

Child Safety, Quality and Child Development Outcomes

Children achieve the best outcomes when early learning services are safe, stable, well-supported, and staffed by qualified educators. High-quality early childhood education and care plays a critical role in supporting children's development, wellbeing, and long-term educational outcomes.

Victoria has a strong regulatory framework designed to safeguard children; however, increasing complexity, inconsistent interpretation, and a growing compliance burden are creating challenges for providers. In some cases, this can shift focus away from quality improvement and child development outcomes, placing unnecessary administrative pressure on services.

A regulatory approach that is clear, consistent, and collaborative is essential to support services to meet their obligations while maintaining a strong focus on continuous improvement.

To strengthen outcomes, ACA Victoria is calling for:

- Regulatory approaches that are transparent, consistent, and focused on continuous improvement, ensuring that compliance frameworks support quality improvement rather than relying on punitive enforcement
- Stronger collaboration and communication between the regulator and providers, enabling proactive risk management, shared understanding, and early intervention where issues arise
- Greater clarity and consistency in regulatory expectations, including practical guidance and aligned interpretation, to reduce administrative burden and support high-quality service delivery
- A balanced and proportionate regulatory approach, recognising the operational realities of services while maintaining high standards of child safety and care

Why this matters:

When services operate within a clear, consistent, and supportive regulatory environment, educators can focus on delivering high-quality education and care. This leads to improved child safety, stronger developmental outcomes, and greater confidence for families in the early learning system.