix Table 8: Number of approved places for centre-based ECEC services by provider management type, 2013–2021**

Provider management type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total places</b>	<b>200,809</b>	<b>223,873</b>	<b>228,856</b>	<b>241,728</b>	<b>257,659</b>	<b>268,682</b>	<b>280,416</b>	<b>290,591</b>	<b>302,668</b>
Catholic school	2,398	2,144	2,106	1,996	1,758	1,567	1,484	1,173	1,143
Government school	18,311	18,267	18,335	18,535	18,296	17,400	16,870	16,399	15,081
Independent school	9,190	9,133	8,492	8,738	9,044	8,960	9,374	9,246	9,521
Local government	19,125	18,575	21,183	21,589	21,333	20,986	21,185	21,474	21,622
Not-for-profit community managed	47,646	62,491	53,738	54,193	55,330	55,587	54,885	55,038	55,319
Not-for-profit other	22,923	22,997	24,990	25,205	27,069	27,692	28,020	28,296	29,724
Private for profit	81,216	90,266	99,980	111,439	124,822	136,490	148,598	158,965	170,228
Other	0	0	32	33	7	0	0	0	30

**Note:** This table only counts places for services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year.

**Appendix Table 9: Number of NQF services managed by Victorian providers, 2015–2021**

Service jurisdiction	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>VIC</b>	<b>3,557</b>	<b>3,602</b>	<b>3,687</b>	<b>3,629</b>	<b>3,620</b>	<b>3,669</b>	<b>4,019</b>
<b>Other jurisdictions</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>546</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>618</b>
ACT	9	8	10	11	12	18	19
NSW	157	189	201	191	195	204	238
NT	7	16	20	18	18	17	12
QLD	66	79	90	88	85	87	101
SA	67	80	75	63	50	47	47
TAS	1	1	10	8	5	5	9
WA	157	173	175	173	170	178	193

**Note:** This table only counts services remaining approved at the end of each year and excludes services suspended, surrendered or cancelled in the same year.



**Appendix Table 10: Number of children attending ECEC services, 2015–2021**

Service type	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total</b>	<b>405,679</b>	<b>413,114</b>	<b>429,922</b>	<b>436,108</b>	<b>409,749</b>	<b>414,983</b>	<b>317,176</b>
Centre-based day care	na	na	na	na	188,249	196,393	<b>201,936</b>
Long day care	148,333	154,175	163,524	172,161	na	na	<b>na</b>
Kindergarten (long day care settings)	21,393	23,269	25,022	24,786	27,514	29,559	<b>na</b>
Kindergarten (all other settings)	52,756	52,996	53,948	53,620	51,991	50,291	<b>na</b>
Family day care	68,886	60,705	63,352	55,617	35,863	31,884	<b>26,361</b>
OSHC (and vacation care)	111,875	119,753	121,955	127,879	106,132	106,856	<b>88,879</b>
Occasional care	2,436	2,216	2,121	2,045	na	na	<b>na</b>

**Note:** Number of children in kindergarten refers to number of children enrolled in funded kindergarten in the year before school, using Victorian Department of Education and Training data. Number of children attending ECEC services refers to children 0–12 years attending Australian CCS approved child care services and is sourced from multiple years of the Report on Government Services and from Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2020, *Preschool Education*, cat. No. 4240.0. Changes to reporting under the CSS resulted in the introduction of new categories Centre-based care (a consolidation of long day care and occasional care previously reported separately) and Outside school hours care (a consolidation of outside school hours care, and vacation care previously reported separately). Data on funded kindergarten enrolments is not directly comparable to attendance in other service types.

**Appendix Table 11: Average hours of attendance per week of children aged 0–12 years at Australian CCS approved child care services, 2013–2021**

Service type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Centre-based day care	na	na	na	na	na	na	29.6	30.0	<b>31.1</b>
Long day care	27.9	28.0	28.1	28.3	28.4	28.5	na	na	<b>na</b>
Family day care	30.2	34.2	34.3	32.4	31.8	30.1	25.0	24.9	<b>24.7</b>
Vacation care	28.5	27.7	27.3	27.0	26.8	26.2	na	na	<b>na</b>
OSHC	6.4	7.8	7.9	7.9	8.0	8.1	8.4	8.5	<b>8.6</b>
Occasional care	8.6	8.4	8.8	8.6	8.7	8.9	na	na	<b>na</b>

**Note:** Data from this table is sourced from multiple years of the Report on Government Services. See note for Appendix Table 10 about continuity of data.

