Children first, always

NSW Early Learning Commission: Interim Strategic Plan on a Page 2026-27

NSW GOVERNMENT

Acknowledgement of Country

The NSW Early Learning Commission recognises the Traditional Custodians of the lands where children learn and play, and we pay our respects to Elders past and present. We honour the long tradition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children learning and thriving on Country and are committed to ensuring that every child feels safe and connected in their early learning.

Protection of the rights and best interests of children is paramount

Children are at the centre of everything the NSW Early Learning Commission (Commission) does and we have an important role in keeping them safe and well. That is why we are committed to developing the Commission as a centre of regulatory excellence, where the paramountcy of children's rights and best interests is applied first, and always.

Children feel safe and thrive in high quality early learning

- Deliver reforms that strengthen regulatory practice, reduce risk to children, and enhance child safety, cultural safety and quality.
- Ensure policy intent reaches practice through high-quality guidance, consistent interpretation and targeted regulatory support.
- Support compliance and guide the delivery of safe, high quality early learning.
- Demonstrate a visible commitment to addressing wrongdoing, enforcing compliance and ensuring accountability.

We act early and decisively to put children's safety first

- Apply the paramountcy principle as a foundational test where regulatory judgment is required. We're confident to act and exercise our powers fully and defensibly.
- Ensure visible regulatory presence in the sector, particularly through unannounced visits.
- Focus regulatory efforts on proactive and predictive activity: acting earlier to prevent harm to children.
- Modernise data, digital and technology capabilities to enhance effectiveness.
- Work collaboratively and continuously with key partners on shared intelligence and coordinated actions.

Families trust us to regulate effectively and transparently

- Increase transparency of and confidence in our regulatory decisions and the state of safety and quality in early learning.
- Ensure regulatory decisions and enforcement and compliance actions are appropriately visible.
- Communicate in culturally safe and responsive ways as a default position.
- Strengthen complaint-handling practices so families experience clarity, timeliness, empathy and respect.
- Articulate our vision, priorities and outcomes-based performance measures.

Commitments

Own our decisions
Apply our regulatory posture consistently, acting decisively to protect children.

Foster courage
Nurture values of integrity, care and decisiveness in the Commission.

Lead the nation
Shape reform for children's safety and wellbeing across Australia.