

# Media Release

**The Hon Lizzie Blandthorn MP**  
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council  
Minister for Children  
Minister for Disability



Thursday, 16 November 2023

## TRANSFORMING EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Allan Labor Government is building on sector insights and partnerships to deliver the best outcomes for children by investing in early childhood education through our \$14 billion *Best Start, Best Life* reforms.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn today released *Transforming early childhood education together: What we heard, what we're doing*, the strategy developed in close consultation with the early childhood sector about the design and implementation of *Best Start, Best Life*.

More than 5,000 Victorian families, early childhood teachers and educators, service providers, peak bodies, unions and tertiary education providers shared feedback to help shape the next stages of the reforms – making sure young Victorians get the best start to their education.

The response from these stakeholders was a strong endorsement of the Labor Government's vision for high-quality education that supports Victorian children, regardless of their circumstances or background.

The feedback included:

- Two years of quality early childhood education will give children more time to play and learn, so they can better develop the skills they need to thrive, especially those needing additional support.
- Victoria's *Best Start, Best Life* reforms must value and grow the workforce.
- There is a need for more spaces where children can learn.
- We must work in partnership with the sector to ensure the reforms are a success.

We are starting from a strong base – the Labor Government has already provided free kindergarten programs for up to 140,000 children in 2023, supported initiatives that have helped to grow the kindergarten workforce by more than 50 per cent since 2019, and opened 400 new services and expanded another 50 in the same period.

The Government is also delivering more accessible and innovative educator and teacher training programs, supporting new graduates in the workplace with mentoring and induction programs, and providing more professional development for the existing workforce.

A significant increase in funding is also helping to build, expand and upgrade kindergartens and directly delivering more government-owned kindergarten infrastructure, including kindergartens on school sites.

Our partnership with the sector will continue over the coming decade and beyond as we design and deliver nation-leading reforms that will give Victorian children the best start in life.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn

*"Investing in early childhood education not only gives children the best start in life – it also ensures families and communities have access to the world class early education and facilities they deserve."*

*"We're partnering with the early childhood sector to meet the needs of children and families, to value and grow the workforce, to deliver quality spaces for learning, and to support the sector through positive change."*

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