**Appendix Table 12: Number of applications submitted by application type, 2013–2021**

Application type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Approval</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>758</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>710</b>
Provider Approval	366	447	389	356	390	355	300	251	309
Service Approval	322	320	369	379	335	265	247	221	401
<b>Amendment of approval</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>658</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>1287</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>578</b>
Amend Provider Approval	48	109	144	166	179	237	140	121	145
Amend Service Approval	384	420	514	469	364	644	1147	439	433
<b>Waiver (service or temporary)</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>529</b>	<b>386</b>
<b>Suspension</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>101</b>
Suspension Provider Approval	1	2	5	18	20	23	15	16	6
Suspension Service Approval	18	18	36	94	82	107	84	152	95
<b>Related to supervisor certificates</b>	<b>5,161</b>	<b>2,969</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Amend Supervisor Certificate	27	57	37	39	31	0	0	0	0
Supervisor Certificate	5,079	2,897	511	352	188	0	0	0	0
Supervisor Certificate for Specified Class of Persons	53	14	5	8	11	0	0	0	0
Suspension Supervisor Certificate	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Other</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>542</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>486</b>	<b>413</b>	<b>414</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>268</b>
Change of Information-Provider	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Decision – Request Review by Tribunal or Court	0	1	2	3	8	1	1	1	0
Extension-Temporary Waiver	0	0	0	1	3	10	26	20	27
Internal Review of Reviewable Decision	58	55	65	32	29	14	14	8	4
Out of Scope Application	0	1	84	144	156	97	135	10	11
Re-Assessment and Re-Rating	3	19	26	64	19	31	33	27	20
Review of Ratings by RA	16	19	14	25	21	27	14	5	5
Revocation-Service Waiver	1	1	0	0	0	1	3	7	2
Transfer of Service Approval	218	282	351	165	250	232	188	174	199
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,864</b>	<b>4,769</b>	<b>2,734</b>	<b>2,538</b>	<b>2,376</b>	<b>2,347</b>	<b>2,657</b>	<b>1,981</b>	<b>2,043</b>

**Note:**

(i) This table includes applications submitted related to supervisor certificates that were excluded from the Applications section of this report. The requirement for supervisor certificates was removed from the National Law and Regulations on 1 October 2017.

(ii) The 6,865 total includes surrenders of provider and service approvals, which were no longer submitted as applications from 2014.

**Appendix Table 13: Number of decisions by application type and decision type, 2013–2021**

Approval type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Provider approval</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>163</b>
Approved (with additional conditions)	2	1	1	5	29	50	29	37	53
Approved (with standard conditions)	273	164	184	185	106	87	105	64	103
Refused	0	38	128	91	103	45	47	18	7
<b>Service Approval</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>233</b>
Approved (with additional conditions)	130	89	98	111	119	91	91	73	99
Approved (with standard conditions)	128	143	208	141	152	138	123	132	134
Refused	1	6	31	30	24	12	7	5	0

**Note:** The decisions made do not necessarily relate to applications received in the calendar year.

**Appendix Table 14: Number of decisions by month and application type, 2021**

Approval type	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
Provider Approval	9	9	6	11	7	36	19	10	8	26	11	11	<b>163</b>
Service Approval	42	14	6	10	6	46	31	21	13	15	4	25	<b>233</b>
Amendment of approval	28	30	34	24	28	52	49	41	21	60	36	60	<b>463</b>
Service or temporary waiver	11	19	9	18	12	19	19	19	17	17	6	5	<b>171</b>
Voluntary suspension	5	13	6	8	1	14	4	7	16	7	0	10	<b>91</b>
Other	75	11	15	18	14	17	14	13	29	14	22	23	<b>265</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>1,386</b>

**Note:** The decisions made do not necessarily relate to applications received in the calendar year.

**Appendix Table 15: Number of active waivers by type, 2013–2021**

Waiver type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>Physical</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>118</b>
Service	16	20	22	29	33	43	45	50	99
Temporary	9	4	7	15	17	20	24	24	19
<b>Staffing</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>141</b>
Service	40	47	54	51	51	64	72	65	91
Temporary	29	73	31	113	33	95	53	115	50

**Note:** Active waivers are either in place until 31 December of a particular year, expire in the future or remain in place for the duration of the service approval. Temporary waivers that were active and expired before 31 December are not included. Physical and staffing waiver subtotals may not sum up to the total number of active waivers as there may be waivers that fall into both categories. Physical waivers include FDC location waivers.

