

Department for Education Disability Access and Inclusion Plan 2020-2023

Statement from the Chief Executive

The Department for Education is committed to ensuring there is growth for every child, in every class in every school, and that our working environments foster high achievement, challenge and equity for our employees. We partner with families to ensure all children and young people are supported and improve educational outcomes.

The department's Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2020-2023 builds on the Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019-2023. Our DAIP has been developed within the context of Commonwealth and state legislation, state government priorities and objectives, and departmental policy to ensure that it complies with the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, Disability Standards for Education 2005, *Equal Opportunity Act 1984 (SA)* and *Disability Inclusion Act 2018 (SA)*.

Our workforce is one of the biggest in South Australia. As a department it is our responsibility to lead by example to improve access and inclusion for children, young people and employees living with disability. Social inclusion is fundamental to quality of life and critical to achieving positive life outcomes. Whilst the department's DAIP provides a framework for inclusion, each member of our workforce has a role to ensure the reduction of barriers faced by people living with disability and promote positive learning environments for inclusion.

This plan provides just some of the actions we will take as an agency to support improved outcomes for people with disability and should be considered within the context of the reforms which we are and will undertake to make our education system world class.



Rick Persse
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

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Contact

Disability Policy and Programs

Email: education.DAIP@sa.gov.au

Department for Education

The department delivers South Australia's public education and care system, with the goal of delivering world-class public education by 2028.

As part of this strategic commitment, the department has developed a [World Class Education Strategic Plan](#) and [Action Plan](#). These plans set out the department's high level directions that will be our focus to ensure there is growth for every child, in every class in every school. While these plans build on the solid foundations that the department has already embedded across the public education system, the department has developed a Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) to outline specific actions that we are and will undertake to support improved learning and wellbeing outcomes and inclusive, accessible communities.

The department's DAIP recognises that genuine inclusion involves celebrating and acknowledging children, young people and employees of different abilities, backgrounds, views and experiences.

Our DAIP is aligned with the [Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019-2023](#) and aims to reduce the barriers faced by children, young people and employees living with disability through the creation of accessible and inclusive communities.

Departmental profile

Of children and young people with disability in our public education system, approximately 84% attend mainstream schools and 16% attend specialised education options, including special schools, disability units or special classes. These options provide specialist teaching and learning programs, and specialist facilities and targeted resourcing structures.

At 30 June 2020, 31,086 employees were employed by the Department for Education across over 800 sites around the state.

The department's approaches to supporting children, young people and employees are multi-faceted. They include:

- population based funding to preschools and schools
- alternative education options (schools/classes/units)
- student support services
- additional resourcing via departmental programs and provisions
- corporate policies and programs and projects that support access and inclusion.

A number of significant and systemic reforms have been implemented to support children and young people with disability. A new funding model for students with disability, the Inclusive Education Support Program, and service delivery model for the department's Student Support Services were introduced in 2019. The One Plan which is a personalised learning plan for all children and students with disability is being rolled out over three years, alongside the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data (NCCD) reforms introduced by the Australian Government and Education Council, to enable better understanding of the needs of students with disability and how they can be best supported at school.

Our vision

To build a stronger future by making our state's education system world-class.

Actions

The Department for Education Disability Access and Inclusion Plan is structured around the themes and priority areas of the [Inclusive SA: State Disability Inclusion Plan 2019–2023](#).

1: Inclusive communities for all

Social inclusion is a priority for people living with disability as it affects all aspects of their lives. It is our aim that the contributions and rights of people living with disability are valued and understood by all South Australians and that their rights are promoted, upheld and protected. We also want to ensure that people living with disability are supported to advocate for their own rights.

Priority 1: Involvement in the community

Priority 2: Improving community understanding and awareness

Priority 3: Promoting the rights of people living with disability

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
1. Ensure the department's Outdoor Learning Environment Standards (June 2020) promotes accessible play spaces.	1	Capital Programs and Asset Services	Ongoing	Outdoor Learning Environment Standards are available on the Department for Education website.
2. Provide through the Special Education Resource Unit a range of support and learning opportunities, to parents, carers and departmental staff.	2	Early Years and Child Development	Ongoing	Number of staff undertaking training and the number of parents accessing services.
3. Provide e-learning disability courses for educators.	2	Early Years and Child Development	Ongoing	Number and % of total staff accessing the e-learning Disability Standards of Education training. Number and % of staff accessing presentations,

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
				including presentation type, via the annual Inclusive Education Expo.
4. Provide hiring managers and HR Business Partners with unconscious bias resources (course and videos) to support decision making processes in regards to employing people with disability.	3	People and Culture	December 2021	Monitor unconscious bias online course completion rates for this cohort.
5. Develop and promote information on working with people with disability in the staff induction handbook (leverage OCPSE resources).	3	People and Culture	December 2021	Inclusivity messages incorporated in agency induction materials.
6. Provide all new employees at induction with the opportunity to learn about disability through the provision of online learning courses and videos, to challenge stereotypes and to build inclusive workplaces.	3	People and Culture	December 2021	New employee induction incorporates diversity and inclusion content. Monitor disability awareness online course completion rates.
7. Hold an annual Inclusive Education Expo to showcase high-quality practice in inclusive education and training for educators.	3	Early Years and Child Development	Expo to be held from August to October annually.	Increasing numbers of educators accessing Inclusive Education Expo presentations (to be provided by presentation type).
8. Consult with parents of children with disability through forums, conferences, meetings and workshops.	3	Early Years and Child Development	Termly parent forums	Consultation and engagement opportunities are held termly.
9. Review the department's children and young people with disability policy.	3	Early Years and Child Development	December 2021	Policy is reviewed by December 2021.

