

Department of Education and Children's Services



Children's Services Annual Report 2010-11



Government of South Australia
Department of Education and
Children's Services

Department of Education and Children's Services

Education Centre
31 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Postal address
GPO Box 1152
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Email: decscustomers@sa.gov.au
Website: www.decs.sa.gov.au

ABN: 60 168 401 578
ISSN: 1835-1530
ISBN: 978-0-646-53074-1

This report is available on the DECS website.

Queries may be directed to:
Policy and Communications
Level 8, 31 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Telephone: (08) 8226 1083

About this report

The Children's Services annual report provides information about programs and services designed for children in early childhood education and care, covering birth to eight years of age. It reports on the department's outcomes, activity, goals and future plans to benefit children in South Australian public education.



04	Letter of transmittal
05	Executive summary
06	Services for South Australian children
09	About the Department of Education and Children's Services
19	Chapter One: Access
31	Chapter Two: Connections
35	Chapter Three: Early Foundation
42	Chapter Four: Maximising Potential
47	Chapter Five: Focus on Learning
52	Financial statements

Letter of transmittal

The report outlines the achievements and performance of the Department of Education and Children's Services for the year ended 30 June 2011.

The Hon Grace Portolesi MP
Minister for Education and Child Development

Dear Minister

In accordance with the *Children's Services Act 1985*, I am pleased to present to you the *Children's Services Annual Report 2010-11* for presentation to Parliament.

The report outlines the achievements and performance in early childhood services of the Department of Education and Children's Services for the year ended 30 June 2011. The report also presents the department's financial statements for the 2010-11 financial year.

Recognising the importance of the early years, the department continues to make significant contributions to South Australia's Strategic Plan as a lead agency for nine targets across early childhood, schooling and Aboriginal education, and as a contributing agency to three other targets.

South Australia is supporting families with a range of local services for children from birth to school age to help them flourish and prepare them for school and life.

I thank the staff for their contributions to further the State and national reforms occurring in early childhood services during 2010-11 and improving opportunities and outcomes for children and families.

Yours sincerely



Keith Bartley

Chief Executive
28 October 2011

Executive summary

The early years are vitally important to the future health and wellbeing of our children, so South Australia is investing in services to help them thrive. Studies in neuroscience have shown that brain development during the early years of a child's life from birth until five sets the path that affects their health, learning and behaviour into adulthood.

Universal access to preschool

As part of the Universal Access national partnership, in our most disadvantaged communities – including those with the highest proportion of Aboriginal children – 141 preschools started to deliver 15 hours of preschool per week to local children. By June 2011, there were 367 government-operated and grant-funded preschools catering for 18,771 children.

Child care places increase

By 30 June 2011, the total number of licensed child care places across South Australia increased to 21,244.

Out of school hours care continues to grow

At 30 June 2011 there were 334 out of school hours care services providing 36,675 places – more than 60% of these services were operated by school governing councils. Out of school hours care is the fastest growing child care service over the past decade.

More children's centres completed

Construction was completed during 2010-11 at a further 10 children's centres – 23 are now operational. Planning started during the year on the development of the next 10 centres announced as part of the 2010-11 State Budget.

Preschool support for children with disabilities

More than 1,800 young children received support from the *Preschool support* program and 3,975 young children received support under the *Disability support* program during 2010-11.

Australian Early Development Index data grows

South Australian AEDI results are now made up of 16,706 individual child records, which means that we have data available for 387 out of a possible 397 communities.

Services for South Australian children

The following early childhood services are provided for children in South Australia. For further details see page 42, *Maximising potential*.

Babysitting agencies

These agencies are individual or registered businesses that refer people to care for children in their home while parents are temporarily absent. At June 2011 there were 17 babysitting agencies licensed under the *Children's Services Act 1985*.

Children's centres for early childhood development and parenting

Children's centres bring together a range of services for children from birth to eight years and their families. Services include high quality early education and care, child health information and programs, parenting programs, family support, playgroups and play activities. At June 2011 there were 23 children's centres.

