

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Early Childhood Education



Mr RAE (Hawke) (14:43): My question is to the Minister for Early Childhood Education. Why is it important to invest in the early childhood education and care workforce? What has been the response to the Albanese government's investment in this sector?

Dr ALY (Cowan—Minister for Early Childhood Education and Minister for Youth) (14:44): I thank the fantastic member for Hawke for his question. I want to acknowledge his commitment and his advocacy for early childhood education and care workers in his electorate. On this side of the chamber, we recognise the transformative benefits of early childhood education during that crucial period of a child's first five years of life, when 90 per cent of brain development occurs. Our skilled early childhood educators and teachers support that development. They support children's development through play based learning and in those important years before school. We've just wrapped up Early Learning Matters Week, which showcased play based learning and the importance that that has in the formation of child development.



However, we also know that for too long this work has been undervalued. That's why our historic announcement of a 15 per cent pay rise across the early childhood education sector is incredibly important. This pay rise means that by the end of this year early childhood educators—around 200,000 of them right across Australia—will get at least an extra \$100 in their pay packets. By the end of next year, that will be at least \$150. Sam Page, my dear friend and the CEO of Early Childhood Australia, said: