

## Annex A: Recap of Key Moves to Transform the Early Childhood Sector

1 Since 2012, the Government has undertaken several key moves to raise the quality, accessibility and affordability of preschools. This is important to give every child a good start in life and also to support families with young children. The key moves are summarised in the following table:

Quality	<p><i>Uplift Early Childhood Standards</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Early Childhood Development Centres Act took effect from January 2019, bringing childcare centres and kindergartens under the same regulatory framework to ensure more consistent and higher quality standards across the preschool sector.</li> <li>• The Singapore Preschool Accreditation Framework (SPARK) has been continuously enhanced to better provide quality assurance for preschools. Today, around 50% of preschools are SPARK-certified.</li> </ul> <p><i>Enhanced Early Childhood Resources</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MOE has developed Nurturing Early Learners curriculum resources since 2012 to help Early Childhood educators create quality learning experiences for children aged 4-6; MOE Kindergartens were introduced in 2014 to catalyse quality improvements in the sector.</li> <li>• More Anchor Operator preschools are offering Malay and Tamil Language education in preschools, with enhanced training and support for mother tongue language teaching.</li> </ul> <p><i>Strengthen Early Childhood Professional Growth and Development</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Institute of Early Childhood Development (NIEC) was set up to oversee training and professional development for the sector, and welcomed its first batch of teacher trainees in 2019.</li> <li>• A Skills Framework for the Early Childhood sector was introduced to provide greater clarity on the career pathways and opportunities for early childhood professionals.</li> <li>• Training Awards, a Professional Conversion Programme for Preschool Teachers, Place-and-Train Programme for Educators and Professional Development Programmes have been rolled out to attract and develop early childhood educators.</li> <li>• ECDA launched a National Campaign for the Early Childhood Sector to foster greater respect for and recognition of the early childhood profession.</li> </ul>
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Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More full-day preschool places built, from 90,000 in 2012 to almost 180,000 today. This will increase to over 200,000 over the next few years.</li> <li>• Large standalone childcare centres developed in estates with demand for preschool.</li> <li>• Anchor Operators are setting up Early Years Centres for tie-up with nearby MOE Kindergartens in estates with demand for preschool.</li> <li>• More affordable and customised Early Intervention (EI) programmes introduced in 2019.</li> </ul>
Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional Subsidy introduced in 2013.</li> <li>• Kindergarten Fee Assistance Scheme (KiFAS) enhanced in 2015.</li> <li>• Partner Operator scheme started in 2016, resulting in a corresponding fall in median childcare fees in the sector from \$900 per month in 2015 to \$856 per month (which is the Partner Operator fee cap) in 2016, and have stabilised at that level since then.</li> <li>• Child Development Account (CDA), which can be used to pay for preschool expenses, was enhanced in 2016 with the introduction of the CDA First Step, which does not require parents' co-savings.</li> <li>• Subsidy support enhanced in April 2019 for non-working mothers looking for a job or are full-time caregivers to their younger children.</li> </ul>