



National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection

Concepts, Sources and Methods

2012



National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods

Australia

2012

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Brian Pink
Australian Statistician

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACECQA	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ARIA	Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia
ASGC	Australian Statistical Geography Standard
ASGS	Australian Standard Geographical Classification
CCB	Child Care Benefit
CCMS	Child Care Management System
CCR	Child Care Rebate
CD	Collection District
CEaCS	Childhood Education and Care Survey
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEEWR	Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
ECE	early childhood education
ECEC	early childhood education and care
ECEC NMDS	Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set
ERP	Estimated Residential Population
LDC	long day care
METeOR	Metadata Online Registry
NIA ECEC	National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care
NMDS	National Minimum Data Set
NP ECE	National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education
NSSC	National Schools Statistics Collection
PPF	Preschool Provider Frame
ROGS	Report on Government Services
SA1	Statistical Area Level 1
SCSEEC	Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood (previously known as MCEECDYA)
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SLK	Statistical Linkage Key
UA	Universal Access
URL	Unit Record Level
YBFS	Year Before Full-time Schooling

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE COLLECTION

The National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection has been established to provide nationally comparable statistics on early childhood education and care (ECEC). The collection also enables improvements in the quality and accessibility of national ECEC data and assists in the progress reporting for the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). [Chapter 8: Collection Background and Governance](#), provides further context to the collection and background information, including information on governance and the NP ECE.

The collection is underpinned by standards specified within the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS). Further information on the ECEC NMDS is available on the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare website: <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/466519>.

Data standards and collection instructions for the National ECEC Collection are also outlined in detail within the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Data Collection Guide, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0.55.002).

Data collected through the National ECEC Collection are published annually, with the third iteration being *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Previous editions of this publication were labelled as *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2010* and *2011* (cat. no 4240.0), due to data quality and coverage issues in the first two years of the collection.

The ABS acknowledges while there are still data quality issues there has been significant improvements to the collection of data since its inception which no longer warrant the label of 'Experimental Estimates'. These improvements include:

- the increase of the coverage of the collection (see [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements](#))
- an alignment of collection reference periods for all jurisdictions (see [Chapter 2: Collection overview](#))
- increased alignment with the standards specified in the ECEC NMDS.

Whilst there are still some jurisdictions not able to meet all of the standards set out in the ECEC NMDS, there has been substantial improvement by data providers to meet these standards.

There has also been significant improvement in the quality of the linkage variable, which has significantly allowed for the improvement of identification of both child counts, and the year before full-time schooling year before full-time schooling counts.

PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLICATION

The *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Concepts, Sources and Methods* publication details information for data users relating to the 2012 National ECEC Collection. It includes an overview of the collection and discussions on collection scope and coverage, key concepts and definitions, data quality, the availability of data, and background and governance information.

INTRODUCTION

The *Data Collection Guide* is published in conjunction with the *Concepts, Sources and Methods* publication. The *Data Collection Guide* provides detailed guidelines, instructions and definitions to assist in the collection and reporting of ECEC data collected using both URL and aggregate level data collection methodologies. The *Data Collection Guide* is primarily for the states and territories, and Commonwealth data providers to assist with the collection of nationally comparable ECEC data and is released for general information. The guide is intended to be used in conjunction with the 2012 ABS National ECEC data request and the 2012 ECEC NMDS. The guidelines contained within the Data Collection Guide will facilitate the delivery of nationally comparable ECEC statistics.

USE AND MAINTENANCE OF THIS PUBLICATION

The *Concepts, Sources and Methods* publication has been developed by the National Centre for Education and Training Statistics within the ABS. Further collection improvements are planned, and changes in data collection capabilities and methodologies across jurisdictions will necessitate updates to this publication on an annual basis.

For further assistance or information, please contact the ABS by emailing [<education.statistics@abs.gov.au>](mailto:education.statistics@abs.gov.au).

CHAPTER 1: COLLECTION SCOPE AND COVERAGE

SCOPE OF THE COLLECTION

The collection scope of the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection consists of all service providers delivering a preschool program during a reference period that includes the first Friday in August. See [Chapter 2: Collection Overview](#) for further information on the collection reference period.

For the National ECEC Collection, a preschool program is defined as a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year before they commence full-time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it, or whether it is government funded, or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres or in association with a school. Terminology and definitions for preschool programs vary considerably across the jurisdictions. Further information on jurisdictional terminology and other key definitions for the collection can be found in [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

For long day care (LDC), information was collected from all LDC service providers that have children enrolled aged 36, however only data from those delivering a preschool program were considered in scope. More information about the collection date and reference period for the national ECEC Collection can be found in [Chapter 2: Collection Overview](#).

The National ECEC Collection aims to compile service provider, child and worker statistics from all service providers delivering an in-scope preschool program. The following statistical entities are in-scope for the collection population:

Service provider

A service provider is considered to be in-scope if it was providing a structured, play based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, aimed at children in the year before they commence full-time schooling (a preschool program) during the reference period.

Child

All children who as at 1 July in the collection year were between 3 and 6 years of age (inclusive) are in-scope of the collection if they were enrolled during the reference period in a preschool program. To be considered as enrolled, the child must have attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period, or be absent due to illness or extended holiday leave and expected to return.

Worker

All paid employees at an in-scope service provider during the reference period are in-scope of the collection. This includes both contact and non-contact workers, irrespective of whether the worker delivered a preschool program during the reference week.

CHAPTER 1: COLLECTION SCOPE AND COVERAGE

COLLECTION COVERAGE

All state and territory governments of Australia, as well as the Australian Government, currently collect data on service providers who deliver preschool programs. The current governance responsibilities for ECEC within each jurisdiction are outlined below:

1.1 GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR ECEC, 2012

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Government Department</i>
Australian Government	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
New South Wales	Department of Education and Communities
Victoria	Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Queensland	Department of Education, Training and Employment
South Australia	Department for Education and Child Development
Western Australia	Department of Education
Tasmania	Department of Education
Northern Territory	Department of Education
Australian Capital Territory	Education and Training Directorate

In an effort to achieve complete coverage of all ECEC services delivering preschool programs in Australia, ECEC data were sourced from state and territory education departments and compiled together with data from the Australian Government. The collection coverage in each state and territory for the 2012 National ECEC Collection is outlined below. For more detailed information on each jurisdiction's data collection activities, refer to [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements](#). Data sources for the National ECEC Collection for each sector within the states and territories are outlined in [Chapter 2: Collection Overview](#).

PRESCHOOL PROVIDER FRAME

For both 2011 and 2012 collection cycles, the ABS developed a Preschool Provider Frame (PPF) to obtain a comprehensive national picture of the number of known service providers delivering a preschool program. The two primary purposes for the PPF were to:

- better determine the coverage of the National ECEC Collection; and
- supplement jurisdictional data with data from the Child Care Management System (CCMS) for 2011 and 2012, at both the service provider level and child level.

In 2011, the ABS conducted the Preschool Provider Survey, and in 2012 DEEWR conducted a similar survey as well as targeted communication strategies to improve the coverage of CCMS data. These included:

- promotion of the Preschool module in the CCMS newsletter
- targeted emails to services prior to the reference week
- follow-up email/phone survey to update CCMS data in the reference week
- imputation of child records where necessary, to supplement the CCMS extract with survey information.

CHAPTER 1: COLLECTION SCOPE AND COVERAGE

The 2012 DEEWR Follow-up survey focused on 3 population groups. These included:

- services that reported a preschool program in CCMS in 2011, but not in 2012
- new services since the 2011 collection that were not reporting a preschool program
- services that were identified in the 2011 ABS Preschool Frame Survey as delivering a preschool program, but not recorded as such in the CCMS 2012 reference week.

Provider Frame: Key Outcomes

The project initially focused on confirming the existence of preschool programs operating at CCMS-registered LDCs. A telephone survey was conducted by the ABS in late 2011, confirming the existence of a preschool program and subsequent preschool enrolments at targeted service providers. Where preschool was confirmed, child enrolments were utilised in the 2011 National ECEC Collection to produce enhanced estimates of preschool in Australia. A similar supplementary collection activity was conducted by DEEWR in 2012, and data were included in the CCMS extract provided to the ABS for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

During construction of the PPF dataset a range of quality issues were identified. Data providers across jurisdictions were unable to supply service provider characteristics to the required National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) standards.

To capitalise on initial achievements of the 2011/2012 PPF project and ensure the benefits are maximised from the 2011 Collection, maintenance of the frame for subsequent collection cycles has been automated. The over-arching concept of an enduring frame is to establish register of all ECE source providers to accompany the National ECEC Collection.

Coverage

Level of coverage for the PPF varies between sector and preschool program delivery setting. Below is an outline of coverage for each of these sectors.

Long Day Care with a preschool program

The PPF project, and subsequent 2012 DEEWR supplementary communication and collection activities, have improved the coverage of service providers reported as delivering a preschool program within CCMS.

Although there have been some collection improvements, there is still an unknown level of under-coverage of service provider which are delivering a preschool program and are not currently captured in CCMS or state and territory ECEC collections.

Non-Government Service Providers

The 2012 PPF project identified a potential under-coverage of non-government preschools. 2012 collection development activities have improved collection coverage, however there still remains evidence to suggest that collection under-coverage exists within the 2012 National ECEC Collection. The non-government under-coverage can be explained by funding and service provision arrangements and existing collection authority within the states and territories. Given that non-government under-coverage remains a problem for the National ECEC Collection, states and territories are encouraged to continue exploring methods to improve non-government preschool collection for future collection cycles.

CHAPTER 1: COLLECTION SCOPE AND COVERAGE

A summary of the results of the 2012 PPF is included as an appendix to the release of the publication *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0), released in March 2013.

STATE AND TERRITORY COLLECTION OF THE NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE COLLECTION

The ABS continues to work closely with all states and territories, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) on collection development activities. Current development activities focus on improving service provider coverage and aligning service provider data standards. These data development activities will greatly benefit future cycles of the National ECEC Collection.

The ABS and jurisdictions are continuing to work together to improve collection coverage by expanding the development of collections for future cycles. Outlined below are details of the coverage for each State and Territory.

Coverage in New South Wales

Within New South Wales (NSW), full collection coverage was achieved for all preschools delivered within government schools through the Government School Census.

Full coverage was achieved for all government funded preschools through the Children's Services Annual Data Collection. Within these preschools, only children who did not receive or were not eligible for the Child Care Benefit (CCB) or the Child Care Rebate (CCR) were included in the collection.

All services approved for the purposes of CCB were required to provide data through the CCMS. However, LDCs delivering preschool programs were not mandated to complete the preschool program component of the CCMS, which may have resulted in under-coverage due to levels of service non-response. Service providers that were not approved for CCB purposes were not included in the CCMS, so this may have resulted in under-coverage within NSW.

There were a small number of non-government preschools not reported in the 2012 collection because they were not funded by NSW Department of Education and Communities and not within the CCMS. Some of these providers are school-based preschools, associated with non-government schools.

See [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#), for further information on the sectors that deliver preschool programs in NSW.

Coverage in Victoria

Within Victoria (Vic.), full collection coverage was achieved for all preschool programs delivered in services that were funded by Vic. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), through the Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection (conducted in April) and the August Data Collection. The majority of service providers delivering preschool programs in Vic. were covered within these collections, irrespective of their management type and service delivery setting.

CHAPTER 1: COLLECTION SCOPE AND COVERAGE

A small number of LDC centres operating a preschool program were not funded or licensed by Vic. DEECD. All services approved for the purposes of CCB were required to provide data through the CCMS. However, LDCs delivering preschool programs were not mandated to complete the preschool program component of the CCMS, which may have resulted in under-coverage due to levels of service non-response. LDC data for Vic. are sourced from both the Vic. Collection and CCMS. Each collection may address the under-coverage in the other. However, this may still have resulted in a level of under-coverage in the LDC sector.

See [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#), for further information on the sectors that deliver preschool programs in Vic.

Coverage in Queensland

Within Queensland (Qld.), full collection coverage was achieved for all approved service providers in receipt of Qld. government funding through the Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census (ECECSC). This included coverage of LDCs. Participation in the Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census (ECECSC) was voluntary for unfunded providers and therefore complete coverage of this sector was not achieved.

See [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#), for further information on the sectors that deliver preschool programs in Qld.

Coverage in South Australia

Within South Australia (SA), full collection coverage was achieved for all government managed and government funded preschools, Independent schools, and Catholic schools with funded preschool programs through the Annual Census of Children's Services (ACCS). Participation in the ACCS was compulsory for all government managed and government funded preschool programs. Participation was voluntary for unfunded independent and Catholic school managed preschool providers and for unfunded community managed providers. As a result, full coverage in these sectors was not achieved. There may be a small number of LDC providers operating a preschool program that were unfunded and not registered for CCB, and this represents a possible under-coverage within South Australia.

All services approved for the purposes of CCB were required to provide data through the CCMS. However, LDCs delivering preschool programs were not mandated to complete the preschool program component of the CCMS, which may have resulted in under-coverage due to levels of service non-response. Service providers that were not approved for CCB purposes were not included in the CCMS, so this may have resulted in under-coverage within SA.

See [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#), for further information on the sectors that deliver preschool programs in SA.

CHAPTER 1: COLLECTION SCOPE AND COVERAGE

Coverage in Western Australia

Within Western Australia (WA), full collection coverage was achieved for all preschool programs delivered in registered and funded schools (both government and non-government) and community-based preschools through the WA August Student Census.

All services approved for the purposes of CCB were required to provide data through the CCMS. However, LDCs delivering preschool programs were not mandated to complete the preschool program component of the CCMS, which may have resulted in under-coverage due to levels of service non-response. Service providers that were not approved for CCB purposes were not included in the CCMS, so this may have resulted in under-coverage within WA.

See [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#), for further information on the sectors that deliver preschool programs in WA.

Coverage in Tasmania

Within Tasmania (Tas.), full collection coverage was achieved for all preschool programs delivered in government and non-government schools through the Tas. 2012 Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection.

All services approved for the purposes of CCB were required to provide data through the CCMS. However, LDCs delivering preschool programs were not mandated to complete the preschool program component of the CCMS, which may have resulted in under-coverage due to levels of service non-response. Service providers that were not approved for CCB purposes were not included in the CCMS, so this may have resulted in under-coverage within Tas.

See [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#), for further information on the sectors that deliver preschool programs in Tas.

Coverage in the Northern Territory

Within the Northern Territory (NT), full collection coverage was achieved for all government and registered non-government preschools through the NT Age/Grade Census.

All services approved for the purposes of CCB were required to provide data through the CCMS. However, LDCs delivering preschool programs were not mandated to complete the preschool program component of the CCMS, which may have resulted in under-coverage due to non-response. Service providers that were not approved for CCB purposes were not included in the CCMS, so this may have resulted in under-coverage within NT.

See [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#), for further information on the sectors that deliver preschool programs in NT.

Coverage in the Australian Capital Territory

Within the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), full collection coverage was achieved for all ACT government managed and Catholic schools delivering a preschool program through the ACT Public School Census and the ACT Catholic Preschool Collection. Independent schools, and community (not for-profit) and private for-profit managed preschools, were not covered in the collection and therefore full coverage in these sectors was not achieved.

CHAPTER 1: COLLECTION SCOPE AND COVERAGE

All services approved for the purposes of CCB were required to provide data through the CCMS. However, IDCs delivering preschool programs were not mandated to complete the preschool program component of the CCMS, which may have resulted in under-coverage due to levels of service non-response. Service providers that were not approved for CCB purposes were not included in the CCMS, so this may have resulted in under-coverage within ACT.

See [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#), for further information on the sectors that deliver preschool programs in ACT.

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

COLLECTION DATE AND REFERENCE PERIOD

The collection date for the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection is the first Friday in August of each year. In 2012, the collection date for all jurisdictions was Friday, 3 August 2012, with a recommended reference period of 30 July – 3 August 2012. Some jurisdictions preferred to incorporate a reference period of two weeks that included the collection date, to reflect their preschool program delivery models better. Jurisdictional collection dates and reference periods for 2012 are summarised in the table below.

2.1 JURISDICTIONAL COLLECTION DATES AND REFERENCE PERIODS, 2012

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Collection Date</i>	<i>Reference Period</i>
Australian Government	3 August 2012	30 July – 5 August 2012 6 August – 10 August 2012(a)
New South Wales	3 August 2012	30 July – 3 August 2012 30 July – 10 August 2012(b)
Victoria	3 August 2012	30 July – 3 August 2012
Queensland	3 August 2012	30 July – 5 August 2012 and 23 July – 5 August 2012(c)(d)
South Australia	3 August 2012	23 July – 3 August 2012(c)
Western Australia	3 August 2012	23 July – 3 August 2012(c)
Tasmania	3 August 2012	23 July – 3 August 2012(c)
Northern Territory	3 August 2012	30 July – 3 August 2012
Australian Capital Territory	3 August 2012	30 July – 10 August 2012(c) 30 July – 3 August 2012(e)

(a) DEEWR preschool census reference week.

(b) NSW community based preschools.

(c) Jurisdiction collected data for a fortnightly reference period to reflect their preschool delivery model.

(d) Reference period for community-based preschools in Queensland.

(e) ACT Catholic Preschool Collection.

For the National ECEC Collection to be comparable across the states and territories, it is necessary for all jurisdictions to have consistent collection dates and overlapping reference periods. The use of the recommended collection date of the first Friday in August also aligns the National ECEC Collection with the census date used for the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) to ensure that children are only counted in one sector of education.

COLLECTION METHODS

The National ECEC Collection aims to report accurately on the number of children who have received a preschool program within the collection reference period. To achieve this, an important goal of the collection is to count each child once in the total number of children within each state and territory who are enrolled in and attending preschool programs. Given the complexity of the service delivery models for ECEC across Australia, it is a statistical challenge to ensure that children attending multiple preschool programs are only counted once in these total counts.

Jurisdictions collect and report data for the National ECEC Collection using either a Unit Record Level (URL) collection methodology or combination of aggregate and URL collection methodologies.

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

Unit Record Level Data Collection

A URL data collection methodology supports the collection of information at the individual child, worker and teacher level, and at the service provider organisation level. For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, a URL data collection methodology collects child level data, and corresponding service provider data for each child in the data set. This collection methodology also includes worker level data corresponding to service provider data for each worker in the data set. In 2012, all jurisdictions were able to collect worker data using a URL data collection methodology.

A URL collection with appropriate methodologies and protocols is the most appropriate method for ensuring a child who is enrolled in multiple preschool programs is only counted once in child level estimates. Aggregate data collection methodologies are limited in their capacity to identify children attending multiple preschool programs. Consequently all data from jurisdictions with a collection process that produced aggregate data for the 2012 National ECEC Collection could only be presented in terms of episodes of preschool program provision.

Aggregate Level Data Collection

An aggregate data collection methodology supports the collection of information on child and teacher data at the service provider level. For this collection, aggregate data can only be presented in terms of episodes of preschool program delivered. An episode is the count of the occurrence for a specific characteristic. For the National ECEC Collection, an episode refers to a preschool program provided to a child. When one child attends two different preschool programs, the child is attending two episodes of preschool.

An aggregate level data collection methodology contains data from statistical entities within the collection population that are grouped together and aggregated into broader categories. For the National ECEC Collection, an aggregate data collection methodology collects totals of children enrolled in and attending preschools programs at the service provider level only. Unlike URL collection methodologies, data collected at this level does not contain detailed child level information. Therefore, it is not operationally possible to identify children enrolled and attending multiple services. All preschool data collected at the service provider level is therefore reported as an episode.

For further information on these concepts, including definitions for child, worker and service provider record level data, see [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

The following table shows the collection methodologies adapted by each jurisdiction in 2012. Further information on each jurisdiction's collection capabilities are outlined in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements](#).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

2.2 JURISDICTIONAL DATA COLLECTION METHODOLOGIES, 2012

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Collection Method</i>
Australian Government	Unit Record Level
New South Wales	Unit Record Level
Victoria	Unit Record Level
Queensland	Unit Record Level / Aggregate(a)
South Australia	Unit Record Level
Western Australia	Unit Record Level(b)
Tasmania	Unit Record Level
Northern Territory	Unit Record Level
Australian Capital Territory	Unit Record Level

(a) Qld. collected data from a number of unfunded preschools using an aggregate data collection methodology.

(b) WA provided some aggregate data as pseudo URL data for community preschools.

Jurisdictions that provided a combination of URL and aggregate data are working towards the collection of complete URL data for future cycles of the National ECEC Collection.

Those jurisdictions that were able to provide complete URL level ECEC data for 2012 are also working towards enhancing the information that they collect and/or provide to the ABS for the National ECEC Collection, where relevant, to improve child level estimates.

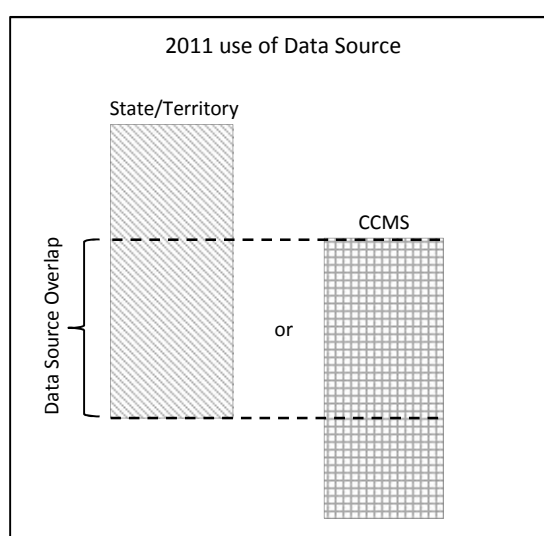
CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

CHANGES TO 2012 NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE DATA SOURCES

Due to the collection capabilities within each state and territory, data for the 2012 National ECEC Collection were derived from a number of data sources. Child Care Management System (CCMS) data were used in addition to state and territory supplied datasets as a supplementary data source for Long Day Care (LDC) centres in most states and territories. This is because state and territory data, where available, may not have sufficient coverage of the LDC sector.

For the 2011 National ECEC Collection, the LDC data source used for each state and territory was decided through a quality review including the examining of collection coverage. LDC data used in the 2011 publication were selected from either the State/Territory data source, or state/territory specific CCMS data source (see figure 2.1).

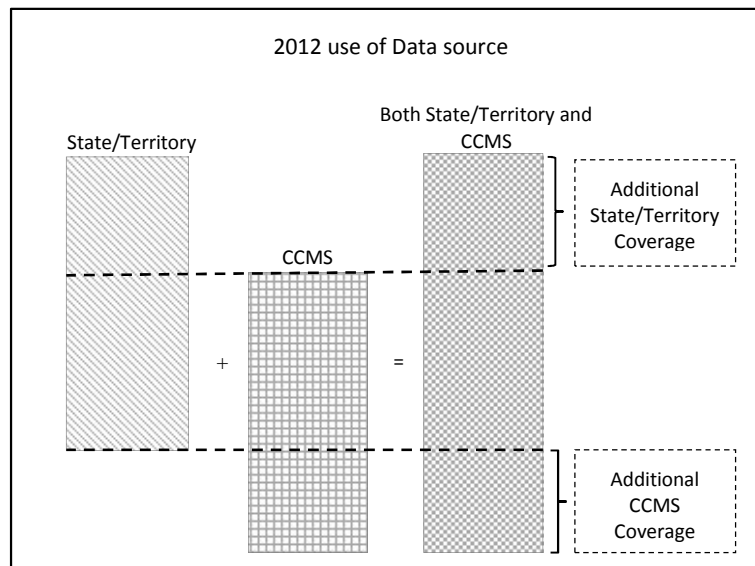
Figure 2.1: Use of Data Sources 2011



With the development and interaction of jurisdictional collection coverage and National ECEC Collection methodology (see [Chapter 1: Collection Scope and Coverage](#)), there has been significant improvement in the coverage of the 2012 National ECEC Collection. In 2012, the data were sourced from both the state/territory data source, and CCMS data source used to provide a wider coverage for each state and territory (see figure 2.2).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

Figure 2.2: Use of Data Sources 2012



Further information on the CCMS can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

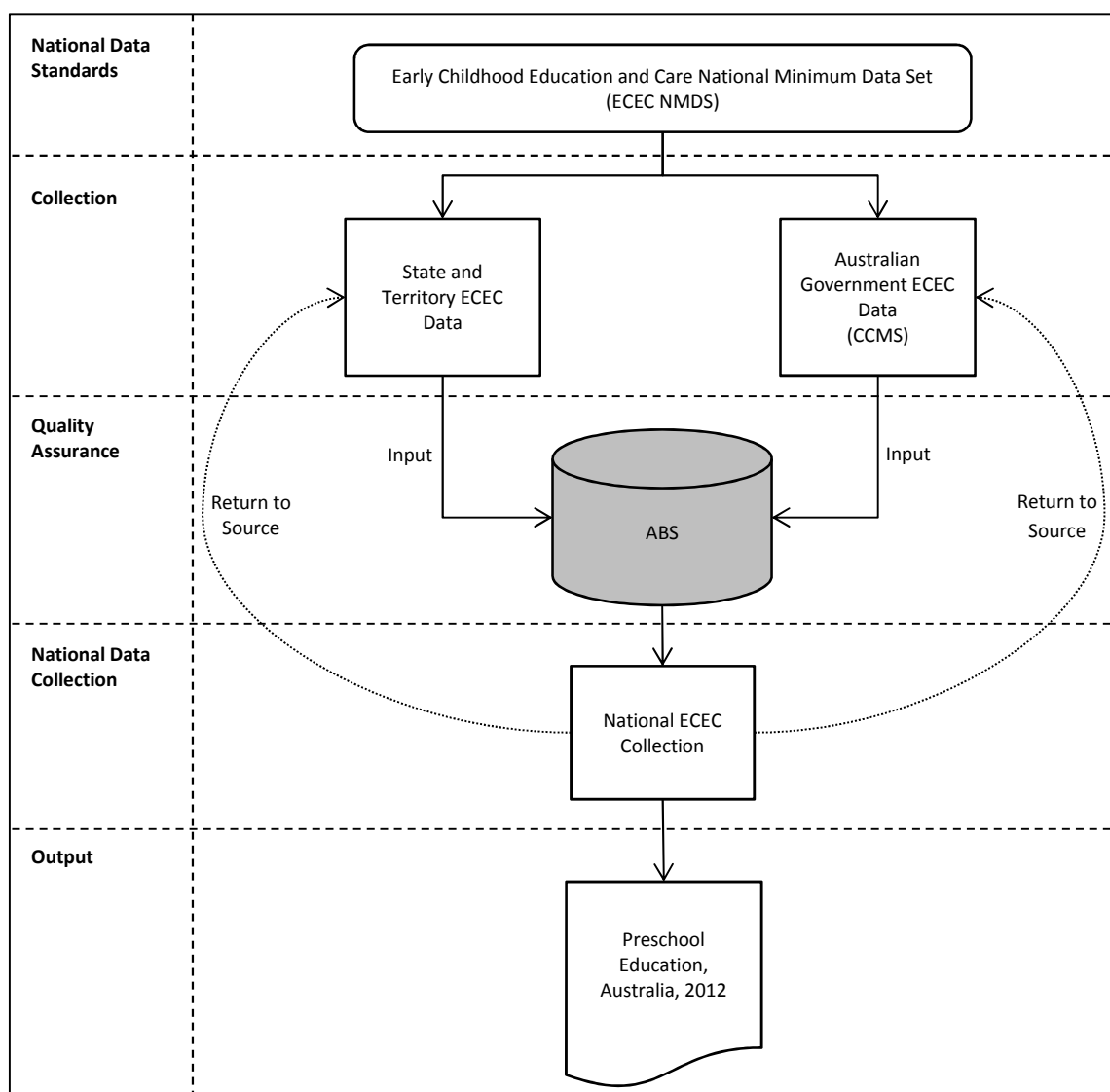
CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

DATA SOURCES

Due to collection capabilities within each state and territory, data for the National ECEC Collection were derived from a number of data sources. In most state and territories, data from the CCMS has been used as the data source for LDC centres. This is because state and territory data may not have sufficient coverage of that sector. An overview of the National ECEC Collection is provided in Figure 2.3 below.

Further information on the CCMS can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

Figure 2.3: Overview of National ECEC Collection



CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The following table and accompanying flow diagrams summarise the sources for ECEC data within each of the states and territories that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Outlined below is a summary of the data sources used from each state/territory for the National ECEC Collection. In some instances a combination of both jurisdictional and CCMS data were used. For more information on the data sources used for each particular state/territory see [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements](#).

