



The Hon Peter Garrett AM
Federal Member for Kingsford Smith
Minister for School Education,
Early Childhood and Youth

The Hon Linda Burney MP
Minister for State Planning
Minister for Community Services

13 October 2010

GIVING FAMILIES MORE ACCESS TO PRESCHOOL

Federal Minister for Early Childhood Peter Garrett today met with his state counterpart Linda Burney, NSW Minister for Community Services, at a preschool in La Perouse.

Mr Garrett said the Gillard Government believes every child deserves the best start in life and access to high-quality education and care so they can get the best job possible later in life.

“All the research tells us that through early childhood education our children are being well prepared for their entry into school,” he said.

“That is why the Government is placing so much emphasis on the first years by providing \$970 million over five years to early childhood education through the National Partnership Agreement. Of this major investment, \$955 million will go directly to the states and territories to achieve universal access to early childhood education.

“By 2013, in the year before they start school, all children will have access to 15 hours a week of quality early childhood education for 40 weeks a year, to be delivered by a university-trained early childhood teacher.

“We’re also investing in lifting the quality of childcare in Australia, providing more than \$14.4 billion to mums and dads to help pay for the cost of childcare, and our new, fully-funded Paid Parental Leave scheme has begun and working parents who are expecting a baby in the New Year and thereafter can claim parental leave pay for up to 18 weeks at the minimum wage of \$570 per week before tax.

“These historic reforms show this Gillard Government is laying the reforms for smarter, fairer Australia and one that’s all about securing the future of all Australian kids.”

The National Partnership Agreement on Early Childhood Education is a Commonwealth commitment with states and territories to help make community preschool programs more affordable and accessible.

Ms Burney said that through the National Partnership and NSW Government’s Preschool Investment and Reform Plan (PIRP), an investment of \$55 million this year alone will help create 5,250 new preschool places by 2013.

“The reform plan is benefitting families in this state because since 2009, the NSW Government has made 1,642 new preschool places available, including 919 places this year,” she said.

