

## Flying Start Webinar - Friday 24 October

### Q&A summary

**Q: Does it meet the requirements of the Policy and Funding Guide for a service to have one degree-qualified Early Childhood Teacher (ECT) delivering a combined 3- and 4-year-old preschool room?**

**A:** Yes, one degree-qualified ECT is sufficient to deliver the preschool program in a mixed age group room that includes both 3- and 4-year-olds.

Provided an ECT is delivering the program, all eligible children in that room can be counted for preschool funding.

**Q: Can a service schedule an ECT's non-contact time as one block or spread it across multiple days during the week?**

**A:** Services have flexibility in how they schedule the required minimum 4 hours of non-contact time for ECTs. It can be arranged as a single block or distributed across the week.

**Q: If multiple ECTs are job sharing the delivery of the preschool program, does the service need to nominate each individual teacher and provide their details to the OECD as part of the data collection process?**

**A:** Yes, services must provide the names of all ECTs who are delivering the preschool program as part of OECD's quarterly data collection process.

For example, if you have 4 ECTs collaboratively teaching in one preschool room, the OECD will require the names of all 4 ECTs to be included in the quarterly data submissions.

**Q: If a service has one registered ECT and one person with a Special Authority to Teach as an Early Childhood Teacher (ECT SAT) sharing the delivery of one preschool room, how does that arrangement work in terms of non-contact time?**

**A:** An ECT SAT can deliver the preschool program as long as they have access to the appropriate mentoring requirements and supports. If these conditions are met, non-contact time may be allocated to both teachers in line with the program requirements.

**Q: Do services require an extra ECT to cover illness or annual leave days?**

**A:** A diploma-qualified educator, or person who holds a qualification in primary teaching, may replace an ECT or a person with an ECT SAT for a period of up to, but not exceeding, 60 days in a 12-month period to cover illness, leave and resignation, if there is another registered ECT identified to coach and support programming and practice during this period.

Where possible, if a service can arrange coverage with another ECT (or an ECT SAT) during periods when the regular ECT is on leave, this is strongly encouraged.



The particular section of the Policy and Funding Guide that supports services with guidance to help navigate these different scenarios can be found on page 12.

**Q: If a service has two ECTs job sharing the delivery of the preschool program, how many non-contact hours is each ECT required to complete?**

**A:** If the two ECTs are job sharing across five days and are already receiving non-contact time in line with the award, the additional programming time provided under the policy can be shared in the same ratio as the hours worked by each staff member.

**Q: If a child attends a Department for Education service for their 4-year-old preschool for 2 days and an approved Flying Start partner service for 3 days a week, currently the service is unable to claim funding for the child. Will this arrangement change under the new agreement?**

**A:** Funding is based on the number of hours a child is enrolled in the preschool program, not the hours they attend a service.

If a child is enrolled for the full 15 hours at a government preschool, no other service can claim funding.

**Q: We have specialists that are primary school trained that cover our ECTs for sport or music, would these positions be able to provide cover for ECTs delivering preschool within partnered services?**

**A:** This is not recognised as an early childhood qualification to deliver a funded preschool program. An ECT SAT would need to be in place to cover any funded preschool program hours.

**Q: If a child has been enrolled in the preschool program, but the parent/guardian has changed their mind, how do we unenroll a child?**

**A:** If this has occurred after the projected or quarterly data submission date, the child will be funded for that term and then should not be included in the data submission for the following period.

In the future, as we move to using EC Connect for data submissions, there will be a different process required by services to notify the OECD that the child has unenrolled.

**Q: Is it a requirement to cover a lunch break for an ECT delivering a preschool funded program with an ECT?**

**A:** No, there is no requirement to provide an additional ECT to cover a lunch break within a room delivering a Flying Start preschool program.

**Q: Do eligible children have to be 3- or 4-year-old as of 1st January 2026 or 30th April 2026 and can we have a mid-year intake for our preschool programs?**

**A:** We have developed an age eligibility calculator that is available on our website. This has been designed for you to enter a child's birthdate and help you work out the earliest point that a child would be eligible for 3-year-old preschool. We have included the link below:



[Give your child a Flying Start with 3-year-old preschool | Office for Early Childhood Development](#)

It is possible to have rolling intakes, so a mid-year intake can be included as part of your enrolment process. It is important to remember that the age eligibility of a child is not always the only factor. Families will need to consider the anticipated school commencement date of the child, to work out the child's eligibility for 3-year-old (two years before full-time school) and 4-year-old (year before full-time school) preschool.

