

**13 October 2025****MEDIA ALERT**

- **When** Wednesday 15 October, 11.30am for 11.45am
- **Where** Top of Martin Place, Sydney (opposite NSW Parliament House)
- **What** Press conference and photo opportunity
- **Who** IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews; preschool teachers

**Preschool teachers urge NSW government to provide funding for fair pay**

The union representing teachers in early childhood education and care in NSW and the ACT on Wednesday will hold a Day of Action rally on behalf of teachers and educators in community preschools in NSW.

As part of the IEU's Start Strong, Pay Fair campaign, the union and preschools are calling on the NSW government to fund pay rises that properly value the work of preschool staff.

"Community preschools are crying out for more teachers," IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary Carol Matthews said. "Their work has been undervalued for far too long and this must be fixed."

Up to 500 early childhood teachers and educators, parents, children and supporters, dressed in pink, will gather at the top of Martin Place, opposite NSW Parliament House, to bring the fight for fair pay to the attention of politicians.

Staff in community preschools earn up to 30% less a year than their counterparts in schools with similar qualifications and roles, and 15% less than staff in long day care centres.

Community preschools are staffed by professional and experienced teachers and run by volunteer committees of parents whose only priorities are children's education and safety – not profit.

Funding for community preschools is derived only from the NSW government and parents. On average, more than 80 per cent of funding received by community preschools is spent on wages.

"The NSW government has rejected our request for increased funding for wages for teachers and educators after months of bargaining," Matthews said.

"Without an increase in NSW government funding to lift pay and conditions, community preschools may be forced to cap enrolments, increase fees for families and, in some cases, close entirely."

The union also anticipates the early childhood education and care sector, including community preschools, will have to raise salaries to address the systemic, gender-based undervaluation of its highly feminised workforce (more than 90 per cent of staff are women).

"To address the gender pay gap, community preschools need funding support from the NSW government," Matthews said.

Community preschools cater to all children, including children from backgrounds of economic disadvantage and children with additional needs.

But poor pay and conditions mean community preschools are struggling to attract new staff to their services and are losing staff to other sectors.

"We urge the NSW government to step up and address staff shortages caused by inadequate pay and conditions in community-based preschools," Matthews said. "Teachers, children, parents and the wider community all stand to gain from a strong preschool sector."

**Contacts**

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*The IEUA NSW/ACT Branch represents over 32,000 teachers, principals and support staff in Catholic and independent schools, early childhood centres and post-secondary colleges.*

**Authorised by Carol Matthews, IEUA NSW/ACT Branch Secretary**