Child care centres

Child care centres (licensed but not operated by DECS) provide full-day and part-time child care for babies, toddlers and children under the age of six. Centres are open for a minimum of eight hours a day, five days a week, 48 weeks a year. At June 2011 there were 337 licensed child care centres in South Australia.

Family day care

This program provides child care in the homes of approved care providers for children from birth, including school-aged children. Care hours are flexible and parents negotiate the care they need. In 2011 there were 816 DECS-sponsored family day care service providers, catering for 3,422 places.

Integrated centres

Integrated centres offer a preschool program together with a licensed child care service from the one location. In 2011 there were 22 integrated centres in South Australia.

Learning together

The *Learning Together* program is a literacy and support program that aims to improve early learning for children from birth to three years. There is also *Learning Together @ Home*, a home visiting program that supports families in developing skills to help their children's learning and development through play.

Occasional care

Occasional care services provide hourly or sessional child care for children under school age in child care centres, some preschools and family day care homes. In 2011 there were 87 occasional care service providers catering for 3,325 places.

Out of school hours and vacation care

Out of school hours care services provide a range of activities for school-aged children that occur in a recreation and leisure environment. Services can be offered before school, after school, during school holidays (vacation care) or any combination of these components. In 2011 there were 334 out of school hours care services catering for 36,675 approved childcare places.

Playcentres

Playcentres offer a play-based program for children aged from birth to five years. The majority of playcentres operate in rural areas from a school and a playcentre leader coordinates the program. In 2011 there were 29 playcentres.

Playgroups

Playgroups offer parents and their children an opportunity to meet regularly and socialise, share experiences, and learn together through play and having fun.

Number of children attending early childhood services by type of service 2008-10

Service type ^{1,2}	2008	2009	2010
Child care centres ³	27 350	30 360	30 570
Out of school hours care	22 980	21 890	22 310
Preschools (including outreach centres)	17 362	17 521	17 654
Vacation care	17 460	16 520	16 440
Family day care	10 201	10 516	10 054
Integrated centres	2 176	2 560	2 603
Occasional care centres	2 050	2 278	2 165
Learning Together @ Home	641	721	673
Children's centres	843	726	1 305
Playcentres	276	283	225
Rural care	229	243	265

This table shows how services are being used by families and how services are affected by changing community demands, to meet family needs. Note that children may attend more than one service.

Notes:

- 1 The numbers for child care centres, out of school hours care and vacation care are estimates, as the response rate for the annual census is less than 100%.
- 2 Family day care data reflect the number of registered children. Data for integrated centres and children's centres includes all children attending regardless of the program being accessed.
- 3 Figures for child care centres for 2008 and 2009 have been revised from previously published data, to separately report children's centres data.

Figures exclude services that are DECS licensed but not DECS funded.

Source: Annual Census of Children's Services 2008-2010, family day care from Harmony Data Base

Preschools

In South Australia, preschools may also be known as kindergartens, child parent centres or integrated centres (school-based preschools). Preschools provide early childhood education programs for all children in the year before they start school, once the child has reached four years of age.

In 2011 there were 367 preschools, excluding integrated centres and children's centres. To provide all children with the best possible start, Aboriginal children and children under the Guardianship of the Minister may commence preschool at three years of age.

Children who live in small rural communities may start preschool from three years and six months of age. Early entry to preschool is also available for children with additional needs.

Rural care

Rural care services provide full-day or part-time child care for babies, toddlers, preschool and school-aged children in some rural preschools. Centres are open for a minimum of eight hours a day, five days a week, 48 weeks a year and in 2011, there were 14 service providers catering for 98 places.



About the Department for Education and Children's Services



ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

Young people are at the centre of everything we do.

DECS is responsible for ensuring the provision of high quality children's services and public education throughout South Australia.

We are a large organisation with some 25,000 people working in just over 1,000 locations. Our schools and preschools provide services to more than 180,000 young people and their families.

Our key functions are:

- to set the directions for education and care in South Australia

We ensure the education system is well positioned to deliver high quality education and care through strategic and coordinated leadership in implementing South Australia's Strategic Plan, integrated policy development in collaboration with key stakeholders, and planning for an effective workforce to meet current and future requirements.