**Appendix Table 16: Number of active waivers related to qualifications, 2013–2021**

Waiver type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>103</b>
Service	40	47	54	51	51	64	72	65	<b>53</b>
Temporary	29	73	31	24	5	87	53	114	<b>50</b>

**Note:** See footnote for Appendix Table 15.



**Appendix Table 17: Number of active waivers related to educator-to-child ratios, 2013–2021**

Waiver type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Temporary	0	0	0	89	28	8	0	1	0

**Note:** See footnote for Appendix Table 15.

**Appendix Table 18: Number of approved multi-storey services, 2013–2021**

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
NQF services	64	74	83	104	128	150	188	212	<b>237</b>
CSA services	–	–	41	41	42	44	48	39	<b>45</b>

**Note:** This includes only services that have been identified to be operating in multi-storey buildings at the end of 2020.

**Appendix Table 19: Overall quality ratings by rating level, 2014–2021**

Rating	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>2,351</b>	<b>3,407</b>	<b>3,792</b>	<b>3,908</b>	<b>3,930</b>	<b>3,989</b>	<b>3,984</b>	<b>4,013</b>
Excellent	4	8	8	10	9	10	6	<b>5</b>
Exceeding NQS	772	1,137	1,271	1,326	1,314	1,282	1,252	<b>1,113</b>
Meeting NQS	1,066	1,579	1,809	1,928	2,001	2,100	2,177	<b>2,404</b>
Working Towards NQS	508	683	689	635	605	597	547	<b>491</b>
Significant Improvement Required	1	0	15	9	1	0	2	<b>0</b>
Number of approved services	2,351	4,027	4,108	4,233	4,209	4,229	4,299	<b>4,435</b>
Percentage of services eligible for a rating	100%	94%	95%	94%	95%	95%	96%	<b>95%</b>
Percentage meeting NQS or above	78%	80%	81%	84%	85%	85%	86%	<b>88%</b>
Rating as %	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Excellent	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	<b>0.1%</b>
Exceeding NQS	33%	33%	34%	34%	33%	32%	31%	<b>28%</b>
Meeting NQS	45%	46%	48%	49%	51%	53%	55%	<b>60%</b>
Working Towards NQS	22%	20%	18%	16%	15%	15%	14%	<b>12%</b>
Significant Improvement Required	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0%</b>

Appendix Table 20: Overall quality ratings by care type and rating level, 2021

Care type	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total services with an NQS rating		
All services	0	491	2,404	1,113	5	4,013		
LDC	0	203	1,025	350	2	1,580		
KGN	0	54	440	652	3	1,149		
OSHC	0	174	885	101	0	1,160		
FDC	0	60	54	10	0	124		
Rating as %	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total approved services	Percentage of services eligible for a rating	Percentage meeting NQS or above
All services	0%	12%	60%	28%	0.1%	4,435	95%	88%
LDC	0%	13%	65%	22%	0.1%	1,777	95%	87%
KGN	0%	5%	38%	57%	0.3%	1,185	98%	95%
OSHC	0%	15%	76%	9%	0%	1,316	93%	85%
FDC	0%	48%	44%	8%	0%	157	92%	52%

Appendix Table 21: Overall quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021

Provider management type	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total services with an NQS rating		
All services	0	491	2,404	1,113	5	4,013		
Catholic/independent school	0	16	41	85	0	142		
Government school	0	64	114	35	1	214		
Local government	0	22	155	188	0	365		
Not for profit	0	99	658	607	4	1,368		
Private for profit	0	290	1,436	198	0	1,924		
Rating as %	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total approved services	Percentage of services eligible for a rating	Percentage meeting NQS or above
All services	0%	12%	60%	28%	0.1%	4,435	95%	88%
Catholic/independent school	0%	11%	29%	60%	0.0%	149	96%	89%
Government school	0%	30%	53%	16%	0.5%	228	94%	70%
Local government	0%	6%	42%	52%	0.0%	385	97%	94%
Not for profit	0%	7%	48%	44%	0.3%	1,424	98%	93%
Private for profit	0%	15%	75%	10%	0.0%	2,249	93%	85%

**Appendix Table 22: Overall LDC quality ratings by rating level, 2014–2021**

Rating	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>1,156</b>	<b>1,246</b>	<b>1,319</b>	<b>1,412</b>	<b>1,499</b>	<b>1,530</b>	<b>1,580</b>
Excellent	3	6	6	7	6	6	3	<b>2</b>
Exceeding NQS	241	348	409	427	427	410	399	<b>350</b>
Meeting NQS	439	586	650	711	767	861	913	<b>1,025</b>
Working Towards NQS	182	216	181	174	212	222	214	<b>203</b>
Significant Improvement Required	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	<b>0</b>
<b>Number of approved services</b>	<b>866</b>	<b>1,280</b>	<b>1,343</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>1,607</b>	<b>1,691</b>	<b>1,777</b>
<b>Percentage of services eligible for a rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>95%</b>
<b>Percentage meeting NQS or above</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>87%</b>
Rating as %	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Excellent	0.3%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	<b>0.1%</b>
Exceeding NQS	28%	30%	33%	32%	30%	27%	26%	<b>22%</b>
Meeting NQS	51%	51%	52%	54%	54%	57%	60%	<b>65%</b>
Working Towards NQS	21%	19%	15%	13%	15%	15%	14%	<b>13%</b>
Significant Improvement Required	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	<b>0.0%</b>

**Appendix Table 23: Overall kindergarten quality ratings by rating level, 2014–2021**

Rating	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>1,144</b>	<b>1,173</b>	<b>1,183</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>1,163</b>	<b>1,155</b>	<b>1,149</b>
Excellent	1	2	2	3	3	4	3	<b>3</b>
Exceeding NQS	404	585	641	681	693	707	699	<b>652</b>
Meeting NQS	365	444	446	429	396	386	394	<b>440</b>
Working Towards NQS	105	113	84	70	76	66	59	<b>54</b>
Significant Improvement Required	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Number of approved services</b>	<b>875</b>	<b>1,197</b>	<b>1,203</b>	<b>1,205</b>	<b>1,194</b>	<b>1,186</b>	<b>1,183</b>	<b>1,185</b>
<b>Percentage of services eligible for a rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Percentage meeting NQS or above</b>	<b>88%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>95%</b>
Rating as %	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Excellent	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	<b>0.3%</b>
Exceeding NQS	46%	51%	55%	58%	59%	61%	61%	<b>57%</b>
Meeting NQS	42%	39%	38%	36%	34%	33%	34%	<b>38%</b>
Working Towards NQS	12%	10%	7%	6%	7%	6%	5%	<b>5%</b>
Significant Improvement Required	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>

**Note:** Quality ratings in this table exclude ratings for kindergarten services provided in a long day care setting.



**Appendix Table 24: Overall quality ratings for NQF services funded to provide a four year old kindergarten program by rating level, 2014–2021**

Rating	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>1,523</b>	<b>2,027</b>	<b>2,125</b>	<b>2,306</b>	<b>2,333</b>	<b>2,310</b>	<b>2,503</b>	<b>2,567</b>
Excellent	4	8	8	10	9	9	6	5
Exceeding NQS	608	882	980	1,064	1,069	1,027	1,060	979
Meeting NQS	688	876	935	1,033	1,030	1,058	1,210	1,364
Working Towards NQS	223	261	202	199	225	216	226	219
Significant Improvement Required	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
<b>Number of approved services</b>	<b>1,523</b>	<b>2,121</b>	<b>2,168</b>	<b>2,352</b>	<b>2,374</b>	<b>2,349</b>	<b>2,579</b>	<b>2,693</b>
<b>Percentage of services eligible for a rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>98%</b>
<b>Percentage meeting NQS or above</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>	<b>91%</b>
Rating as %	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Excellent	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	0.2%
Exceeding NQS	40%	44%	46%	46%	46%	44%	42%	38%
Meeting NQS	45%	43%	44%	45%	44%	46%	48%	53%
Working Towards NQS	15%	13%	10%	9%	10%	9%	9%	9%
Significant Improvement Required	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

**Note:** Quality ratings in this table include ratings for funded four-year-old kindergarten services provided in a long day care setting.