2: Leadership and collaboration

People living with disability want to have a greater role in leading and contributing to government and community decision-making. It is our aim that the perspectives of people living with disability are actively sought and that they are supported to participate meaningfully in government and community consultation and engagement activities.

Priority 4: Participation in decision-making

Priority 5: Leadership and raising profile

Priority 6: Engagement and consultation

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
1. Consult with parents through disability forums about relevant current and future policy, service and program development and implementation.	6	Early Years and Child Development	Termly parent forums	Parents have the opportunity to engage and have their say on policies which have an impact for children and students with disability.
2. Parent/carer and child/young person voice is included in the personalised planning process (One Plan).	4, 6	Early Years and Child Development	Annually	Each child with disability has a One Plan.

3: Accessible communities

The accessibility of the built environment, quality services and information is key to ensuring people living with disability are included and have the opportunity to equally participate in all aspects of community life. It is our aim to increase accessibility to public and community infrastructure, transport, services, information, sport and recreation and the greater community.

Priority 7: Universal Design across South Australia

Priority 8: Accessible and available information

Priority 9: Access to services

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
1. Universal design principles are included in the Education Facilities Design Standards. These Standards are applied to education facility upgrades, as required.	7	Capital programs and Asset Services	Ongoing	Education Facilities Design Standards are available on the Department for Education website.
2. Ensure the ongoing review and updating of Education Facilities Design Standards.	7 & 9	Capital programs and Asset Services	Ongoing	Education Facilities Design Standards are available on the Department for Education website.
3. Improved online accessibility of the department's website and intranet.	8	Communications	Ongoing	Communications policy is reviewed at least every 3 years.
4. Support access to preschool and school for children and young people with disability via the students with disability transport assistance program.	9	Early Years and Child Development	Ongoing	The Students with disability transport assistance program procedure is reviewed at least every 3 years.
5. Facilitate minor capital works and upgrades via the 'Just in Time' principle to make existing preschools, schools or the department sites accessible to a child, young person or employee with disability.	9	Capital Programs and Asset Services	Ongoing	Minor refurbishments comply with legislative disability requirements, the Department for Education Design Standards and the department's 'Just in Time' Policy and Procedure. Number of Disability Access

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
				provision requests completed annually.

4: Learning and employment

Workforce participation is fundamental to social inclusion. It provides economic independence and choice, social connections and friendships, value, identity and belonging. It is our aim that people living with disability have access to inclusive places of study and that education and training provides pathways to meaningful and inclusive employment and volunteering opportunities.

Priority 10: Better supports within educational and training settings

Priority 11: Skill development through volunteering and support in navigating the pathway between learning and earning

Priority 12: Improved access to employment opportunities and better support within workplaces

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
1. Develop and provide programs which support the learning of children and students with disability such as the Inclusive Education Support Program (IESP) which allocates funding to children and young people based on their needs to support their access to learning.	10	Early Years and Child Development	Annually	Number and % of students with disability who have achieved their SACE.
2. Schools use the Abilities Based Learning and Educational Support (ABLES) program which supports the teaching of students with significant intellectual disability.	10	Early Years and Child Development	From term 4, 2020	Children and students with significant intellectual disability who are working towards foundation in the areas of literacy and mathematics access ABLES.

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
3. Develop personalised learning plans for students with disability to support access, participation and achievement in the curriculum.	10	Early Years and Child Development	Ongoing	All children and students with disability have a One Plan.
4. Provide additional specialised education options for children and young people with disability as part of the Year 7 to high school transition.	10	Early Years and Child Development	Term 1 2022	180 new places are provided for the Year 7 to high school transition by 2022.
5. Provide additional supports and program modification to enable Aboriginal students with disability to access South Australian Aboriginal Secondary Training Academy (SAASTA) programs.	10	Aboriginal Education	Ongoing	Number and % of Aboriginal students that are supported via the IESP. Number and % of Aboriginal students engaged in their SACE. Number and % of Aboriginal students who have completed their SACE.
6. Ensure the Workabout Centre provide additional supports and program modification to enable Aboriginal students with disabilities to access their programs	10	Aboriginal Education	Ongoing	Program reviewed on an annual basis.
7. Use the Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) to inform improved planning and support in the department.	10	Early Years and Child Development	Ongoing / August Each Year	100% of schools participate in Collection annually.
8. Ensure the Volunteer policy, procedure and volunteer application forms are inclusive of people with a disability.	11	Early Years and Child Development	Ongoing	Volunteer policy, procedure and volunteer application forms are reviewed regularly.
9. Develop resources to support schools and preschools to better engage people living with a disability to volunteer.	11	Early Years and Child Development	Proposed date of completion is June 2021.	Volunteering resources are available through the department's intranet.