- to provide and regulate children's services

We drive the reform of early childhood education and care systems to secure improved outcomes for childcare in SA.

- to manage the State's education system

We deliver high quality primary and secondary education to school students across the State. DECS is responsible for the education of children and students across all areas of the curriculum.

Our vision

Young people in South Australia achieve a positive social and economic future.

Our goals

Connecting with communities

We will improve relationships with families and communities, and work together to meet individual care and education needs.

Developing young people

We will engage with and listen to young people as we nurture their development in a way that provides a basis for lifelong learning.

Aiming for a better future

We will help young people gain the academic and social skills necessary to become capable, confident and productive members of society.

Our values

The following six organisational values are the tenets which guide adult and student behaviours within Central Office, schools and children's services.

Cooperation

We show cooperation by constructively thinking, working and learning together, by valuing the uniqueness of each individual and by being capable of uniting cohesively as a group and community. We recognise our local and global inter-connectedness.

Excellence

We show excellence by being innovative, creative and responsive in the way we think, act and learn. In meeting and overcoming challenges, we expand capabilities to achieve appropriate quality outcomes and success.

Fairness

We show fairness by acting without bias and recognising that the causes of inequity are socially constructed and can be changed by behaving in a way that leads to equitable outcomes.

Integrity

We show integrity by consistently applying moral and principled behaviour which reflects trust and honesty.

Respect

We show respect by honouring and considering others and treating them with dignity, empathy, esteem and courtesy.

Responsibility

We show responsibility through accountability and strategically leading, planning and managing for today, with tomorrow in mind.

Supporting schools and preschools

All levels throughout DECS aim to support staff in schools and preschools to focus on the learning needs of young people.

We want to empower principals to lead, teachers to teach and children to learn.

Recognising schools and preschools

We aim to recognise, value and promote the status of teachers, child carers and public education.

Staying in touch

We aim to further develop and strengthen relationships with parents, teachers and other key stakeholders.

Business systems

We aim to cut 'red tape' inefficiencies, streamline administration tasks and improve IT systems to support school and preschool staff.

Governance

South Australia's public education is delivered by an interconnected system of individual locations that include schools, preschools, regional offices and the Central Office of DECS.

We strive to maintain the highest ethical and moral standards in all of our dealings, both internally and externally.

All staff are required to adhere to a set of governance arrangements that cover ethical conduct, rigorous financial management standards, clear roles, responsibilities and delegation rules, and a clear employment framework.

Legislative responsibilities

During the 2010-11 year, the Minister for Education and Minister for Early Childhood Development held responsibility for the following Acts and Regulations made under them:

- *Education Act 1972*
- *Children's Services Act 1985*
- *SACE Board of South Australia Act 1983*
- *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004*

The *Education Act 1972* provides for compulsory primary and secondary education in South Australia.

The *Children's Services Act 1985* and its associated Regulations focuses on coordination and integration of child care, education, health and family support services for children 0-8 years and their families.

Children's Services Licensing and Standards provides technical advice, monitors compliance and investigates breaches to support the administration of this function. Under the Act, the Minister is responsible for administering, monitoring, coordinating, supporting and planning these services.

The *Education Act 1972* and the *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004* also relate to the provision of early childhood education and care services.

The State Government is committed to reforming the *Education Act 1972* and the *Children's Services Act 1985* to entrench a modern legislative framework for education and early childhood service provision. This State legislative reform is occurring within the context of the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*, which has been developed by all jurisdictions to underpin the new national early childhood quality agenda. This applied legislation was passed in Victoria late in 2010.

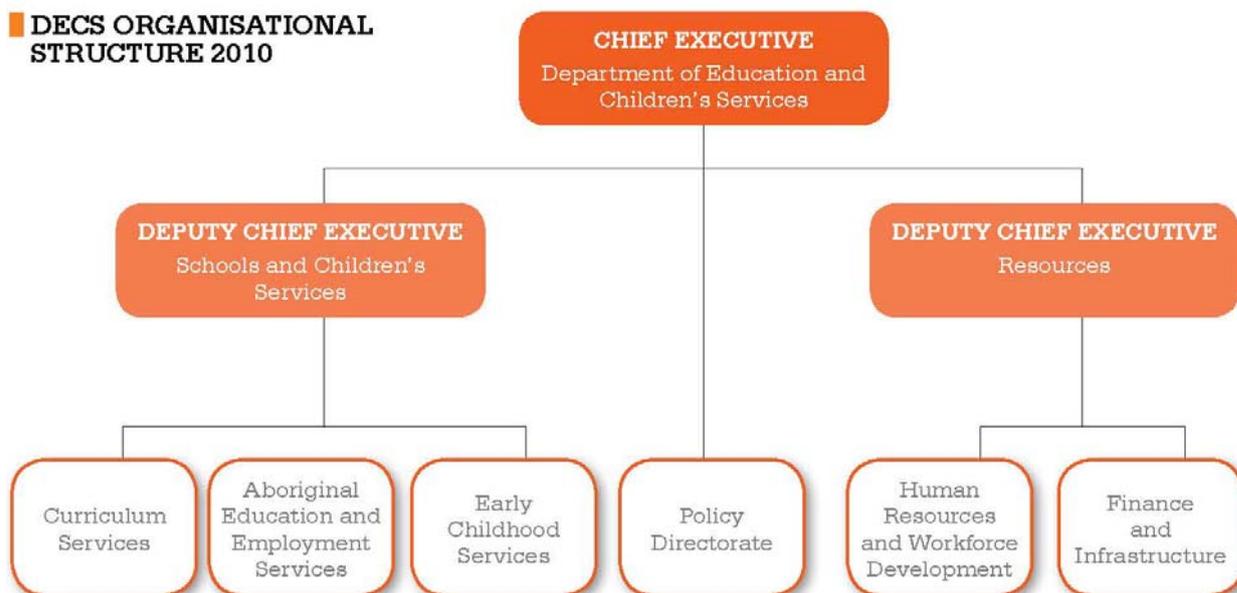
Relevant statutory authorities

- Classification Review Panels
- Non-Government Schools Registration Board
- Schools Loans Advisory Committee
- SACE Board of South Australia
- Teachers Appeal Board of South Australia
- Teachers Registration Board of South Australia

Relevant Ministerial advisory bodies

- Advisory Committee on Non-Government Schools
- Ethnic Schools Board
- Ministerial Advisory Committee Students with Disabilities
- Multicultural Education Committee
- Planning Committee for Non-Government Schools

DECS ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE 2010



Leadership within DECS

Until August 2011, DECS had a Corporate Executive Team (CET) that met regularly to share information, discuss issues in a strategic manner and make appropriate management decisions. CET considered and provided advice in relation to national matters, strategic risk assessment, Aboriginal education and employment, strategic communications, and the development and review of major strategies and policies.

In August 2011 the new chief executive announced a change in portfolio structure, with a new executive structure comprising a Head of Schools, a Head of Early Childhood Development and a Head of Policy and Communications as well as a Chief Operating Officer/Deputy Chief Executive portfolio.

Regions

In December 2006, the SA Government approved the adoption of 12 regions by all State Government departments to better coordinate government services.

In 2009, DECS realigned regional boundaries. A list of schools, preschools and children's services within each region can be found at www.decs.sa.gov.au/locs.

Each region has its own regional director and support team.

Regional offices are responsible for:

- providing supportive, enabling leadership to children's services and schools
- improving direct support to children's services, preschools and schools in the areas of curriculum, support and disability, inclusion and wellbeing, information technology and site improvement
- managing support services to children and students, their families and communities
- establishing local models of cross-agency, coordinated government services
- fostering decision making at a local level.

Central Office

DECS Central Office has the major responsibility for interactions between the department and:

- the Government of South Australia
- the Australian Government
- peak stakeholder groups, industrial parties, other organisations and authorities
- other national and international education and children's services agencies
- early childhood service providers.

Central Office is responsible for leading and developing early childhood services and education system policies, designing programs and allocating resources. Central Office also provides services to early childhood service providers, preschools, schools and regions for those functions that are more effectively undertaken at an aggregated level, such as research and evidence-based strategies, reporting, recruitment, workforce development, legal services and auditing.

Supporting State Government objectives

Until June 2011, South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP) had 98 targets, identified under six objectives:

1. Growing Prosperity
2. Improving Wellbeing
3. Attaining Sustainability
4. Fostering Creativity and Innovation
5. Building Communities
6. Expanding Opportunity.

The department is accountable for nine lead targets from Objectives 4 and 6, and contributes to three targets from Objectives 1 and 6.

DECS is responsible for the following SASP targets that apply to early childhood services:

- T6.2 Early childhood—Year 1 literacy
- T6.4 Early childhood—AEDI
- T6.18 Aboriginal education—early years.

Other SASP targets

All government agencies are required to contribute towards targets to improve the performance of the public sector.

Reporting on SASP targets can be found within the body of this report.

Supporting national objectives

South Australia is implementing 12 national partnership agreements for early childhood and schooling that have been agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG).

The national partnerships that relate to early childhood are:

- Early Childhood Education (Universal Access)
- National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care
- Indigenous Early Childhood Development

More information about these partnerships can be found at

<http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/Default.aspx>

Early Childhood Education (Universal Access)

In June 2009, states and territories entered into this national partnership with the Australian Government to implement universal access to early childhood education. Under the agreement, South Australia is being provided with \$65.4m to ensure that by 2013 every four-year-old child will have access to 15 hours of preschool per week in the year before school, delivered by a four-year university-trained early childhood teacher for 40 weeks per year.

The Stakeholders Advisory Committee was established to ensure that the department's chief executive has up-to-date advice in relation to issues that impact on the implementation of Universal Access in South Australia.

Further details on the progress of this plan are available in Chapter 1 – Access.

National Quality Agenda (NQA) for Early Childhood Education and Care

This national partnership commenced in December 2009 and through the application of a National Quality Framework (NQF) and associated regulatory system, aims to ensure that every childcare service, family day care scheme, out of school hours care service and preschool provides a quality service.

Implementation of the National Quality Standard started from 1 July 2010. It will become fully operational from 1 January 2012.

The national partnership provides South Australia with \$5.73m to implement the new regulatory arrangements, and an additional

\$1.25m for transitional support for the period from 2010-11 to 2013-14.

State, territory and national governments reached agreement during 2010-11 on the NQA *Multilateral implementation plan* and at June 2011, formal approval was being sought from jurisdictions.

The legislative process required to establish the new system is using a collaborative laws approach. Victoria passed the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010* in September 2010. In South Australia the legislation is planned to be introduced into Parliament in Spring 2011.

Draft national regulations were agreed by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) and consulted upon until late April, 2011. In South Australia some 300 participants attended the five consultation sessions held across the State.

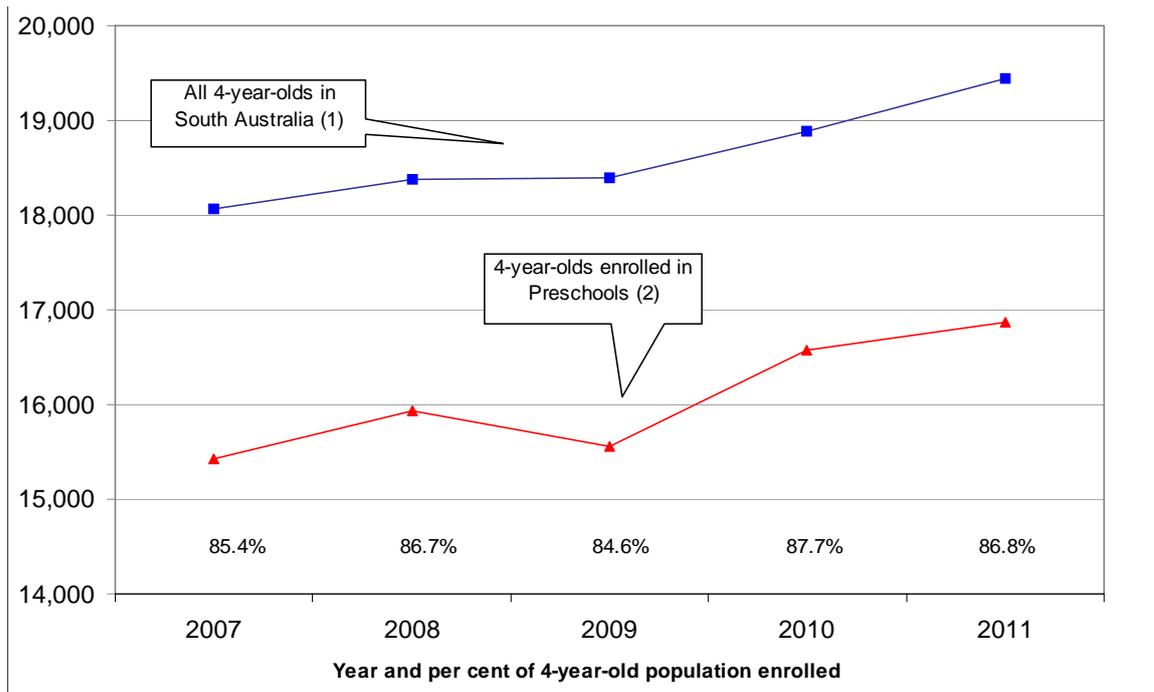
The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority, which will provide oversight of the national approach and consistency of the NQF, was established as an entity during 2010-11.

The SA National Quality Agenda Stakeholder Reference Group, comprising representatives from government, non-government and privately owned services, local government, training institutions, professional associations and unions, is a key mechanism for consulting and communicating with the sector. It will also engage with and support them as they transition to and implement the new reforms.

The quarterly NQA implementation newsletter is circulated widely across the sector within South Australia, and is a major communication approach to update stakeholders about the NQA transition and implementation progress.

Nationally, 200 services field tested the draft National Quality Standard assessment and rating process, including 42 South Australian services. Feedback was used to inform both the assessment instrument and rating process.

Number of 4-year-old children enrolled in government preschools compared with population of 4-year-olds, 2007-11



Note:

- 1 Source: Total number of four-year-olds is based on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data 2007-2010: Cat 3101.0 Australian Demographic Statistics, TABLE 4. Estimated resident population by single year of age, South Australia, released December 2010-2011: Cat 3222.0 Population Projections, Australia, TABLE B4. Population projections, by age and sex, South Australia - Series B, released September 2008
- 2 Source: DECS Preschool Staffing Data Collection, Term 2 2007-2011. Includes children enrolled in all DECS-funded or managed preschools (ie, includes child parent centres, children's services centres, centres known as 'affiliates', grant funded, Catholic, integrated, special preschools and children's centres). Excludes playcentre enrolments.
- 3 Population and percentage figures for 2007-2010 have been revised to reflect most recently available population figures.

Twenty-two familiarisation sessions presented by DECS central and regional office staff were held across South Australia between February and April 2011. At these sessions approximately 682 staff from government and non-government services were introduced to foundational information about the NQF and the draft assessment and rating process.

National consultations have contributed to feedback about the draft school-age care framework *My Time, Our Place* with the final version awaiting endorsement by MCEECDYA. Planning is underway for the development of an educator's guide, which will be led by South Australia and released nationally. The *My Time, Our Place* educator's guide will comprise a series of sequential resource papers that will support school-age care educators and teams to use the framework to provide a play-based, recreational and leisure program that extends and enriches children's learning and development.

During 2010-11, the SA Minister for Early Childhood Development made a decision that from full implementation of the National Quality Standard as of 1 January 2012, government preschools will be externally regulated by the new State Regulatory Authority, to be operational by that date.

Indigenous Early Childhood Development

South Australia is establishing four Aboriginal children and family centres under the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership.

The national partnership provides funding of \$25.22 million over five years to establish the centres, which will provide early childhood development programs and services for Aboriginal children from the antenatal phase to five years of age, and their families.

