



20 October 2025

Communiqué

Education Ministers met at Broadbeach State School in Queensland on 17 October 2025.

Ministers continued to progress significant reforms across early education, school education and higher education.

Early Childhood Education and Care Safety Update

Ministers reaffirmed their agreement that dedicated, committed early educators are our greatest asset in caring for, educating, and keeping our children safe.

Education Ministers discussed the key Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) safety reforms they agreed at their August meeting and noted they are on track.

Ministers received an implementation update on the Australian Government's \$189 million investment in safety and quality in ECEC settings, delivered in coordinated action with states and territories, which is delivering:

- **new powers to impose conditions on providers.** The Australian Government has issued compliance notices to services that have not been meeting National Quality Standards (NQS), with conditions imposed on over 50 services;
- **a national CCTV assessment** which will commence shortly;
- **a National Educator Register.** This remains on track for testing in December 2025 and becoming mandatory in February 2026; and
- **mandatory child safety training.** The training remains on track to commence from February 2026, supported by Commonwealth funding for targeted workforce subsidies to help cover wage costs.

Ministers were briefed on the progress of amendments to the Education and Care Services National Law, led by Victoria, to enshrine stronger safety and quality standards in legislation, with a focus on the rights and best interests of children. These amendments include:

- making the safety, rights and best interests of children the paramount consideration under National Law;
- mandating the national child safety training for all staff, volunteers and students;
- making use of the National Educator Register mandatory from February 2026; and
- extending the limitation period for offences to enable prosecution to be undertaken.

These amendments are expected to be introduced into the Victorian Parliament by the end of 2025.

Preschool Reform Agreement

Ministers agreed-in-principle to extend the Preschool Reform Agreement for two years to ensure continuity of Commonwealth and state or territory funding through to the end of 2027. They agreed to continue to work together on future reforms beyond the end of the extended Agreement, consistent with building a quality, universal early education and care system. Ministers also acknowledged future reforms will respond to changes in the nature of preschool delivery in the past decade, including changes to the regulatory environment, the increased provision of preschool to three-year-olds and four-year olds in some jurisdictions and the significant growth in centre based long day care, and increases in Child Care Subsidy payments.

All governments have an important role in strengthening the system and must work together as joint system owners. Future reform will support the ECEC sector to ensure that all children have access to safe, quality early learning to get the best possible start in life.

Actions to address bullying in schools

Ministers were briefed by Dr Charlotte Keating and Dr Jo Robinson AM, who presented the [Final Report of the Anti-Bullying Rapid Review](#). Ministers agreed to the report's recommendations to address bullying, including cyberbullying, in all Australian Schools.

The Australian Government announced a new \$10 million investment to help fast track the implementation of the Review's findings by developing resources to help prevent and address bullying, and funding a national awareness campaign.

Ministers asked their departments to work together to develop an implementation plan, including details regarding the staging and timeline for actions within jurisdictional contexts. This will include work on a resource hub to provide a list of the most effective, evidence-based Anti-Bullying programs and approaches.

Ministers also agreed to commence work on embedding Anti-Bullying and respectful relationships training in Initial Teacher Education programs.

Social Media Ban for under 16s

Education Ministers were briefed by the Federal Minister for Communications and Sport, the Hon Anika Wells MP, and the eSafety Commissioner, Julie Inman Grant, on the Social Media Age Restrictions which will start on 10 December 2025, and require social media platforms to detect and deactivate underage accounts.

Minister Wells and Commissioner Inman Grant briefed Ministers on the Australian Government's comprehensive education campaign, including the [Social media age restrictions hub](#) that will support parents, teachers and young people to navigate the change.

Ministers offered their support to assist in the implementation of this important reform and regulatory actions to protect young Australians and combat the growing threat of AI chatbot 'companions', and deepfake image-based materials that affect students and teachers.

A new Teaching and Learning Commission

Ministers reached in principle agreement to bring together and build upon the existing functions of ACARA, AITSL, AERO and ESA into a single Teaching and Learning Commission. The Commission would allow for greater co-ordination between curriculum, teaching, assessment, research, and reporting – with the whole being greater than the sum of its parts.

Ministers established a Teaching and Learning Commission Working Group to further develop the proposal including the design, governance, implementation and stakeholder engagement and consultation plans. The Working Group will include representatives from the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, the Catholic and Independent schooling sectors, NATSIEC, and the AEU and IEU. The Working Group will report back to Education Ministers in February.

Ministers instructed the Working Group to conduct consultation with teachers and school leaders, school staff, First Nations representatives, public servants and their respective unions.

Australian Curriculum Reform – F-2 Mathematics

Ministers agreed to commence iterative reviews of the Australian Curriculum – starting with Foundation to Year 2 mathematics – as part of a 10-year curriculum review cycle.

On the advice of ACARA, Ministers agreed that the first iterative review should be of mathematics (F-2). Ministers agreed that the first three years of mathematics are critical and that it is important to get the foundations right.

Education Ministers have asked ACARA to define the scope of the F-2 Mathematics curriculum review and report back in February.

This builds on the decision Ministers have made to implement an Early Years Numeracy Check to identify children who need additional support in the first years of school. This Check will be piloted or rolled out in most jurisdictions next year.

Continuing work on the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan

Ministers received an update on work underway across all jurisdictions to deliver the National Teacher Workforce Action Plan.

The Commonwealth recently held a national roundtable to directly hear the views from education leaders and experts about challenges and opportunities to support the teacher workforce across the country.

As part of considering further actions to support the teacher workforce nationally, Ministers asked the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) to scope a review of the *The Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (Teacher Standards) and the *Australian Professional Standard for Principals* (Principal Standard). This was a recommendation of the recent Teacher Workforce Roundtable.

The Teacher Standards have not been updated since they were adopted 15 years ago. Ministers discussed the ongoing need for the need for strong national standards and agreed to AITSL commencing work to ensure they remain relevant to contemporary teaching.

Initial Teacher Education Reform

In January 2026 the new core content for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses begins. This is the result of a decision made by Ministers in July 2023 to implement a recommendation from [Strong Beginnings: the Report of the Teacher Education Expert Panel](#).

Ministers were briefed by Emeritus Professor Bill Loudon AM, the Deputy Chair of the ITE Quality Assurance Oversight Board on the preparations for the implementation of this important reform.

University Governance Reform

Ministers were briefed by Melinda Cilento, the Chair of the Expert Council on University Governance on the University Governance Principles and Recommendations.

Ministers noted that the Australian Government will commence embedding the Principles into the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*.

Ministers also considered recommendations of the Senate Inquiry into governance at Australian higher education providers and agreed the importance of strengthening transparency, accountability and diversity in university governance.

Education Ministers noted the Australian Government, with the Commonwealth Remuneration Tribunal, will establish a framework of remuneration classification ranges for Vice-Chancellor remuneration.

Education Ministers agreed the Australian Government in consultation with States and Territories would bring back an implementation plan to the next EMM.

The Ministers thanked Broadbeach State School for hosting EMM.

EMM will meet again in February 2026.

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