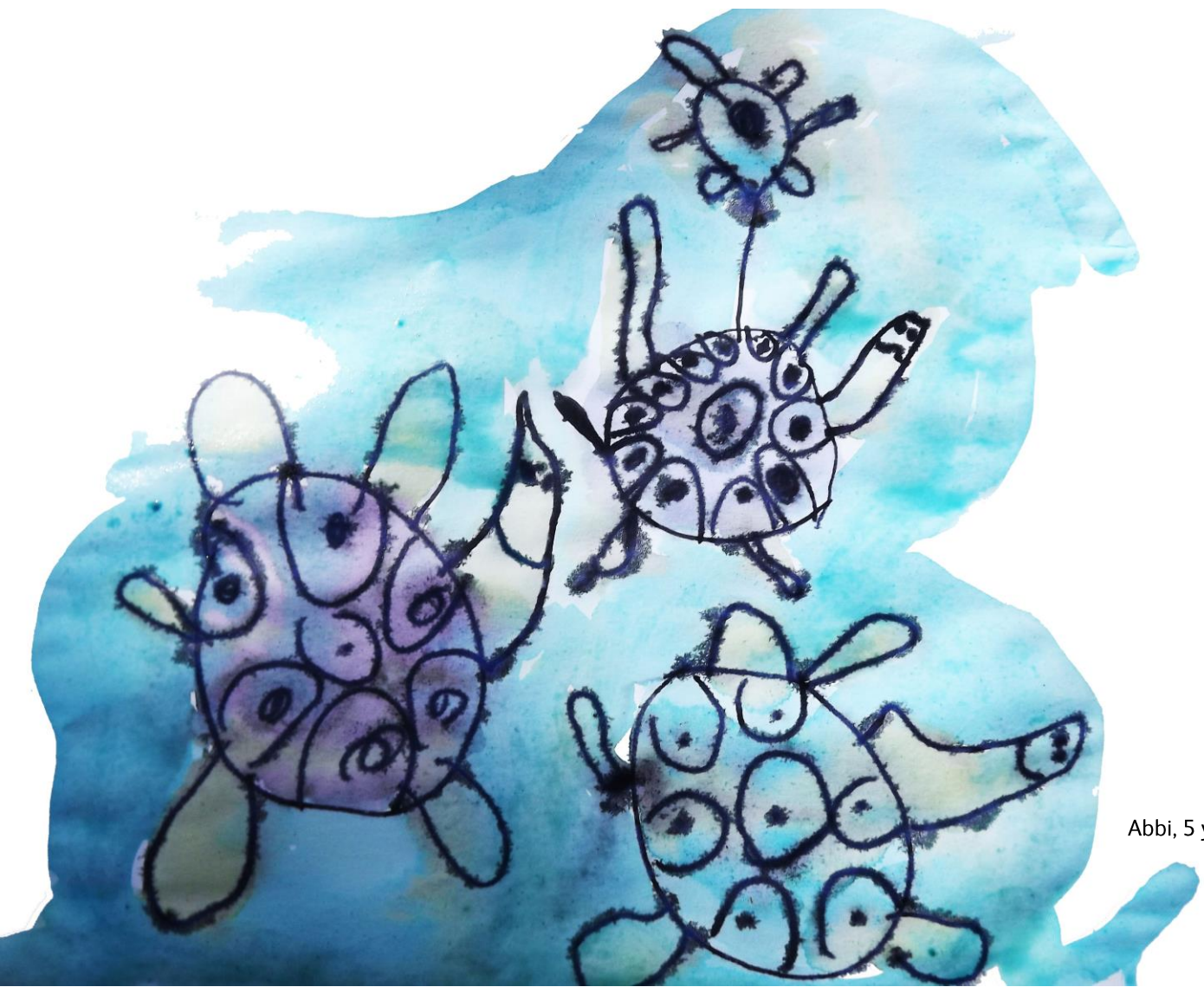




National Review of Teacher Registration May 2018

Response to Consultation Paper by KU Children's Services



Abbi, 5 years

About KU Children's Services

KU Children's Services (KU) is one of the largest not-for-profit providers of early education and childcare in NSW. Established in 1895 as the Kindergarten Union of NSW, KU was the first provider of early childhood education and care in Australia and has operated continuously for more than 120 years making KU the nation's most experienced provider of early childhood education and care.

KU's vision is that *'Every child has a right to feel safe, nurtured, valued and heard'* and KU contributes to this by delivering, supporting and leading high quality inclusive play-based learning programs. KU provides opportunities for children to become the creators, thinkers and doers of today and tomorrow.

Today, KU operates almost 140 early education services, in NSW, Victoria, ACT and Queensland. These services include long day care, preschool/kindergarten, outside school hours care, vacation care, occasional care, family programs, early intervention programs and other early childhood education and care services.

The organisation has a long-demonstrated history of providing high quality early childhood education programs and has long held an unwavering commitment to university qualified early childhood education teachers and their ongoing professional learning and development.

KU's achievements in the National Quality Standard Assessment and Ratings to date, far exceed the national average, with 99% of KU centres Meeting or Exceeding the National Quality Standard.

Such is KU's experience, expertise and reputation within the sector, the organisation is often requested to provide specialist advice by other providers, peak bodies, the corporate sector, and all levels of Government.

Introduction

KU welcomes the opportunity to comment on the *National Review of Teacher Registration Consultation Paper* and supports the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and the Teacher Accreditation process which establishes professional expectations for teachers to support their professional learning, guide their progression and support them to develop and maintain their teaching practice.

KU supports the inclusion of early childhood teachers in this system to strengthen the quality and professionalism of teaching and the overall quality of education for young children. Set out below is KU's response to the National Review of Teacher Registration.

KU's Response

Summary of key points

KU's key recommendations:

- ▶ The development of a set of guidelines and recommendations for teachers to assist them in using a planned approach to professional development with links to the Teaching Standards.
- ▶ The language used in the Teaching Standards needs to be reviewed for clarity as it applies to the early childhood sector as the language is focussed on the school sector only.
- ▶ Streamline and align the Teaching Standards with the National Quality Framework for Education and Care to demonstrate a consistent approach to quality early childhood services in Australia.
- ▶ Early engagement through pre-registration may be considered as a pathway to registration for early childhood teachers.
- ▶ Providing additional support and streamlined structures for casual teachers will help encourage them to stay in the profession.
- ▶ A more consistent and thorough approach is to have a national system that satisfies the fit and proper person requirement for teachers. This includes a national system for Working With Children Checks.
- ▶ Equitable processes and resources needs to be available to support successful implementation of the teacher registration process for all teachers regardless of whether they working in a school based or prior to school setting.

Specific responses

1. How is the national teacher registration framework working across Australia?

Teacher accreditation brings recognition of the professional standing of the early childhood sector and gives Early Childhood Teachers the status deserving of their profession. It also brings equity of standing with teachers working in primary and secondary schools.

The requirements for teacher registration in NSW has brought greater participation of early childhood teachers in professional development. However, teachers have not necessarily linked their professional development to a formal professional development plan. KU recommends that there be guidelines and recommendations for teachers to assist them in using a planned approach to professional development with links to the Teaching Standards.

2. Should early childhood teachers be part of a national approach to teacher registration?

KU welcomes a national approach to teacher registration, inclusive of teachers in early childhood education and care services. This helps to make teacher requirements and teacher quality equitable across jurisdictions and for a smoother transition for teachers moving between States and Territories.

Regarding applying the Teaching Standards to early childhood teachers, KU raises the following points:

- ▶ The language used in the Teaching Standards needs to be reviewed for clarity as it applies to the early childhood sector. For example, words and terms such as students, assessment data and discipline are not used in early childhood programs. The *Proficient Teacher Evidence Guide for Early Childhood Teachers* developed by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) is a good example of how this could be done.
- ▶ Streamline and align the Teaching Standards with the National Quality Framework (NQF) for early education and care. This Framework also provides a regulatory function to ensure only people with the necessary qualifications and who are fit and proper are employed as teachers. Alignment with the NQF will demonstrate a consistent approach to quality teaching and education for the early childhood sector in Australia.
- ▶ Jurisdictions can share success and examples of best practice for a consistent and rigorous process. The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has undertaken considerable sector consultation and resource development that acknowledges the contextual factors of implementing teacher registration.
- ▶ Equitable processes and resources should be available to support successful implementation of the teacher registration process. In NSW, this includes expectations for larger early childhood education and care providers/employers to take up additional responsibilities for the Accreditation process of Provisional Teachers on the premise that large employers have added capacity. This carries a resource and financial implication that will directly impact on fee affordability for families.
- ▶ Clear policies, guidelines and resources are needed for providers/employers to assist them in their role and in supporting teachers with the requirements for Accreditation.

3. What role does teacher registration play for VET teachers in school settings?

KU does not have any comments related to this question.

4. How does teacher registration support entry into the teaching profession?

KU agrees that high quality induction is essential for the transition of teachers into the profession. To assist graduate teachers to make a positive transition KU makes the following points:

- ▶ Early engagement through pre-registration may be considered as a pathway to registration for early childhood teachers, especially those that may be working towards a teaching qualification where an employer might have a service approval waiver to address a workforce shortage.
- ▶ Early childhood teachers employed on a casual basis and who work for several employers find the current Accreditation requirements difficult to navigate. Providing additional support and streamlined structures for casual teachers will help encourage them to stay in the profession. Casual teachers are a valuable and essential resource for early childhood centres.

5. How can we ensure that registered teachers satisfy the fit and proper person requirement?

As noted in the consultation paper teachers are mobile and many will move between States and Territories. A more consistent and thorough approach is to have a national system that satisfies the fit and proper person requirement. This would include a national system for Working With Children Checks.

- ▶ Streamline and align the Standards with the National Quality Framework for Education and Care. This Framework also provides a regulatory function to ensure only people with the necessary qualifications and who are fit and proper are employed as teachers in prior to school settings.

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May 2018