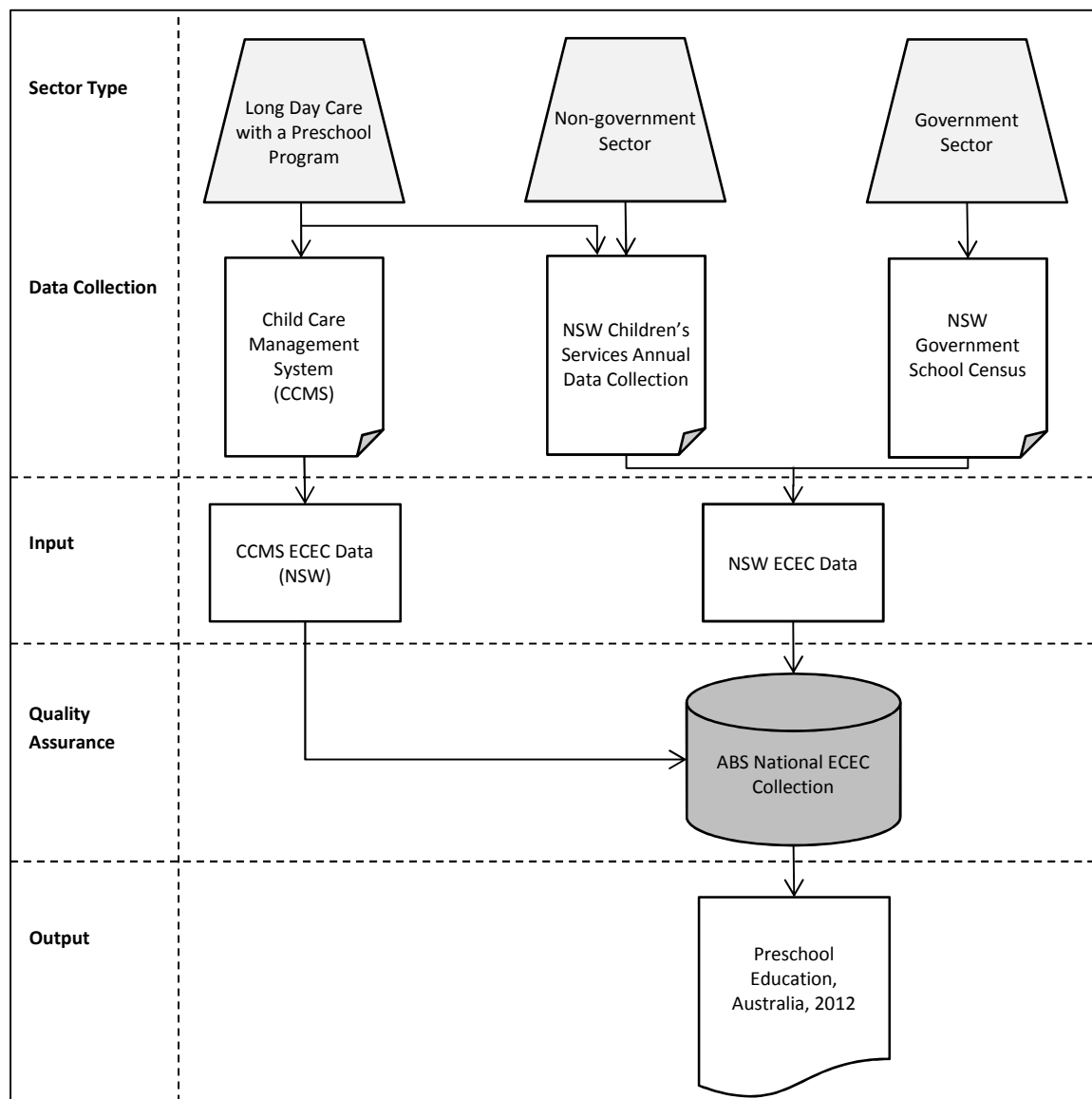
Figure 2.4: NATIONAL ECEC COLLECTION INPUT DATA SOURCES FOR EACH STATE & TERRITORY, 2012

<i>State/Territory</i>	<i>Sector</i>	<i>Data Source</i>
New South Wales	Government	NSW Government School Census
	Non-government	NSW Children's Service Annual Data Collection
	Long Day Care	CCMS and NSW Children's Service Annual Data Collection
Victoria	Government	Vic. August Census Collection
	Non-government	Vic. August Census Collection
	Long Day Care	CCMS and Vic. August Census Collection
Queensland	Government	Qld. Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census
	Non-government	Qld. Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census
	Long Day Care	Qld. Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census
South Australia	Government	SA Annual Census of Children's Services
	Non-government	SA Annual Census of Children's Services
	Long Day Care	CCMS and SA Annual Census of Children's Services
Western Australia	Government	WA August Student Census
	Non-government	WA August Student Census
	Long Day Care	CCMS
Tasmania	Government	Tas. 2012 ECEC Collection
	Non-government	Tas. 2012 ECEC Collection
	Long Day Care	CCMS
Northern Territory	Government	NT Age/Grade Census
	Non-government	NT Age/Grade Census
	Long Day Care	CCMS
Australian Capital Territory	Government	ACT Public School Census
	Non-government	ACT Catholic Preschool Collection
	Long Day Care	CCMS

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The below diagram summarises the source for ECEC data within NSW that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Figure 2.5: Data Sources – New South Wales



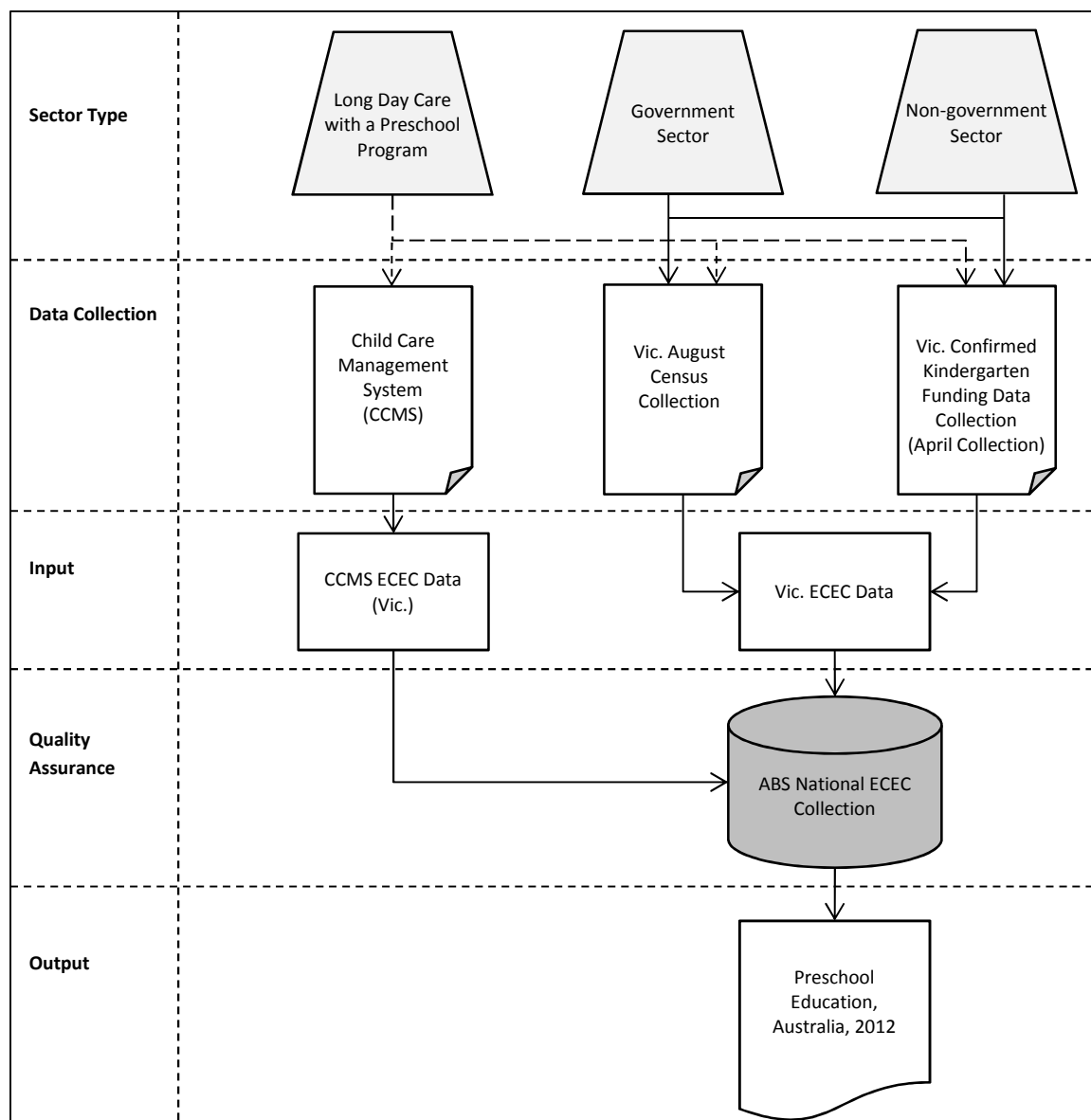
A data quality statement for the NSW Government School Census and the NSW Children's Services Annual Data Collection can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – New South Wales](#).

A data quality statement for the Child Care Management System can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The below diagram summarises the source for ECEC data within Vic. that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Figure 2.6: Data Sources – Victoria



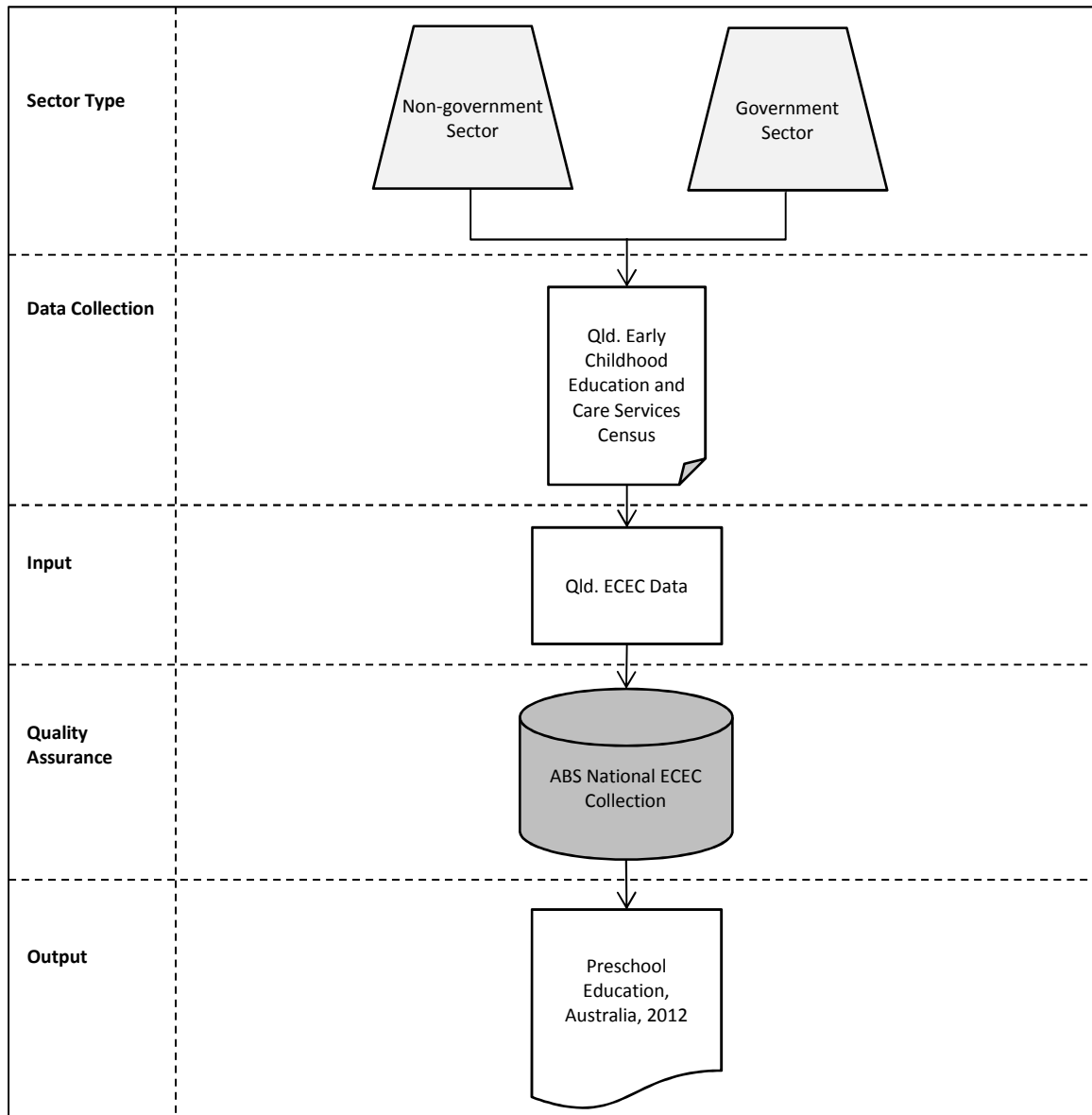
A data quality statement for the Victorian August Census Collection and the Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Victoria](#).

A data quality statement for the Child Care Management System can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The below diagram summarises the source for ECEC data within Qld. that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection. Qld. data does not include CCMS data as data is provided at the aggregate level from the Qld. Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census.

Figure 2.7: Data Sources – Queensland

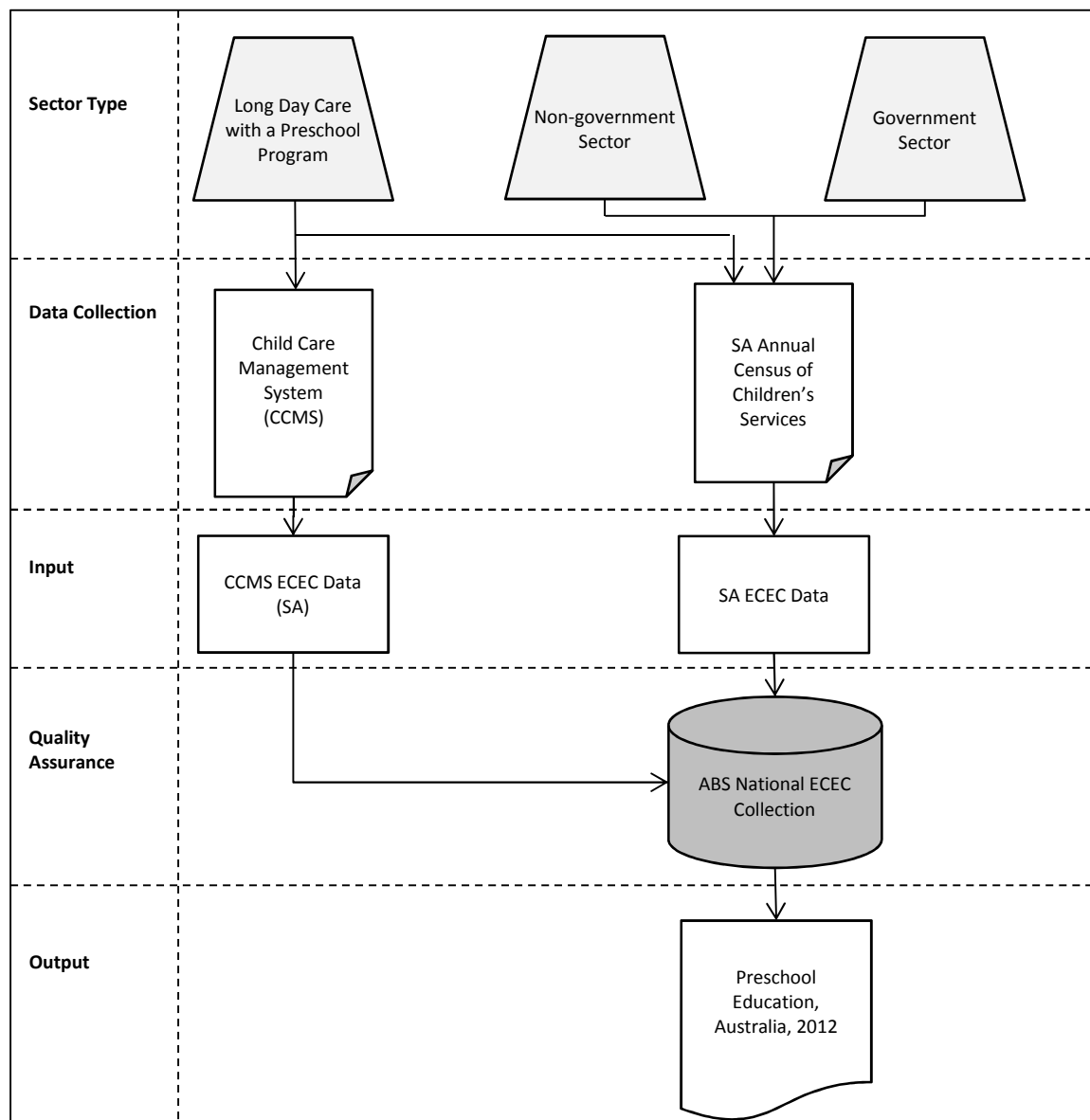


A data quality statement for the Queensland Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements - Queensland](#).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The below diagram summarises the source for ECEC data within SA that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Figure 2.8: Data Sources – South Australia



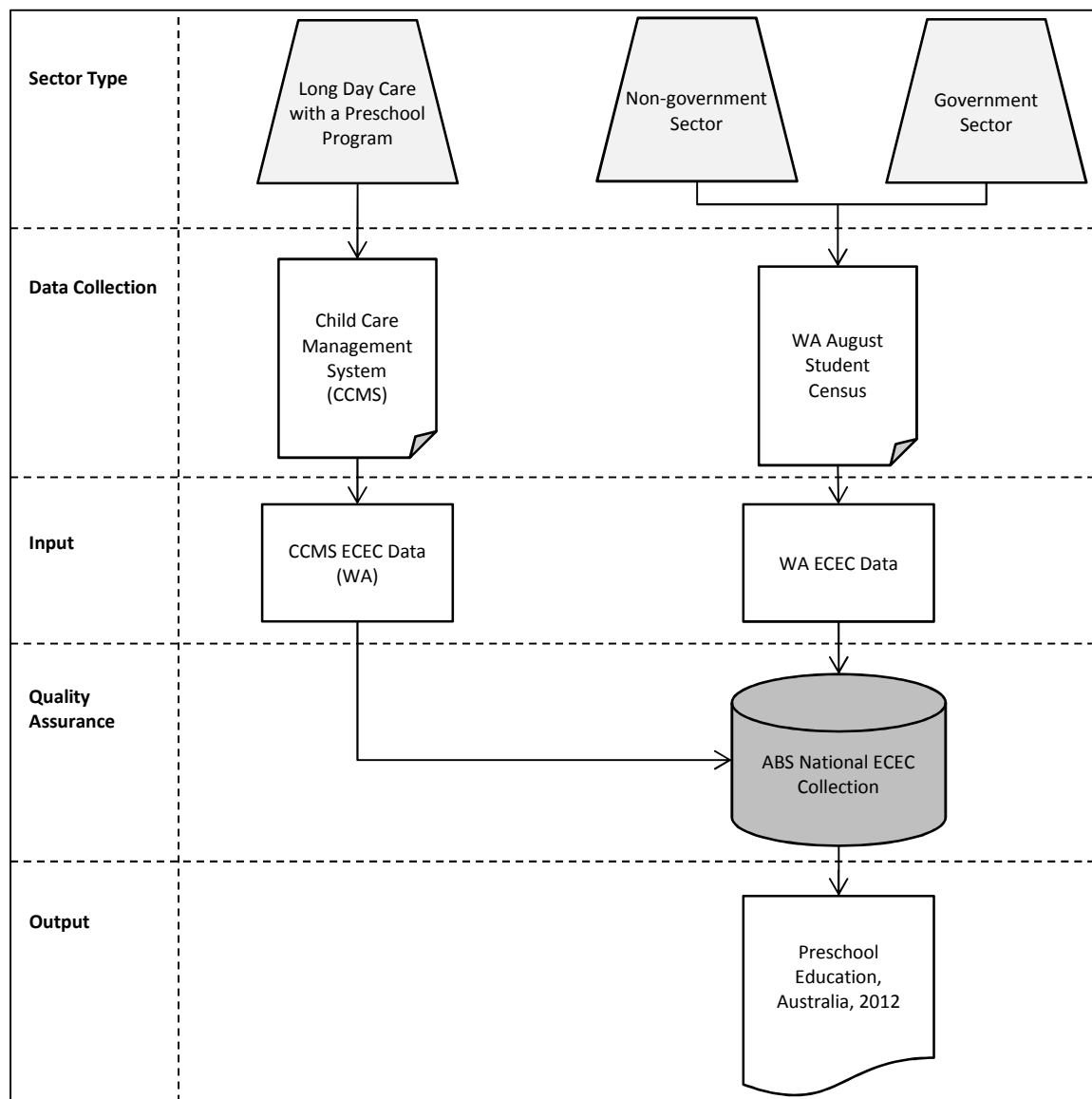
A data quality statement for the South Australian Annual Census of Children's Services can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – South Australia](#).

A data quality statement for the Child Care Management System can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The below diagram summarises the source for ECEC data within WA that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Figure 2.9: Data Sources – Western Australia



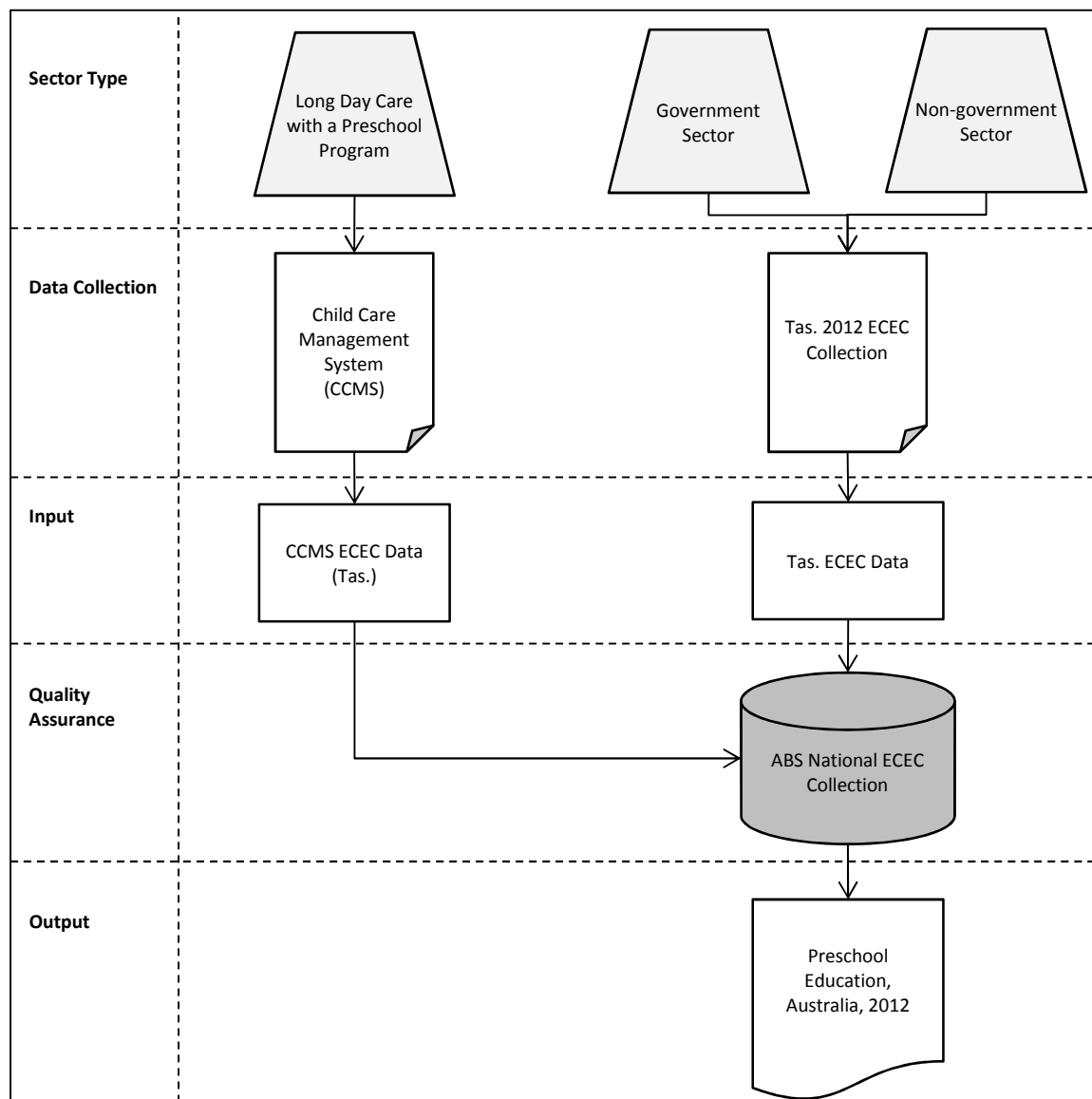
A data quality statement for the Western Australian August Student Census can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Western Australia](#).

A data quality statement for the Child Care Management System can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The below diagram summarises the source for ECEC data within Tas. that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Figure 2.10: Data Sources – Tasmania



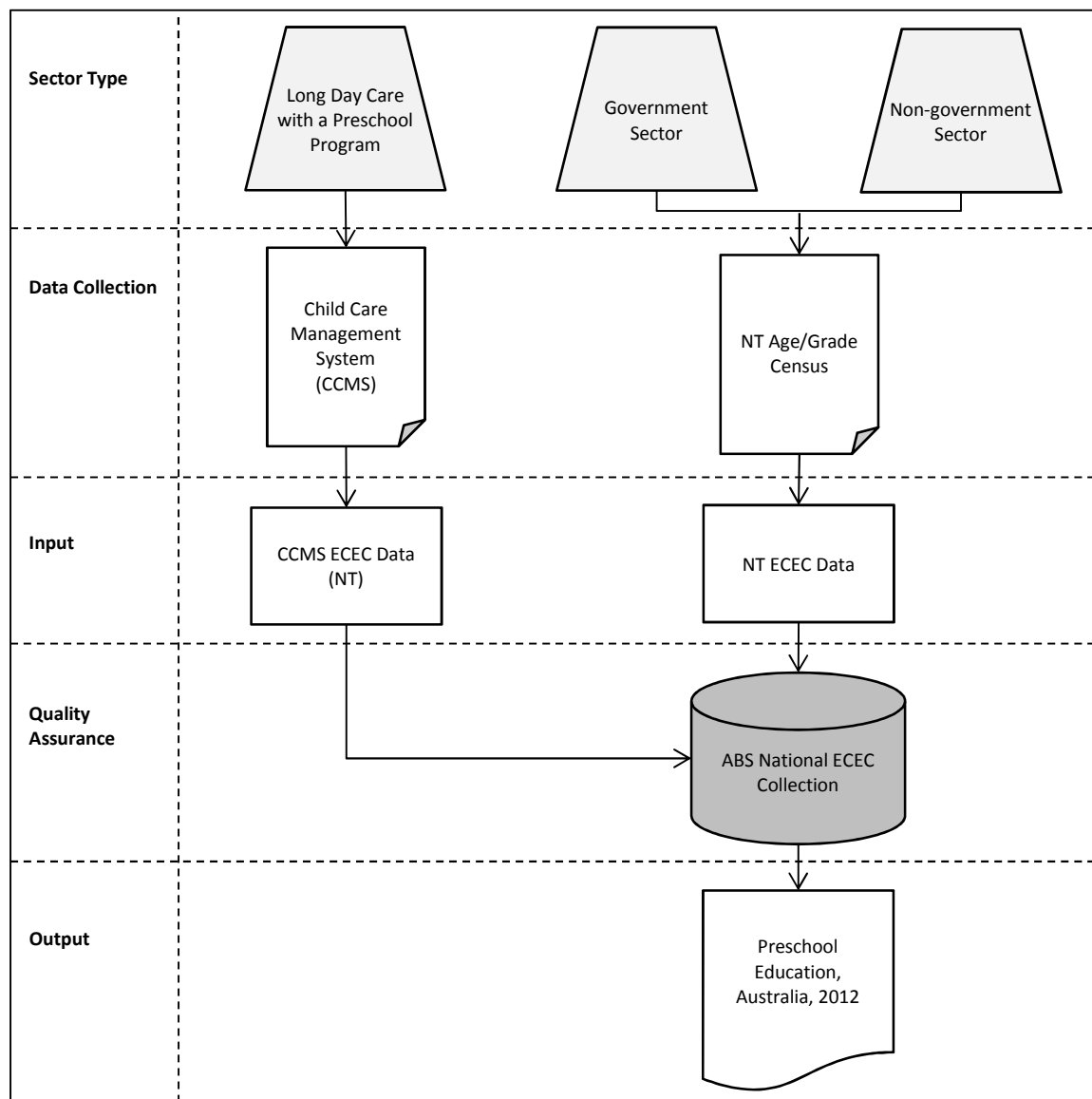
A data quality statement for the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Collection can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Tasmania](#).

A data quality statement for the Child Care Management System can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The below diagram summarises the source for ECEC data within NT that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Figure 2.11: Data Sources – Northern Territory



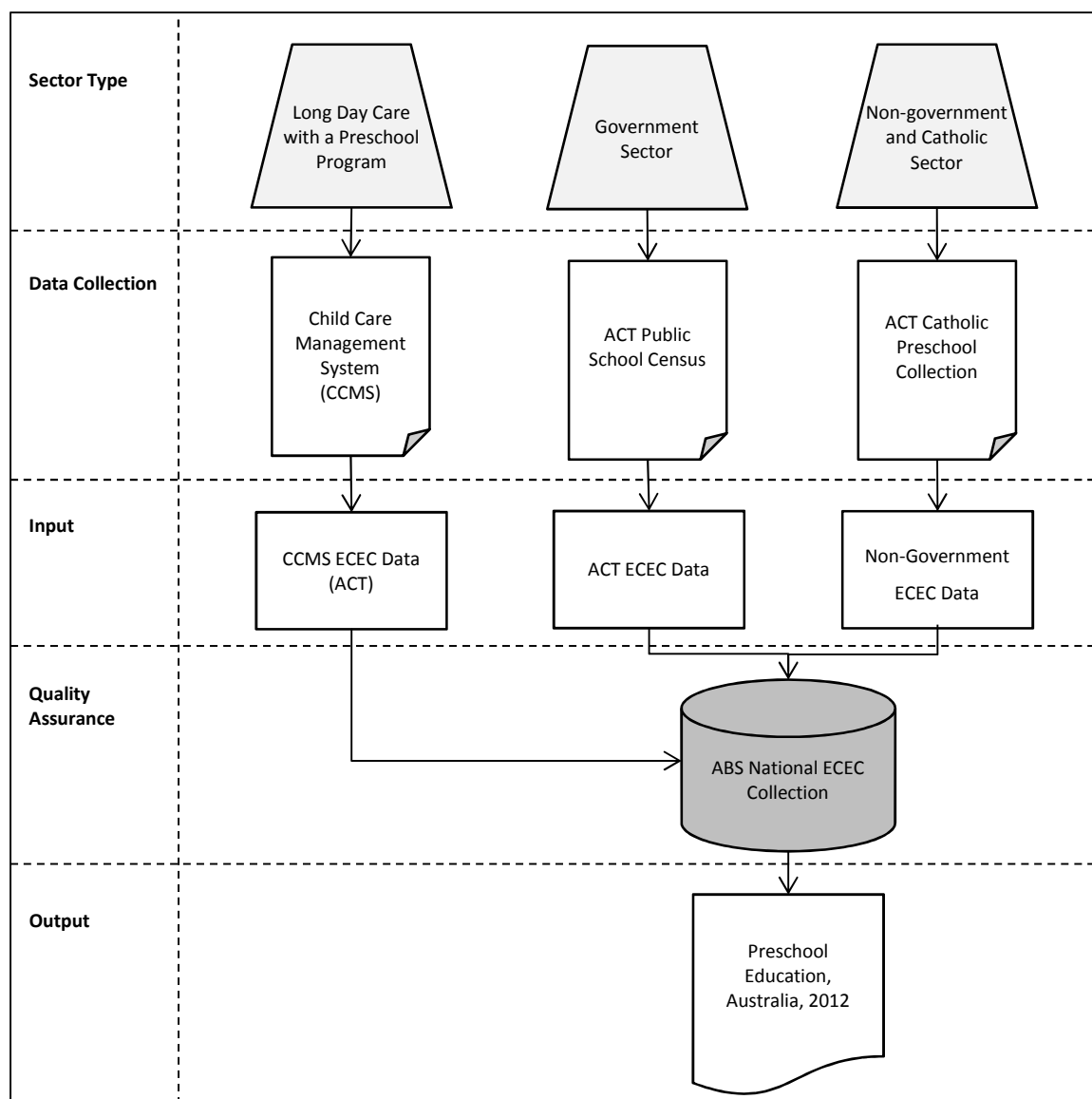
A data quality statement for the Northern Territory Age/Grade Census can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Northern Territory](#).

A data quality statement for the Child Care Management System can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

CHAPTER 2: COLLECTION OVERVIEW

The below diagram summarises the source for ECEC data within ACT that have been used for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Figure 2.12: Data Sources – Australian Capital Territory



A data quality statement for the ACT Public School Census can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Capital Territory](#).

A data quality statement for the Child Care Management System can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

KEY COLLECTION CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

This chapter outlines key collection concepts and definitions of the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection. This chapter is divided into two sections, data collection and counting concepts, and data processing and reporting concepts. The data collection and counting concepts section explores the core definitions and concepts within the National ECEC Collection while the processing for the National ECEC Collection section explores the operational business rules and processes used to report the collection's core processes. The chapter also outlines where these core concepts are presented within the publication output of *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

DATA COLLECTION AND COUNTING CONCEPTS

This section describes key data collection and counting concepts used in the 2012 National ECEC Collection. Further supporting terms and definitions are provided in the [Glossary](#).

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

'Early childhood education and care' (ECEC) incorporates all early childhood education and child care programs. ECEC programs are delivered by a variety of service providers such as preschools, schools and long day care (LDC) centres, and may be delivered to children of all ages.

Responsibility for ECEC is shared between the Australian Government and the state and territory governments, and is administered through a wide range of service provider management types including government, local government, community, schools (both government and non-government) and private organisations.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAM

A preschool program for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, is defined as a structured, play-based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, primarily aimed at children in the year before they commence full-time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it or whether it is government funded or privately provided. This guide uses the term 'preschool program', notwithstanding that the terminology varies considerably across state and territories.

A preschool program can be delivered in a variety of settings such as stand-alone preschools, preschools within a school (both government and non-government), and preschools within a LDC centre. A child may attend both a preschool and a separate or adjoined child care facility, such as family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care, in-home care and occasional care services. LDC centres may or may not offer a preschool program as part of their service offering. Participation in preschool is not compulsory and is influenced by parental preference and other factors, such as school starting age in the particular jurisdiction.

Terminology and age entry requirements differ across states and territories. These differences are summarised in the following table.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

3.1 PROGRAM TERMINOLOGY AND AGE ENTRY REQUIREMENTS, BY STATE AND TERRITORY, 2012^(a)

<i>Jurisdiction</i>	<i>Preschool (Year before full-time schooling)</i>		<i>First year of School (Year prior to Grade 1)</i>	
	<i>Program name</i>	<i>Age entry requirement</i>	<i>Program name</i>	<i>Age entry requirement</i>
New South Wales	Preschool	Generally aged 3 and 4	Kindergarten ^(b)	5 by 31 July
Victoria	Kindergarten	4 by 30 April	Preparatory (Prep) ^(b)	5 by 30 April
Queensland	Kindergarten/Pre-Preparatory (Pre-Prep)	4 by 30 June	Preparatory Year (Prep) ^(c)	5 by 30 June
South Australia	Preschool/Kindergarten	Entry after 4 th birthday ^(e)	Reception ^(b)	Entry after 5 th birthday
Western Australia	Kindergarten	4 by 30 June	Pre Primary ^(c)	5 by 30 June
Tasmania	Kindergarten	4 by 1 January	Preparatory ^(d)	5 by 1 January
Northern Territory	Preschool	4 by 30 June ^(f)	Transition ^(b)	5 by 30 June
Australian Capital Territory	Preschool	4 by 30 April	Kindergarten ^(b)	5 by 30 April

(a) Sourced from the 2013 Report on Government Services (SCRGSP, 2013).

(b) Program is compulsory from age 6.

(c) Program is non-compulsory. Children starting school from age 6 can enrol into Year 1.

(d) Program is compulsory from age 5.

(e) Indigenous children and children under the guardianship of the Minister may commence preschool from 3 years of age.

(f) For Indigenous children in remote areas, age requirement is 3 years old by 30 June.

