

Media release

27 February 2024



Goodstart appoints Chief Operating Officer

Goodstart Early Learning, Australia's largest not-for-profit early learning and care provider, has announced the appointment of Melinda Smith as its new Chief Operating Officer (COO).

With over 30 years of senior leadership and executive experience, Melinda brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to Goodstart. Her background includes leadership roles at Woolworths Ltd and the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), leading national service delivery and major change and transformation projects.

Goodstart's CEO Dr Ros Baxter said Melinda's appointment marks a significant milestone for Goodstart as it positions itself for stronger growth and increased social impact for all of Australia's children.

"This is an important appointment as we continue our centre led journey and our focus on children, families, and our team," Dr Baxter said.

"Melinda is a dynamic leader, who fosters innovation, is results driven and has extensive leadership experience in operations management, cultural change, business transformation and customer service, all of which will be invaluable to Goodstart.

"Melinda will be instrumental in supporting Goodstart's 654-strong centre network and continuing to empower our centre leaders and their wider teams each and every day to maximise the potential of every child through high quality early learning."

Dr Baxter thanked Paul Ryan who has been leading the organisation's operational team and announced that he has agreed to take on a new role as General Manager, Performance Improvement, utilising his extensive operational expertise and skills, and as an invaluable partner to Melinda and to each of our State Managers.

In this new role, Paul will continue to work alongside our State Managers to ensure operational performance improvement is a way of life for every centre, in a way that makes sense for each centre and support them in their continuous improvement journeys. He will also work to ensure the Centre Support Office wraps around centre teams as they need it.

Ros said she looks forward to Melinda taking the reins as COO in early March.

-ENDS-



For more information contact media manager Rachel Espiner on 0429 553 103 or media@goodstart.org.au.



Notes for editors

Goodstart Early Learning is Australia's largest early learning provider with 664 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.

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.