**Appendix Table 25: Overall OSHC quality ratings by rating level, 2014–2021**

Rating	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>931</b>	<b>1,095</b>	<b>1,126</b>	<b>1,152</b>	<b>1,173</b>	<b>1,166</b>	<b>1,160</b>
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Exceeding NQS	100	167	187	186	171	150	140	101
Meeting NQS	231	496	637	717	777	797	822	885
Working Towards NQS	180	268	271	222	204	226	204	174
Significant Improvement Required	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Number of approved services</b>	<b>511</b>	<b>1,168</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>1,224</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>1,250</b>	<b>1,266</b>	<b>1,316</b>
<b>Percentage of services eligible for a rating</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>93%</b>
<b>Percentage meeting NQS or above</b>	<b>65%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>85%</b>
Rating as %	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Excellent	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Exceeding NQS	20%	18%	17%	17%	15%	13%	12%	9%
Meeting NQS	45%	53%	58%	64%	67%	68%	70%	76%
Working Towards NQS	35%	29%	25%	20%	18%	19%	17%	15%
Significant Improvement Required	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0%

Appendix Table 26: Overall FDC quality ratings by rating level, 2014–2021

Rating	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>124</b>
Excellent	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
Exceeding NQS	27	37	34	32	23	15	14	<b>10</b>
Meeting NQS	31	53	76	71	61	56	48	<b>54</b>
Working Towards NQS	41	86	153	169	113	83	70	<b>60</b>
Significant Improvement Required	0	0	15	8	1	0	1	<b>0</b>
<b>Number of approved services</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>157</b>
<b>Percentage of services eligible for a rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>94%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>95%</b>	<b>92%</b>
<b>Percentage meeting NQS or above</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>52%</b>
Rating as %	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total services with an NQS rating</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
Excellent	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	<b>0.0%</b>
Exceeding NQS	27%	21%	12%	11%	12%	10%	11%	<b>8%</b>
Meeting NQS	31%	30%	27%	25%	31%	36%	36%	<b>44%</b>
Working Towards NQS	41%	49%	55%	60%	57%	54%	53%	<b>48%</b>
Significant Improvement Required	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%	2.9%	0.5%	0.0%	0.8%	<b>0.0%</b>

Appendix Table 27: Overall LDC quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021

Provider management type	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total services with an NQS rating		
All LDC	0	203	1,025	350	2	1,580		
Catholic/independent school	0	4	5	21	0	30		
Government school	0	1	4	2	0	7		
Local government	0	6	40	39	0	85		
Not for profit	0	29	275	155	2	461		
Private for profit	0	163	701	133	0	997		
Rating as %	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total approved services	Percentage of services eligible for a rating	Percentage meeting NQS or above
All LDC	0.0%	12.8%	64.9%	22.2%	0.1%	1,777	95%	87%
Catholic/independent school	0%	13%	17%	70%	0.0%	33	91%	87%
Government school	0%	14%	57%	29%	0.0%	7	100%	86%
Local government	0%	7%	47%	46%	0.0%	92	93%	93%
Not for profit	0%	6%	60%	34%	0.4%	483	98%	94%
Private for profit	0%	16%	70%	13%	0%	1,162	93%	84%

**Appendix Table 28: Overall kindergarten quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021**

Provider management type	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total services with an NQS rating		
All KGN	0	54	440	652	3	1,149		
Catholic/independent school	0	4	20	58	0	82		
Government school	0	3	17	13	1	34		
Local government	0	9	92	139	0	240		
Not for profit	0	37	306	439	2	784		
Private for profit	0	1	5	3	0	9		
Rating as %	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total approved services	Percentage of services eligible for a rating	Percentage meeting NQS or above
All KGN	0%	5%	38%	57%	0%	1,185	98%	95%
Catholic/independent school	0%	5%	24%	71%	0%	85	98%	95%
Government school	0%	9%	50%	38%	3%	34	100%	91%
Local government	0%	4%	38%	58%	0%	250	99%	96%
Not for profit	0%	5%	39%	56%	0%	806	98%	95%
Private for profit	0%	11%	56%	33%	0%	10	90%	89%

**Note:** Quality ratings in this table exclude ratings for kindergarten services provided in a long day care setting.

**Appendix Table 29: Overall ratings for NQF services funded to provide a four-year-old kindergarten program by provider management type and rating level, 2021**

