

Goodstart 2025–2026 WA State Election Platform

Goodstart Early Learning is Australia's largest not-for-profit social enterprise, providing high-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) to over 61,400 children in 654 centres nationwide. In Western Australia, Goodstart operates 53 centres, supporting 5,000 children from 4,225 families.

As a not-for-profit, our mission is to ensure every child—regardless of their circumstances—has access to the high-quality early learning they need for success in school and life. While participation in ECEC in WA lags behind other states, national reforms highlight the importance of investing in early years education. We therefore call on all parties to prioritise the following actions in the lead-up to the 2025 WA election:

1. Strengthen Leadership and Governance in ECEC

1.1 Create an Office of Early Childhood: Establish a dedicated office to lead early childhood reforms and improve sector coordination, modelled on South Australia's approach.

1.2 Expand ECEC on school sites: Prioritise integrating ECEC services into new and existing school sites to improve access and seamless transitions.

1.3 Support Not-for-Profit providers: Invest in NFP services to deliver high-quality, affordable ECEC, particularly in underserved areas.

1.4 Finalise the Childcare Premises Position Statement: Ensure WA planning policies support quality and inclusive ECEC provision.

2. Support Access to Two Years of Preschool

2.1 Fee relief for 3-Year-olds: Provide fee relief to increase preschool participation, especially for vulnerable children.

2.2 Address preschool fragmentation: Research and address impacts on children caused by multiple preschool settings, moving towards a five-day preschool model.

2.3 Enable direct payments to providers: Amend legislation to allow direct government funding to ECEC providers.

3. Improve Inclusion in Early Years

3.1 Fund initiatives for vulnerable children: Expand programs like Goodstart's Increasing Access and Participation (IAP) program to WA to support at-risk children's access to ECEC.

3.2 Streamline access to the Inclusion Support Program (ISP): Simplify processes and enhance collaboration between WA Government Departments and the WA Inclusion Agency.

3.3 Strengthen developmental screening: Partner with ECEC services to deliver health and developmental screenings, building on successful models like *Ears2Learn*.

4. Strengthen the ECEC Workforce Strategy

4.1 Expand workforce pipeline initiatives: Fund scholarships, fee-free TAFE, and mentoring to grow the workforce.

4.2 Support regional and underserved communities: Enhance incentives like housing support and relocation bonuses to attract educators to remote areas.

4.3 Reduce Burnout and Build Wellbeing: Invest in educator support programs and training to ease regulatory burdens and promote resilience.

By prioritising these actions, Western Australia can strengthen its early childhood sector, ensuring all children receive the high-quality education and care they need to thrive.

For more information, contact:

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