Enrolment in a preschool program

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, a child is considered to be enrolled in a preschool program if the child has been offered a place in a preschool program and is actively attending. A child is considered to be attending preschool if they attended the preschool program for at least one hour in the reference period or were absent during the reference period due to illness or extended holiday leave, but expected to return.

Attendance in a preschool program

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, a child is considered to be attending if the child is enrolled in a preschool program and has attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period.

Worker

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, an ECEC worker is defined at the broadest level as a contact worker who has paid employment with an ECEC service provider (including contract, part-time and full-time workers) who delivered a preschool program in the collection reference period.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Teacher

The formal definition of a teacher for the purposes of the national ECEC Collection is still under development. The 2012 National ECEC Collection output definition is defined as; 'a primary contact worker delivering a face-to-face structured play-based preschool program education for at least one hour per week during the collection reference period who has a university qualification in early childhood education'. The formal teacher definition is currently being negotiated in the context of future ECEC National Minimum Data Set (NMDS).

More information on worker and teacher specifications can be found in 'Chapter 1: Collection Specifications' of the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Data Collection Guide, 2012 (cat. no 4240.0.55.002)*.

For more information on how a worker/teacher is defined for each state and territory see [Chapter 5: Overview of Early Childhood Education and Care in Australia](#).

CHILD COUNTING CONCEPTS

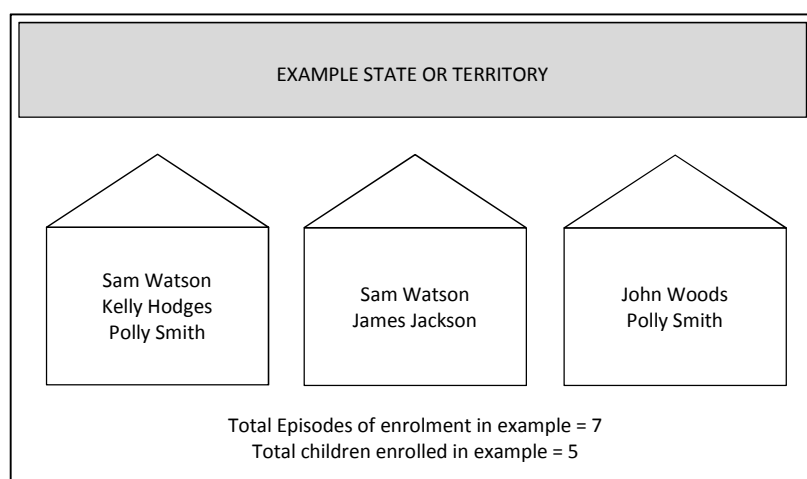
Child Episode Counts vs Unique Child Counts

A key outcome of the National ECEC Collection is to report the number of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs. In order to report accurately on the number of children who have received an early childhood education program, a requirement of the collection is to count each child once. Given the complexity of the service delivery models for ECEC across Australia, it is a statistical challenge to identify children attending multiple preschool programs within the collection reference period. It is also a challenge to report accurately the number of children enrolled in and attending a preschool program, without counting an individual child more than once.

When a child attends two different preschool programs, this is described as a child attending two episodes of preschool. This child is only counted once in the total numbers of children enrolled and attending (child counts). All preschool episodes associated with a child are included in the total enrolment and attendance episodes of preschool.

In the example within figure 3.1, Sam Watson and Polly Smith both attend two different service providers which are responsible for delivering two separate episodes of preschool to Sam and Polly. James Jackson, Kelly Hodges and John Woods each only attend one episode of preschool. In the above example there are 7 episodes of preschool and this relates to 5 different children. See the [Glossary](#), for further information on the concept of an 'episode'.

Figure 3.1 Relationship of Episode counts, and Child counts



CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

COUNT OF CHILD EPISODES AND UNIQUE COUNT OF CHILDREN

The count of child episodes is the total count of preschool programs delivered to children within the collection reference period. The unique count of children represents the count of children, irrespective of the number of separate preschool programs at different service providers any one child may be enrolled in.

COUNT OF CHILDREN IN THE YEAR BEFORE FULL-TIME SCHOOLING

The year before full-time schooling (YBFS - also referred to as the 'year before formal schooling') is a term used to describe the 'preschool cohort' of children, due to the varying delivery models of early childhood education across jurisdictions (McEwin and Ryan, 2009). The year before a child begins full-time schooling is further defined as Year 1 (or Grade 1) minus 2 years. This cohort may be a combination of children aged 3, 4, 5 and sometimes 6 years old.

Children who are 6 years old and attending a preschool program have usually attended more than one year of a preschool program, or may have been delayed from starting preschool at the usual age. The 3 year old children include those that are eligible for early entry due to special needs or giftedness, or who attend the first year of full-time schooling as 4 year olds due to the state or territory school starting age. Children eligible for early entry as 3 year olds who remain for a second year of preschool as 4 year olds (i.e. early entry for Indigenous children or children with special needs), are in their YBFS when they attend preschool as 4 year olds.

Operationally for the National ECEC Collection, children were only included in the YBFS cohort if the child was 4 years old or 5 years old with a preschool repeater indicator and reported not to be repeating. 5 year olds without a preschool repeater indicator were also included within the YBFS population. 5 year old children with a repeater indicator and who were reported as repeaters were excluded within the YBFS population. Refer to Figure 3.12 Creating a Unique Child Record for the Year Before Full-time Schooling Concept.

Unique children counts produce fewer counts as this population counts each child only once, irrespective of the number of preschool episodes they have received during the reference period. This population does not remove instances of children who are enrolled in a preschool program across multiple years.

Year Before Full-time Schooling (YBFS) counts of children produce even fewer instances of children as the count removes children who repeated preschool across years. For this population, children aged 5 who were enrolled in preschool in the previous year, when they were aged 4, are excluded from this population count. This population includes 4 and 5 year olds who are enrolled in their first year of a preschool program.

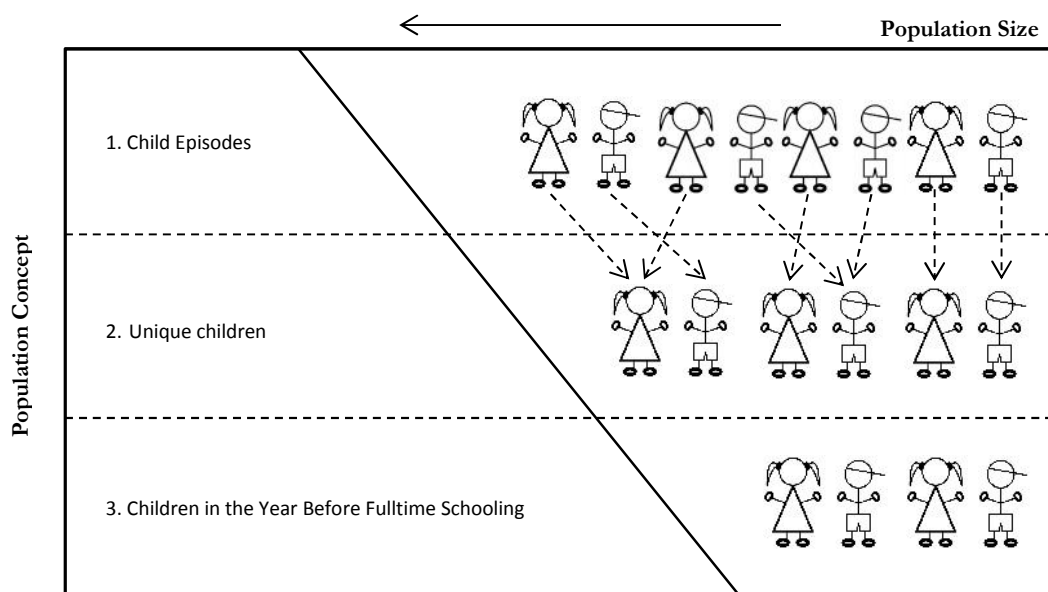
The below diagram (Figure 3.2) depicts the impact on population size in relation to the business rule associated with each of the 3 population counting concepts. A unique child can attend more than one episode of preschool during the reference week.

In a given year, the enrolment and attendance counts of unique children (refer Fig 3.2) will be:

- less than the enrolment and attendance counts of child episodes, but
- greater than the enrolment and attendance counts of children in the year before full-time schooling.

The concept of child episode produces the largest count of observations as it includes double counting of individual children who received 2 or more separate episodes of preschool during the reference period.

Figure 3.2 Counting Concepts on population size



MATCHING AND LINKING TERMINOLOGY

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, match or matching relates to the scenario where two or more records can be identified to belong to the same unique child. Linked or linking relates to the scenario where two or more records are linked but not necessarily a true match for a unique child. For the National ECEC Collection, episode linking methodology uses the Statistical Linkage Key (SLK), which is not a unique identifier. In a majority of cases, the SLK is a unique identifier. However, in some instances, more than one child may have the same SLK due to similar SLKs sharing characteristics. For further information about the SLK please see *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Data Collection Guide* (cat. no 4240.0.55.002)

REASONS A CHILD COULD BE ENROLLED IN AND ATTENDING MULTIPLE PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

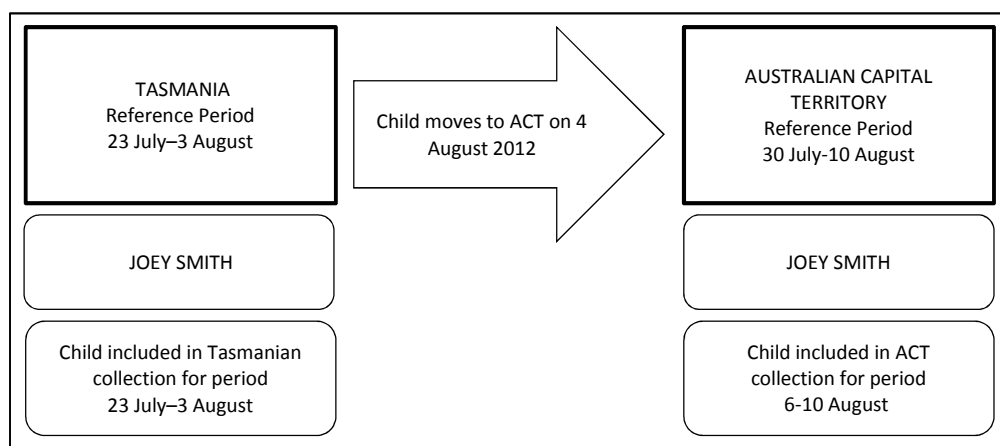
For the National ECEC Collection a child could be enrolled in and attending multiple preschool programs. Below is a summary of the different ways that a child could be included more than once in the National ECEC Collection.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Across data collections

When children move interstate during the reference period, they may still be on the enrolment list of their former preschool as well as on the enrolment list of their new preschool. In this situation, the child would be recorded legitimately in both jurisdictional data sets. In the 2012 collection this occurrence is significantly reduced, due to the alignment of collection reference periods for each jurisdiction. In 2012 the collection did not include any further reconciliation processes to manage this occurrence further.

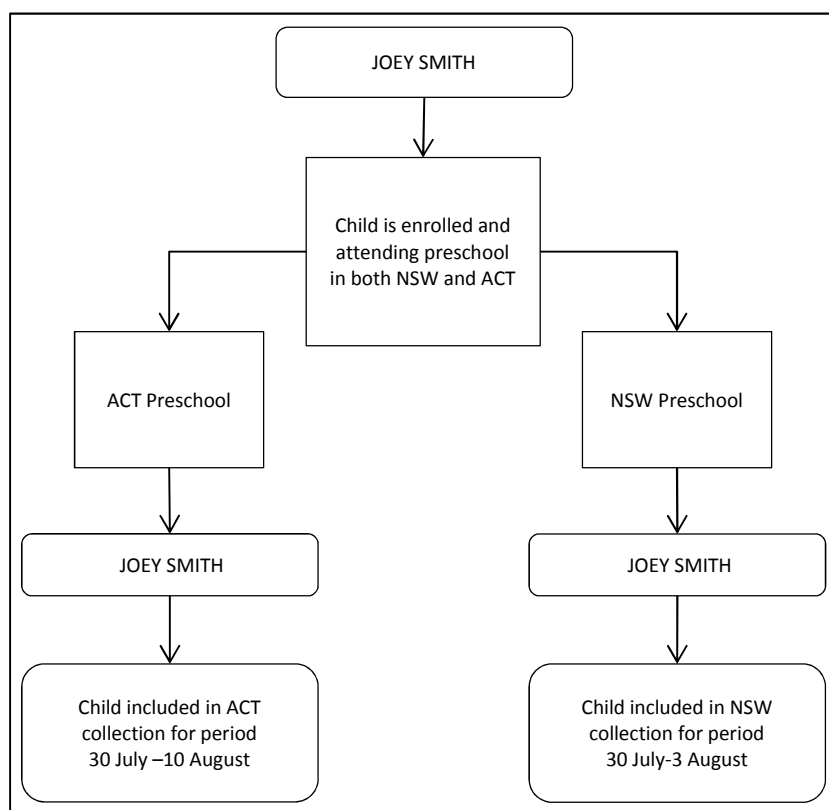
Figure 3.3: Multiple Enrolments – Across Jurisdictions



Cross border movements

Where a child is enrolled in and attending two or more preschools in two separate jurisdictions (e.g. NSW and ACT), the child would be recorded in two different jurisdictional data sets. This could occur when a family uses a mixed preschool program delivery model that is located within different states/territories. Refer to figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Multiple Enrolments – Cross Border Issues

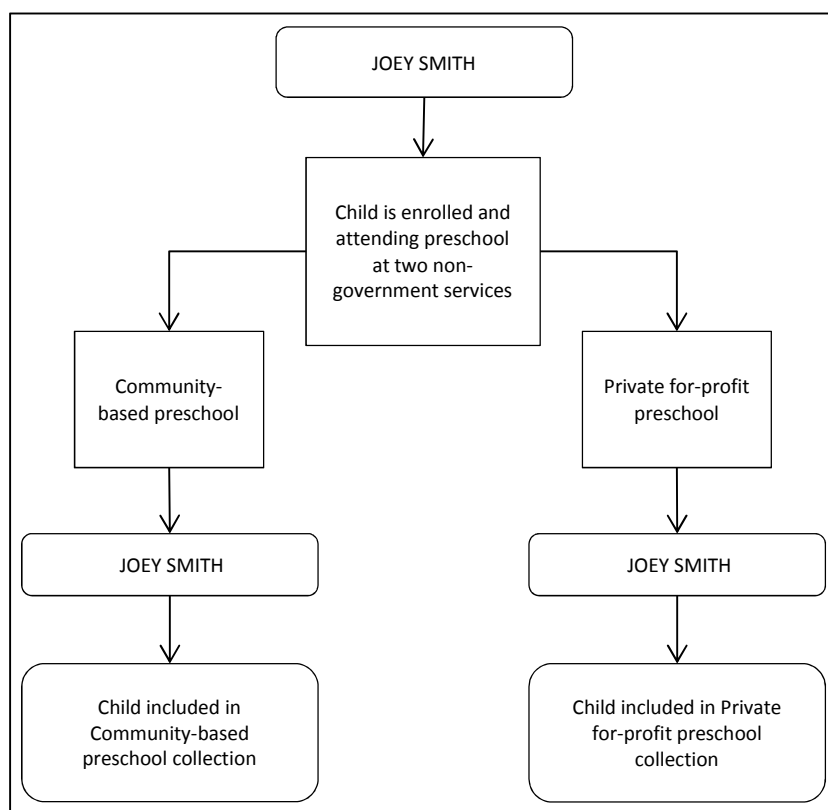


This is an instance where a child is enrolled in and attending two preschools and therefore this child would be included in both jurisdictional collections.

Within a sector

Where a child is enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs within a sector, the child would be recorded for each enrolment within a jurisdictional data set. This could occur because a child's family has decided to use two or more non-government services, two or more government services, or two or more LDCs, reflecting work-life arrangements, or to increase their child's preschool attendance hours. Refer to figure 3.5.

Figure 3.5: Multiple Enrolments – Within Sector

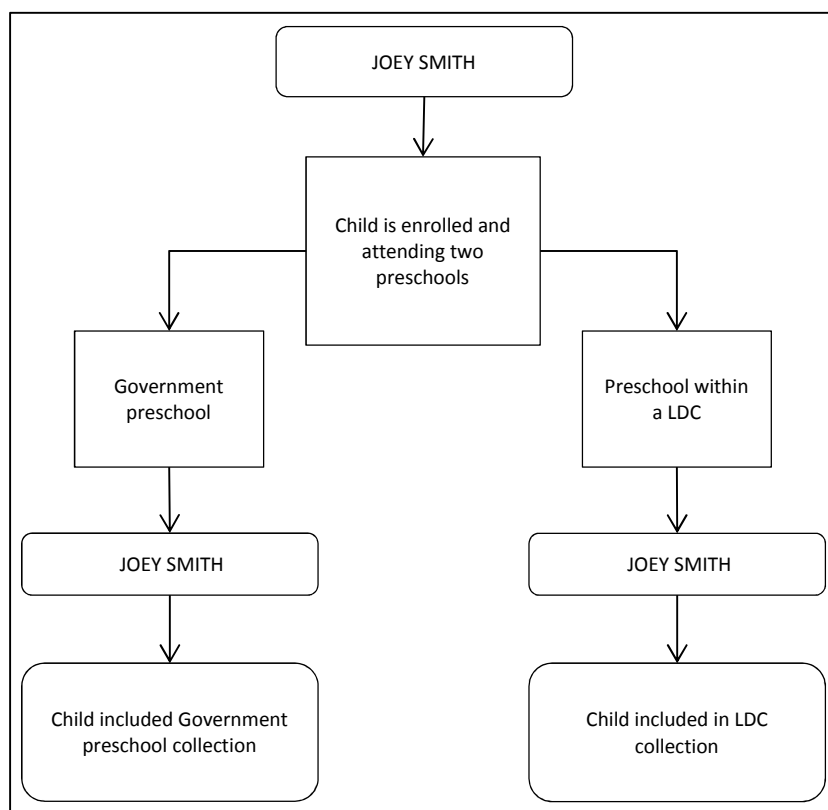


When jurisdictions can collect data using a URL methodology and a child/client database and/or SLK is available, these records could be linked to produce a unique child record. Although this is an instance where a child is enrolled in and attending two preschools, this child should only be counted once within 'Counts of Children'.

Across sectors

Where a child is enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs across sectors the child would be recorded for each enrolment within a jurisdictional data set. This may occur because a child's family has chosen to use a combination of government preschool, non-government preschool or preschool in an LDC, reflecting work-life arrangements, or to increase their child's preschool attendance hours. Refer to figure 3.6.

Figure 3.6: Multiple Enrolments – Across Sectors

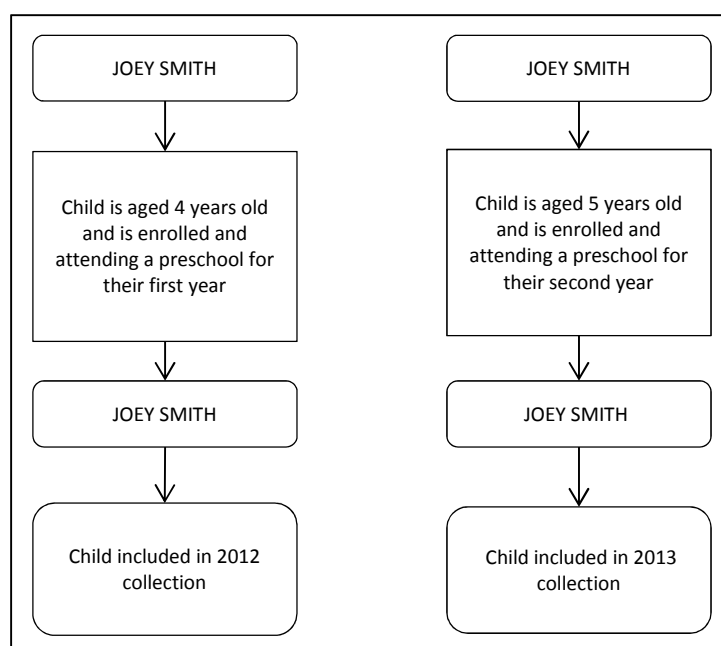


When jurisdictions can collect data using a Unit Record Level (URL) methodology and a child/client database and/or SLK is available, these records could be linked and combined to produce a unique child record. Although this is an instance where a child is enrolled in and attending two preschools, this child should only be counted once when counting numbers of children enrolled in and attending preschool.

Across time

Where a child attends preschool for more than one year (e.g. a child who was enrolled in an 'early entry' preschool program) the child would be recorded in a jurisdictional data set over two years. Refer to figure 3.7.

Figure 3.7: Multiple Enrolments – Across Time



When jurisdictions have collected data using a URL methodology for at least two years with a repeater flag and a child/client database and/or SLK is available, these records could be linked to create a unique child record. This child would be counted in both years when counting the number of children enrolled in and attending preschool in 2012 and 2013, however, the child would only be counted once (in the 2012 count) when counting the number of children enrolled in and attending preschool in the YBFS.

SERVICE PROVIDER

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, a service provider is defined as an organisation that directly provides child care and/or educational services to children at a specific geographical location. These services could include LDC, stand-alone preschool, occasional care, outside of school hours care and vacation care services. Providers may offer multiple services within a single geographical location, however, for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, only service providers delivering preschool programs are considered in-scope.

A service provider may deliver multiple preschool programs from the same premises. Due to legislative requirements in some jurisdictions, separate licences may be issued for each preschool program that a service provider is authorised to deliver, even though those programs are delivered from the one location. For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, this would be considered as a single service provider delivering multiple preschool programs.

There are also instances where two unrelated service providers can operate from the same location. An example of this is an LDC with a preschool program that is located in the grounds of a school, and that school also operates a preschool program; however each provider has different management types. For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, these would be considered as separate service providers delivering separate preschool programs irrespective of implied or perceived service integration.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

COLLECTING DATA FOR THE NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE COLLECTION

This discussion outlines the different types of data collected for the National ECEC Collection.

STATISTICAL ENTITIES

Within each jurisdiction's collection, data were collected for the following statistical entities:

- Child level data
- Worker level data
- Service Provider level data.

Child Level Data

Child level data contains data for each individual child in the data set. Data at the child level includes personal characteristics, enrolment and attendance information for each child.

The primary aim of collecting data at the child level is to enable reporting of numbers of children who have received a preschool program in the year before full-time schooling. Child level data that includes a non-unique identifier, such as a statistical linkage key, assists to ensure that for child counts, each child is counted only once. The importance of child counts is explained further in [Chapter 3: Data Processing and Reporting Concepts](#).

Age Reference Date:

The National ECEC Collection age reference date for all child data is 1 July of the collection year. Jurisdictions that utilised an aggregate data collection methodology for any part of their collection were required to derive children's ages as at 1 July 2012. Jurisdictions that utilised a URL data methodology collected and supplied the date of birth for every child episode record. The ABS then derived the age of each child as at the 1 July 2012 reference date.

Worker Level Data

Worker level data contains confidentialised data for each individual worker at each service provider within the data set. Data at the worker level includes educational qualifications, role and type of work activity, and information on whether the worker delivered a preschool program. It is possible for a single worker to be employed across multiple service providers. Worker level data did not include a unique identifier and as a consequence it can only be output as episodes of workers delivering preschool programs. See the [Glossary](#), for further information on the concept of an 'episode'.

Service Provider Level Data

Service provider level data contains information for each individual service provider delivering a preschool program within the data set. Data at the service provider level includes location information, management type, activity type and service delivery setting, as well as aggregate information on preschool programs. Service provider data are also available from child URL data sets (preferred collection method). In a child URL dataset, a service provider's characteristics are replicated for every child episode associated with that service.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

DATA PROCESSING AND REPORTING CONCEPTS

This section describes key data processing and reporting concepts used in the 2012 National ECEC Collection. This discussion describes the interactions and business rules within the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection as they relate to the collection output populations and key output collection classifications. Further terms and definitions are provided in the [Glossary](#). This section also highlights where the collection concepts are reported within *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat no 4240.0).

BACKGROUND

For the 2012 National ECEC Collection, the ABS implemented an enhanced methodology for linking of child records within and between source data files. This methodology was introduced to improve the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) collection further by maximising the coverage of data provided to the ABS for the National ECEC Collection. The following discussion provides information on the 2012 methodological procedures in relation to how child data were reconciled into the collection output populations: 'Episodes of preschool', 'Children in 2012' and 'Children in the Year before full-time schooling' (YBFS).

A child record consists of one or more episodes. For more information refer to figure 3.1 Relationship of Episode counts, and Child counts.

The conceptual decision about whether episodes relate to a child was completed through two main processes. The first was linking on SLK plus SLK Match Code or SLK plus geography, the second occurs after linking within a service provider.

The process used by the 2012 National ECEC Collection to establish confirmed unique child records. Outlined below in figure 3.8 'Creation of Unique Child Records from Episode Records'. This process begins by:

SLK linking within file sources:

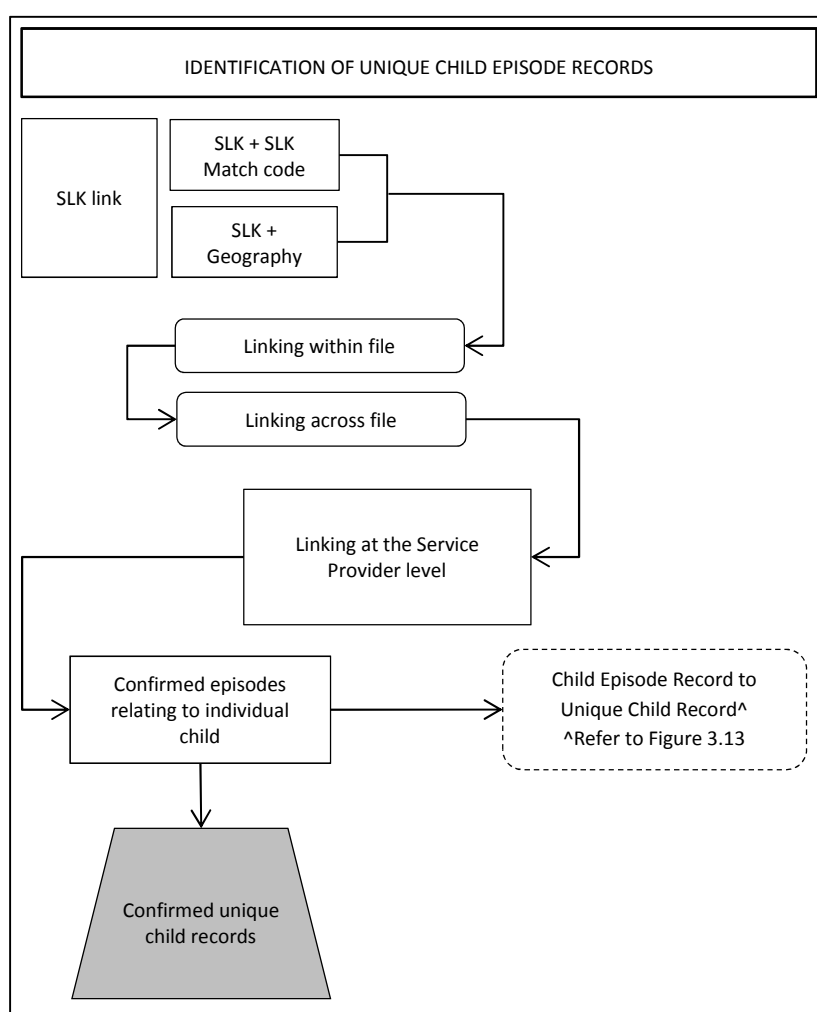
This includes children who may be attending multiple episodes of preschool at one service provider, or multiple episodes of preschool at more than one service provider. This process could include either the state/territory data file, or the CCMS data file, and is used to identify duplicate episode records within file sources.

SLK linking across file sources:

This could include a child who attends preschool at one or more service providers who are captured in both the state/territory data file, and the CCMS data file. This process is used to identify duplicate episode records across file sources.

Once the linking process was completed, the episode records were then linked at the service provider level. A confirmed linking process was undertaken producing unique child records.

Figure 3.8 Creation of Unique Child Records from Episode Records



Linking Statistical Linkage Key

Identification of unique child records can be achieved through the statistical linkage key (SLK) to identify linking child episode records. The SLK can only provide estimated counts of unique child records as it is possible for two or more children to have coincidental identical SLKs. The application by data providers of a child/client database, which contains across year child details including name, date of birth and address information for each child in the data set can further assist in identifying coincidental links of SLK. This process only assists in the identification of coincidental links within a jurisdictional data submission for the National ECEC Collection.

For the 2012 National ECEC Collection, the ABS also requested an additional data element to the NMDS to support improved accuracy of unique child counts. This additional data element was the 'SLK Match Code', which facilitates the correct handling of scenarios where identical SLKs belong to two or more children. Data providers assign an SLK Match code to a child only where two or more episode records are related to that child.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

Identification of identical SLK Child records across data sources

The following data elements were used for linking the multiple data sources for the 2012 National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection:

- Statistical Linkage Key (SLK)
- Geographic location of child (Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1) or Collection District (CD))
- SLK Match Code
- ABS Service provider ID.

Further supporting information relating to these data elements can be found within Chapter 2: Data Element – Unit Record Level of the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Data Collection Guide 2012* (cat. no 4240.0.55.002).

Stages of Linking Methodology

The following discussion outlines the various stages of the ABS linking methodology utilised for the 2012 collection. The National ECEC Collection utilises and combines different data sources or ‘files’ in order to process the collection. See [Chapter 2: Collection Overview](#) for more information. Episode linking processes operate within each state and territory and consist of two key processes:

- Linking within-file: Linking episodes of preschool within a supplied URL data file.
- Linking between files: Linking episodes of preschool across URL data.

The following discussion outlines how these concepts are operationally implemented within for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Linking Within-File

The first stage of the linking methodology was performed on each episode level file provided for the National ECEC Collection. To determine if multiple episodes belong to the same child, the following logic was applied to produce child level records within a file.

For multiple episodes identified as belonging to the same child based solely on their SLK:

SLK Match code is supplied:

If two episodes have the same SLK and the same SLK Match code, then they are considered as belonging to the same child. If the same SLK does not link on the SLK Match code, they are considered as being separate episodes. Linked records through ‘Linking within-file’ and SLK Match code methods may be considered matches (i.e. episode belonging to the child). This can occur where the SLK Match code has been supplied by a data provider with the application of a child/client database.

SLK Match code is not supplied:

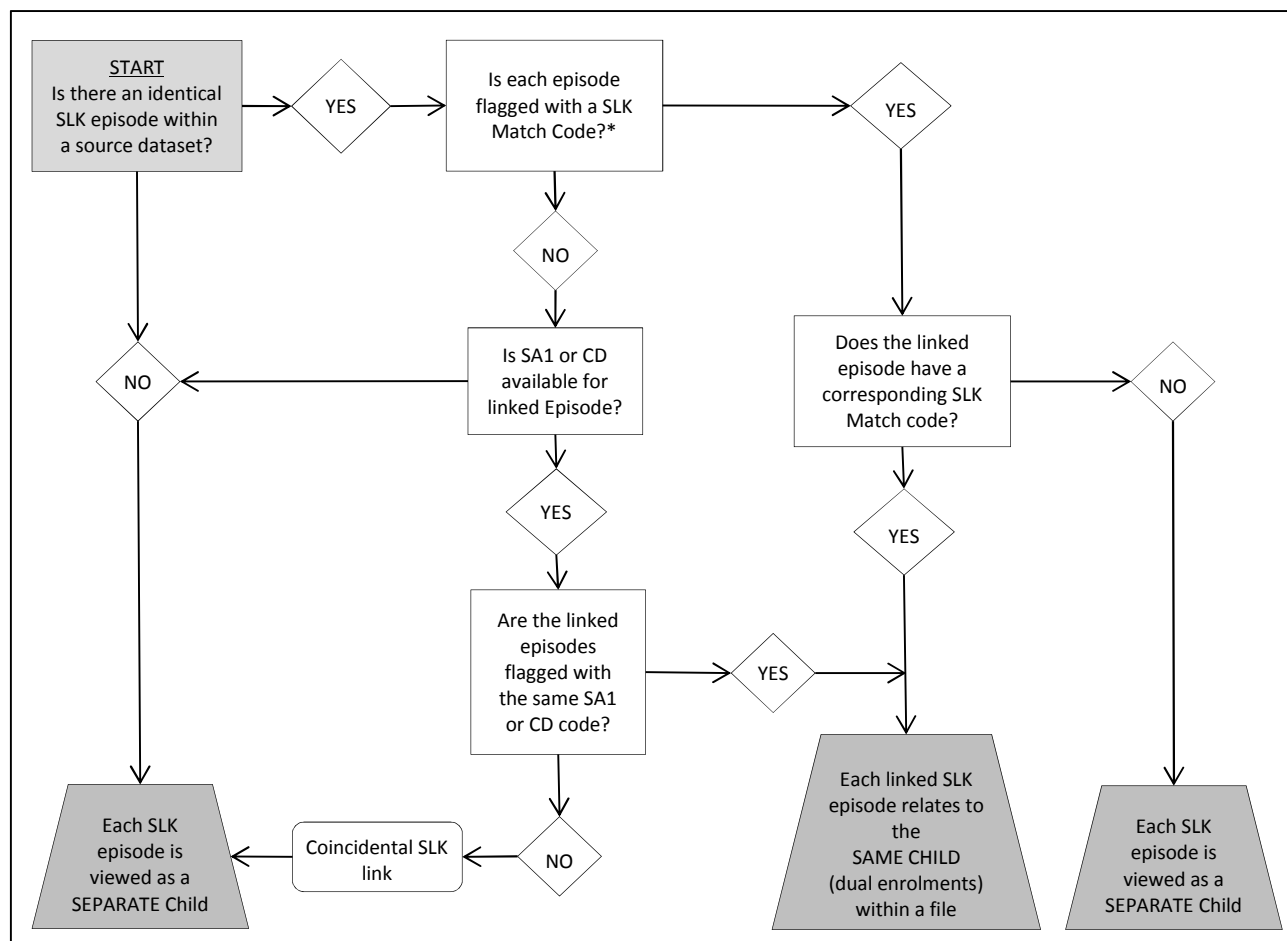
If no SLK Match code is supplied, then a link on SLK and the child SA1 geography code is used to identify linking child records. If two episodes have the same SLK and both are located in the same child geographical statistical area, they are considered as belonging to the same child.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

No SLK Match code and no SA1 supplied:

If no SLK Match code and no SA1 codes are supplied, then a link on SLK and Collection District (CD) code is used. If two episodes have the same SLK and the same CD, then they are considered as belonging to the same child. If they do not link, they are treated as separate episodes.

Figure 3.9: 'Within file' episode linking methodology



*All state and territory and CCMS data provided was provided with a SLK match code

To derive estimates of the 'number of children' enrolled in and attending preschool, a collection methodology is required to transform episodes of preschool to the child level data and to link records across files to estimates of unique children.

Linking Between-Files

The second stage in the methodology links two child level files. This occurs when linking a state and territory file to the CCMS file. This process was performed on a state-by-state basis, i.e. only the NSW children in the CCMS file will be compared with the NSW state file. To determine if two child records on different files were the same child, the following logic was applied to between-file linking.

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Multiple child records (between files) identified as being the same child based on their Statistical Linkage Key (SLK):

Link on SLK and on SA1

If a child record from each file has the same SLK and both are located in the same SA1, then both records are considered as belonging to the same child. If they don't link, they are treated as separate episodes.

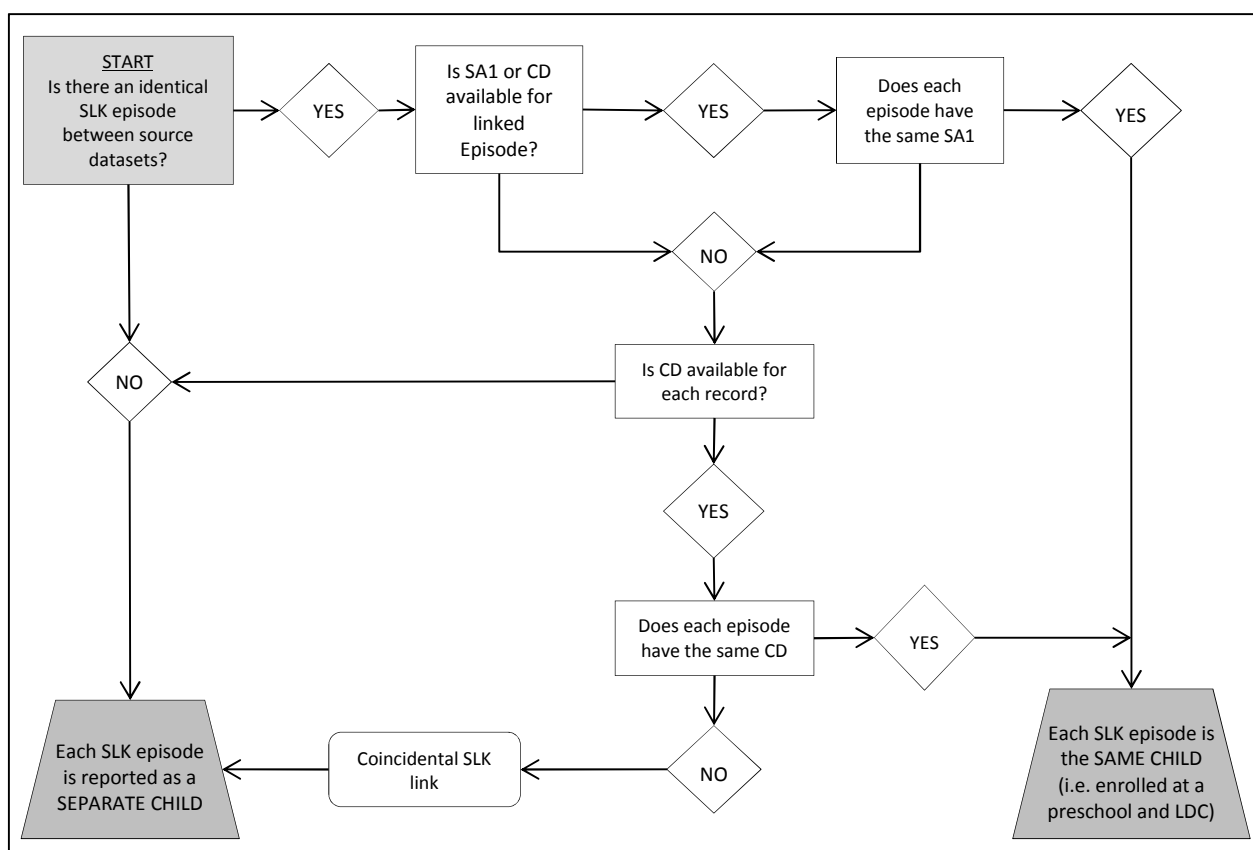
Link on SLK and on CD

Figure 3.10 shows that if a child's SA1 code is not supplied, the linking completed by comparing SLK and child's CD. If a child record from each file has the same SLK and the same CD, then the records are considered as belonging to the same child. If they don't link, they belong to different children.

Link on SLK only

If a child's SA1 or CD is not supplied by the data provider or is of a poor quality, then linking is conducted using SLK alone. In this scenario, child records from two different files who share the same SLK are considered as belonging to the same child. If the SLKs do not link, they are considered to belong to different children.

Figure 3.10: 'Between file' episode linking methodology



Between-file episode linking was completed for each individual state and territory and conducted between a state and territory file and the CCMS.

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Duplicate episode records for a unique child at a service provider:

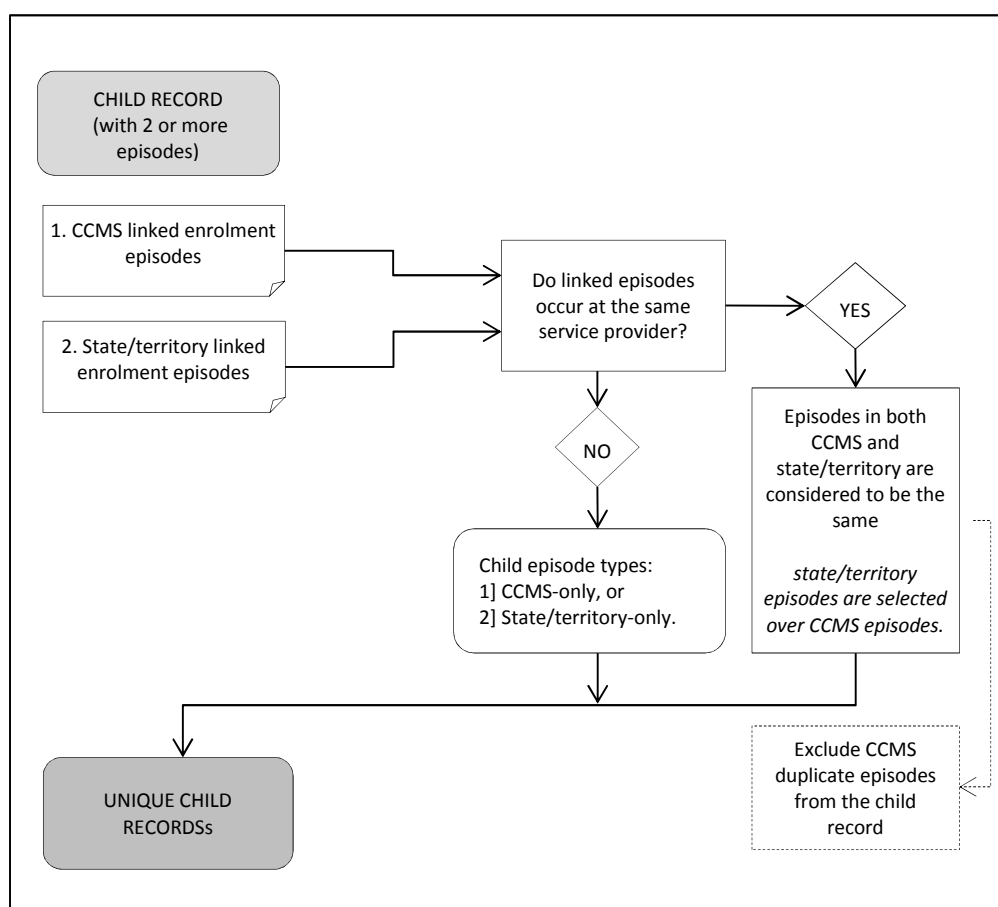
A child who is enrolled within a service provider can be reported within both a state and territory collection and the CCMS. In some scenarios, each data source may be reporting about different preschool experiences within the same service provider. The different data sources could also be reporting the same preschool experience. Due to the nature of state and territory collections and the CCMS, there is no way to definitively know what these linked episode records at a service provider represent. Operationally, for the 2012 National ECEC Collection, linked episode records at a service provider were considered duplicates. To determine if two or more episodes linked to a child were unique or duplicates of each other, the following business rules were applied. This process applied for each state and territory after both the 'Within File' and 'Between File' linking processes had been completed.

Duplicate episode record checking within a service provider:

The ABS as part of the Preschool Provider Frame (PPF) (for more information on the PPF refer to [Chapter 1: Collection Scope and Coverage](#)) allocates a unique identifier to each unique service. The ABS provider ID is used to identify service providers within and across data files, and across collection years.

Figure 3.11 below, outlines how a child record with two or more episodes that share the same ABS provider ID code were considered as being a duplicate of each other. In this scenario, the state/territory supplied episode is selected over the CCMS source episode and the duplicate episode is removed from the child record. If a child enrolled in one service provider has multiple episodes originating from the same state and territory file, these episode duplicates are not removed from the child record. For a child record with corresponding episodes that have different ABS provider ID codes, each episode is considered to be unique and remain a component of the child record.

Figure 3.11: Child-episode reporting business rules for two or more episodes^(a)



(a) This process will occur for each state/territory after the 'Within file' and 'Between file' linking process has been completed.

Identification of Unique Child Records in the Year Before Full-time Schooling

The final stage of the linking methodology was to identify children in the YBFS.

For the 2012 National ECEC Collection, children who were enrolled for more than one year of a preschool program were identified and if these children were aged 5 or 6 years old, their records were excluded from the YBFS population. Those 4 year old children who were previously enrolled in a preschool program were not excluded, because they would not have been attending a program intended for children in the YBFS in the previous year (i.e. they would have been attending preschool as a 3 year old child in 2011, but were out of scope to be included in the count of children enrolled in, and attending in the YBFS population).

Operationally, for the 2012 National ECEC Collection, the identification of unique child records in the YBFS could only be achieved when 2 years of data had been collected using a URL data collection methodology and, a preschool repeater indicator applied through a jurisdictional child/client database.

The following discussion outlines the identification of a YBFS child through the application of a preschool repeater indicator and without a preschool repeater indicator.

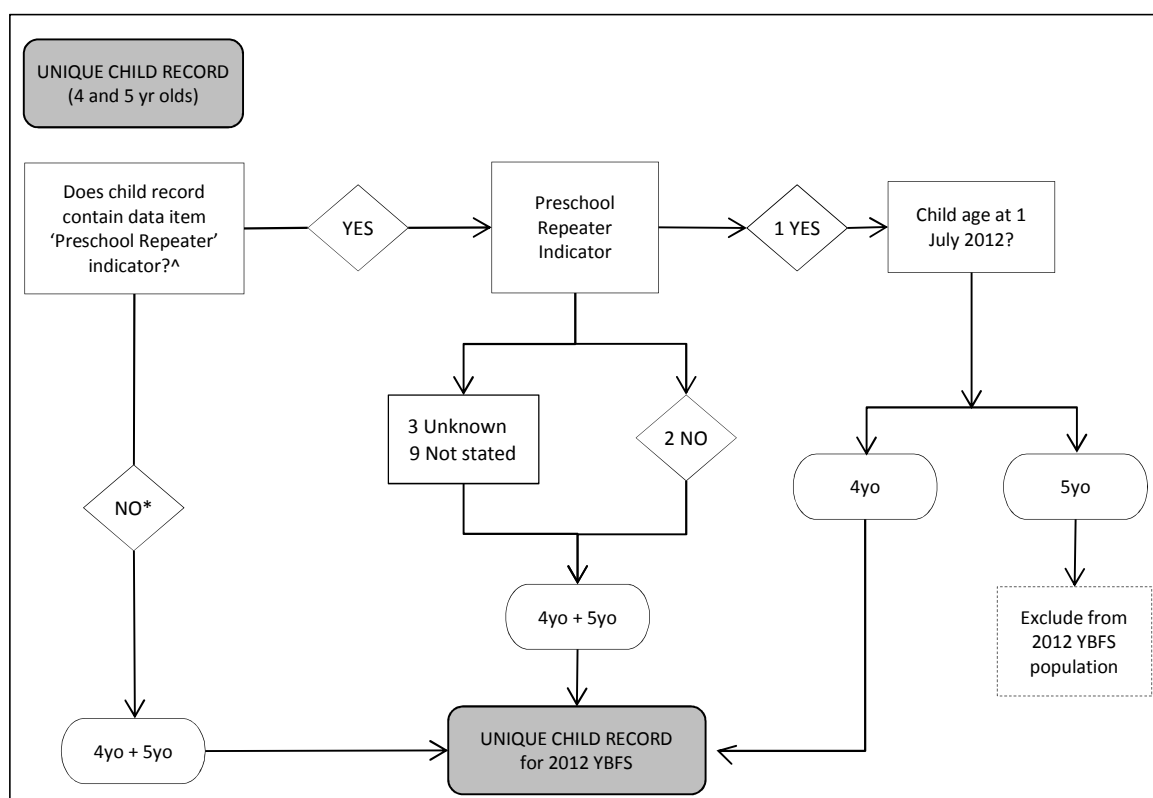
CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

For a YBFS child record with a 'Preschool Program Repeater Indicator'

If the preschool repeater flag had been supplied by data providers (indicating that the child is a repeater on either the jurisdictional or CCMS files), and the child was 5 years old as at the 1 July age reference date, the child was not included in the tables presenting the 'Children in the Year Before Full-time Schooling'.

This process ensures that each child is only counted once for the total number of children enrolled in and attending a preschool program in the YBFS population. The process to create a unique child record for the YBFS population is outlined in Figure 3.12 below.

Figure 3.12: Creating a Unique Child Record for the YBFS Concept



^ A valid Preschool repeater indicator includes where there was a valid response as per the ECEC NMDS.

*Represents blank value.

Please see [Chapter 6: Jurisdictional Data Quality Statements](#) for each jurisdiction for more information on the capacity of data providers to supply the preschool repeater indicator.

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

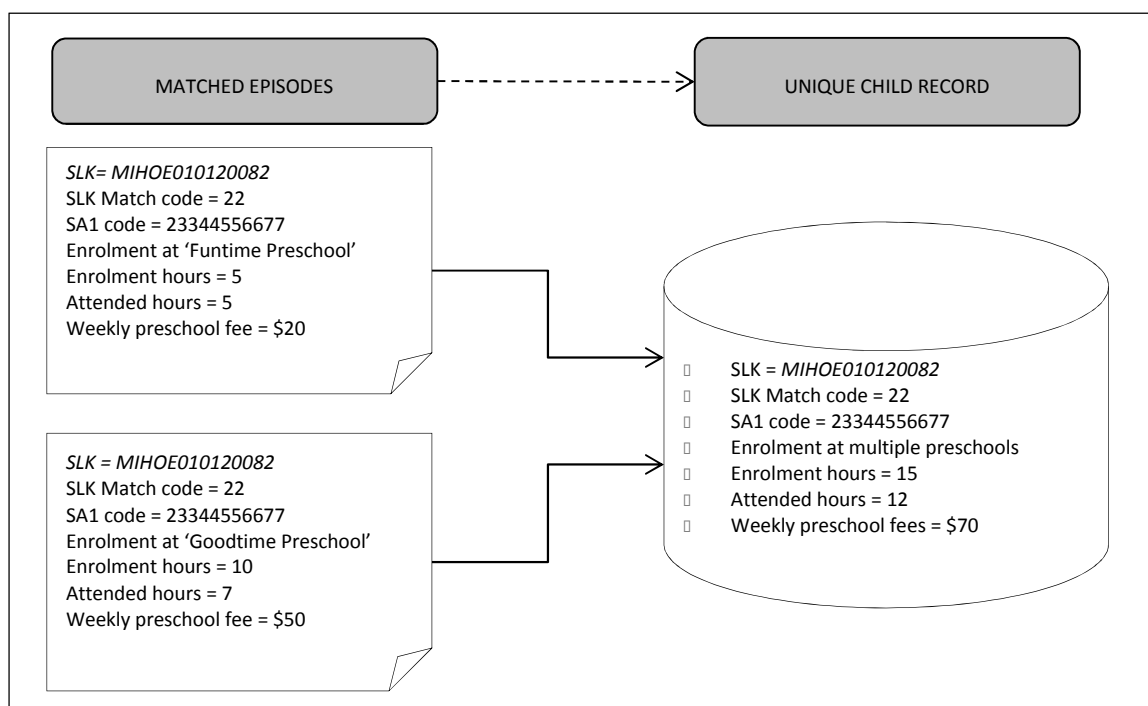
Reporting Child Counts

After completing within-file linking, between-file linking, and child-episode, the National Collection contains the unique child level records which are used in all child level tables in the publication. These records can be of the following three types:

- a child with records solely from a state/territory source
- a child with records solely from a CCMS source
- a child with records from both a state/territory and a CCMS source.

Where two or more child episodes are linked, the unique characteristics within each episode are used to formulate the characteristics of the corresponding unique child record. Figure 3.13 outlines two linked episodes from two different preschool programs with weekly preschool fees, enrolment and attendance hours. This information is used to create a unique child record from the same data source supplied for the National ECEC Collection.

Figure 3.13: 'Child Episode Record to Unique Child Record'



For the purpose of output reporting on hours enrolled, hours attended and preschool fees, the child's multiple episode records are combined to obtain the total preschool program hours and total preschool program fees.

CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

This chapter describes the interactions and business rules within the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection as they relate to key output collection classifications. Further terms and definitions are provided in the [Glossary](#). This chapter also highlights where the collection concepts are reported within *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

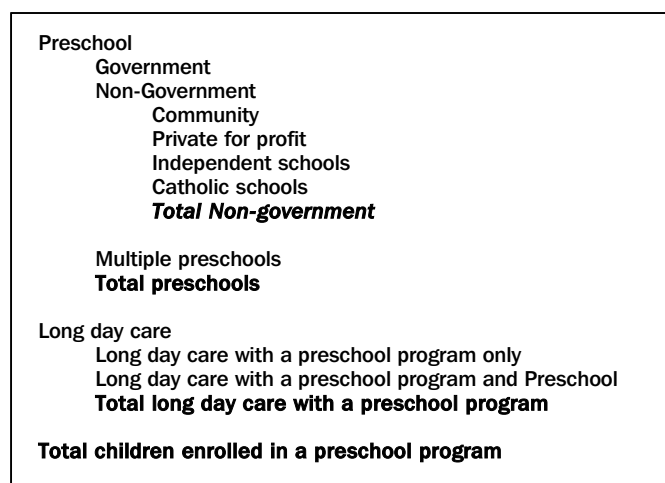
OUTPUT REPORTING AND PROCESSING FOR THE NATIONAL ECEC COLLECTION

Output reporting and processing for the National ECEC Collection within this chapter is divided into 4 different discussions, these include sector classifications, Indigenous reporting, geography for the National ECEC Collection and output table matrices.

SECTOR CLASSIFICATION FOR THE NATIONAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE COLLECTION

The 'Sector' classification is a key derived classification that is used within the reporting of the National ECEC Collection in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240). This classification is a combination of the 'service activity type' classification and the 'management type' data items. Further information about these individual data elements can be found within *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: 2012 Data Collection Guide* (cat. no 4240.00.55.002). The relationship in the 'Sector' derived classification as it relates to child counts is shown in Figure 4.1.

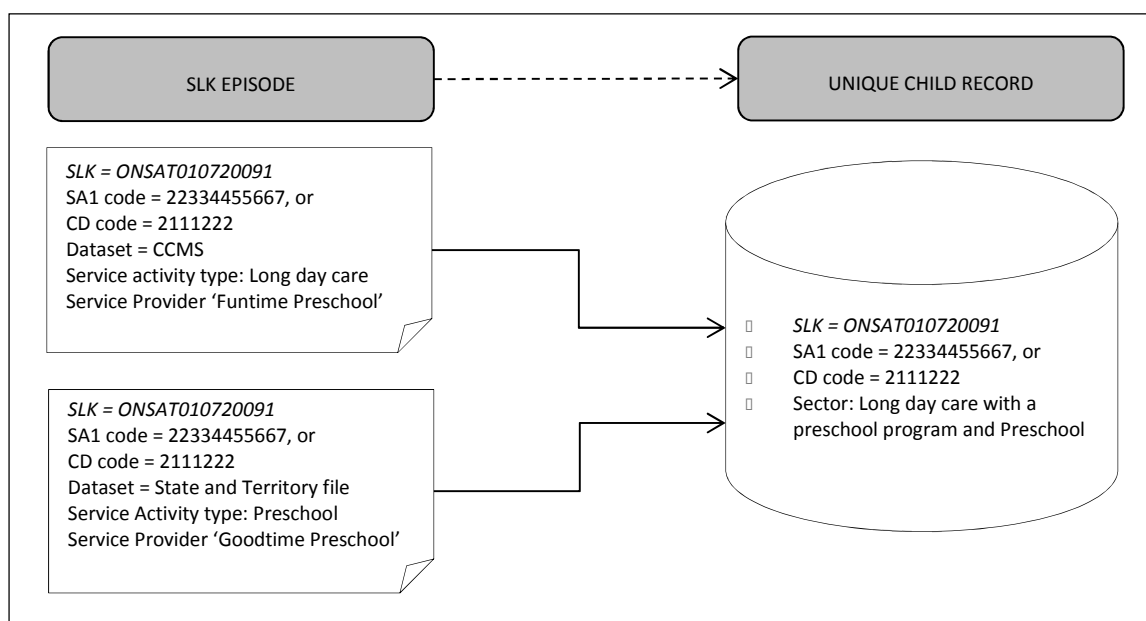
Figure 4.1 Sector Classifications



Management type is not disaggregated within the long day care (LDC) classification due to data availability issues associated with the Child Care Management System (CCMS). A data quality statement for the CCMS can be found in [Chapter 6: Jurisdiction Data Quality Statements – Australian Government](#).

The child classification category 'Long day care with a preschool program and Preschool' within the sector classification is derived by the ABS. The example outlined in figure 4.2 shows how a child may be enrolled in both 'preschool' and 'long day care'. In this scenario, unique child records would be presented under the sector classification 'Long day care with a preschool program and Preschool'.

Figure 4.2: Derived 'Sector Classification' from two episodes



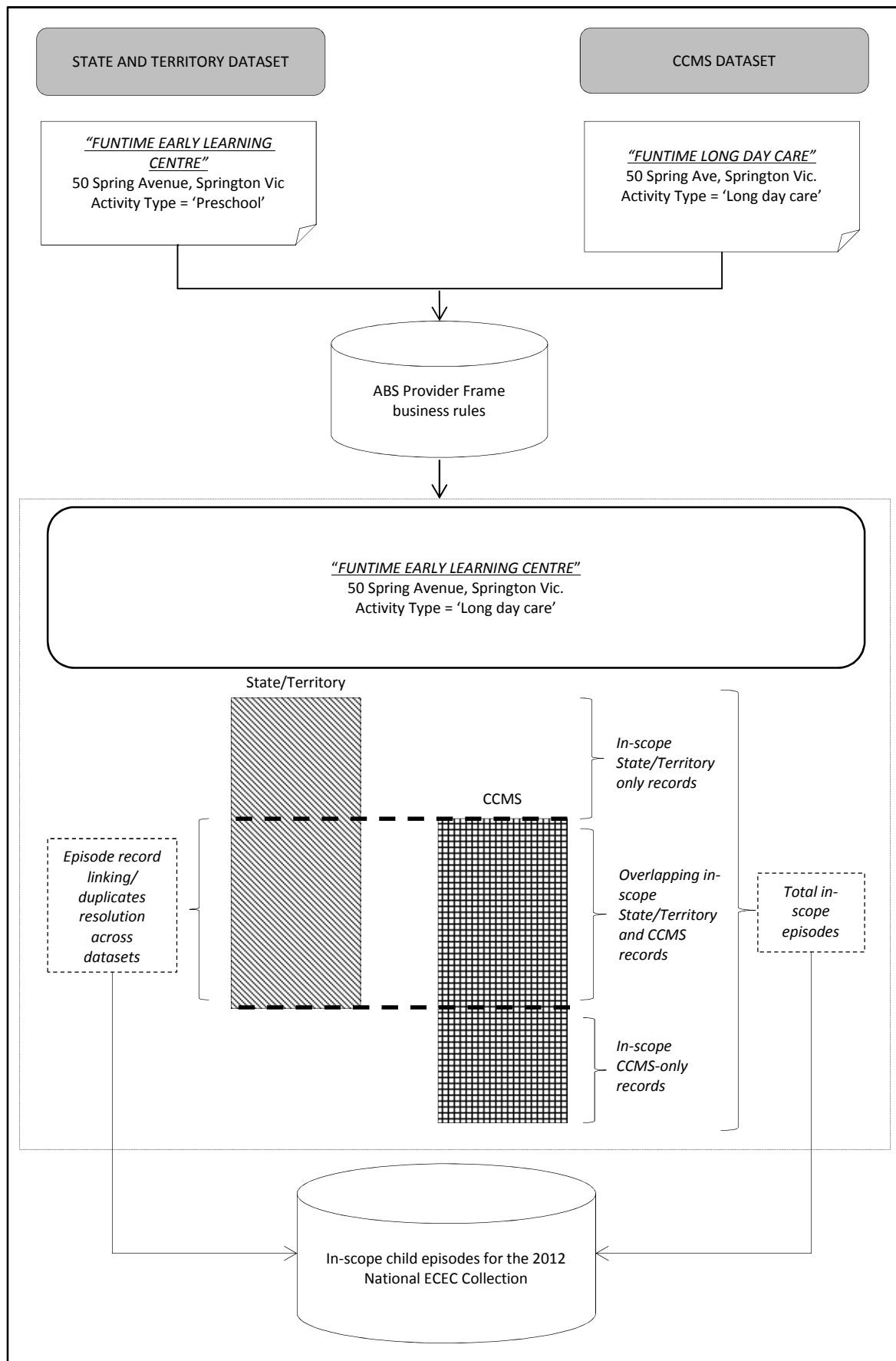
Derived Sector Classification

In 2011, as part of the National Early Childhood Education and Care, Preschool Provider Frame project, the ABS created a comprehensive frame of all service providers with a preschool service. A summary of the 2011 ECEC provider frame was presented at Table A2 of the *Experimental Estimates of Preschool Education, Australia, 2011* (cat. no 4240.0). In 2012, the ABS continued developing the ECEC provider frame through utilising existing infrastructure that supports the broader National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection. This infrastructure facilitates the merging of multiple sources of service provider information to identify unique service providers delivering ECEC services in Australia.

The example presented in Figure 4.3 shows how the same service provider may be reported by a state and territory collection as well as the CCMS. A state or territory may report a state/territory funded 'preschool' at a particular location. At the same centre, a long day care program may also operate with enrolled children receiving a preschool program within both preschool and child care components (by definition of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection). In this example, a child may be reported by both a state or territory and the CCMS. While the management types for the two programs may be different (i.e. a government preschool and a community LDC), the two programs operate from the same service provider. In these scenarios, the ABS has reclassified the service provider activity type as 'LDC with preschool' to best reflect the nature of activities delivered by these service providers, within the current framework of the National ECEC Collection Standards.

CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

Figure 4.3: Service provider determination from ABS Provider Frame and associated child episodes



CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

Methodological Implications on the New Derived Service Provider Classification

Service Providers

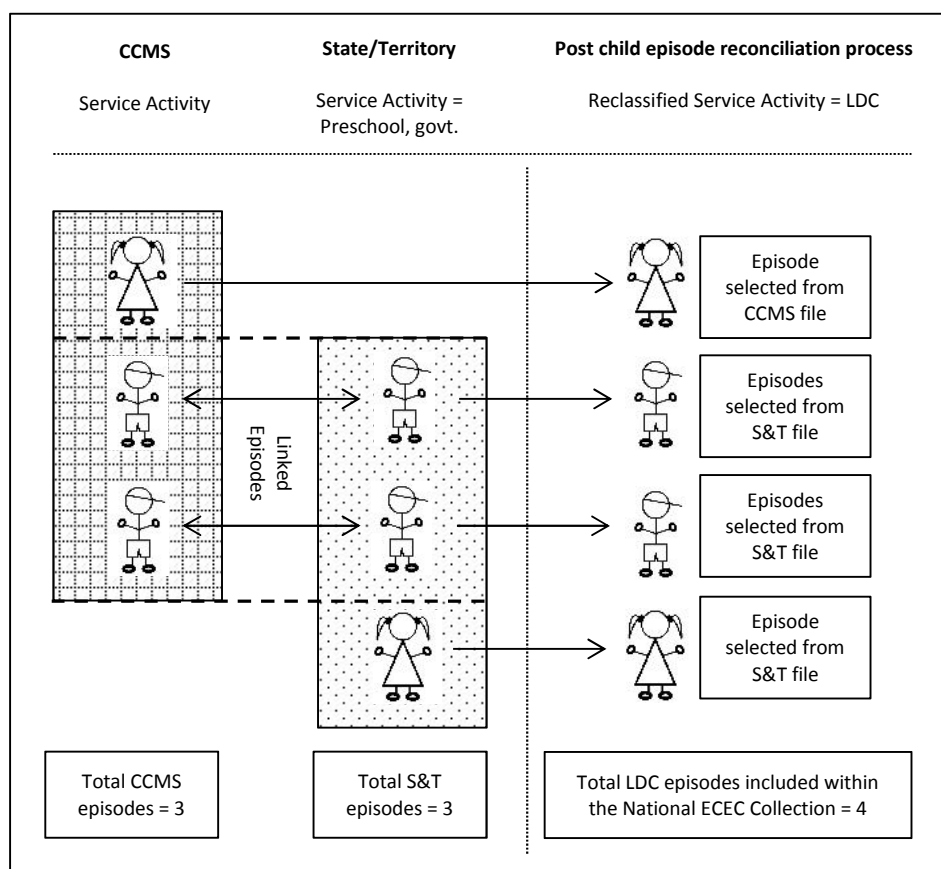
The change in methodology to the 2012 National ECEC Collection will result in the movement of service provider records across service activity type categories. This has a potentially significant impact on service activity output with an increase in 'long day care delivering a preschool' and a decrease in preschools.

This change in collection methodology will have no impact to states and territories where there is no service provider overlap in 2012 with CCMS and their collections.

Child Episode Records

The 2012 National ECEC Collection utilised as many available episode records attached to a service provider as possible, irrespective of data source. Figure 4.4 below shows how child episodes are utilised in the new collection methodology to increase the accuracy of the number of episodes for inclusion.

Figure 4.4: Child Episode reconciliation from multiple data sources for a single service provider



In-scope episodes used in output populations include a combination of state and territory-only, CCMS-only and overlapping state and territory and CCMS records. Of the overlapping episode records, only one episode (always from a state and territory collection) is chosen if they are for the same child at the same service provider.

Based on this methodology, episode and child level data presented can be sourced from state and territory-only episodes and/or CCMS-only episodes as well as the overlapping episodes.

CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

Child Episode to unique Child Record and Year Before Fulltime Schooling

Within collection output tables, users can expect movements between children enrolled / attending 'preschool' and 'long day care' categories as well as movements between children enrolled / attending 'long day care with a preschool' and 'long day care with a preschool and Preschool'.

Child Episode reconciliation from multiple data sources

Figure 4.4 depicts how the change in 2012 collection methodology impacts on child episodes. In this example, the state and territory-sourced "Funtime Early Learning Centre" and CCMS-sourced "Funtime Long Day Care Centre" at the same location have been linked within the National ECEC Collection processes. The derived sector classification methodology has been applied and the service provider has been classified as a 'Long Day Care' centre.

All child episodes attached to each collection source (CCMS or state and territory) for a linked service provider (eg "Funtime Early Learning Centre" and "Funtime Long Day Care") now share the same service provider characteristics (management type and service activity type). For all child episodes within a service provider having linked episodes in both a state or territory and CCMS files, only state and territory sourced episodes will be utilised. All episodes within a service provider are utilised for child episodes sourced only from a state and territory file or CCMS. All child episodes from either input file are now classified as Long Day Care and will be counted as episodes of Long Day Care in ABS publication tables.

Sector Classification Reporting

As a result of data processing methods for the National ECEC Collection which ensure preschool children are counted once only for unique child counts, many children were identified as being enrolled in and attending multiple service providers. More information on child linking methodologies can be found in [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

Table 4.1 outlines various patterns of preschool participation and the corresponding output categories in which they appear in the 2012 Child tables and in the 2012 Year Before full-time Schooling (YBFS) Child tables within *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

4.1 Output sectors for different patterns of preschool participation

<i>Preschool usage scenario</i>	<i>Enrolled and Attending at: PRESCHOOL 1^(a)</i>	<i>Enrolled and Attending at: PRESCHOOL 2^(a)</i>	<i>Enrolled and Attending at: 1 LDC with a PSP</i>	<i>Enrolled and Attending at: 2nd LDC with a PSP</i>	<i>Sector type in 2012 Child and YBFS Tables</i>
Child A	✓	-	-	-	'Preschool'
Child B	✓	✓	-	-	'Multiple preschools'
Child C	✓	-	✓	-	'Long day care with a preschool program and Preschool'
Child D	✓	✓	✓	-	'Long day care with a preschool program and Preschool'
Child E	✓	-	✓	✓	'Long day care with a preschool program and Preschool'
Child F	-	-	✓	-	'Long day care with a preschool program'
Child G	-	-	✓	✓	'Long day care with a preschool program'

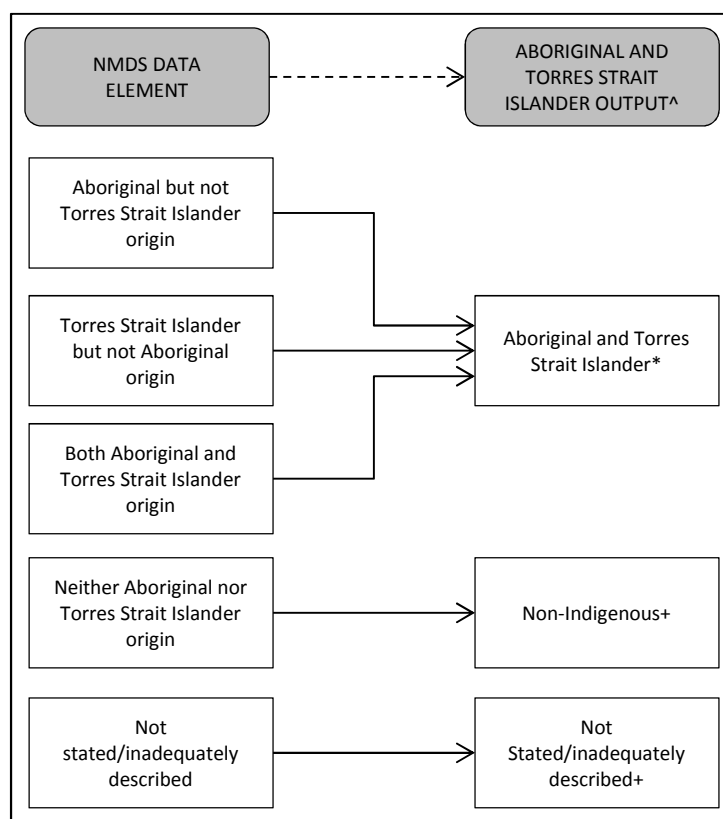
^(a) Not matched to a corresponding LDC

CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

REPORTING OF ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER STATUS

For the 2012 National ECEC Collection, data providers were asked to collect Indigenous status by applying the National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) standard Indigenous classification (this definition is in accordance with 'The Commonwealth Definition' which was given in a High Court judgement in the case of *Commonwealth v Tasmania* (1983) 46 ALR 625). At the episode level this directly relates to the Indigenous status of the child. Due to ABS confidentiality requirements and the small population associated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the preschool sector, the input category needed to be collapsed for the output of the 2012 National ECEC Collection. The below diagram Figure 4.5 outlines how the NMDS data elements of Indigenous status are categorised under the collapsed output for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Figure 4.5: Reporting of Indigenous Status



^ This is consistent with the broader classification standard outlined in [Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity, 1999 \(cat. no 1289.0\)](#).

*For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status only is output.

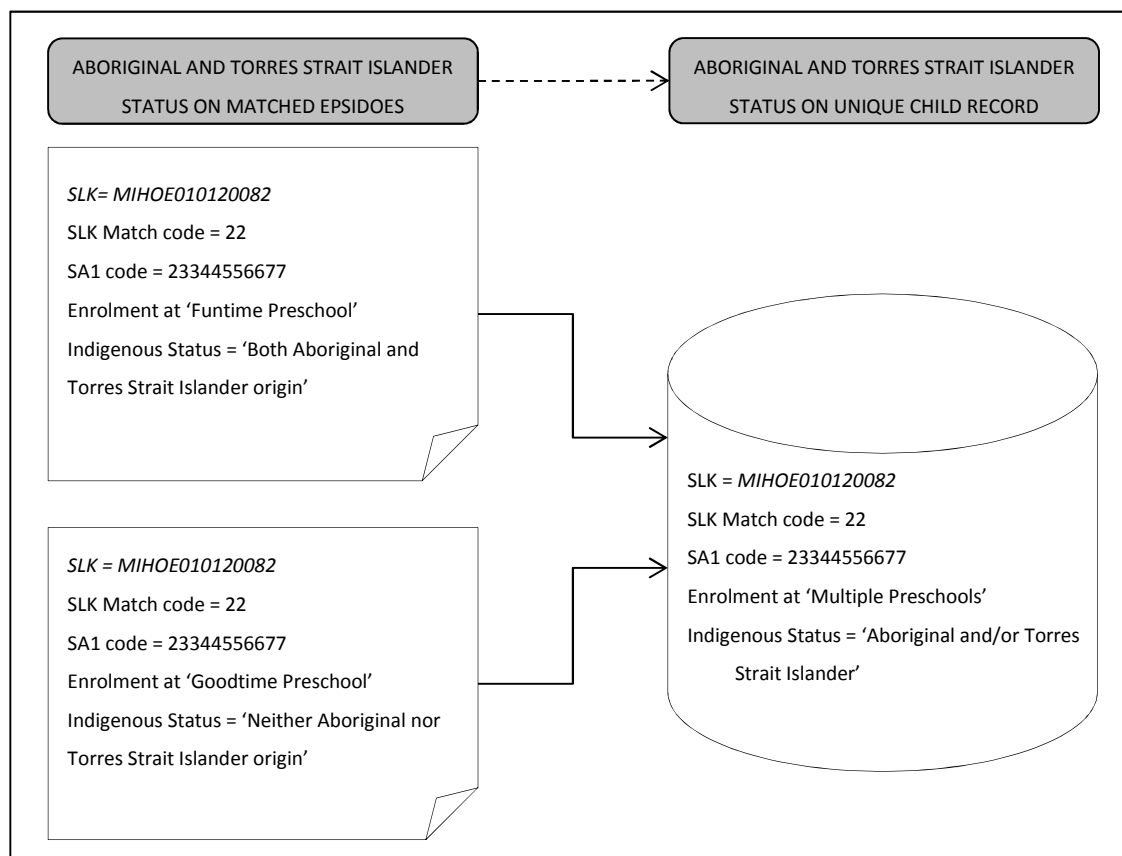
+Non-Indigenous and not stated/inadequately described output is commonly combined.

For the 2012 National ECEC Collection, Indigenous status in some instances may be different for corresponding episodes for the same child. In instances where the Indigenous status differed between episodes for a child, the business rules used for deriving Indigenous status was as follows:

A child was classified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin if his/her Indigenous status was recorded as such on at least one episode. Figure 4.6 illustrates how the Indigenous status of a child with two episodes of preschool from two different service providers and an inconsistent record of his/her indigenous status has been output for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

Figure 4.6: Inconsistent Reporting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Status for Episode and Unique Child Counts



The unique child record assumes Indigenous status information for each child on the basis of the business rules outlined above. If a child is identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander on any one episode of enrolment, their Indigenous status will be output as Indigenous for child and YBFS tables. In the event that a child's Indigenous status is incorrectly recorded (as Indigenous) in one or more episode, this may result in incorrect classification of that child. It is acknowledged that this methodology may lead to an over-count of Indigenous children depending on the level of accuracy of Indigenous identification.

Table 4.2 below outlines example scenarios for deriving Indigenous Status within the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

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4.2: Illustration of selected business rules for deriving Indigenous Status output classifications

Unique Child	Episode 1	Episode 2	Episode 3	Output Indigenous status
Child A	Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin	Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin	Aboriginal origin	Indigenous
Child B	Torres Strait Islander origin	Torres Strait Islander origin	Torres Strait Islander origin	Indigenous
Child C	Aboriginal origin	Aboriginal origin	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin	Indigenous
Child D	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin	Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin	Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin	Indigenous
Child E	Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin	Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin	Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin	Non-Indigenous

More information can be found in the National best practice guidelines for data linkage activities relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the AIHW website.
<http://www.nss.gov.au/nss/home.nsf/NSS/ODD43402B6B4D854CA257A38001E143B?opendocument>.

GEOGRAPHY FOR THE NATIONAL ECEC COLLECTION

The Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) is the ABS' new geographical framework, which came into effect from July 2011. The ASGS replaced the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). For the 2012 National ECEC Collection data have been output at the ASGC level for disadvantage area as Estimated Residential Population (ERP) figures are not available by single year of age at the time of publication of the *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0). Final rebased single year of age ERP figures will be available in mid to late 2013, while the 2012 National ECEC Collection is published on 13 March 2013. It is advised that output *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) data relating to remoteness and disadvantage be used in conjunction with 2006 census based ERP data for reporting and to ensure comparability.

OUTPUT TABLE REFERENCE MATRIX

DESCRIPTION OF CONCEPTS WITHIN THE 2012 NATIONAL ECEC COLLECTION

For the 2012 National ECEC Collection, data has been output using various concepts. The discussion below is a quick reference of these concepts to assist users to ascertain which tables within the *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) publication contain the relevant population concept.

In the previous publications output from the National ECEC Collection tables have been output by estimation concept. For the 2012 release of the National ECEC Collection, the output of the publication is organised in terms of classification, not estimation concept.

Tables are grouped in broad classification concepts. Outlined below is a summary of tables by classification concept.

CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

Classification concept grouping

- Enrolment and Attendance by Episode, Child and YBFS population
- Disadvantage by Episode, Child and YBFS population
- Remoteness Area (ARIA) by Episode, Child and YBFS population
- Hours by Episode, Child and YBFS population
- Fees by Episode, Child and YBFS population
- Worker by Education field, and Role of Worker

Table 4.3 identifies the location of classification concept grouping within the *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) publication.

More information on classifications can be found within *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: 2012 Data Collection Guide* (cat. no 4240.00.55.002).

4.3: Classification concept grouping

<i>Classification concept grouping</i>	<i>Output table number</i>
Enrolment and Attendance by Episode, Child and YBFS population	1-9
Disadvantage by Episode, Child and YBFS population	10-14
Remoteness Area (ARIA) by Episode, Child and YBFS population	15-22
Hours by Episode, Child and YBFS population	23-31
Fees by Episode, Child and YBFS population	32-36
Worker by Education field, and Role of worker	37-38

Each group is disaggregated by estimation concept and other collection classifications including sector and age. For further information on table disaggregation, see the *Preschool Education, Australian 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) publication index.

ESTIMATION CONCEPTS

The following discussion provides a reference to locate estimation concept tables. The estimation concept tables consist of 3 populations including episode, children in preschool and children in preschool in the YBFS.

More information on population concepts can be found in [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

Episodes of a Preschool Program

Episodes of a preschool program population concept presents count of episode of 4 and 5 year old preschool children during the 2012 National ECEC Collection reference period. All jurisdictions, irrespective of whether data were provided at the child record level or at the service provider record level, were included in these tables. More information on Episodes of a preschool program can be found in [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

Episodes of preschool program data were reported separately for enrolment and attendance. Within these two data items, additional tables were produced by various cross-classifications.

Table 4.4 identifies the location of population concepts of Episodes of a preschool program within the *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) publication.

4.4: Episodes of a Preschool Program in 2012

Population Concept	Output table number
Age, Sector type, State and Territory	2
Indigenous children, Age, Sector type, State and Territory	6
Age, Disadvantage index, State and Territory	10
Remoteness area, Sector type, State and Territory	15
Remoteness area, Indigenous children, Sector type, State and Territory	19
Weekly hours, Sector type, State and Territory	23
Remoteness area, Weekly hours, State and Territory	27
Hourly fees charged, Sector type, State and Territory	32
Remoteness area, Hourly fees, State and Territory	34

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012

The Children in a Preschool Program in 2012 population concept presents count of unique child of all 4 and 5 year old preschool children during the 2012 collection reference period. More information on Children in a preschool program can be found in [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

To be included in these tables, data had to be of a quality that allowed accurate identification of unique child records to ensure that each child was counted once only in the collection year. This required child data collected with a unit record level (URL) data collection methodology. See 'Identification of Unique Child Records' within [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

Numbers of children in a preschool program were reported separately for enrolment and attendance. Within these two data items, additional tables were produced by various cross-classifications for performance reporting under the National Partnership on ECEC.

Table 4.5 identifies the location of population concepts of Children in a preschool program within the *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) publication.

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4.5: Children in a Preschool Program in 2012

<i>Population Concept</i>	<i>Output table number</i>
Sector type, State and Territory	3, 4
Indigenous children, Sector type, State and Territory	7,8
Age, Disadvantage index, State and Territory	11
Disadvantage index, State and Territory	12
Age, Disadvantage index, State and Territory, Indigenous status	13
Remoteness area, Sector type, State and Territory	16, 17
Remoteness area, Indigenous children, Sector type, State and Territory	20, 21
Weekly hours, Sector type, State and Territory	24, 25
Weekly hours, State and Territory, Remoteness Area	28
Weekly hours, State and Territory, Indigenous, Remoteness Area	29
Hourly fees charged, Sector type, State and Territory	33
Hourly fees charged, State and Territory, Remoteness Area	35

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year Before Full-time Schooling

The Children in a Preschool Program in the Year Before Full-time Schooling population concept presents unique child counts of 4 and 5 year old children who in 2012 were in the year before full-time schooling (grade 1 minus 2 years) for the first time. The 2012 YBFS cohort excludes 5 year old children who were reported as 4 year old YBFS children in 2011, i.e. those children who had been identified to be a preschool repeater. More information on Children in a preschool program in the YBFS can be found in [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

To be included in these tables, URL methodology was used, and data had to be of a quality that allowed accurate identification of unique child records across multiple years to ensure that each child was counted once only in the totals. See 'Identification of Unique Child Records in the YBFS'.

Counts of YBFS preschool children were reported separately for enrolment and attendance. Within these two data items, additional tables were produced by various cross-classifications for performance reporting under the National Partnership on ECEC.

Table 4.6 identifies the location of population concepts of Children in a preschool program in the YBFS within the *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) publication.

CHAPTER 4: DATA OUTPUT AND PROCESSING

4.6: Children in a Preschool Program in the Year Before Full-time Schooling (YBFS)

<i>Population Concept</i>	<i>Output table number</i>
Sector type, State and Territory	5
Indigenous children, Sector type, State and Territory	9
Disadvantage index, State and Territory	14
Remoteness area, Sector type, State and Territory	18
Remoteness area, Indigenous children, Sector type, State and Territory	22
Weekly hours, Sector type, State and Territory	26
Remoteness area, Weekly hours, State and Territory	30, 31
Hourly fees charged, State and Territory, Remoteness Area	36

Episodes of Worker

Worker information is output in two tables within the *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) publication. These tables have been created to distinguish two different populations. The base population for the first table is broader than the second table, and is used to define worker. See [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#) for the 2012 National ECEC Collection definition of worker. The second table includes further disaggregation by Role of Worker.

More information on worker data items can be found in the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: 2012 Data Collection Guide* (cat. no 4240.0.55.002).

Table 4.7 identifies the location of worker tables within the *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) publication.

4.7: Worker – Education Field and Role of Worker

<i>Cross-classification Concept</i>	<i>Output table number</i>
Episodes of workers, Principals, Group Leaver and Teachers, Highest level of qualification, Education field	37
Episodes of workers, Highest level of qualification, Role of worker	38

CHAPTER 5: OVERVIEW OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN AUSTRALIA

NATURE OF PRESCHOOL PROGRAM DELIVERY BY STATE AND TERRITORY

OVERVIEW

The nature and delivery of preschool programs across states and territories differs significantly and are largely based on historical and legislative environments. For this reason, state and territory departments responsible for ECEC may not be required to collect data from all preschool programs within their jurisdiction, as they may not fund, register, regulate or supply the program.

Long day care (LDC) centres may also be delivering preschool programs that align with the definition for the National ECEC Collection. However, for the purposes of a jurisdictional collection, these programs may not be recognised as a preschool program if they are not funded, regulated or licensed by the relevant state or territory education department. Despite this, these LDCs are still considered to be within the scope of the National ECEC Collection.

This section provides an outline of the state and territory preschool delivery models, including terminology and age entry requirements. This section also provides an outline for the role and work activities of early childhood education workers delivering a preschool program.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

This section broadly outlines the nature of preschool delivery for each state and territory, including relevant information on legislation requirements and licensing arrangements that were in effect at the time of the National ECEC Collection in August 2012. The regulatory arrangements including Acts and Regulations within each state and territory for LDC centres may have changed with the introduction of the National Quality Framework in January 2012, and these changes have begun to impact service providers involved in the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Discussion outlines any registration bodies or government registries relevant to preschool workers within a state/territory. Preschool teachers delivering a preschool program in a long day care setting may not be subject to such regulation.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

This section will provide an overview of the management arrangements for preschool delivery within each state or territory. The content presented aligns with the sector types published in the tables within *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0). In some instances the sectors have been collapsed within the tables presented, however data are available from the ABS by request.

Broadly, the two main sectors are presented as 'Preschool' and 'Long Day Care' service activity types. Within the 'Preschool' activity type, the management arrangements are explained in terms of government and non-government managed. The distinction between Preschool and LDC are as follows.

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Preschool

A preschool delivers a preschool program in a stand-alone facility or is co-located or integrated as part of a school. A preschool provides structured educational programs to children in the year before they commence full-time schooling. Government preschools include those managed by state and territory and local governments, or by state and territory government schools. Non-government preschools include those operated by private for-profit organisations, private not-for-profit organisations (community managed and other organisations), independent schools and Catholic schools.

Long Day Care

A LDC is a centre-based form of child care service providing all-day or part-time care for children. Included in these care services may be the delivery of a preschool program. LDCs primarily provide care services for children aged 0-5 years, though children of older ages may also be attending. LDCs are primarily operated by for-profit and not-for-profit organisations, local councils, community organisations and employers, and are usually provided by a mix of qualified and other staff. The service may operate from stand-alone or shared premises, including those on school grounds.

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AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

OVERVIEW

For the 2012 National ECEC collection, information on children attending a preschool program delivered by a degree qualified teacher in LDC settings was primarily provided by the Australian Government.

LDCs that provide preschool programs are known by a variety of nomenclature, such as kindergartens, preschools, child care centres, or early learning centres, however they are referred to within this manual as 'LDCs'. The preschool programs delivered in these LDCs are called either kindergartens or preschools (depending on location of service delivery) however they are referred to within this manual as 'preschool programs'.

The delivery of preschool programs, including those delivered in LDCs, varies within and across the different states and territories. These differences are outlined in the table below.

5.1 PRESCHOOL DELIVERY MODELS(a)

<i>Model 1: Government Model (WA, SA, Tas., ACT & NT)</i>	<i>Model 2: Non-Government Model (NSW, Vic. & Qld.)</i>
The state/territory government owns, funds and delivers the majority of preschool services.	The state/territory subsidises preschool programs that are provided by non-government organisations.
Preschools are treated in much the same way as primary and secondary schools.	Preschool programs delivered in LDC centres charge some fees and attract Australian Government funding through the CCB and CCR.
The state/territory may provide supplementary funding to preschools, but generally not to preschool programs delivered in LDC centres. These services attract Australian Government funding through the Child Care Benefit (CCB) and Child Care Rebate (CCR).	Under this model, the state/territory government owns less than 20% of preschool programs and these services are generally targeted at disadvantaged communities. This is in contrast to government schools, which are comprehensive.

(a) Sourced from the *Evaluation of the National Partnership on Early Childhood Education, Annual Progress Report 2010* (Urbis, 2010).

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

Authority for approving LDCs and providing funding comes from the provisions in:

- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance)(Administration) Act 1999*
- *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999.*

The Australian Government and the state and territory governments are involved in the operation, funding and regulation of child care services. Each has a separate and vital role to play.

The key responsibilities of the Australian Government through the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) are to:

- administer CCB and CCR to families through the Family Assistance Office (FAO)
- administer payment of CCB and CCR to approved services
- administer financial support to approved services in areas of need. These costs may be shared between state or territory governments and the Australian Government
- maintain some statistical data on the supply of child care places.

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State and territory governments have prime responsibility for family support, child welfare and the regulation of child care services. These regulatory responsibilities include licensing in all states and territories for centre based LDC. From 1 January 2012, most LDCs commenced operation under the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care (the 'Framework'). The new Framework replaced all licensing, accreditation and quality assurance processes for most LDC, family day care, preschool (or kindergarten) and outside of school hours care services, which were previously undertaken by the states and territories and the Australian Government. Under the Framework, approval and regulation of LDCs approved for CCB now occurs through an applied laws system which has been enacted in all jurisdictions, comprising the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* and the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*. The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority is the independent statutory authority responsible for ensuring that services are meeting the new requirements as set out in the Framework.

Further information on the Framework can be found on the DEEWR website:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood/policy_agenda/quality/pages/home.aspx.

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NEW SOUTH WALES

OVERVIEW

In New South Wales (NSW), 'Preschool' is the term used for educational programs provided to children mostly but not exclusively in the year before full-time schooling (i.e. Year 1 minus 2 years). 'Kindergarten' is the term used for a child's first year of school (i.e. pre-Year 1 year). Children in NSW can attend a preschool program in a variety of settings, including preschools operated by non-government (typically not-for-profit) and government managed service providers and by both not-for-profit and commercial LDC centres. The majority of NSW preschools operate in line with public school terms and close during school holidays.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

All early childhood education and care services in NSW, including preschools and LDCs, must comply with the Education and Care Service National regulations under the *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law* (NSW) and the *Children (Education and Care Services) Supplementary Provisions Regulation 2012* (NSW).

The NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC) regulates all early childhood education and care services across the state, including preschools, LDC, occasional care, family day care and home-based care. Approvals are granted without a fixed term. Prior to 2011, early childhood education and care services were licensed by the NSW Department of Family and Community Services.

Preschool teachers delivering a preschool program in a government or non-government school settings within NSW are required to hold an early childhood education degree from a recognised university. Preschool teachers delivering a preschool program in community or centre-based setting may not be required to be university trained in early childhood education.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Preschool

Service providers in NSW that offer a preschool program as their main type of activity have the following management arrangements.

Government Managed

Government managed preschools are preschool programs which are located on government school sites and are operated by the NSW DEC. These services are regulated under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* under the *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law* (NSW).

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Non-government Managed

Community managed: Community managed preschools are not-for-profit preschools owned and operated by community organisations or local government and have a main service activity type of preschool. These preschools are regulated by NSW DEC under the Education and Care Services national Regulations under the *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)* and most are also funded by NSW DEC.

Independent school managed: Independent school managed preschools are non-government private schools which also provide preschool programs and are generally regulated by NSW DEC under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* under the *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)*.

Long Day Care

Service providers in NSW that offer a LDC as their main type of activity and may also offer and deliver a preschool program have the following management arrangements.

Long Day Care with a Preschool Program

Community managed: Community managed LDCs are not-for-profit LDCs owned and operated by community organisations or local government. These include services where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider. These preschools are regulated by NSW DEC under the education and Care Services National regulations under the *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)* and some are also funded by NSW DEC.

Private for-profit: Private for-profit managed LDCs are services provided by commercial for-profit corporations or entities, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider. These services do not receive funding from NSW DEC, but are also regulated by NSW DEC under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations* under the *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW)*.

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VICTORIA

OVERVIEW

In Victoria (Vic.), 'Kindergarten' is the term used for educational programs provided to children in the year before full-time schooling (i.e. Year 1 minus 2 years) which is referred to within this manual as 'preschool'. 'Preparatory', or 'Prep', is the term used for a child's first year of school (i.e. pre-Year 1 year).

Children in Victoria are eligible to enrol in and attend a funded preschool if they turn 4 years old prior to 30 April of the same year. Preschool programs for 3 year old children are not funded by Victoria, except for the Early Start programs that cater specifically for Indigenous children and children known to the Child Protection Service.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

All Victorian preschools are bound by the conditions set out in the *Children's Services Act 1996* (Vic.) and the *Children's Services Regulations 2009* (Vic.). The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Vic. DEECD) licenses child care services including preschool, LDC, family day care, in-home care, occasional care and outside school hours care. All regulations and conditions of applications for licenses are covered under the *Children's Services Regulations*.

The Victorian state government provides contributory funding towards one year of preschool for each child in the year before they commence full-time schooling. To be in receipt of funding, preschools must be licensed under the *Children's Services Act*, and operate a preschool program that meets the criteria for funding eligibility. Some children are funded for a second year of preschool if eligibility requirements are met.

For funded preschool programs in Vic. Some long-term teachers have Certifications of Teaching or a 3 year degrees. Prior experience and qualifications are required to be demonstrated that teachers meet the criterion for an equivalent 4 year degree standard. If a teacher meets this criterion, they are deemed to have a 4 year teaching qualification for funded preschool programs in Vic.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Preschool

Service providers in Victoria that offer a preschool program as their main type of activity have the following management arrangements.

Government Managed

Government preschools in Victoria are those managed by local government.

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Non-government Managed

Community managed: Community managed preschools include those managed by incorporated associations and cooperatives, companies limited by a guarantee, (government) school councils and church groups, where the main service activity type is preschool.

Independent schools: Independent schools are schools that are governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school.

Private for-profit managed: Preschools managed by the private sector include for-profit private providers (companies limited by shares), and individuals, where the main service activity type is preschool.

Long Day Care

Service providers in Victoria that offer a LDC as their main type of activity and may also offer and deliver a preschool program have the following management arrangements.

Long Day Care with a Preschool Program

Community managed: Community managed LDCs include those managed by incorporated associations and cooperatives, companies limited by a guarantee, (government) school councils and church groups, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider.

Private for-profit managed: LDCs managed by the private sector include for-profit private providers (companies limited by shares), colleges or universities, and individuals, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider.

Other: Other management types include approved preschool programs delivered in tertiary educational facilities (for example TAFE or universities) where the main service activity type is LDC.

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QUEENSLAND

OVERVIEW

In Queensland (Qld.), 'Kindergarten' and 'Pre-Preparatory' are the terms used for the educational programs provided to children in the year before full-time schooling (i.e. Year 1 minus 2 years) which is referred to within this manual as 'preschool'. 'Preparatory' or 'Prep' are the terms used for a child's first year of full-time school (i.e. pre-Year 1 year). Children in Qld. are eligible to enrol in a funded preschool program if they are at least 4 years of age prior to 30 June of that year.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

The Qld. Department of Education, Training and Employment (Qld. DETE) is responsible for the approval of licensing and monitoring of early childhood services under the *Education and Care Services National Law 2011* (Qld.) and *Child Care Act 2002* (Qld.). All non-government services offering approved preschool programs are approved under the national law. In addition, Qld. DETE provides funding to service providers approved under the Qld. Kindergarten Funding Scheme (QKFS) to support the delivery of preschool programs. In addition, a small number of DETE early childhood education programs known as pre-Prep are administered under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Queensland). Approved service providers include all government managed providers and all non-government managed providers that meet the approval requirements.

Prior to 2012, qualification requirements to work in early childhood education were attached to specific educator roles including director, early childhood teacher, group leader, assistant, family day care educator or outside school hours care coordinator. From 1 January 2012 these requirements changed for the majority of services as per the National Quality Framework. A list of national approved qualifications is available on the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Further information on the Framework can be found on the DEEWR website:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/earlychildhood/policy_agenda/quality/pages/home.aspx.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Preschool

Service providers in Qld. that offer a preschool program as their main type of activity have the following management arrangements.

Government Managed

There are a small number of government managed schools that provide preschool programs in Qld. under the Bound for Success pre-Prep program, which operates in Indigenous communities. This program is offered in very remote communities where there are little or no early childhood education and care infrastructure. These programs are provided by Qld. DETE under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* (Qld.).

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Non-government Managed

Community managed: Community managed preschools include those managed by parents, a church or a cooperative, where the main service activity type is preschool.

Private for-profit: Private for-profit preschools are approved stand-alone preschools provided by for-profit corporations or entities, where the main service activity type is preschool.

Private not-for-profit: Private not-for-profit preschools are approved stand-alone preschools provided by not-for-profit organisations or entities, where the main service activity type is preschool.

Independent schools: Independent schools are services providing approved preschool programs in registered non-government schools.

Catholic schools: Catholic schools are services providing approved preschool programs in registered Catholic schools.

Other (TAFE, university, corporate): Other management types include approved preschool programs delivered in educational facilities (for example TAFE or universities) or in corporate settings (for example preschools provided for employees of an organisation), where the main service activity type is preschool.

Long Day Care

Service providers in Qld. that offer a LDC as their main type of activity and may also offer and deliver a preschool program have the following management arrangements.

Long Day Care with a Preschool Program

Private for-profit: Private for-profit LDCs are approved centre-based integrated services provided by for-profit corporations or entities, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider.

Private not-for-profit: Private not-for-profit LDCs are approved centre-based integrated services provided by not-for-profit corporations or entities, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA

OVERVIEW

In South Australia (SA), 'Preschool' is the term used for the educational programs provided to children in the year before full-time schooling (i.e. Year 1 minus 2 years). 'Reception' is the term used for a child's first year of school (i.e. pre-Year 1 year). All children in SA are eligible to commence preschool at the beginning of the school term following their 4th birthday, although Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children under the Guardianship of the Minister may commence preschool from 3 years of age.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

The SA Department for Education and Child Development (SA DECD) licenses, regulates or operates the majority of all child care and preschool centres in SA. The SA DECD licensing and standards unit collects information on child care services via licensing applications. SA DECD maintains a register of all services that it operates or funds, and collects service, worker and child level data from these services through an annual census process.

An independent regulatory authority, the Education and Early Childhood Services Regulation and Standards Board of South Australia, which acts on behalf of SA DECD, applies the following regulations: *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* (SA), the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*, *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011* (SA) and the *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Regulations 2011*.

Registration for early childhood education teachers is a requirement for preschool programs delivered in a government, non-government, independent and Catholic school setting. Registration requirements may not apply for early childhood teachers delivering a preschool program in some LDC centre-based settings.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Preschool

Service providers in SA that offer a preschool program as their main type of activity have the following management arrangements.

Government Managed

SA DECD manages the majority of preschool programs in SA. There are two models of preschool operations in the government managed sector:

- stand-alone or integrated centre-based programs where the main service activity type is preschool. These preschools are operated under the provisions of the *Children's Services Act 1985* (SA).
- school-based programs attached to SA DECD schools.

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Non-government Managed

Community managed: Community managed preschools include stand-alone preschools and integrated centre-based programs where the main service activity type is preschool. Non-government community managed providers (not attached to a school) are licensed as child care centres.

Independent schools: Non-government preschools can be provided through independent private schools or colleges in SA. Preschools attached to independent schools frequently incorporate 'Early Learning Centre' as part of their name and are subject to the abovementioned Act and Regulations

Catholic schools: Non-government preschools can be provided through Catholic primary schools or colleges in SA.

Long Day Care

Service providers in SA that offer a LDC as their main type of activity and may also offer and deliver a preschool program have the following management arrangements.

Long Day Care with a Preschool Program

Private for-profit: Private for-profit managed LDCs are those provided by for-profit corporations or entities, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider.

Private not-for-profit: Private not-for-profit managed LDCs are those provided by not-for-profit corporations or entities, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider.

Community managed: Community managed LDCs include those that are managed by parents, a church or a co-operative where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider. Preschool programs can be managed and delivered in these community-based LDC settings.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

OVERVIEW

In Western Australia (WA), 'Kindergarten' is the term used for the educational programs provided to children in the year before full-time schooling (i.e. Year 1 minus 2 years) which is referred to within this manual as 'preschool'. 'Pre-primary' is the term used for a child's first year of full-time school (i.e. pre-Year 1 year). Children in WA are eligible to enrol in a preschool program at the beginning of the year if they are 4 years old on or prior to 30 June of the same year. The provision of preschool education is generally integrated with school education in WA.

Preschool is provided in nearly all schools which cater for WA primary school aged children. Preschool is provided in both the government and non-government sectors, and in a small number of community and independent preschools.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

Under WA legislation, the *School Education Act 1999* (WA), a program is only recognised as a preschool program if it is provided within a school setting. Therefore preschool programs provided in LDC settings or those not being provided under the *School Education Act* are not officially recognised as preschool in WA.

All early childhood education teachers are required to be registered by the WA College of Teaching (WACOT) and are required to hold a qualification deemed suitable by WACOT. If an early childhood education teacher has no qualifications, they are required to indicate if they are currently working towards an ECEC qualification and the number of years' experience they have teaching in a preschool setting. LDCs are not required to employ teachers who are members of WACOT.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Preschool

Service providers in WA that offer a preschool program as their main type of activity have the following management arrangements.

Government Managed

Government managed preschool programs are provided in all public schools which cater for primary school aged children. Government preschools in WA are funded by the WA Department of Education (WA DoE) and are operated from public schools and independent public schools. These preschools are operated under the *School Education Act*, as well as the *School Education Regulations 2000*.

WA also regards community-based preschools as government managed preschools. Community-based preschools are registered by the Minister of Education and are staffed, funded and quality assured by the public education system. Parent management committees are responsible for financial management and daily operations in these preschools. Community-based preschools which have been registered under the *School Education Act* are bound by the conditions of this Act, as well as the *School Education Regulations*.

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Non-government Managed

Independent schools: Independent schools are registered by the Minister under the *School Education Act* and their programs are quality assured by the WA Department of Education Services (WA DES). All independent schools with preschool programs receive a per capita grant from WA DES for age-eligible children enrolled at the school. Independent schools operate under the *School Education Act*, as well as the *School Education Regulations*.

Catholic schools: Catholic schools are registered by the Minister under the *School Education Act*. Through a formal agreement with WA DES, their programs are quality assured by the Catholic Education Office of WA. All Catholic schools with preschool programs receive a per capita grant from WA DES for age-eligible children enrolled at the school. Catholic preschools operate under the *School Education Act*, as well as the *School Education Regulations*.

Long Day Care

Service providers in WA that offer a LDC as their main type of activity and may also offer and deliver a preschool program have the following management arrangements.

Long Day Care with a Preschool Program

Private for-profit: Preschool programs provided in LDC settings are not officially recognised in WA as preschool, unless the LDC provider is also registered as a school. In this situation, the LDC would be included in the non-government school category. Only incorporated non-profit entities can be registered as a school. Non-school preschool programs in LDCs do not therefore receive funding from WA DES. Education regulations and quality assurance mechanisms that apply to schools do not apply to preschool programs in LDCs. In particular, LDCs are not required to implement the WA K-12 Curriculum Framework and are not required to employ teachers who are members of the WACOT. LDCs are bound by the *Childcare Service Act 2007* (WA), the *Children's Services (Childcare) Regulations 2006* and the *Childcare Services Regulations 2007*.

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TASMANIA

OVERVIEW

In Tasmania (Tas.), 'Kindergarten' is the term used for educational programs provided to children in the year before full-time schooling (i.e. Year 1 minus 2 years) which is referred to within this manual as 'preschool'. 'Preparatory' is the term used for a child's first year of full-time school (i.e. pre-Year 1 year). Preschool programs are offered to children who are a minimum age of 4 years 0 months as at 1 January of the reference year. Exceptions may be granted for gifted children (who must be at least 3 years and 6 months of age as at 1 January of the reference year) or where children were previously enrolled in a preschool in another state or territory.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

In Tas., a service provider can only be recognised as offering a preschool program if it is registered as a school. Preschool education provided by government and non-government schools in Tas. is covered under the *Education Act 1994* (Tas.) and associated *Education Regulations 2005* (Tas.). Under the *Education Act*, preschool programs provided in government schools are regulated by the Tas. Department of Education (Tas. DoE). Non-government schools and LDCs registered as a school are regulated by the Schools Registration Board. LDCs not registered as a school are not officially recognised as a preschool by the Tas. DoE. These LDCs delivering a preschool program are regulated under the *Child Care Act 2001* (Tas.).

As preschools in Tas. are registered or delivered as part of the school system (including preschool provided in LDCs registered as a school), all teachers are required to be qualified and registered. Most preschool teachers in Tas. are trained in early childhood education as a part of their degree, but this is not mandatory.

All teachers in Tas. must be registered by the Tas. Teacher Registration Board. As a result of the registration process, some long-term teachers have Certifications of Teaching or 3 year degrees. The registration process requires all teachers to demonstrate, through teaching experience, that they meet the criterion for an equivalent 4 year degree standard. If a teacher meets this criterion, they are deemed to have a 4 year teaching qualification for registration purposes. Teachers within LDCs are not required to be registered by the Tas. Teacher Registration Board.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Preschool

Service providers in Tas. that offer a preschool program as their main type of activity have the following management arrangements.

Government Managed

Government preschools in Tas. are delivered, funded and staffed by the Tas. DoE. All government preschools are integrated with a primary or district high school and are normally located on the same campus. The preschool curriculum is part of the school curriculum.

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Non-government Managed

Independent schools: Registered non-government schools with a primary school component that provide preschool programs within their school curriculum. These service providers receive some funding from Tas. DoE.

Catholic schools: Catholic schools with a primary school component that provide preschool programs within their school curriculum. These service providers receive some funding from Tas. DoE.

Long Day Care

Service providers in Tas. that offer a LDC as their main type of activity and may also offer and deliver preschool programs have the following management arrangements.

Long Day Care with a Preschool Program

While Tas. has a number of LDC providers, only one service provider is currently recognised by Tas. DoE as being able to offer a preschool program. This LDC is regulated under the *Education Act*, is registered with the Schools Registration Board, and is therefore registered as a school for the purposes of providing a preschool program. This LDC did not deliver a preschool program in Tas. in 2011.

There are a number of other LDCs in Tas. that offer preschool programs as defined by the National ECEC Collection, however these services are not registered with Tas. DoE and are therefore not recognised by Tas. DoE as delivering a preschool program.

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NORTHERN TERRITORY

OVERVIEW

In the Northern Territory (NT), 'Preschool' is the term used for educational programs provided to children in the year before full-time schooling (i.e. Year 1 minus 2 years) and 'Transition' is the term used for a child's first year of full-time school (i.e. pre-Year 1 year). Both Preschool and Transition in the NT are non-compulsory. Children are eligible to enrol in preschool at the beginning of the year if they turn 4 years of age on or prior to 30 June of the same year.

Indigenous children living in remote areas are eligible to enrol in preschool if they turn 3 years of age on or prior to 30 June of the same year. Children turning 4 years of age after 30 June are eligible to enrol in a preschool program after their birthday, if places are available in a program and with the understanding that the child will access more than 12 months of preschool.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

The NT Department of Education and Children's Services (NT DECS) are responsible for the registration of preschool programs in accordance with the *Education Act* (NT) and associated regulations. Child care services are registered and/or licensed under the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007* (NT) and the *Care and Protection of Children (Children's Services) Regulations 2009*.

NT DECS requires Early Childhood Education teachers to provide details of highest relevant qualification to ECEC. NT DECS considers all teachers registered with the NT Teacher Registration Board as four year equivalent qualified teachers. Registration requirements may not apply for early childhood teachers delivering a preschool program in a long day care or centre-based setting.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Preschool

Service providers in the NT that offer a preschool program as their main type of activity have the following management arrangements.

Government Managed

In the NT, the majority of preschools are government preschools that are delivered, funded and staffed by NT DECS. They are provided either free of charge, or for a small voluntary fee. These government preschools are integrated with a primary school and are almost all located on the same site as the primary school, often with administrative and educational links to that school. While NT DECS provides preschool in this sector, a range of management functions are delegated to school councils and parent management committees. Preschool programs operated in a government school setting in the NT are bound by the *Education Act* and associated regulations.

In addition to on-site preschools, NT DECS also funds satellite and mobile preschools which operate in a range of remote and very remote areas to service small communities. The mobile preschools visit their respective communities for two days a week on average. They are staffed by qualified teachers (not necessarily an early childhood teacher) and on-site teacher assistants.

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Non-government Managed

Independent school managed: Independent school managed preschools are non-government managed preschools delivered by registered Christian and independent schools. Christian and independent preschools are not funded by NT DECS. Preschool programs operated in a non-government school setting in the NT are bound by the *Education Act* and associated regulations.

Catholic school managed: Catholic school managed preschools are non-government managed preschools delivered by registered Catholic schools. In the NT, a small number of remote Catholic schools receive funding from NT DECS for preschool services and are provided to children on a non-fee paying basis. Preschool programs operated in Catholic school settings in the NT are bound by the *Education Act* and associated regulations.

Long Day Care

Service providers in the NT that offer a LDC as their main type of activity and may also offer and deliver a preschool program have the following management arrangements.

Long Day Care with a Preschool Program

Private for-profit: Private for-profit managed LDCs are those provided by for-profit corporations or entities, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider. No data are collected by NT DECS for preschool services offered in these centres as they are not registered as preschools and do not receive any funding from NT DECS. LDCs are registered and/or licensed under the *Care and Protection of Children Act* and the *Care and Protection of Children (Children's Services) Regulations*.

Private not for-profit: Private not-for-profit managed LDCs are those provided by not-for-profit corporations or entities, where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider. No data are collected by NT DECS for preschool services offered in these centres as they are not registered as preschools and do not receive any funding from NT DECS. LDCs are registered and/or licensed under the *Care and Protection of Children Act* and the *Care and Protection of Children (Children's Services) Regulations*.

Community managed: Community managed LDCs include those that are managed by parents, a church or a co-operative where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider. No data are collected by NT DECS for preschool services offered in these centres as they are not registered as preschools and do not receive any funding from NT DECS. LDCs are registered and/or licensed under the *Care and Protection of Children Act* and the *Care and Protection of Children (Children's Services) Regulations*.

Non-government managed schools: There are several non-government schools that provide on-site services for children aged 3 to 5 years, providing LDC and/or sessional programs delivered by an early childhood qualified teacher, in lieu of registered preschools. These services are known as early learning centres and are licensed and funded as children's services as defined by the *Care and Protection of Children Act*. No data are collected by NT DECS for preschool programs offered in these centres as they are not registered as preschools and do not receive any funding from NT DECS.

CHAPTER 5: OVERVIEW OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

OVERVIEW

In the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), 'Preschool' is the term used for educational programs provided to children in the year before full-time schooling (i.e. Year 1 minus 2 years) and 'Kindergarten' is the term used for a child's first year of full-time school (i.e. pre-Year 1 year). Children in the ACT are eligible to enrol in a preschool program at the beginning of the year if they turn 4 years of age prior to 30 April of the same year. Children with special needs may be placed in a targeted early childhood intervention program from 2 years of age. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, hearing and vision impaired children, children for whom English is a second language, children from mobile families (e.g. Defence Force families) and gifted and talented children are also eligible to apply for early entry.

LEGISLATION AND LICENSING

The ACT Community Services Directorate (ACT CSD) is responsible for the licensing and monitoring of education and care services, including independent preschools, under the *Children and Young People Act 2008* (ACT) and the ACT *Childcare Services Standards 2009*.

Licensed children's services include centre-based care (LDC and occasional care), school aged care, independent preschools and play-schools. Educators delivering preschool within Independent schools are required to have early childhood teaching qualifications.

All government preschool programs are currently delivered by four year qualified early childhood education teachers. Qualification requirements may not apply for early childhood teachers delivering a preschool program in a non-government, long day care or centre-based setting.

SECTOR DESCRIPTIONS

Preschool

Service providers in ACT that offer a preschool program as their main type of activity have the following management arrangements.

Government Managed

ACT public preschools are delivered and funded by the ACT Education and Training Directorate (ACT ETD). These public preschools are amalgamated with primary schools and are staffed by the ACT ETD.

Non-government Managed

Community (not-for-profit): Community (not-for-profit) preschools include churches and community groups. These services do not receive funding from the ACT Government.

CHAPTER 5: OVERVIEW OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN AUSTRALIA

Private for-profit: Private for-profit providers include corporations or other entities, which do not receive funding from the ACT Government.

Independent schools: Independent school managed preschools are preschool programs provided by registered non-government schools. These services do not receive funding from the ACT Government.

Catholic schools: Catholic school managed preschools are preschool programs provided by registered Catholic schools. These services do not receive funding from the ACT Government.

Long Day Care

Service providers in ACT that offer a LDC as their main type of activity and may also offer and deliver a preschool program have the following management arrangements.

Long Day Care with a Preschool Program

Community (not for-profit): Community (not-for-profit) LDCs include churches and community groups where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider. These services do not receive funding from the ACT government.

Private for-profit: Private for-profit LDCs include corporations or other entities where the main service activity type is not preschool but a preschool program is delivered by the service provider. These services do not receive funding from the ACT government.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the methodology and quality of jurisdictional early childhood education and care data and the sources from which the data were collected for the 2012 National Early Childhood Education Care (ECEC) Collection. As there is considerable variability in the data collected by each of the jurisdictions, this chapter aims to clarify the quality of the data and the mechanisms used for collecting the data.

The [ABS Data Quality Framework, May 2009 \(cat. no 1520.0\)](#) has been used to evaluate the quality of each jurisdictional collection which contributes data to the National ECEC Collection.

Each jurisdictional collection has been assessed using an individual data quality statement, and as such the statements relate only to the quality and coverage of each individual jurisdictional collection as a separate entity. For example, in those state and territories where data for Long Day Care centres will be sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS), information concerning the quality assessment of the CCMS is not included.

The dimensions which make up the Data Quality Statements are defined as follows.

Institutional Environment

This dimension refers to the institutional and organisational factors which may have a significant influence on the effectiveness and credibility of the agency producing the statistics. This considers the surrounding context, which may influence the validity, reliability or appropriateness of the data. Information contained in this section includes the organisation responsible for collecting and compiling the data, and the authority or legislation under which the data were collected.

Relevance

The assessment indicates how well the jurisdictional data source meets the needs of the National ECEC Collection in terms of the concepts measured, and the populations represented. This criterion also outlines the collection scope and coverage. Information provided includes the original purpose for collecting the data, the collection scope and population of interest for the data collected, and any coverage limitations.

Timeliness

Timeliness refers to the delay between the reference period (to which the data pertains) and the date on which the data become available. This includes the time taken for the jurisdiction to deliver the data to the ABS and the time taken for the ABS to release the data. It also refers to the frequency with which data are collected.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS

Accuracy

Data sources employ a range of methods to collect data. In this context accuracy refers to the degree with which the data correctly describe the phenomenon they were designed to measure. This is an important component of quality as it relates to how accurate the data are and impacts on how useful and meaningful the data will be for interpretation or further analysis. An assessment is made on the accessibility and availability of a source and the implications on statistics for the National ECEC Collection. To describe this dimension for the National ECEC Collection, information is provided on the collection mechanism, data processing and validation procedures.

Coherence

Coherence refers to the internal consistency of a statistical collection, product or release, as well as its comparability with other sources of information, within a broad analytical framework and over time. The use of standard concepts, classifications and target populations promotes coherence, as does the use of common methodology across collections. Coherence is an important component of quality as it provides an indication of whether the data set can be usefully compared with other sources to enable data compilation and comparison. In the context of the National ECEC Collection this assessment also examines changes in concepts and alignment with the ECEC National Minimum Data Set.

Counts of Children:

This section also outlines whether jurisdictional data are able to be presented in terms of the following table concepts for the publication *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0):

- Children in a preschool program in 2012; and
- Children in a preschool program in the Year before Full-time Schooling.

The concept of child counts is discussed in more detail in [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).

Interpretability

Interpretability refers to the availability of information to help provide insight into the data. Assisting with the interpretation of the data may include the variables used and the availability of metadata, including concepts, classifications, and measures of accuracy. This section outlines further information that is available to help users better understand the data source, as well as information made available to data providers to assist with the initial collection and collation of the data.

Accessibility

Accessibility refers to the ease of access to data by users, including the ease with which the existence of information can be ascertained, as well as the suitability of the form or medium through which information can be accessed. For the purpose of the data quality framework, data accessibility relates to the publication *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012*. (cat. no 4240.0)

Information Source

This section outlines the source of information used to compile the data quality statement

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012 the Australian Government was responsible for one data collection in relation to preschool children, the Child Care Management System (CCMS). The CCMS enabled a data extract to be provided at child unit record level (URL) for the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

Child Care Management System

Institutional Environment

The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) and the Department of Human Services all share responsibility for the operation of the CCMS. Data for the CCMS are collected under *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) (Administration) Act 1999* (Cwlth) and the *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* (Cwlth). Preschool data from the CCMS for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are managed by DEEWR.

Relevance

The CCMS is a national child care administrative system that enables child care services to exchange child care information online with the Australian Government. It enables the payment of Child Care Benefit (CCB) fee reductions on behalf of parents, to approved child care services. It also provides for the collection of information about the supply and usage of child care across Australia. All CCB approved child care service providers are required by law to operate under CCMS.

Child care services use their CCMS registered software to record child demographic, enrolment and attendance information. Relevant data is then extracted by DEEWR to allow calculation and payment of CCB fee reductions on behalf of children in their service. Services need to supply this information regularly in order to comply with CCMS regulations.

While the CCMS was not initially designed to collect information about preschool programs in long day care (LDC) centres, the CCMS provides an opportunity to gain such information. From June 2010, enhancements were deployed in the CCMS to capture information on whether a child is attending a preschool program in each LDC, and the hours per week of preschool attendance. Reporting capabilities for this data have been available since 1 September 2010.

Scope: The scope of the CCMS extract for the National ECEC Collection included all children aged 3 to 6 years of age who were enrolled within the reference week at a LDC provider approved for the purposes of CCB.

Coverage: All services approved for the purposes of CCB were required to provide data through the CCMS. However, LDCs delivering preschool programs were not mandated to complete the preschool program component of the CCMS, which has resulted in under-coverage due to levels of non-response. Service providers that were not approved for CCB purposes were not included in the CCMS. Refer to [Chapter 1, Collection Scope and Coverage](#) for more information on the strategy undertaken to improve coverage in this sector.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Data collection methods: The 2012 preschool program component of the CCMS collected data using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data for workers was not available.

Timeliness

The CCMS involves service providers uploading weekly attendance information for children enrolled at their service. Data were extracted from the system for a collection reference period of 30 July to 5 August 2012. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months from the collection date, at which time data were delivered to the ABS.

Accuracy

Under *A New Tax System (Family Assistance) Act 1999* (Cwlth), approved child care services are required to submit certain records such as weekly enrolments and attendance record reports for each child to DEEWR electronically, using an approved software. To ensure there are no duplicate enrolments, DEEWR checks dates of birth and Child Reference Numbers as well as Service Client IDs so there can only be one current enrolment at a service for the same parent/guardian and child combination.

The CCMS has a high level of accuracy in reporting information on child demographics (such as name, date of birth and address information) and children's attendance in child care services, as this information contributes to the provision of CCB. However, some service provider characteristics and information on children's attendance in preschool programs was subject to a level of service non-response, as the provision of this data by service providers was not mandatory. Furthermore, as not all services use the same software to record the information into CCMS, the various interfaces used to input to CCMS can influence what is recorded. No data on workers within service providers are collected through the CCMS.

Coherence

Data collected in 2012 from the CCMS for use in the National ECEC Collection was comparable with data collected in 2011.

The preschool program component of the CCMS was designed to collect data in accordance with the 2010 ECEC National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS). As a result, there are small discrepancies between the national standards defined in the 2012 ECEC NMDS and the data collected from the CCMS.

CCMS method of collection of preschool program fee was collected using the total LDC fee, rather than just the preschool program component. This methodology influenced a higher preschool fee resulting in a potential over exaggeration of preschool fees for a preschool program delivered within an LDC.

Despite this, data sourced from the 2012 CCMS were of sufficient quality and comparability for use as a supplement to state and territory data, thereby improving 2012 coverage of preschool programs delivered in the LDC sector. Deviations between the 2012 ECEC NMDS and data collected from the CCMS are outlined in table 6.1.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

6.1 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC NMDS

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Indigenous status	Data were based on the Indigenous status of the person receiving the CCB (i.e. the child's parent or guardian), not the Indigenous status of the child. It is assumed that the person receiving the CCB is biologically related to the child and that the child's Indigenous status is the same as their parent's.
Maximum preschool program hours available	Data were not available in 2012.
Preschool program hours attended	The reporting of this data element by service providers was not compulsory and therefore in some instances was completed using enrolment hours. It is only compulsory to record complete day absences and therefore the hours attended may be overstated.
Management type	Data were not ECEC NMDS compliant.
Worker data elements	Worker level data were not available.

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in, and attending, two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify matched episode records for a child accurately, both within a collection cycle and between years.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

For data sourced from the Child Care Management System (CCMS), counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived as data were collected using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

Two years of comparable data collected using a URL methodology and a child/client database were available for data collected from the CCMS.

Interpretability

Extensive explanatory information was provided in a handbook and a telephone enquiry help desk was available to assist users with queries about how to report information under the CCMS. The CCMS handbook is available for download from the DEEWR website, along with other instruction sheets and explanatory materials, at <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/Operation/Pages/CCMSPublications.aspx>.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the preschool program component of the CCMS for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) on the ABS website.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT

Information Source

The information in this report has been sourced from DEEWR in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available from the DEEWR website: [<http://deewr.gov.au/early-childhood>](http://deewr.gov.au/early-childhood).

NEW SOUTH WALES

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012, New South Wales (NSW) was responsible for two data collections in relation to preschool programs, both of which collected data using a Unit Record Level (URL) data collection methodology:

- NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC): ‘Government School Census’
- NSW Department of Education and Communities (NSW DEC): ‘Children’s Services Data Collection’.

a] Government School Census

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the Government School Census was NSW DEC. Data for the Government School Census were collected under the *Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2012* (NSW) and Education and Care Services National Regulations.

Relevance

The data collected by NSW DEC enabled reporting across the NSW government schools sector for a variety of reporting requirements, as well as to measure progress against Australian Government ECEC targets and Council of Australian Governments (COAG) reforms.

Scope: The scope of the early childhood component of the Government School Census included all children aged 3 to 5 years old who were attending a preschool program at a government school in NSW. Children are eligible to enrol at a government preschool if they turn 4 on or before 31 July of that year. Priority is given to children from disadvantaged backgrounds who are unable to access other children’s services, particularly Indigenous children and children from families who experience financial hardship.

Children enrolled in an Early Intervention class at a NSW government school were included in the Government School Census for the first time in 2012. Early intervention classes provide early childhood education in a preschool setting for children with a disability.

The scope for data provided on workers included all paid primary contact teachers and School Learning Support Officers delivering preschool programs at government schools in NSW. Only Primary contact teachers were considered in-scope for the National ECEC Collection.

Coverage: All government schools in NSW participated in the Government School Census. For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data were sourced from all government schools offering a preschool program, and therefore full coverage was achieved for the NSW government sector.

Data collection methods: The 2012 Government Schools Census collected data using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NEW SOUTH WALES

Timeliness

The Government School Census is an annual collection and in 2012 was undertaken on 3 August, with a reference period of 30 July to 3 August. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the Government School Census for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

All NSW DEC government school-based preschools were required to participate in the Government School Census by completing an on-line census form. There were three sections to the preschool component of the Government School Census:

- general preschool data (e.g. number of children enrolled, number of Indigenous children)
- class or group data (overall session details for service and individual attendance by child, along with date of birth, sex, Indigenous status, language background other than English and disability)
- teacher data (e.g. qualifications and length of employment).

During the collection period, NSW DEC extracted children's details from the Enrolment Registration Number (ERN) system. Preschool teachers checked enrolment data, allocated children to class groups and entered enrolment details for any children missing from the ERN. Teachers also entered additional information, such as change of address details, and then electronically submitted the census to the secure DEC Collection portal.

NSW DEC ensured that all preschools submitted compulsory data. Preschools were notified about the data collection through the regular Principals' newsletter and reminder faxes. Detailed instructions on collecting and entering the data using the secure DEC Collections portal were available to preschools at all times during the survey period. The online census contained a number of validation rules to prevent inconsistencies and omissions. During the data collection period, preschool support workers could phone NSW DEC to clarify counting rules and data collection procedures. In addition, data anomaly reports were generated identifying problems such as incorrect age, low attendance or duplicate children. All anomalies were checked and data corrected if required. Signoff was required from all Principals whose school provided a preschool program.

Coherence

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data collected through the 2012 Government School Census were comparable with data collected in 2011, as both collections were undertaken using a URL data collection methodology. Children enrolled in an early Intervention class at a NSW government school were included in the Government School Census for the first time in 2012. An analysis of the coherence of this collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis, taking into account any data elements that are not consistent with the ECEC NMDS specifications. Deviations between the 2012 ECEC NMDS and data collected from the Government Schools Census are outlined in table 6.2.1.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NEW SOUTH WALES

6.2.1 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC NMDS

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Address line (Child)	Full child address information was not collected for a small proportion of children; only the suburb/town/locality name. This impacted on the ability to determine child disadvantage status and remoteness classifications, which affected comparability across jurisdictions.
Preschool program fees	Preschool Fees were introduced to government preschools in January 2012. The 2012 Government School Census did not have the capability to collect this data element.
Level of highest qualification relevant to ECEC (Worker)	The collection of this data element was self-reported. Only one qualification was recorded for each worker. Teachers and School Learning Support Officers were asked to report their Highest qualification in Early Childhood.

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify accurately matched episode records for a child both within a collection cycle and between years.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

For NSW, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived as data were collected using an appropriate URL data collection methodology.

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

As NSW had two years of comparable data collected using URL methodology and had child/client database, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in the year before full-time schooling were also able to be derived.

Interpretability

NSW DEC preschools were notified about the Government Schools Census through the regular Principals' newsletter and reminder faxes. Detailed instructions on collecting and entering data using the secure NSW DEC Collections portal were available to preschools at all times during the collection period.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the Government School Census for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) on the ABS website.

b) Children's Services Annual Data Collection

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the Children's Services Annual Data Collection was NSW DEC. Data for the Children's Services Data Collection were collected under the Service Specifications, which are contracts with each service provider outlining the terms of renewable funding under the Children's Services Program. These preschools are regulated by NSW DEC under the Education and Care Services National regulations and the *Children (Education and Care Services) National Law* (NSW).

Relevance

The data collected by NSW DEC were used for state government reporting commitments and to assist with the evaluation and planning of service provision. For preschools, the information obtained was used to determine funding for the following year. The data was also used for a variety of State and Commonwealth reporting requirements, as well as to measure progress against Commonwealth ECEC targets and COAG reforms.

Scope: The scope of the Children's Services Data Collection included all children aged 0 to 6 years attending a preschool program regulated and funded by NSW DEC. Enrolment priority is given to children who are in their year before full-time schooling, children who are at risk of harm and children from disadvantaged backgrounds (i.e. Indigenous status, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), and children from low income families and children with a disability).

The scope for data provided on workers included all paid workers employed in service providers that were regulated and funded by NSW DEC.

Coverage: NSW government funded preschools were mandated to participate in the Children's Services Data Collection. The collection included government funded Catholic and Independent schools with preschool programs and Community managed preschools.

A substantial proportion of preschool programs in NSW are delivered by commercial LDCs that do not receive funding from NSW DEC. As a result, no data were collected from these services by the NSW Government as part of the Children's Services Data Collection. Data on commercial LDCs were collected using the Child Care Management System (CCMS).

Service providers that were registered for the CCB and CCR were requested to provide information in the Children's Services Data Collection only for children who did not receive the CCB or the CCR. Preschool programs not funded by the NSW government and preschools delivered in non-government schools were also not in scope of the collection, therefore complete coverage was not achieved by the Children's Services Data Collection.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NEW SOUTH WALES

Data collection methods: The 2012 Children's Services Annual Data Collection collected data using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level

Timeliness

The Children's Services Data Collection is an annual collection and in 2012 was undertaken between 30 July and 26 August with a reference period of 30 July to 10 August 2012. This reference fortnight was adopted by NSW DEC to reflect the preschool delivery model in NSW. Data collected in the reference fortnight was then derived by NSW DEC to a one week reference period for data items expressed in units of time, e.g. preschool fees charged per week and hours worked per week in preschool program delivery. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the Children's Services Annual Data Collection for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4204.0).

Accuracy

In 2012 service providers completed the Children's Services Annual Data Collection through the online Children's Services Data Collection (CSDC) system. The CSDC system allowed service providers to:

- enter data for each child and ECEC worker, and to automatically calculate totals
- enter individual child and ECEC worker details progressively throughout the representative fortnight
- generate a copy of the data entered, for their own records.

ECEC workers were required to report one qualification, being their highest qualification in early childhood education.

After completion of all fields, data entry restrictions were automatically applied to ensure required information was entered before the data could be submitted. After data lodgement, users received an automated e-mail confirming that data had been submitted successfully and received by NSW DEC.

NSW DEC ensured that all services submitted compulsory data. The online census contained a number of validation rules to prevent inconsistencies and omissions. During the data collection period, service providers could phone a 1300 phone number to clarify counting rules and data collection procedures. In addition, all submitted data were cross-checked for consistency with operational characteristics such as approved number of places and operating hours at each service. Prior year data were also compared and, where large variations were apparent, service providers were contacted to confirm data accuracy. Regional staff also undertook random audits of service providers after the collection period.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NEW SOUTH WALES

Coherence

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data collected through the 2012 Children's Services Annual Data Collection were comparable to data collected in 2011, as both collections were undertaken using similar URL data collection methodologies.

Specific data elements collected using methods which did not align with the ECEC NMDS specifications are outlined below and should be taken into account when comparing data collected from each dataset.

An analysis of the coherence of this collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis, taking into account any data elements that are not consistent with the ECEC NMDS specifications. Deviations between the 2012 ECEC NMDS and data collected from the Children's Services Annual Data Collection are outlined in table 6.2.2.

6.2.2 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC NMDS

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Address line (Child) Area of usual residence (Child)	Full address information was not collected for a small proportion of children; only the suburb/town/locality name. This impacted on the ability to determine child disadvantage status and remoteness classifications, which affected comparability across jurisdictions. Child address line data could only be supplied voluntarily, thereby affecting ability to accurately classify to CD and SA1 geographic locations.
Indigenous status (Child)	The Indigenous status of the child was not disaggregated below the level of 'Indigenous' and 'non-Indigenous'.

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify matched episode records for a child both within a collection cycle and between years accurately.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

For NSW, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived as data were collected using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

As NSW had two years of comparable data collected using URL methodology and had child/client database, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in the year before full-time schooling were also able to be derived. Data quality for child SLK and the repeater indicator improved considerably in 2012.

Interpretability

NSW provided a range of key information via manuals and fact sheets, such as the 2012 Census Booklet and Coding Instructions, to assist in the reporting of data, correct interpretation and explanation of concepts. Information and notification about the data collection were communicated to service providers via electronic mail and information package via postal mail detailed instructions on collecting and entering the data using the CSDC system. The Children's Services data collection tool - user guide, can be found at:

<https://ecec.det.nsw.edu.au/CSDC/UserGuide.pdf>.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NEW SOUTH WALES

Accessibility

Data sourced from the Children’s Services Annual Data Collection for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) on the ABS website.

Information Source

The information contained within this report has been sourced from NSW DEC in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available at the NSW DEC website <http://www.educationandcommunities.nsw.gov.au/>.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - VICTORIA

VICTORIA

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012, Victoria (Vic.) was responsible for two Unit Record Level (URL) data collections that were used to supply data for the 2012 National ECEC Collection. These collections were:

- the Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection conducted in April (the 'April Data Collection')
- the August Census Collection.

There is also the November Future Funding Collection, however this is not used for the National ECEC Collection.

Confirmed Kindergarten Funding Data Collection & the August Census Collection

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for both data collections was the Vic. Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD). Data were collected in accordance with Funding and Service Agreement requirements.

Relevance

Data from the 2012 collections enabled reporting across the Victorian ECEC sector for a variety of reporting requirements. The information collected through the April collection was used by Vic. DEECD to make decisions about the level of funding each organisation was eligible to receive for each preschool child enrolment (per capita funding) and the number of children eligible to receive the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy. The August Census Collection was conducted primarily to support national reporting requirements.

Scope: The scope of both collections included all children aged 3 to 6 years of age who were officially enrolled during the reference period in Vic. DEECD funded preschool programs for children in the year prior to school delivered by service providers with a current Vic. DEECD Service Agreement.

The scope for data provided on workers included all paid primary contact teachers and teaching assistants who were employed in Vic. DEECD funded preschool programs delivered by service providers with a current Vic. DEECD Service Agreement.

Coverage: Services with a current Funding and Service Agreement were licensed and funded by Vic. DEECD, therefore participation in the collections was a mandatory requirement for these providers. Full coverage of preschool programs delivered through these service providers was achieved. A small number of long day care (LDC) centres operating a preschool program were not funded by Vic. DEECD and as a result, no data were collected from these services by Vic. DEECD.

Data collection methods:

The 2012 April Data Collection collected data using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data for children were provided from the August Data Collection only
- *Service provider organisation:* data for service providers were provided from the August Data Collection only
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - VICTORIA

The 2012 August Data Collection collected data using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child*: data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation*: data at the service provider record level
- *Worker*: data at the worker level were provided in the April collection, and updated for the August Data Collection.

Data collected in the April collection is prepopulated into the August Census Collection tool and services update and add to the information to reflect the reference week.

Timeliness

The April Data Collection is an annual collection and in 2012 was conducted 2 April to 4 May 2012. The August Census Collection reference period was 30 July to 3 August. The collection was conducted from 30 July to 31 August.

In Victoria, it is a condition of preschool funding that organisations provide accurate information to Vic. DEECD by the due date of the data collections. The timeliness and accuracy of data provided by each organisation in April is reviewed annually as part of a service agreement. If an organisation fails to provide accurate information or to submit on-line forms by the required date, Vic. DEECD may decide to delay or cease payments of funding.

Completion of the data processing and validation stages for the August Census Collection took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the collections for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

Organisations with a current Vic. DEECD Service Agreement, who continue to meet the eligibility requirements for funding, were required to submit data to their regional office via an on-line survey. There are two data collections each year and organisations are required to provide data for both collections.

In the April Data Collection, service providers were required to confirm the number of enrolled children eligible for per capita funding, and the number eligible for the Kindergarten Fee Subsidy. Information on service provider characteristics and worker details was also required to be confirmed. These data were confirmed using data supplied in the November Future Funding Collection. For the 2012 August Census Collection, service providers in receipt of per capita funding were required to provide enrolment, attendance and fees paid data for each child enrolled at the service and workforce data

Teacher qualification data was primarily collected during the April Data Collection and then updated during the August Census Collection.

Victoria carried out data validation in response to missing fields of data as well as cross checking data for accuracy. With on-line data collection, fields were entered via drop-down boxes containing only valid options where possible. Intermediate totals were system calculated rather than manually entered. Vic. DEECD staff performed verification checks on every preschool service submission, ensuring that no blanks occurred in data records and comparing enrolments across years.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - VICTORIA

Coherence

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data collected through the 2012 August Census Collection were able to be compared with data collected in 2011, as both collections were undertaken using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

Specific data elements which were collected using methods which did not align with the ECEC National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) specifications are outlined below and should be taken into account when analysing the data collected. An analysis of the coherence of this collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis, taking into account any data elements that are not consistent with the ECEC NMDS specifications. Deviations between the 2012 ECEC NMDS and data collected from the 2012 August Census Collection are outlined in table 6.3.

6.3 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC NMDS

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Fees charged (Child)	Fee data collected from LDCs relates to the total LDC enrolment rather than the actual preschool fee and preschool hours.
Preschool program enrolment hours (Child)	Data were not available for LDCs. Attendance hours were used as a proxy measure for enrolment hours for these services.
Management type (Service provider)	The legal entity status of the funded organisation reported by each service provider (excluding Independent schools) was used as a proxy measure for management type. This may not have produced consistent classifications of management type for all service providers. Independent schools were categorised using the 'funding status' flag in the Vic. DEECD funding system and assigned a management type of Code 6: <i>Independent school</i> , regardless of the legal entity status of the funded organisation.
Meshblock	Meshblock was not provided for Child or Service provider level. However CD and SA1 were provided for 2012.

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify matched episode records for a child, both within a collection cycle and between years accurately.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

For Vic., counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived as data were collected using a URL data collection methodology.

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

Whilst Victoria had two years of comparable data collections using URL methodology, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in the year before full-time schooling (YBFS) were not able to be accurately derived as Vic. did not have a child/client database. Children in a preschool program in the YBFS were reported as a proxy.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - VICTORIA

Interpretability

Extensive explanatory information was provided in the on-line collection instrument. Information such as a 'frequently asked questions' fact sheet on the data collection process was available from Vic. DEECD. If service providers required clarification about the collection, they were also able to contact a Children's Service Adviser in their regional office.

The Vic. DEECD provides information on funding criteria and data collection responsibilities in the publication 'Victorian kindergarten policy, procedures and funding criteria 2010–12', which is available on the Vic. DEECD website at:

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/earlychildhood/childrensservices/kindergartenpolicycriteria.pdf>.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the Vic. DEECD Collection for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) on the ABS website.

Information Source

The information contained in this report has been sourced from Vic. DEECD in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available at the Vic. DEECD website <http://www.education.vic.gov.au>.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - QUEENSLAND

QUEENSLAND

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012, Queensland (Qld.) was responsible for one data collection in relation to preschool programs, the 'Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census' (ECECSC), which collected data using both aggregate level and Unit Record Level (URL) data collection methodologies.

Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the 2012 ECECSC is Qld. Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE). Data for the 2012 ECECSC were collected under the *Child Care Act 2002* (Qld.) and the *Education and Care Service National Law 2011* (Qld.).

Relevance

Data collected from the ECECSC enabled Qld. DETE to report on a variety of matters, such as the performance of the early childhood education and care sector, to the Qld. and Australian Governments, and the community. The data were used to provide evidence for policy and program development and planning and to monitor outcomes of early childhood initiatives such as the department's Workforce Action Plan and the implementation of the Education and Care Services National Law.

Scope: The 2012 ECECSC included all children who were enrolled in a licensed or approved child care service or pre-prep program provided by a government school. This included children that were enrolled in Long Day Care, Kindergarten, Pre-Prep in schools, Limited Hours Care, Family Day Care and School Aged Care Services at the time of the ECECSC.

The scope for data provided on workers included all staff, both paid and volunteer engaged in licensed child care services that consented to their information being provided. Only primary contact teachers were considered in-scope for the National ECEC Collection.

Coverage: The 2012 ECECSC achieved complete coverage of approved service providers in receipt of Qld. Government funding. Data were also collected from unfunded providers, however their participation in the ECECSC was voluntary.

Data collection methods: The 2012 ECECSC collected data for the following statistical entities:

Funded approved programs (URL data collection methodology):

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - QUEENSLAND

Unfunded providers (aggregate level data collection methodology):

- *Child*: totals for children enrolled and attending preschool programs at the service provider record level
- *Service provider organisation*: data at the service provider record level
- *Worker*: data at the worker record level.

Timeliness

The ECECSC is an annual collection and in 2012 was undertaken in the week commencing 30 July. For all service providers excluding community preschools, the reference period was 30 July to 5 August 2012. For community preschools, the reference period was 23 July to 5 August 2012. Information collected within this reference fortnight was adopted for these service providers to reflect their preschool delivery model. This reference fortnight was then derived by Qld. to a one week reference period to enable comparison with other service providers across Qld. and other jurisdictions for the National ECEC Collection.

Completion of the data processing and validation stages occurred in the 3 months following the collection, at which time data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the ECECSC for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

For the 2012 ECECSC, data were collected from service providers via an online survey tool.

A limited number of services supplied information through paper-based forms that were equivalent to the on-line census.

As part of the internal validation process for 2012, Qld. DETE included explanatory notes within the on-line census to assist service providers with definitions and responses. Edit checks were built into the online census, which ensured that valid data were supplied. Data supplied by service providers also underwent a range of validation and edit checks post enumeration to ensure that the information was complete, internally consistent and fell within fixed known parameters for relevant questions. During the data validation process, where information was not supplied, data were substituted from other parts of the service's data supply. Only in certain circumstances were service providers contacted to collect missing information.

An Imputation process was undertaken by Qld. DETE for non-responses by unfunded services in 2012, incorporating historical and donor methodology. No adjustment for any known or predicted undercount was undertaken.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - QUEENSLAND

Coherence

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data collected through the 2012 ECECSC were not directly comparable with 2011 data as the proportions of URL data and aggregate data were not consistent between years. The number of services taking up their funding entitlement to deliver a kindergarten program (URL data) has increased considerably and is expected to continue as Qld. progresses towards universal access. This means the number of unfunded services (aggregate data) is continually decreasing and therefore no further legislation change to collect URL data from unfunded services has been pursued. Consequently, Qld. data are comparable at the child episode level only.

In 2012 there were more service providers in scope for the Qld. collection, as a result the episode counts have increased in comparison to 2011. Care needs to be taken when interpreting episode/child data across years from Qld.

Specific data elements which were collected using methods which did not align with the ECEC National Minimum Data Set (NMDS) specifications are outlined below and should be taken into account when analysing the data collected. An analysis of the coherence of this collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis, taking into account any data elements that are not consistent with the ECEC NMDS specifications. Deviations between the 2012 ECEC NMDS and data collected from the Early Childhood Education and Care Services Census, are outlined in table 6.4.1 and table 6.4.2.

6.4.1 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC URL NMDS – Funded Approved Programs

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Statistical linkage key (Child)	There were quality issues with construction of statistical linkage keys for some children.

6.4.2 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC Aggregate NMDS – Unfunded Providers

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Number of children enrolled in a preschool program	This data element could not be disaggregated by the child level data element 'Sex'. 'Sex' was an additional data element request for 2012.
Number of children attending a preschool program	
Number of Indigenous children enrolled in a preschool program	This data element could not be disaggregated by the child level data element 'Sex' and was only available at the level of 'Indigenous' or 'non-Indigenous'.
Number of Indigenous children attending a preschool program	
Weekly tuition fee schedule amount	Fees and hours were not included from Qld's aggregate collection due to data quality concerns. The use of Qld fee and hour statistics needs to be treated with care acknowledging that fee and hour data does not represent comprehensive coverage.
Total hours of preschool program attended	

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify accurately matched episode records for a child both within a collection cycle and between years.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - QUEENSLAND

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012 and in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

For Qld., counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 and in the year before full-time schooling, were not able to be derived as data were reported using a combination of URL and aggregate methodologies. As a result, data for Qld. could only be presented in terms of episodes of enrolment and attendance in preschool programs.

Interpretability

Qld. DETE provided a range of information to assist in the collection and reporting of data, such as explanatory notes for providers. The explanatory notes, together with printable copies of ECECSC collection forms, were available from the Qld. DETE website: <http://deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/office/2012census.html>.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the ECECSC for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) on the ABS website. Data from the ECECSC are also published in sector fact sheets and various other forms on the Qld. DETE website.

Information Source

The information contained within this report has been sourced from Qld. DETE in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available at the Qld. DETE website <http://deta.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/office/2012census.html>.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012, South Australia (SA) was responsible for one data collection in relation to preschool programs, the Annual Census of Children's Services (ACCS).

Annual Census of Children's Services

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the ACCS is SA Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). Data for the ACCS were collected under the *Education Act 1972 (SA)* and the *Education Regulations 1997 (SA)*.

Relevance

Information gathered by the ACCS included patterns of service usage and characteristics of children and families. The data were required by the SA government for forward planning and the analysis of needs and gaps in current service provision. The data from this collection enabled reporting across the SA early childhood education and care sector for a variety of reporting requirements.

Scope: The scope of the 2012 ACCS included children aged 3 to 5 years (extending to 6 years old for a small number of children who were Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, or were under the guardianship of the Minister for Families and Communities) attending government managed or government funded preschools, including integrated centres, and funded non-government community managed child care centres with a preschool program.

The scope of data provided on workers included all paid workers employed in government managed or government funded preschools, including integrated centres, and funded non-government child care centres and schools with a preschool program. Data on workers includes temporary relief teachers employed in these centres during the reference period. Workers were included irrespective of whether they delivered a preschool program during the reference period.

Coverage: In 2012 the ACCS achieved full coverage of all government managed and government funded preschools, including Independent and Catholic schools with funded preschool programs, and funded non-government community managed child care centres with a preschool program. The numbers of non-government community managed LDCs with a preschool program that receive government funding has grown steadily.

Participation in the ACCS was voluntary for unfunded Independent and Catholic school managed preschool providers. It was also voluntary for unfunded community managed providers and unfunded LDC centres. Therefore the ACCS did not achieve full coverage of these sectors due to levels of service non-response.

Data collection methods: The 2012 ACCS collected URL data for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Timeliness

The ACCS is an annual collection and in 2012 was undertaken on the 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 23 July to 3 August 2012. This reference fortnight was adopted by SA DECD to reflect the preschool delivery model in SA. Information collected during this reference fortnight was then derived by SA DECD to a one week reference period to enable comparison with other jurisdictions for the National ECEC Collection.

The data processing and validation stages took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the ACCS for the purpose of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

In 2012, the ACCS collected data through a spreadsheet based collection for non-government providers and a web-based preschool administration system for government providers. The web-based format collected information using a URL data collection methodology. For the non-government providers that submitted data via spreadsheet templates, data were also supplied at child unit record level, compliant with NMDS Standards. The 'Early Years System' (EYS) is the web-based system in SA preschools for the management of preschool enrolments, attendances and fees. Training of service providers commenced in 2011 and continued throughout 2012. The EYS staffing module was pre-populated with teaching qualifications from the SA DECD Human Resources administrative system prior to the ACCS being conducted. Staff completing the ACCS checked the qualifications listed in the EYS and updated them if required.

SA DECD collated both on-line and spreadsheet census information within a temporary data repository known as the Data Administration Centre (DAC). Service provider details are stored and maintained in the location services system (LSS). ECEC worker data are stored and maintained in the VALEO Human Resources Management System at unit record level. Data for the 2012 National ECEC Collection were sourced from these databases. A data validation database was utilised by SA DECD to ensure the quality of the data collected. Data validations were performed at the service provider, child and staff levels.

Coherence

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data collected through the 2012 ACCS were comparable with 2011 data. Due to developments and subsequent data improvements. Some data may not be comparable to 2011 data.

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to accurately identify matched episode records for a child, both within a collection cycle and between years.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

For SA, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived as data were collected using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012 and in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

As SA had two years of data collected using a URL methodology and had a child/client database, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in the year before full-time schooling were able to be derived. While child level data items were collected in compliance with 2012 NMDS standards, due to rolling student intakes in SA, it is recognised that a small proportion of children could not be reported in the YBFS cohort in the 2012 ABS publication tables. This can occur for children who were 4 years of age at the time of commencing preschool in term 3 (that is those who had their 4th Birthday on or before 23 July 2012), but were 3 years of age as at 1 July 2012. These children may commence their formal schooling in Term 3 2013 and therefore would not be included in the 2013 National ECEC Collection.

Interpretability

SA provided a range of information to assist in the reporting of data, such as the 2012 ACCS Booklet and Coding Instructions. Key material was provided in the form of manuals and fact sheets to support the correct interpretation and explanation of concepts. Training in using the Early Years System (EYS) for DECD preschools was ongoing throughout 2012. No training was provided in use of the temporary spreadsheet collection templates for non-government services, however they were designed to be intuitive for users.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the ACCS for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) on the ABS website.

Information Source

The information contained within this report has been sourced from SA DECD in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available on the SA DECD website <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/>.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012, Western Australia (WA) was responsible for one data collection in relation to preschool programs, the WA August Student Census, which collected data using a Unit Record Level (URL) data collection methodology. The WA August Student Census included an additional component, the 2012 Kindergarten Provision Census, which collected worker data from all service providers included in the WA August Student Census.

WA August Student Census

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the School Census is WA Department of Education (DoE). Data for the WA August Student Census were collected under the *School Education Act 1999* (WA).

Relevance

The data collected through the School Census by the WA DoE were used to meet national reporting requirements, including the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC) and the National ECEC Collection. The data were also used to determine allocation of schools operating grants and forward planning for the government and non-government school sectors, including Indigenous participation policy and ‘guaranteed local access to kindergarten’ policy.

Scope: The scope of the early childhood component of the WA August Student Census consisted of children aged 4 years on or before 30 June 2012, who were attending a preschool program within a school, including government and non-government schools, and community based preschools.

The scope for data provided on workers included all paid educators (teachers and education assistants) delivering preschool programs at all government, Catholic and independent schools, and community-based preschools.

Coverage: Full coverage was achieved for all registered and funded schools (both government and non-government) and community-based preschools.

As preschool programs provided in long day care (LDC) settings are not funded or regulated by WA DoE, these service providers were not included in the WA August Student Census.

Data collection methods: The 2012 WA August Student Census collected data for Government and community-based preschools, and some non-government schools (using a URL data collection methodology) for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level,
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level,
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Timeliness

The WA August Student Census is an annual collection conducted in August. In 2012 the collection was undertaken on 3 August with a reference period of 23 July to 3 August 2012. This reference fortnight occurred in the first two weeks of Semester 2, the first day of which was a pupil-free day in Western Australia. The 9-day fortnight for this particular census period was derived to a weekly equivalent to enable data comparison with other jurisdictions for the National ECEC Collection. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the WA August Student Census for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

Child level data: Government preschool data were obtained from government primary schools through an administrative system, the INTEGRIS Student Information Database (SID) and a daily data harvesting process. The SID is the primary source of URL data for public schools, which is loaded into the Student Census System data warehouse twice a year. Once collected, non-government school data are held in the Student Census System data warehouse. The census data is collected twice a year, in February and August. For non-government schools, child URL data is extracted from school enrolment records at the census date and made available to DoE. School principals are required to authorise census data submissions.

Worker level data: All educators (teachers and education assistants and Aboriginal and Islander Education Officers) who work with kindergarten children for more than one hour per week were required to provide details on their field and level of highest qualification relevant to ECEC. If an educator had no qualifications, they were required to indicate whether they were currently working towards an ECEC qualification and also the number of years of experience they had in teaching preschool (the first year of school, known as 'kindergarten in WA, and offered part-time) or Pre-primary (the first year of full-time school in WA). To be registered as a teacher in WA, teachers are required to produce evidence that they are four year trained or equivalent. Equivalency is determined by WA College of Teaching (WACOT).

Government and non-government data collected through the Schools Census were then stored in the WA data repository, and extracted for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection.

Internal validation processes for the School Census occurred at three different points of the process. The Census module within SID had a series of in-built validation rules, some of which required the school to edit data before continuing, while other rules generated warnings alerting the user to anomalies. These warnings allowed the user to decide whether data needed amending before the census return was submitted. For government schools, a validation tool allowed administrators to bulk check the integrity of child date of birth data. This first level of validation only applied to WA government schools/preschools.

WA non-government schools used a comma-separated values file upload (URL data collection methodology) to the online Census System, which incorporated a number of internal consistency checks. A proportion of children in non-government managed preschools ages were imputed from aggregate data but supplied by WA DoE as pseudo URL child level data.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – WESTERN AUSTRALIA

For non-government preschools, a validation checklist was utilised to ensure that:

- preschool children were counted by year of birth,
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal data were correct,
- totals were correct.

A second set of validation processes were run by the WA August Student Census team, using both routine and ad-hoc validation methods to examine data while being assembled into working files. These processes were designed to enable effective investigation of new issues.

The third set of validation rules were built into the custom software which loaded school census data into the data warehouse, or into the staging phase.

Coherence

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data collected from government school-based preschools using a URL data collection methodology were comparable with data collected in 2011.

Specific data elements collected using methods which did not align with the ECEC National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) specifications are outlined below and should be taken into account when analysing the data collected.

Attendance hours were constructed by applying average hours attended data. This data was available through student attendance data which became available in October. An average was calculated and applied for Indigenous and non-Indigenous data. Due to WA policy on enrolment and attendance there may be an under-count in children enrolled in preschool. This is because in WA a child attending for less than 90% of enrolled hours is not considered enrolled.

An analysis of the coherence of the WA collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis, taking into account any data elements that are not consistent with the ECEC NMDS specifications. Deviations between the 2012 ECEC NMDS and data collected from the WA August Student Census, are outlined in table 6.5.

6.5 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC NMDS

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Maximum preschool program hours available (Child)	This data element did not align with the ECEC NMDS as it was collected as minimum hours enrolled.
Preschool program hours attended (Child)	This data element was imputed from a separate WA attendance rates database.

Counts of Children:

In the collection reference period, it is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to collate all matching child records.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012 and in the Year Before Full-time Schooling:

For WA, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived (for most sectors, excluding non-government schools) as data were collected using a URL data collection methodology.

Interpretability

For government schools, the collection instrument itself contained significant guidance and computation rules to prevent inconsistent responses in relation to prior data entries. For non-government schools, a checklist was provided which included instructions and suggestions for validations. DoE staff who prepared the Census were trained to provide phone and email support through the DoE Customer Service Centre system.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the School Census for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) which is available on the ABS website.

Information Source

The information contained within this report has been sourced from WA DoE in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available on the WA DoE website <http://www.det.wa.edu.au/>

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - TASMANIA

TASMANIA

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012, Tasmania (Tas.) was responsible for one data collection in relation to preschool programs, the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection.

Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Collection

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection was the Tasmanian Department of Education (DoE). Data for the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection were collected under the *Education Act 1994* (Tas.). Worker data were collected under the *Tasmanian Personal Information Protection Act 2004* (Tas.).

Relevance

The data collected by Tas. DoE in the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection were used to report on Tasmanian achievements against performance targets, as well as progress against Australian Government ECEC targets and COAG reforms. For preschools, the information obtained was also used in determining the funding of services by the Tasmanian government.

Scope: The scope of the early childhood component of the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection consisted of all children enrolled in a preschool program in 2012. The 2012 Data Collection was managed in conjunction with the Tas Catholic Education Office and the Independent Schools of Tasmania in order to cover preschool children at non-government schools accurately.

The scope for data provided on workers included all paid and unpaid contact workers that were employed in government, Independent and Catholic schools during the reference period and were involved in service provision of a preschool program.

Coverage: All registered government schools, catholic schools, and independent schools in Tas. participated in the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection.

Data collection methods: The Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection was conducted using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - TASMANIA

Timeliness

The Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection is an annual collection and in 2012 was undertaken on 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 23 July to 3 August 2012. This reference fortnight was adopted by Tas. DoE to reflect the preschool delivery model in Tas. This reference fortnight was then derived by Tas. DoE to a one week reference period to enable comparison with other jurisdictions for the National ECEC Collection. Completion of the data processing and validation stage took approximately 3 months after the collection date, at which time data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

Child level data: The process of obtaining and processing data in Tas. commenced with government service providers uploading information from each child enrolment form into the student management system 'EduPoint' which stored the information in a data warehouse. The data warehouse contains in-built data quality checks that provided timely data feedback to schools. Data from the warehouse were then used to populate the Tasmanian 2012 ECEC Data Collection

Worker level data: Teacher data were collected directly from the Tasmanian ECEC Workforce Microsoft access database. Qualification information for teachers and principals was collected from the Tas. 'Teacher Registration Board', which also holds a current record of qualifications of all teachers. All non-teacher worker qualification data were collected directly from Government, Independent and Catholic schools, as the government data warehouse does not hold non-teacher data centrally.

If a worker holds more than one qualification, the following rules apply:

- the highest ECE qualification is reported for the worker if applicable
- in instances where the worker does not hold an ECE qualification, then the highest teaching related qualification is reported
- in instances where the worker does not hold a teacher qualification, the highest non-teaching related qualification is reported.

All teachers in Tas. must be registered by the Tas. Teacher Registration Board. As a result of the registration process, some long-term teachers have teaching certification or relevant 3 year degrees. The registration process requires all teachers to demonstrate, through teaching experience, that they meet the criteria for an equivalent 4 year degree standard. If a teacher meets this criterion, the teachers are deemed to have a 4 year teaching qualification for registration purposes.

The collection data were reviewed and cleaned by Tas. DoE staff. This process included numerous quality checks such as confirming student ages, hours enrolled, and verifying duplicate enrolments across schools. A declaration report was sent to schools, which each principal was required to review and declare that all data were true and correct. This set of students became the authoritative dataset for the census date. Preschool data were extracted from this census dataset to match with all other data collated for the National ECEC Collection. Extensive quality assurance occurred for the attendance and teacher qualification data, to ensure that data were consistent with other Tas. DoE data sources.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - TASMANIA

Some specific validation methods applied by Tas. DoE included:

- data code compliance with the NMDS
- detection of inconsistent data coding. For example, teacher with no qualifications, and students with dates of birth outside expected date ranges, indicate coding errors
- comparisons of student enrolment counts with previous year data
- review of school summary tables by student and workforce data by various categories, i.e. Indigenous status, enrolment hours
- students in repeat years of preschool
- key collection outputs are meaningful.

Coherence

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data collected through the Tas. 2012 ECEC Data Collection were comparable with data collected in 2011, as both collections were undertaken using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

Specific data elements collected using methods which did not align with the ECEC NMDS specifications are outlined below and should be taken into account when comparing data collected from each dataset. An analysis of the coherence of this collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis, taking into account any data elements that are not consistent with the ECEC NMDS specifications. Deviations between the 2012 ECEC NMDS and data collected from the Tasmanian 2013 ECEC Collection, are outlined in table 6.6.

6.6 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC NMDS

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Maximum preschool program hours available (Child)	The data element 'Preschool program attendance hours' was used as a proxy for this data element.
Child attendance and enrolment data	Hours of attendance were derived from the kinder class times. Attendance was recorded per class.

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify matched episode records for a child, both within a collection cycle and between years accurately.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

For Tas., counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived, as data were collected using a URL data collection methodology.

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

As Tas. had two years of comparable data collected using a URL methodology and had a child/client database, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in the year before full-time schooling were also able to be derived.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS - TASMANIA

Interpretability

To support data custodians participating in the Tas. 2012 ECEC Data Collection, a guide was sent to service providers along with the collection instrument to assist users with the data collection system.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the Tas. 2012 ECEC Data Collection for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) on the ABS website.

Information Source

The information contained within this report has been sourced from Tas. DoE in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available at the Tas. DoE website [<www.education.tas.gov.au>](http://www.education.tas.gov.au).

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NORTHERN TERRITORY

NORTHERN TERRITORY

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012, the Northern Territory (NT) was responsible for one data collection in relation to preschool services, the Age/Grade Census, which collected data using a Unit Record Level (URL) data collection methodology.

Age/Grade Census

The 2012 Age/Grade Census consisted of three components:

- Student Census
- Staff Census
- Preschool Census (Students and Staff).

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the Age/Grade Census was the NT Department of Education (DECS). Data for the Age/Grade Census were collected under the *Education Act* (NT).

Relevance

The data collected from the Age/Grade Census enables reporting on NT schools and the early childhood education sector for a variety of reporting requirements. The preschool data collected from this census are used for the National Preschool Census and the Report on Government Services, as well as government budget paper estimates and the NT DECS annual report.

Scope: The scope of the Age/Grade Census for the early childhood component of the census consisted of all children enrolled in a preschool program that attended a government or registered non-government preschool at least once during the four week period prior to the one week reference period (30 July – 3 August 2012).

The scope for data provided on workers included all paid workers employed in government and registered non-government preschools and who were registered with the NT Teacher Registration Board. Workers were included irrespective of whether they delivered a preschool program during the reference period.

Coverage: All government and registered non-government preschools participated in the Age/Grade Census, which collected data using a URL collection methodology. Although the data collection methodology utilised for non-government preschools differed from that applied to government preschools, the data collected were at the same level of detail and were comparable with data from government preschools.

Long Day Care centres that deliver a preschool program were not within scope of the 2012 Age/Grade Census, therefore the Child Care Management System (CCMS) was utilised for coverage of this sector.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NORTHERN TERRITORY

Data collection methods: The 2012 Age/Grade Census collected data using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

Timeliness

The Age/Grade Census is an annual collection and in 2012 was undertaken on 3 August 2012. Information gathered for the Preschool Census component of the collection related to the reference period of 30 July to 3 August 2012. Completion of data processing and validation stages took approximately 2 to 3 months after the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the Age/Grade Census for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

In 2012 data extracts from the Age/Grade Census of child, teacher and service provider record level information were submitted from each government and some non-government schools' Student Administration and Management System (SAMS). Some non-government schools provided data via Excel spread sheets. Additional data were collected through an online survey tool and data from both sources were processed centrally for inclusion in the census collection.

Teacher level data: Teachers were required to provide details on their field of highest qualification relevant to early childhood education and care. NT DECS considered all teachers registered with the NT Teacher Registration Board as four year equivalent qualified teachers.

After data were processed by NT DECS, school principals were required to check the data, edit if necessary, and confirm accuracy. Business rules guided the processing of data. All three components of the Age/Grade Census required formal sign-off from school principals for the final data lodgement, stating it was a true and accurate representation of their school for the reference period. This ensured the quality and validity of the data being provided. Internal validation of the Preschool Census (Student and Staff) was undertaken using a system that outlined how to validate and edit data.

Detailed validation processes used by NT DECS in 2012 were as follows:

- *schools validation:* schools were provided with a validation report through the Business Intelligence Centre and were required to confirm the information was correct
- *performance and data management validation:* the validation process included historical comparison of trends, comparison of enrolments and schooling level proportions, cross checking missing data and application of national reporting rules. Schools were also required to carry out validation reporting to maintain data quality, targeting such areas as child Indigenous status, gender and age.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NORTHERN TERRITORY

Coherence

For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, data collected through the 2012 NT Age/Grade Census were comparable with data collected in 2011, as both collections were undertaken using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

Specific data elements collected using methods which did not align with the ECEC National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) specifications are outlined below and should be taken into account when analysing the data collected. An analysis of the coherence of this collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis, taking into account any data elements that are not consistent with the ECEC NMDS specifications. Deviations between the 2012 ECEC NMDS and data collected from the Age/Grade Census, are outlined in table 6.7.

6.7 Deviation of Collection from the 2012 ECEC NMDS

<i>Data Element</i>	<i>Details of Deviation</i>
Preschool program hours attended (Child)	This data element was not available in 2012.
Area of usual residence (CD) (Child)	Geo-coding for some child addresses was less accurate where instances of remote residences or street names were not supplied. For those children in remote localities who did not have an address recorded, the address of the remote preschool was supplied as a proxy.
Date of birth (Child)	Where date of birth was unavailable, it was estimated at 01/01/YYYY.
Geographic location of organisation (CD) (Service provider)	Geo-coding for some remote preschool addresses was less accurate where street address was not supplied.
Maximum preschool hours available (Service provider)	Care should be taken with interpretation of this data element as for some schools, this represents the average number of hours per week that the preschool service is available to children, while for other schools, this represents actual hours per week per student,

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify matched episode records for a child, both within a collection cycle and between years accurately.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

For NT, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived as data were collected using a URL data collection methodology.

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

As NT had two or more years of comparable data collected using a URL methodology and had a child/client database, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in the year before full-time schooling were also able to be derived.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – NORTHERN TERRITORY

Interpretability

The NT provided a range of information to assist in the collection and reporting of data, such as manuals and fact sheets, to support correct interpretation and definition of concepts. Detailed reports and instructional papers on the requirements, processes and rules for submitting data through the Age/Grade Census were provided to service providers to assist with data provision. Information sourced can be obtained on the NT DECS website <http://www.det.nt.gov.au>

Accessibility

Data sourced from the Age/Grade Census for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) on the ABS website.

Information Source

The information contained within this report has been sourced from NT DECS in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available at the NT DECS website: <http://www.det.nt.gov.au>.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

DATA QUALITY STATEMENT

In 2012, in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) there were two data collections in relation to preschool programs, both of which collected data using a child Unit Record Level (URL) data collection methodology:

- ACT Public School Census
- ACT Non-Government Catholic School Census.

a) ACT Public School Census

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the Public School Census was the ACT Education and Training Directorate (ETD). Data for the 2012 census were collected under the *Education Act 2004* (ACT), the *Children and Young People Act 2008* (ACT), and the *ACT Childcare Services Standards 2009*.

Relevance

Data collected from the ACT Public School Census contributed to a variety of reporting requirements and were used to ensure effective delivery of children's education services within the ACT public sector.

Scope: The scope of the early childhood component of the ACT Public School Census included all children between 3 and 6 years of age attending public school preschools. Children enrolled in a preschool program at Jervis Bay School were included in the census, as that school is administered by ACT ETD on behalf of the Australian Government. Children who were absent for more than 4 continuous school weeks prior to the census date were included if the principal received written documentation signed by the child's guardian indicating that the child would return to school.

The scope for data provided on workers included all paid primary contact teachers that delivered a preschool program during the reference period at public schools in ACT.

Coverage: The 2012 ACT Public School Census included all government managed schools with a preschools program. Data from Catholic schools, independent schools, and community (not for-profit) and private for-profit managed preschools and Long Day Care centres were not included in this census.

Data collection methods: The 2012 ACT Public School Census collected data using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Timeliness

The ACT Public School Census is an annual collection and in 2012 was undertaken on 3 August 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 10 August 2012. The reference fortnight was adopted by ACT ETD to reflect the preschool delivery model in ACT. The reference fortnight was then derived by ACT ETD to a one week reference period to enable comparison with other jurisdictions for the National ECEC Collection. Completion of data processing and validation stages took approximately 2 months from the collection date, at which time the data were delivered to the ABS.

Data sourced from the ACT Public School Census for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

Child level data: In 2012 data were obtained from a point in time sweep of enrolment and attendance data stored in the public school administration system (MAZE). Individual child information was captured from data supplied via an enrolment form which was entered into MAZE by school staff. Each ACT public school had access to their own MAZE database, where teachers or administrators uploaded information on each child enrolment. The principal of each school was required to sign off on their school's total enrolment count by sex and year level. Any inconsistencies were followed up. Every school's MAZE system was linked to a central database, which could only be accessed by central office staff. At census time, child enrolment information was extracted from the central database and cross checked with schools.

The following list includes key approaches undertaken by the ACT in managing the quality of its data processing for 2012:

- ACT's system included automatic edits and mandatory fields, such as date of birth, sex, family details, attendance status and Indigenous status
- ACT cross-checked addresses for the preschools ensuring one existed for each service provider
- Child addresses were geo-coded to produce valid CD and SA1 codes
- A MAZE manual was available to users to assist in data entry and extraction. Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs guidelines were also used for instances where key data items were unknown. In addition to this, face-to-face training was provided to users of the MAZE system in both entering data and also extracting data, including training on extracting non-routine data
- Survey of schools to confirm number of preschool classes and identity of teachers in the collection period.

The ACT carried out validation of 2012 data in a number of ways, including but not limited to:

- Manual data entry was avoided where possible through an automatic transfer of child information when the child had previously attended another ACT government school
- Addresses could be updated through a geo-coding cross check
- Date of birth was checked against year level and outliers were followed up
- Duplicate records of one child attending two schools were followed up
- Data checks included matching back to the original census data and running aggregate counts for each field.

Service provider level data: The process of obtaining service provider information from public preschools in the ACT was managed through the MAZE administrative system.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Worker level data: Teacher data were also sourced from MAZE and extracted at the same time as child data. Data were provided on the teacher who was normally assigned to the class and recorded by the school in MAZE. Once extracted from MAZE, teacher data were on-provided to the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) who linked the teacher with the highest level and field of relevant qualification from information within their database.

Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) also performs manual qualification assessments of all teachers prior to their employment. Teachers are required to provide certified copies of all qualification documents so that a qualification assessment can be undertaken.

In 2012, ACT teacher qualifications were manually assessed and aligned with the classifications outlined in the ECEC National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) specifications. In the event a teacher had more than one qualification, the qualification that specifically related to Early Childhood was recorded. Any teachers with a 3 year undergraduate degree combined with a 1 year post graduate education qualification were assessed as having a 4 year qualification.

Coherence

Data collected through the 2012 ACT Public School Census were comparable with data collected in 2011, as both collections were undertaken using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

An analysis of the coherence of this collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis, taking into account any data elements that are not consistent with the ECEC NMDS specifications.

Counts of Children: It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify accurately matched episode records for a child both within a collection cycle and between years.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

Counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived as data were collected using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

As ACT government preschools sector contains two years of comparable data collected using URL methodology and had a child/client database, counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in the year before full-time schooling were also able to be derived for the government sector.

Interpretability

In 2012 the ACT ETD provided face-to-face staff training in the MAZE system, supported with a handbook which outlined how to enter data, extract data, find data and validate data.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the ACT Public School Census for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no4240.0) on the ABS website. Data are also made available on the ACT ETD website:

http://www.det.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/publications_a-z/census.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

b) ACT Catholic Preschool Collection

Institutional Environment

The organisation responsible for the ACT Catholic Preschool Collection was the Catholic Education Office – Canberra. Data for the 2012 census were collected under the *Education Act 2004* (ACT), the *Children and Young People Act 2008* (ACT), and the *ACT Childcare Services Standards 2009*.

Relevance

Scope: The scope of the early childhood education component of the ACT Catholic Preschool Collection included all children between 4 and 5 years of age attending a preschool program in a Catholic school. Children who were absent for more than 4 continuous school weeks prior to the census date were included if the principal received written documentation signed by the child's guardian indicating that the child would return to school.

The scope for data provided on workers included all paid primary contact teachers that delivered a preschool program during the reference period at Catholic schools in ACT.

Coverage: The 2012 ACT Catholic Preschool Collection included all primary Catholic schools delivering a preschool program or programs.

Data collection methods: The 2012 ACT Catholic Preschool Collection, collected data using a URL data collection methodology for the following statistical entities:

- *Child:* data at the child record level
- *Service provider organisation:* data at the service provider record level
- *Worker:* data at the worker record level.

Timeliness

The ACT Catholic Preschool Collection is an annual collection and in 2012 was undertaken on 7 December 2012, with a reference period of 30 July 2012 to 3 August 2012. Fortnightly data were converted to a one week reference period to enable valid and reliable national comparisons

Data sourced from the ACT Catholic Preschool Collection for the purposes of the National ECEC Collection are published by the ABS in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0).

Accuracy

Child level data: In 2012 data were obtained from a point in time sweep of enrolment and attendance data stored in the ACT Catholic School administration system (MAZE).

The Catholic Education Office - Canberra carried out validation of 2012 data using data from the MAZE administrative system and through consultation with Catholic Education Office personnel and service providers. Data from each Catholic school delivering a preschool was assessed by the Catholic Education Office.

CHAPTER 6: JURISDICTIONAL DATA QUALITY STATEMENTS – AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Service provider level data: The process of obtaining service provider information from public preschools in the ACT was managed through the MAZE administrative system, and verified by service provider Directors.

Worker level data: Teacher data were also sourced from the MAZE administrative system.

Coherence

The 2012 National ECEC Collection was the first time Catholic preschool data were included.

An analysis of the coherence of this collection with other jurisdictional collections should be undertaken on an individual basis. Data will not be comparable to 2011 data as 2012 was the first year data were included for ACT Catholic preschools in the National ECEC Collection.

Counts of Children:

It is possible for a child to be concurrently enrolled in and attending two or more preschool programs and attend preschool across years. In order to address collection requirements, it is important to be able to identify accurately matched episode records for a child both within a collection cycle and between years.

Children in a Preschool Program in 2012:

Counts of children enrolled in and attending preschool programs in 2012 were able to be derived as data were collected using a consistent URL data collection methodology.

Children in a Preschool Program in the Year before Full-time Schooling:

As this is the first year of ACT Catholic School Preschool data, the YBFS population only related to child repeating experience in the ACT Public School Census.

Interpretability

In 2012 the majority of data were collected by MAZE sweeps and cross-checked with personnel at the Catholic Education Office and Centres. The Catholic Education office liaised closely with the Director of each centre to verify details.

Accessibility

Data sourced from the ACT Catholic Preschool Collection for the 2012 National ECEC Collection are published at the state and territory level in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no4240.0) on the ABS website.

Information Source

The information contained within this report has been sourced from the ACT ETD and the Catholic Education Office - Canberra in consultation with the ABS. Further information is available from the ACT ETD website:

<http://www.det.act.gov.au/>

CHAPTER 7: DATA AVAILABILITY

EARLY CHILDHOOD DATA SOURCES

The publication *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) contains data from the National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection. Data are provided to the ABS by the Australian Government and the state and territory government departments responsible for early childhood education and care (ECEC).

Strengths and limitations of the data presented in *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0) are outlined in [Chapter 2, Collection Overview](#), along with information on planned improvements for future collections.

RELATED PRODUCTS

The following section summarises related surveys and sources of ECEC data. Although there are other data sources on ECEC available, the National ECEC Collection aims to provide high quality and detailed ECEC information on an annual basis. Other ABS publications which may be of interest to users of *Preschool Education, Australia, 2012* (cat. no 4240.04) are also listed.

ABS PRODUCTS

ABS products that present information related to early childhood education statistics include the National Schools Statistics Collection (NSSC), the Childhood Education and Care Survey (CEaCS), and data from the Census of Population and Housing.

The National Schools Statistics Collection

The NSSC is an annual collection which collects statistics for schools, students and staff involved in the provision, or administration, of primary and secondary education, in government and non-government schools, for all Australian states and territories.

Data from the NSSC is presented in [Schools, Australia \(cat. no 4221.0\)](#).

The Childhood Education and Care Survey

From 1969 to 2005 the ABS conducted 12 Child Care Surveys (CCS) and consequently has a rich time series available. CEaCS was developed from the CCS in 2008 and is conducted every three years as a supplement to the monthly Labour Force Survey.

CEaCS collects data on the types of care usually attended by children less than 13 years of age, the hours of care, use, cost, and demand for care. Information about the employment, educational attainment and income characteristics of parents is also collected. In 2011, CEaCS also collected data on the informal learning activities in which children may participate with parents or other people. CEaCS examines participation in early childhood education in both preschools and child care settings. The survey also allows the assessment of need for preschool programs and provides information on communication of learning outcomes to parents. This survey provides a timely picture of early childhood education, to inform debate and decision-making in this area.

CHAPTER 7: DATA AVAILABILITY

Data from CEaCS is presented in [Childhood Education and Care, Australia \(cat. no 4402.0\)](#) (formerly called *Child Care, Australia* (cat. no 4402.0)).

The Census of Population and Housing

The Census of Population and Housing provides limited ECEC information, such as data on unpaid child care and those attending an education institution (preschool). The Census also provides a snapshot of the social and cultural composition of Australian families and households, including language spoken at home, country of birth, ancestry and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander status. The Census is carried out every five years.

NON-ABS PRODUCTS

Report on Government Services

The annual Report on Government Services (ROGS) is produced by the Productivity Commission (SCRGSP, 2013). The ROGS publishes data on the equity, efficiency and cost effectiveness of government services. The ROGS draws data together to provide key indicators of the performance of specified government agencies and programs in delivering services to Australians. The report is used for strategic budgeting, policy planning and evaluation. ROGS includes a range of data on the early childhood education sector including expenditure, enrolment, hours of attendance, staff qualifications, children with special needs and information on Indigenous preschool participation. The ROGS only reports information on government-funded or government provided preschool Special Data Services. The ABS offers specialised consultancy services to assist clients with more complex statistical information needs. It must be noted that data may not be available at detailed levels due to small cell counts and confidentiality. All specialist consultancy services attract a service charge and clients will be provided with a quote before information is supplied. For further information, contact ABS information consultants on 1300 135 070 (international callers +61 2 9268 4909)

SPECIAL DATA SERVICES

The ABS offers specialised consultancy services to assist client with more complex statistical information needs. It must be noted that data may not be available at detailed level due to small cell counts and confidentiality. All specialist consultancy services attract a service charge and client will be provided with a quote before information is supplied. For further information, contact the ABS National Information Referral Service on 1300 135 070 (international callers +61 2 9268 4909).

CHAPTER 8: COLLECTION BACKGROUND AND GOVERNANCE

THE NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

In an effort to deliver significant improvements and outcomes for all Australians, in 2007 the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) established a partnership between the Australian Government and the state and territory governments to encourage substantial reform in the areas of education, skills and early childhood development. In 2008, COAG endorsed a comprehensive set of goals, outcomes, progress measures and future policy directions in the area of early childhood education (ECE). This included a commitment to ensure that every child in Australia has access to a quality ECE program (COAG, 2008a). This Universal Access (UA) commitment will ensure that by 2013, each child will have access to a preschool program that is delivered:

- in the 12 months prior to full-time schooling (also referred to as the year before formal schooling)
- by a four-year university-qualified early childhood teacher
- for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year
- across a diversity of settings
- in a form that meets the needs of parents
- at a cost that does not present a barrier to participation (COAG, 2008a).

In November 2008, COAG endorsed the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE). Under the NP ECE the Australian Government and the state and territory governments committed to improving the supply and integration of early childhood services, including child care and early learning and development. This will be achieved through the delivery of the universal access commitment (COAG, 2008a).

The UA commitment is closely underpinned by other elements of the Australian Government's early childhood reform agenda, including the Early Years Learning Framework, early childhood workforce reforms and the National Quality Standards for child care and preschool (COAG, 2008b, DEEWR, 2009). Together, the intention of these reforms is to raise the quality and accessibility of ECE delivered across Australia, regardless of the setting.

Under the NP ECE, the states and territories have agreed to individual Bilateral Agreements with the Australian Government. These agreements specify the actions and strategies to be undertaken by each jurisdiction to achieve universal access to ECE, including outlining performance indicators to measure the achievement of universal access. Six performance indicators were agreed in order to measure two broader outcomes:

- all children have access to affordable, quality early childhood education in the year before full-time schooling
- all Indigenous four year olds in remote Indigenous communities have access to a quality early childhood education program.

For more information on the performance indicators and the National Partnership on Early Childhood Education, see the COAG website: http://www.coag.gov.au/early_childhood.

For more information on the Bilateral Agreements, see the Federal Financial Relations website: <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au>.

The National Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Collection is conducted annually as part of a suite of data improvement projects conducted in support of the NP ECE, under the National Information Agreement on Early Childhood Education and Care (NIA ECEC).

CHAPTER 8: COLLECTION BACKGROUND AND GOVERNANCE

NATIONAL INFORMATION AGREEMENT ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

There are a number of challenges in measuring progress against the performance indicators, foremost being the lack of nationally comparable data. The NIA ECEC aims to increase the ability to collect and provide quality, comparable and reliable ECEC data, which will enable development of an evidence base for assessing outcomes and informing future policy developments in this area (MCEECDYA, 2010). The activities covered by the NIA ECEC are intended to build a common, shared infrastructure to ensure nationally consistent ECEC data across jurisdictions. The agreement was developed in consultation with the Australian Government, state and territory governments, and key data agencies such as the ABS and AIHW.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The National Quality Framework is a new government body called the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). The new body has been established to raise quality within early childhood education, and drive continuous improvement and consistency within education and care services. These initiatives include:

- a National legislative framework
- a National quality standard
- a National quality rating and assessment process.

The National legislative framework took effect on 1 January 2012, with key requirements being phased in over time. Requirements such as qualification, teacher to child ratio and other key staffing arrangements will be phased in between 2012-2020. The National legislative framework is established through an applied laws system and consists of the Education and Care Services National Law, and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. A regulatory authority in each state and territory will be primarily responsible for administering the National Quality Framework, including approving, monitoring and quality assessing services. It will be the first point of contact for the services.

The National quality standard sets a new national benchmark for the quality of education and care services, and is divided into seven quality areas, these include, educational program and practice, Children's health and safety, physical environment, staffing arrangements, relationships with children, collaborative partnerships with families and communities, leadership and service management.

Service providers within scope of the National ECEC Collection are affected by the National Quality Framework as the framework reform which aims to deliver improved standard of care for children in receipt of an ECEC program.

For more information on the National Quality Framework, see the DEEWR website:

http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Pages/home.aspx

CHAPTER 8: COLLECTION BACKGROUND AND GOVERNANCE

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE NATIONAL MINIMUM DATA SET

The development and implementation of agreed data standards through the ECEC National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS) (MCEECDYA, 2010) is a key focus of the NIA ECEC. The AIHW has been commissioned to undertake this work within their existing data repository, the Metadata Online Registry (METeOR). The ECEC NMDS includes a set of national data standards and instructions to assist jurisdictions in the collection of comparable ECEC data, which will improve data quality for reporting against the NP ECE performance indicators. The ABS is assisting the AIHW in working towards further development and implementation of the ECEC NMDS.

A detailed description of each of the Unit Record Level (URL) and aggregate ECEC NMDS data elements are provided in the *National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Data Collection Guide, 2012* (cat. no 4240.0.55.002). Further information is also available on the AIHW website.

- The URL ECEC NMDS is available at: <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/466523>
- The aggregate ECEC NMDS is available at: <http://meteor.aihw.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/466521>.

Each jurisdiction in Australia is currently at different stages of implementing improvements to their ECEC data collections to align with the ECEC NMDS. As systems and procedures for collecting data to the necessary quality standards are still evolving, it will not be possible to produce statistics for all the performance indicators using the 2012 National ECEC Collection.

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GLOSSARY

Administrative data	Administrative data are pieces of information recorded in administrative records, systems or reports, primarily collected for the purpose of record-keeping.
Aggregate level data collection	<p>An aggregate level data collection methodology contains data from statistical entities within the collection population that are grouped together and summed into broader categories.</p> <p>For the National ECEC Collection, the aggregate data collection methodology collects totals of children enrolled in and attending preschools programs at the service provider record level only. Data collected at this level does not contain child record level information.</p>
Attendance	For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, a child is considered to be attending a preschool program if the child was enrolled and present for at least one hour during the reference period. Children who did not attend a preschool program during the reference period (e.g. children who were absent due to illness or extended holiday leave) are not considered to have attended a preschool program.
Australian Standard of Geographical Classification (ASGC)	The ASGC was developed by the ABS for the collection and dissemination of geographic statistics. It is a hierarchically structured classification with a number of spatial units to satisfy different statistical purposes. The ASGC facilitates the standardisation of terminology and comparability of data.
Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS)	The ASGS came into effect in July 2011 to replace the ASGC. The ASGS provides a common framework of statistical geography used by the ABS to enable the publication of statistics that are comparable and spatially integrated. Its purpose is to outline the conceptual basis of Meshblock, the regions of the main structure and the Greater Capital City Statistical Areas and their relationships to each other. The digital boundaries, codes and labels for each of these regions can be obtained as downloads from the ABS website free of charge. http://www.abs.gov.au/geography .
Child Care	Child care services provide care to children at a specific location, and can include long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care, in-home care and occasional care services. Child care services may or may not offer additional preschool programs within their services. Child care services may be provided through a combination of private organisation, community and some state and local government initiatives.
Child Care Management System (CCMS)	The CCMS is a national child care computer system that enables child care services to exchange child care information online with the government. It enables the payment of the Child Care Benefit and Child Care Rebate fee reduction on behalf of parents to approved child care services. It also provides for the collection of information about the supply and usage of child care across Australia.

GLOSSARY

Child Care Benefit: a payment made to eligible parents or guardians, to assist with the cost of child care for long day care, family day care, outside school hours care, vacation care, in-home care and occasional care services. Eligibility is based on an income test.

Child Care Rebate: a payment available to eligible parents or guardians who are working, training or studying, to assist with the out-of-pocket expenses for approved child care services.

Child record level data	Child record level data contains data for each individual child in a data set. Data at the child record level includes personal characteristics and enrolment and attendance information for each child.
Collection date	The recommended collection date is the common date to collect data. For the National ECEC Collection, the collection date is the first Friday in August. For 2012 this was Friday 3 August.
Council of Australian Governments (COAG)	COAG is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia, comprising the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association. The role of COAG is to initiate, develop and monitor the implementation of policy reforms that are of national significance and which require cooperative action by Australian governments.
Coverage	Coverage explains the extent to which the scope is complete.
Data element	A unit of data for which the definition, identification, representation and permissible values are specified by at least one or more data items. Data elements for the National ECEC Collection are detailed within the ECEC NMDS and the <i>National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection: Data Collection Guide</i> (cat. no 4240.0.55.002).
Data item	A particular characteristic of units in a population which is measured or observed. For the National ECEC Collection, data items have been adopted by the ABS where appropriate for conducting the collection and for processing activities.
Data processing	The preparation of data for analysis. Data processing involves five steps: data coding, data input, data editing, data cleaning and data modification.
Data validation	A method of confirming the reliability of data through a checking process, to ensure that the data is free of systematic error. A validation study compares data collected using a collection instrument with data considered to represent the "true value" of the data.
Delivery setting	The type of setting in which children's service activities are provided or could be provided by a service provider, as defined within the 2012 ECEC NMDS.

GLOSSARY

Centre-based (school): refers to child care services or preschool programs delivered on school grounds, using school facilities, e.g. a building owned by the school.

Centre-based (other): refers to a non-residential building that was purpose-built or renovated for the purpose of delivering early childhood education and care services, but is not located on the property of a State, Independent or Catholic school, e.g. a child care centre or stand-alone preschool that is not part of a primary school.

Home-based (child's home): refers to a private residential dwelling where the child lives.

Home-based (other): refers to a private residential dwelling where a child care service or preschool program is delivered by someone other than the child's parents, carers or guardians, e.g. a family day care caregiver's home.

General community setting: refers to a non-residential community infrastructure, facility or building that was not specifically built or developed for the provision of early childhood education and care services and is not part of a State, Independent or Catholic school, e.g. a park, community or scout hall, public library, etc.

Other setting: refers to settings not covered under the other categories, such as mobile services which are attended at a specific location, rather than being delivered in settings such as a child's home.

Disadvantage

A key requirement of the National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE) is that preschool programs should be available to everyone, regardless of their income or background. The NP ECE also recognises that disadvantaged families often face barriers to accessing government services for various reasons.

To measure the extent to which children from disadvantaged families are under-represented in preschool programs, the National ECEC Collection uses usual residence, in conjunction with the geographically based Index of Relative Social Disadvantage (IRSD), which is one of four indexes of the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA). See also 'SEIFA'.

Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (ECEC NMDS)

The ECEC NMDS is the document of agreed standards, definitions, classifications and protocols required for nationally comparable ECEC data. Entities within the ECEC NMDS are at the following levels.

Person/child: refers to the child enrolled in the preschool program.

Person (employed)/worker: refers to all persons or staff members who work within an ECEC service provider (both contact and non-contact staff), irrespective of whether they are employed (paid) or working voluntarily (unpaid).

GLOSSARY

Service provider organisation: refers to the ECEC establishment that delivers the preschool program.

Enrolment A child is considered to be enrolled if they were offered a place in the preschool program and:

- attended the preschool program for at least one hour during the reference period; or
- were absent during the reference period due to illness or extended holiday leave, but were expected to return.

A child is not considered to be enrolled if they were absent during the reference period and not expected to return to the preschool program.

Episode of enrolment/attending a preschool program An episode is the count of the occurrence of a specific characteristic. For the National ECEC Collection, an episode refers to a preschool program provided to a child. When one child attends two different preschool programs, the child is attending two episodes of preschool.

Indigenous status For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection a child is considered to be Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander if he or she is identified by a parent/guardian as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin. The National ECEC Collection uses the ABS standard Indigenous categories, which are as follows:

- Aboriginal but not Torres Strait Islander origin
- Torres Strait Islander but not Aboriginal origin
- Both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin
- Neither Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin
- Not stated/inadequately described.

Jurisdiction For the purpose of the National ECEC Collection, a jurisdiction is defined as the Australian Government or a state or territory government within Australia.

Licensed service providers Licensed service providers are service providers that have been issued with a license by the relevant department or authority which grants legal approval or accreditation to operate their service or a particular component of their service, such as a preschool program or child care centre.

Management type Preschool management type refers to the legal or social entity responsible for managing the service. Data presented from the National ECEC Collection are based on ECEC NMDS categories. Early childhood education and care services may be provided by a number of legal and social entities. The management type categories used in the National ECEC Collection include the following.

Government managed:

State and territory and local government managed: State and territory and local government managed services are services that are managed by the state, territory or local government. Excludes state and territory government schools.

GLOSSARY

State and territory government schools: State and territory government schools are schools that are funded and managed by the respective state or territory government.

Non-government managed:

Private not-for-profit - community managed: Community managed services include services that are managed by organisations based in the community through a membership made up of community members (e.g. the parents). The membership elects a management committee and the committee is accountable to the membership. No profit is distributed to the management committee or the members, any surplus funds are redirected to the service.

Private not for profit - other organisations: Other organisations include services that are managed by non-profit organisations such as charity organisations, consortium of charity organisations and church groups. Excludes Independent and Catholic schools.

Private for-profit: Private for-profit services include for-profit services provided or managed by a company or private individual.

Independent schools: Independent schools are non-government schools that are governed, managed and accountable at the level of the individual school and are not affiliated with the diocesan Catholic Department of Education.

Catholic schools: Catholic schools are schools that are affiliated with the diocesan Catholic Department of Education. Catholic schools, as with other classes of non-government schools, receive funding from the Australian Government.

Other: Other services include employer sponsored services.

Metadata Online Registry (METeOR)

METeOR is an online repository for national metadata standards for health, housing and community services statistics and information. It is the resource which holds all ECEC NMDS data elements and associated metadata standards.

Performance indicator

Performance indicators are measurement indicators used to assess the progress of the National Partnership on Early Childhood Education (NP ECE) and may be calculated using data from the National ECEC Collection. Performance Indicators relating to the NP ECE are further described in detail in [Chapter 8: Collection Background and Governance](#).

GLOSSARY

- Preschool program** A preschool program is a structured, play-based learning program, delivered by a degree qualified teacher, aimed at children in the year before they commence full-time schooling. This is irrespective of the type of institution that provides it or whether it is government funded or privately provided. Programs may be delivered in a variety of service settings including separate preschools or kindergartens, long day care centres, in association with a school etc. Early childhood education terminology of a preschool program differs across states and territories, and these differences are outlined in [Chapter 3: Concepts and Definitions](#).
- Reference period** The period of time for which the data are collected and/or compiled (e.g. calendar year, financial year, last week, last fortnight or a specific day of the month etc.). The reference period may vary for each data element within a collection. For example, fees and hours data could be collected over a 2 week period; however these data would then be derived back to a representative week. For the 2012 National ECEC Collection the reference period was 30 July to 3 August 2012.
- Service activity type** The service activity type is the type of service available or provided by an early childhood education and care service provider. Definitions of service activity types include the following.
- Long day care:** Long day care is a centre-based form of child care service providing all-day or part-time care for children of working families and the general community (services may cater to specific groups within the general community). For-profit and not-for-profit organisations, local councils, community organisations and employers may run these services. Long day cares primarily provide long day care services for children aged 0–5 years. Some long day care may also provide preschool and kindergarten programs and care for school children before and after school and during school holidays, where state and territory government regulations allow this. The service may operate from stand-alone or shared premises, including those on school grounds.
- Occasional care:** Occasional care comprises of services usually provided at a centre on an hourly or sessional basis for short periods or at irregular intervals for parents who need time to, for example, attend appointments, take care of personal matters, undertake casual and part time employment, study or have temporary respite from full time parenting. These services provide developmental activities for children and are aimed primarily at 0–5 year olds. Centres providing these services usually employ a mix of qualified and other staff.
- Outside school hours care:** Outside school hours care comprises services that provide care for school aged children (5–12 year olds) before school, after school, during school holidays, and on pupil free days. Outside school hours care may use stand-alone facilities, share school buildings and grounds and/or share facilities such as community halls.
- Vacation care:** Vacation care comprises services provided for school aged children (5–12 year olds) during school holidays only.

Family day care: Family day care comprises services providing small group care for children in the home environment of a registered carer. Care is primarily aimed at 0–5 year olds, but primary school children may also receive care before and after school, and during school holidays. Educators work in partnership with scheme management and coordination unit staff.

In-home care: In-home care comprises services where an approved carer provides care in the child's home. Families eligible for in-home care include families where the parent/s or child has an illness or disability; families in rural or remote areas; parents working shift work or non-standard hours; families with more than two children from a multiple birth and/or more than two children under school age; and families where a breast feeding mother is working from home.

Preschool program: stand-alone: Preschool program (stand-alone) comprises separately located services dedicated to provide structured educational programs to children in the year before they commence full-time schooling only.

Preschool program: as part of a school: Preschool program (as part of school) comprises services that are co-located with a school that provides structured educational programs to children in the year before they commence full-time schooling. These services may also be integrated with a school.

Service provider record level data

Service provider record level data contains data for each individual service provider delivering a preschool program within a data set. Data at the service provider record level includes location information, management type, activity type and service delivering setting, as well as information on preschool programs delivered by each service provider in the data set.

Socio-economic indexes for areas (SEIFA)

The SEIFA is a product developed especially for those interested in the assessment of the welfare of Australian communities. SEIFA is a suite of four summary measures that have been created from 2006 Census information. The indexes can be used to explore different aspects of socio-economic conditions by geographic areas. For each index, every geographic area in Australia is given a SEIFA number which shows how disadvantaged that area is compared with other areas in Australia. The indexes provide more general measures of socio-economic status than is given by measuring, for example, income or unemployment alone. The SEIFA index used for the National ECEC Collection is the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (IRSD).

Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage: The IRSD summarises a range of information about the economic and social resources of people and households within an area. Unlike other indexes, this index includes only measures of relative disadvantage. Variables that comprise this index include; low income, no qualifications, unemployment, overcrowded housing, disability, no car, and Indigenous status.

GLOSSARY

Standing Council for School Education and Early Childhood (SCSEEC)	The Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood comprises state, territory, Australian Government and New Zealand Ministers with responsibility for the portfolios of school education, early childhood development and youth affairs. With the new COAG Council System, the Standing Council replaces MCEECDYA.
Unit Record Level (URL) data collection	<p>A URL data collection methodology contains confidentialised data for individual statistical entities in a collection population.</p> <p>For the purposes of the National ECEC Collection, a URL data collection methodology collects child enrolment and attendance level data corresponding to service provider record level data for each child in the data set. A URL data collection methodology also includes worker record level data corresponding to service provider record level data for each worker in the data set.</p>
Universal Access	The Australian Government's commitment to ensuring that every child has access to a quality early childhood program is referred to as the Universal Access commitment. The program is to be delivered by a four-year university-trained early childhood teacher, for 15 hours a week, 40 weeks a year, in the year before full time schooling. The commitment is to be fully implemented by mid-2013.
Usual Residence	The place where the person has or intends to live for six months or more, or the place the person regards as their main residence, or where the person has no other residence, the place they currently reside.
Work activity	<p>The work activity type refers to the type of work performed by a person in the course of their employment in early childhood education and care.</p> <p>Primary contact: An activity type of primary contact refers to a worker that mainly has direct contact with children. This may include but is not limited to teachers, teacher's assistants/aides, specialist teachers and therapists.</p> <p>Other contact: An activity type of other contact refers to a worker that has some duties involving direct contact with children, but deals mainly with staffing or management issues such as supervising staff and handling queries from parents or designing the education program. This may include but is not limited to principals, deputy principals, centre managers and coordinators.</p> <p>Management / administration: An activity type of management/administration refers to a worker who mainly performed management or administration work that contributed to the running of the early childhood education and care service and had no direct contact with children. Work may include clerical or receptionist duties, filing, keeping financial records, staffing and management issues.</p> <p>Other work: An activity type of other work refers to a worker who provides support services such as cooking, cleaning and gardening. This may include drivers, cooks, cleaners and maintenance staff.</p>

GLOSSARY

Worker	All paid employees who were working at an in-scope service provider during the reference period are in-scope of the collection. This includes both contact and non-contact workers, irrespective of whether the worker delivered a preschool program during the reference week.
Year before full-time schooling (YBFS)	The year before full-time schooling (also referred to as the 'year before formal schooling') is a term used to describe the 'preschool' cohort, due to the varying delivery models of early childhood education in the different jurisdictions (McEwin and Ryan, 2009). The year before a child begins full-time schooling is further defined as Year 1 (or Grade 1) minus 2 years.

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POST Client Services, ABS, GPO Box 796, Sydney NSW 2001

FAX 1300 135 211

EMAIL client.services@abs.gov.au

PHONE 1300 135 070

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