Provider management type	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total funded services with an NQS rating		
All funded services	0	219	1,364	979	5	2,567		
Catholic/independent school	0	6	23	77	0	106		
Government school	0	4	19	15	1	39		
Local government	0	14	128	173	0	315		
Not for profit	0	63	555	585	4	1,207		
Private for profit	0	132	639	129	0	900		
Rating as %	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total funded approved services	Percentage of services eligible for a rating	Percentage meeting NQS or above
All funded services	0.0%	8.5%	53.1%	38.1%	0.2%	2,567	98%	91%
Catholic/independent school	0.0%	5.7%	21.7%	72.6%	0.0%	106	98%	94%
Government school	0.0%	10.3%	48.7%	38.5%	2.6%	39	100%	90%
Local government	0.0%	4.4%	40.6%	54.9%	0.0%	315	99%	96%
Not for profit	0.0%	5.2%	46.0%	48.5%	0.3%	1,207	99%	95%
Private for profit	0.0%	14.7%	71.0%	14.3%	0.0%	900	98%	85%

**Note:** Quality ratings in this table include ratings for funded four-year-old kindergarten services provided in a long day care setting.

Appendix Table 30: Overall OSHC quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021

Provider management type	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total services with an NQS rating		
All OSHC	0	174	885	101	0	1,160		
Catholic/independent school	0	8	16	6	0	30		
Government school	0	60	93	20	0	173		
Local government	0	0	14	3	0	17		
Not for profit	0	28	69	12	0	109		
Private for profit	0	78	693	60	0	831		
Rating as %	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total approved services	Percentage of services eligible for a rating	Percentage meeting NQS or above
All OSHC	0.0%	15.0%	76.3%	8.7%	0.0%	1,316	93%	85%
Catholic/independent school	0.0%	26.7%	53.3%	20.0%	0.0%	31	97%	73%
Government school	0.0%	34.7%	53.8%	11.6%	0.0%	187	93%	65%
Local government	0.0%	0.0%	82.4%	17.6%	0.0%	20	95%	100%
Not for profit	0.0%	25.7%	63.3%	11.0%	0.0%	121	96%	74%
Private for profit	0.0%	9.4%	83.4%	72%	0.0%	957	92%	91%

Appendix Table 31: Overall FDC quality ratings by provider management type and rating level, 2021

Provider management type	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total services with an NQS rating		
All FDC	0	60	54	10	0	124		
Local government	0	7	9	7	0	23		
Not for profit	0	5	8	1	0	14		
Private for profit	0	48	37	2	0	87		
Rating as %	Significant Improvement Required	Working Towards NQS	Meeting NQS	Exceeding NQS	Excellent	Total approved services	Percentage of services eligible for a rating	Percentage meeting NQS or above
All FDC	0.0%	48.4%	43.5%	8.1%	0.0%	157	92%	52%
Local government	0.0%	30.4%	39.1%	30.4%	0.0%	23	100%	70%
Not for profit	0.0%	35.7%	57.1%	7.1%	0.0%	14	100%	64%
Private for profit	0.0%	55.2%	42.5%	2.3%	0.0%	120	90%	45%



**Appendix Table 32: Number of visits by visit type, 2014–2021**

Visit type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total visits</b>	<b>3,122</b>	<b>3,144</b>	<b>3,058</b>	<b>3,413</b>	<b>4,044</b>	<b>4,003</b>	<b>2,644</b>	<b>3,326</b>
Assessment and Rating	1,213	1,156	886	1,007	984	991	227	<b>609</b>
Compliance	1,798	1,863	2,047	2,274	2,848	2,847	2,244	<b>2,485</b>
Other	111	125	125	132	212	165	173	<b>232</b>

**Note:** A compliance visit is defined as any of the following visit types in NQA ITS: application/assessment, change of ownership, complaint, incident, investigation and post-approval, while other visits are education or pre-approval visits. Some visits relate to services that were not operating at the end of the year.