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
10. Provide professional learning for educators to implement student volunteering, with a focus on volunteering being inclusive and equitable for all children and young.	11	Early Years and Child Development	Ongoing	Number of people attending training.
11. Ensure the VET for School Students policy is inclusive of people with disability.	11	Further Education and Pathways	Ongoing	VET for School Students policy is reviewed at least every 3 years.
12. Work Place Equity and Respect (WER) Working Group and Equity Champions promote days of significance and inclusion activities.	12	People and Culture	Ongoing	Communications plan approved and activities implemented.
13. Establish/access capability in order to review recruitment processes (application to induction) to ensure department practices do not inadvertently discriminate or disadvantage people with disability.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Satisfy whole of government approach/advice to agencies on how to improve practices. Implement solutions to any unintended barriers revealed during the review to ensure inclusiveness.
14. Develop and promote resources that support career progression opportunities for people with a disability through the PDP cycle.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Monitor retention and promotion rates for people with disability (as able). Review of I Work for SA – Your Voice survey results for people with a disability.
15. All diversity streams are represented in promotional material recognising employee contributions.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	People with disability are represented in promotional material (incl. recognition programs).
16. Review the South Australian Public Sector Disability Employment Toolkit to ensure practices align.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Include additional action items to the plan to address any identified gaps.

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
17. Engage employees with disability in the department (and their supporters) to form a network (Equity Champions) and engage in inclusion activities.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Networking group established. Annual review of group's purpose, structure and achievements.
18. Ensure the EAP provides an inclusive service and provides available support information to employees.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Review feedback from people with disability who have accessed the EAP regarding their level of satisfaction with the provider (via EAP provider reporting).
19. Develop a guide for managers to support the inclusivity of people with disability in the workplace. Adapt (or provide a link to access) the Australian Network on Disability's, disability language guide and disability communication etiquette.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Guide available on Edi and promoted.
20. Develop a guide for managers on reasonable workplace adjustments and resources (changes to a work process, practice, procedure or environment) to enable a person with disability to experience equitable terms and conditions of employment.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Monitor the number of reasonable workplace adjustments and responses (subject to online form being created).
21. Establish an Edi page to provide access to all information and tools to employees and managers to promote disability inclusion in the workplace.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Monitor access to information. Seek feedback on the usefulness of information provided on driving inclusivity in the workplace.

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
22. Explore WOG partnership with a panel of local disability employment services to supply suitably skilled and available candidates.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Successful recruitment outcomes of people with disability through a registered disability employment service.
23. In collaboration with OCPSE, develop and promote information for hiring managers about how applicants who are registered with a disability employment service provider can apply for departmental vacancies on iWorkforSA.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Successful recruitment outcomes of people with disability through a registered disability employment service.
24. Promote the availability of the Skilling SA program's traineeships to people with disability in the department.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Monitor uptake of traineeships for people with disability in the department.
25. Identify appropriate mechanisms (incl. clear confidentiality protocols) for employees to share information about their existing or acquired disability when employed and throughout the employment lifecycle (e.g. PDP discussions).	12	People and Culture	December 2021	<p>Establish a baseline measure of the number of people with disability employed in the department.</p> <p>More employees feel confident in sharing information.</p> <p>Policies and practices modified to address needs of employees with a disability.</p>
26. Develop a reporting dashboard to monitor workforce profile data including aggregated information on people living with disability in the department, whilst maintaining privacy.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	Monitor the number of employees with disability in the department, identify

Action	State Plan Priority #	Responsibility	Timeframe	Measurable Target
27. Establish a feedback mechanism(s) to capture the perspectives of employees on their experience across the employment lifecycle.	12	People and Culture	December 2021	trends to inform future initiatives. Review feedback captured and actions taken in response.



Disability access and inclusion plan development

Consultation

Thank you to everyone who provided feedback for the department's DAIP. Our stakeholder's voices are valued and will inform our continued review and update of the DAIP as we further develop our reforms to ensure that children and students with disability have access to a high quality inclusive education.

Implementation

The implementation of the DAIP will be integrated into the annual business planning of our divisions to ensure that these commitments are implemented and monitored. We will use the voices of parents through our regular parent forums to regularly reflect on implementation and inform our broader reforms beyond this plan.

This DAIP will be communicated department wide including to our preschools and schools and be available via the Department for Education internet and intranet.

Glossary and Definitions

Inclusive Education Support Program (IESP)

The Department for Education's Inclusive Education Support Program (IESP) is a functional needs-based funding model for South Australian government preschool and school students with disability. The program's name and eligibility criteria reflect its inclusive approach and principles.

One Plan

The One Plan is a personalised learning plan that contains information to support children and student's inclusion and achievement in schools and preschools. The priority groups for this project are:

- children in preschool with extensive adjustments
- students with disability
- children and young people in care
- Aboriginal learners.

Universal Design involves creating facilities, built environments, products and services that can be used by people of all abilities, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptations.