

EDUCATION FOR A **STRONGER** FUTURE

Department for Education
and Child Development
Strategic Plan



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education
and Child Development

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Foreword



We are setting ourselves an ambitious goal - to build a world-class education and child development system here in South Australia.

We want to give young South Australians the very best opportunities to achieve their potential at school and in life.

But we know it takes more than great teachers and an excellent school.

It takes a focus on wellbeing, health and development from before a child is even born through to their transition into adulthood.

This focus on 'the whole child' is at the heart of the DECD strategic plan. We are proud to be one team statewide working together to change lives and build futures.

In considering our way forward, we looked around the world at the fundamentals of high-performing education systems.

We have been influenced by best practice and innovation and we draw from this as we modernise and build a world-class education and child development system.

A child starting preschool in 2017 will complete their SACE in 2030 and enter into a rapidly changing future world where jobs and the skills needed to succeed will be different. They will be expected to be agile, to question, to analyse problems, develop solutions, work flexibly and to create their own opportunities.

With this knowledge, we are deliberately creating a future-focused system characterised by expert teachers, a modern curriculum and strong, empowered leaders in every school, preschool and children's centre.

Our multidisciplinary staff will be known, respected and trusted as leaders in their respective fields for both their expertise and the positive outcomes they achieve.

As one team, we will partner with parents and carers in our shared quest for children to be the best they can be, supporting them when they need it the most.

Overall, we will continually improve and invest in success for the long term. Our system will be driven by values, with high expectations, professionalism and meaningful collaboration.

We are committed to building confident, capable and worldly young South Australians who are primed for success. I am confident that we will succeed.

Rick Persse
Chief Executive

EDUCATION FOR A **STRONGER** FUTURE



Vision

To build a stronger future for our children by making South Australia's education and child development system world class

Purpose

To create a stronger future for South Australia through providing high-quality education, early childhood and child health services

Values

We embrace the values of the South Australian public sector:

- Service
- Professionalism
- Trust
- Respect
- Collaboration and engagement
- Honesty and integrity
- Courage and tenacity
- Sustainability

Characteristics

The Statement on Public Education in South Australia describes the unique role of public education in society and the characteristics we seek to preserve:

- Quality
- Equity
- Diversity and cohesion
- Collaboration and trust
- Community
- Democracy

Our ambitions

Our shared ambitions for education and child development are described in Education for a Stronger Future: Strategic Directions for Education and Child Development at decid.sa.gov.au/strongerfuture.

Our key priorities

We will deliver on the following 5 key priorities for South Australia's children and young people:



Great start: Children have a strong, supportive start to life and learning.



High achievement: We have high standards and support all children and young people to achieve their best.



Fairness for all: All children receive a quality education, whatever their circumstances. We want to close the gap in outcomes for children and young people.



Learning in partnership: We will work towards partnerships with families, in the community and across the world to support our children and young people.



Better futures: Young people are prepared for work and life in a transforming economy.

Our outcomes

- Children have a strong start in life
- Students have strong numeracy and literacy skills
- Educational achievement regardless of student background
- Students attend school and stay engaged
- Students learn 21st century skills
- High achievement is supported by quality teaching and leadership
- Young people successfully complete their schooling
- Students are equipped to engage globally
- Young people are equipped to work in expanding South Australian industries
- South Australians value and support public education.

We will publicly report progress to be accountable for our performance.

Achieving our ambitions

We will build a world-class education and child development system and deliver on the priorities for children and young people.

We will do this by building capability in the 6 fundamental areas that have created impact in successful education systems around the world.

Expert teaching

Characteristic: Quality

Goal: Expert teachers have skills, knowledge and the support they need to perform at their highest level every day.

We will ensure our teachers have the pedagogical skills and specialist knowledge to engage students to be expert learners of the contemporary curriculum, and to develop the general capabilities. We will focus on learning design, assessment and moderation, and the rigorous implementation of Teaching for Effective Learning and Early Years Learning frameworks* across the state. Teachers will be supported to achieve performance against Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, and to build rewarding careers.

Quality leadership

Characteristic: Quality

Goal: Quality leadership drives better results and improved professional practice.

We will prioritise educational leadership in schools and preschools, and professional leadership across all disciplines. Our leaders will be supported to effectively lead their employees and sites and to respond to the needs of their local community. We will attract, develop and retain talented and passionate leaders and work with them to build their capability. Our focus on development for aspiring, new and experienced leaders will ensure we are capable of leading into the future.

Engaged parents and communities

Characteristics: Democracy and community

Goal: Partnerships with parents and carers support children's learning and development.

We will engage with parents from before their child is born and invite parents and carers into their local education community. By providing additional support, high-quality resources and information about their child's progress, we will ensure parents and carers know how best to support their children's learning and development.

* Visit www.decd.sa.gov.au and find out more about the Teaching for Effective Learning and the Early Years Learning frameworks.

Stronger services

Characteristics: Equity and diversity

Goal: A robust service base supports child health, development and education outcomes.

We will use the statewide reach of our services to increase access to support for child and family health and child development in the critical early years. Better linkages to other government services will ensure we play our part in the protection of vulnerable children. We will offer additional learning and developmental support to children who need it across all stages of their education. We will implement targeted strategies to improve outcomes for priority groups, which will include a strong focus on Aboriginal children and their families.

Resourcing and investment

Characteristics: Quality and equity

Goal: Resources are deployed where they are most needed and strategic investments ensure the quality and sustainability of our system.

We will ensure that sites are resourced and funded according to the needs of their students. We will invest in new and upgraded facilities that support the delivery of contemporary learning priorities and children's health and development services. Our facilities will be accessible for all children and our planning will anticipate the future needs of the South Australian community.

Improvement and accountability

Characteristic: Collaboration, equity and quality

Goal: Professional collaboration and a consistent approach to accountability improves the system as a whole.

We will further develop a collaborative culture where effective practice is shared within schools and preschools, through local partnerships and across the system. Strong accountability processes and effective policies will ensure our decisions are based on the best available evidence. A differentiated approach to school improvement will ensure every school knows where best to focus efforts to improve student outcomes.

What success looks like in a school and preschool



Outcomes we measure

We will pursue strategies that build our professional and organisational capacity. However, our success is measured by the difference we make in the lives of children and young people.

We will track our progress against the DECD Standard of Educational Achievement at preschool and school, partnership and system level with high expectations for all our students, particularly our Aboriginal learners and those from other priority groups.

We will use data and evidence for accountability and to drive improvement approaches. Over time, we will measure more aspects of children's learning and development, including their capabilities, health, engagement and wellbeing. This will give us a comprehensive range of indicators for children from birth until adulthood, to allow us to set priorities and continuously improve our approach.

Planning for improvement

We will work hard to make all sites successful, with high achievement, growth, challenge, engagement and equity as central to a site's culture.

Every person working in education and child development will understand the role they play in improving young people's achievement and development. We will work together as one team, statewide.

All DECD employees at every level will know what they are accountable for delivering through a performance and development plan reviewed at least every 6 months.

Schools, preschools and children's centres

Every school, preschool and children's centre will have an evidence-based improvement plan that takes into account all the factors affecting students' learning. The plans will have clear, measurable improvement goals based on the DECD strategic plan and Standard of Educational Achievement. Services and expertise will be available to help sites to deliver on their plan.

Schools will be externally reviewed every 4 years to evaluate school performance and effectiveness. High-performing schools will set stretch targets for their students. Intensive, timely support will be provided to schools facing challenges to turn around results quickly.

Partnerships

Local partnerships of schools, preschools and children's centres will be assessed every 2 years through a performance review. Education directors, as leaders of local partnerships, will drive improvement in their preschools, schools, and children's centres and bring in extra support where needed. Good ideas and effective ways of working will be shared with others.

Learning improvement and student support

Experts in learning improvement and student support services will spend most of their time working directly with schools. Teachers will be supported to deliver high-quality learning. Students will receive the support they need to be engaged and progressing in their learning.

Child health and development

Professionals in child health and development will support young children and families in these critical early years. These early years services provide a strong start for children and set them up for future success in life and continual learning.

Corporate services

System-wide corporate services that allow schools, preschools and children's centres to focus their attention on student improvement will be delivered through Corporate Office. The impact of these services will be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure they are having a positive effect in supporting colleagues in sites.



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