

This fact sheet has been designed to clarify the issue of Preschool children accessing OOSH services in NSW.

The Facts...

Children who have not commenced school are referred to as 'NON-SCHOOL' age children under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and the Children's Services Regulation 2004. Non-school age children are required to be in licensed childcare services, such as Family Day Care, Long Day Care, Occasional Care and Preschools.



Currently, OOSH services in NSW are not licensed and therefore are not permitted to care for non-school age children.

Before and after school care

OOSH services operating before and After School Care may only accept "school age" children, i.e. children who are currently enrolled in school. That means children attending preschool are not permitted to attend before and After School Care services.

Vacation Care

However, OOSH services operating Vacation Care have the choice to accept preschool age children in the January holiday period, on the condition the child is enrolled to start school in the current year. For services that wish to investigate this option or that elect to accept these children refer to *Fact Sheet #36 - Preschool Age Children in Vacation Care*.

What does this mean for OOSH?

Can a child attending preschool during the day attend before and after school care?

No, unless an exemption is given by DoCS for individual services operating within a preschool site where a formal request has been granted.

Can preschool children attend Vacation Care before they begin school?

Only preschool children who are enrolled/registered to attend school in the current school year are permitted to access vacation care in January of that year. The decision resides with each individual service as to whether these children have access. Refer to *Fact Sheet #36 - Preschool Age Children in Vacation Care*.

What about a parent who is desperate for care and continually asks for their preschool child to attend OOSH?

When faced by working parents of children attending preschool it is advisable to encourage them to approach their preschool service and request the possibility of extended hours, or suggest seeking alternate childcare arrangements that accommodate their working schedules better. Refer to the above facts from DOCS to explain why OOSH is not permitted to accept their child.

Supporting information

Information can be found on the websites below:

- Network of Community Activities: www.netoosh.org.au
- The Department of Community Services website www.communitynsw.gov.au

Alternatively if you need to discuss this information further contact Network on (02) 9212 3244.