



Gladys Berejiklian
Premier of NSW

Sarah Mitchell
Minister for Early Childhood Education
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs
Assistant Minister for Education

MEDIA RELEASE

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SUPPORT FOR DROUGHT-AFFECTED PRESCHOOLS

Drought-affected families experiencing hardship in regional NSW will have some relief following today's announcement that the NSW Government will be providing financial support for community preschools in NSW.

Premier Gladys Berejiklian and Minister for Early Childhood Education Sarah Mitchell today announced a new \$3 million package, which will reduce fees, allow more flexibility with travel arrangements and future-proof services so they are more resilient and better equipped to cope when challenging circumstances arise.

Ms Berejiklian said the 2018 Drought Relief Payments will ensure early childhood education services can continue to operate during the adverse economic conditions associated with the drought period.

"This year has been one of the driest winters on record, which is why the NSW Government has committed more than \$1 billion to date to help our farming communities that are struggling."

"We understand there are numerous social and economic flow-on effects from the drought, which affect businesses in every town and small community," she said.

"Our goal is to help alleviate some of the pressure on families by supporting early childhood services where attendance may have dropped due to financial pressures, and also to boost support for service operators coping with additional challenges due to drought."

Ms Mitchell said it is crucial the Government continues to support families to ensure children always have access to top quality early childhood education, no matter where they live or what their circumstances are.

"Services can use this funding to assist families and children in a range of ways, including transport arrangements to maintain preschool participation, crisis planning or fee subsidies to further support families," Ms Mitchell said.

Funding will be allocated to services based on their enrolment numbers and location, and will be scaled according to the level of drought intensity.

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