**Appendix Table 33: Number of assessment and rating visits per 100 services by care type, 2014–2021**

Care type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>NQF services</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>55</b>
LDC	33	25	21	27	28	24	6	<b>12</b>
KGN	31	25	15	23	24	18	3	<b>20</b>
OSHC	32	40	24	21	19	31	6	<b>10</b>
FDC	20	19	39	22	17	9	4	<b>13</b>

**Appendix Table 34: Number of compliance visits completed per 100 services by care type, 2014–2021**

Care type	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>All services</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>53</b>
LDC	69	67	78	76	86	88	70	72
KGN	25	22	27	32	42	40	38	40
OSHC	31	28	27	39	55	54	36	41
FDC	61	49	51	44	69	76	38	36
CSA	15	51	39	36	47	40	26	45

**Appendix Table 35: Number of reported serious incidents by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>All services</b>	<b>3,529</b>	<b>3,247</b>	<b>3,507</b>	<b>3,568</b>	<b>3,882</b>	<b>3,595</b>	<b>3,897</b>	<b>3,494</b>	<b>4,704</b>
LDC	2,223	1,928	2,039	2,296	2,535	2,278	2,536	2,506	<b>3,489</b>
KGN	725	685	718	704	750	734	673	515	<b>625</b>
OSHC	406	496	577	448	487	473	572	390	<b>496</b>
FDC	175	138	154	96	96	98	105	76	<b>74</b>
CSA	–	–	19	24	14	12	11	7	<b>20</b>

**Note:** Under s174 of the National Law Approved providers are required to notify the regulatory authority of certain information including incidents and complaints in relation to their ECEC service. 'Serious incidents' are notifiable incidents under s174(2)(a). The meaning of a 'serious incident' is described under R12 of the National Regulations. 'Other incidents' refer to incidents required to be notified to the regulatory authority under r175(2) of the National Regulations except r175(2)(a) which is about a change in the hours of operation. Some incidents include notifications of COVID-19 cases at the service, and some relate to services that were not operating at the end of the year.

**Appendix Table 36: Number of reported serious incidents per 100 NQF services by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
All services	83	74	79	79	84	79	86	76	100
LDC	182	155	159	171	174	150	158	148	196
KGN	60	57	60	59	62	61	57	44	53
OSHC	37	43	49	38	40	38	46	31	38
FDC	66	41	40	26	28	40	56	48	47
CSA	–	–	4	6	4	3	3	3	7

Note: See footnote for Appendix Table 35.

**Appendix Table 37: Number of reported non-serious incidents by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
All services	137	450	663	930	887	1,010	1,549	4,590	6,233
LDC	99	332	460	580	584	615	835	1,001	2,627
KGN	24	71	137	192	178	194	293	1,882	1,444
OSHC	7	28	41	110	93	163	390	1,355	1,597
FDC	7	19	25	47	32	35	30	107	359
CSA	–	–	0	1	0	3	1	245	206

Note: See footnote for Appendix Table 35.

**Appendix Table 38: Number of reported non-serious incidents per 100 approved services by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
All services	3	10	15	21	19	22	34	100	132
LDC	8	27	36	43	40	40	52	59	148
KGN	2	6	11	16	15	16	25	159	122
OSHC	1	2	4	9	8	13	31	107	121
FDC	3	6	7	13	9	14	16	67	229
CSA	–	–	0	0	0	1	0	88	76

Note: See footnote for Appendix Table 35.

**Appendix Table 39: Number of complaints by complaint type, 2013–2021**

Complaint type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
All complaints	1,394	1,552	1,627	1,828	1,765	1,694	2,000	1,542	1,985
Direct complaints	1,167	822	653	649	585	650	677	380	515
Complaints through notifications	227	730	974	1,179	1,180	1,044	1,323	1,162	1,470

Note: Complaint notifications are a requirement under s174 of the National Law for an approved provider to notify the regulatory authority of any complaint alleging a serious incident at the service or a breach of the National Law. Direct complaints are complaints received directly from a parent or other member of the public usually expressing dissatisfaction about a service. Some complaints relate to services that were not operating at the end of the year.

**Appendix Table 40: Number of complaints per 100 services by complaint type, 2013–2021**

Complaint type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
All complaints	33	35	37	40	38	37	44	34	42
Direct complaints	27	19	15	14	13	14	15	8	11
Complaints through notifications	5	17	22	26	26	23	29	25	31

**Note:** See footnote for Appendix Table 39.

**Appendix Table 41: Number of complaints per 100 services by care type, 2013–2021**

Care type	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
All services	33	35	37	40	38	37	44	34	42
LDC	81	86	83	94	86	77	90	74	94
KGN	20	26	27	26	21	22	22	11	14
OSHC	7	6	11	10	14	12	16	9	8
FDC	29	28	23	27	20	35	34	22	20
CSA	–	–	3	4	4	4	4	3	2

**Note:** See footnote for Appendix Table 39.

