

# Media release

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5 September 2024

## Goodstart recognised as 'Employer of Choice' in The Australian Business Awards for a second year

Goodstart, Australia's largest early learning provider and the nation's biggest non-government provider of preschool and kindergarten, has been named an 'Employer of Choice' in The Australian Business Awards for the second consecutive year.

The prestigious award recognises organisations that create leading workplaces by maximising the full potential of their workforce through effective recruitment, engagement and retention practices.

Recognition as an Employer of Choice reinforces Goodstart's steadfast commitment to creating a nurturing and empowering environment for its 16,000 educators, teachers, and early learning professionals, whose life-changing work helps maximise the potential of every child.

Goodstart Chief Executive Officer Dr Ros Baxter said the award reflects Goodstart's deep appreciation and investment in its people.

"Our educators and teachers are extraordinary – they are our nation's change-makers, supporting tens of thousands of children every day and preparing them for life-long learning," Ros said.

"Their passion for teaching and learning, backed by research, shows the incredible difference they make in young children's lives.

"Being recognised as an Employer of Choice for a second year is a testament to our commitment to their growth and development, supporting them in making a lasting positive impact on children's lives."

Ros highlighted that the not-for-profit places a strong emphasis on workforce investment, which has positively impacted employee retention and engagement.

"In February this year, we achieved our lowest turnover rate in three years, despite fierce competition for talent. Our educators have voted with their feet, choosing to stay with us because of our ongoing investment in wages, professional development, and our supportive work culture," Ros said.

"We've taken proactive steps to recognise the invaluable contribution of our teams by implementing the largest wage increase in Goodstart's history, even ahead of government funding.

"We're proud that our people feel valued and supported. We listen to their feedback and take action – whether it's offering above-award wages, flexible work arrangements, or leadership coaching, we're creating a workplace where our educators can thrive."

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**We're for children, not for profit**

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## Media release (continued)

On 1 July 2023, Goodstart introduced its largest-ever pay rise, with most educators receiving a 7% increase. Parental leave was increased from four to six weeks in December 2023.

In June 2024, the Fair Work Commission announced a 3.75% increase to the award wage, which Goodstart fully passed on to all centre-based Goodstarters including educators and teachers, maintaining its generous above-award margins. Goodstart educators are now paid at least 5% above the award, and teachers upwards of 15% above the award.

After years of advocacy and campaigning for improved wages, Goodstart is thrilled to welcome the 15% government-funded pay rise for its educators (read Goodstart's statement [here](#)).

Goodstart's actions align with the findings of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), which reported that not-for-profit providers like Goodstart offer higher quality early learning for children, are more affordable for families, and have higher retention rates for educators and teachers as a result of higher than sector average wages and strong focus on educating our own teams.

The organisation also champions diversity and inclusion, offering traineeships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators and creating support communities for underrepresented groups, including male educators and LGBTIQ+ employees.

"Our vision is to give every child the best possible start in life, and our educators are essential to achieving that goal. We'll continue to invest in our people because when they succeed, the children and communities we serve thrive," Ros said.

This recognition comes during a week of celebration for Goodstart's educators, coinciding with Early Childhood Educators' Day on 4 September.

Founded in 2010 as a not-for-profit social enterprise by Mission Australia, The Benevolent Society, The Brotherhood of St Laurence, and Social Ventures Australia, Goodstart was established with a vision to give Australia's children the best possible start in life.

Learn more about The Australian Business Awards 2024 [here](#).



For more information contact media team on 0429 553 103 or [media@goodstart.org.au](mailto:media@goodstart.org.au).

### Notes for editors

Goodstart Early Learning is Australia's largest early learning provider with 653 centres nationwide. We're a not-for-profit social enterprise committed to improving the lives of Australia's children and their families. For more information, visit [goodstart.org.au](http://goodstart.org.au).

### Acknowledgement of country

Goodstart acknowledges all Traditional Custodians across Australia and recognises First Nations peoples' continued cultural and spiritual connection to the land, sky and waterways that surround us. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.