The centres will be located at:

- Ceduna Area School
- Hincks Avenue Primary School in Whyalla
- Christies Beach Primary School
- Ernabella Anangu School in Pukatja.

Achievements during 2010-11 included the following highlights:

Specific site locations were agreed and announced following extensive consultation and planning with local communities.

Community development coordinators at each location established consultation mechanisms to determine the needs of the local community and inform the development of programs.

'Enabling groups' were established at each location to engage key government, non-government and community representatives to provide leadership and strategic direction in the planning, development and establishment of the centres.

A cross-agency Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Operations Group was established to oversee the development of the centres.

Programs and services for children and families at the Pukatja centre commenced within existing facilities. An additional building to enable expansion of services will be constructed during 2011.

Policy reform agenda

We support ongoing policy reform with a focus on valuing teachers, child care workers and public education, supporting principals and directors to be education leaders, providing leadership in early childhood

development and education, developing schools and preschools that are connected with their communities and founded on social inclusion, responding to the needs of young Aboriginal people and families, and responding better to the needs of young people with a disability. The department is now focusing on reviewing all early childhood policies to ensure they are in line with National Quality Standard reforms.



Chapter One: Access



There will be improved access to quality services,
and the people using the services will
have a say about how they are delivered.

Access

Universal access to preschool

In our most disadvantaged communities, including those with the highest proportion of Aboriginal children, 141 government preschools started during 2010-11 to deliver 15 hours of preschool to local children under the Universal Access national partnership (see page 15 for full details).

These preschools are located in the Far North and Aboriginal Lands, Northern Adelaide, Western Adelaide, Southern Adelaide, the Murray and Mallee and include 12 preschools with high Aboriginal enrolments in other regions across South Australia.

The rollout of Universal Access has resulted in an estimated 4,779 four-year-old children in our most disadvantaged communities having access to 15 hours of preschool.

This includes 536 Aboriginal children, which represents 75% of the total four-year-old Aboriginal population.

A further 63 services are being supported to start operating in Term 3, 2011.

The Universal Access initiative is being implemented at a local level and delivered in a manner that meets the needs of families and their communities. As an example, full-day preschool, including lunchtime care, is being implemented to support the needs of working families and those families that need to travel long distances to access preschool.

Under the initiative, a preschool program was established at the Womens and Children's Hospital to provide access to preschool for hospital inpatients.

A new grant funding arrangement is available for non-government early childhood services to participate in the Universal Access initiative. The funding is designed to assist services in meeting the cost of employing a preschool teacher to deliver the program. A targeted child subsidy is also available to reduce the cost for low-income families. To date, 140 child care centres and preschools provided by the non-government school sector have been invited to participate in the initiative.

This table shows all enrolments for preschool across the service types for children aged 3, 4 and 5.

Preschool enrolments 2007-11

Number of enrolments	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Children's service centres	13 754	14 204	13 809	14 230	13 899
Children's centres	191	343	377	725	1 505
Integrated centres	1 018	994	995	1 043	1 041
Child parent centres	2 304	2 328	2 374	2 341	2 326
Total	17 267	17 869	17 555	18 339	18 771

Notes: 2007-2010 figures have been revised. This affects distributions; the totals as previously reported are the same.

Source: DECS Preschool Staffing Data Collection, Term 2, 2007-2011. Includes children enrolled in all DECS-funded or managed preschools (ie, includes child-parent centres, children's services centres, centres known as 'affiliates', grant-funded, Catholic, integrated, special preschools and children's centres). Excludes playcentre enrolments.

Access

Children's Services and Licensing Standards

Children's Services Licensing and Standards fosters the health, safety and wellbeing of children by developing, promoting and monitoring standards for child care. It provides an advisory, inspection and investigation service that is thorough, fair and informed. Children's wellbeing is a crucial factor.

At 30 June 2011 the total number of licensed child care places (integrated centres and child care centres) across South Australia increased from 2010 by 422 to 21,244. One hundred and nine service managers were approved for competency according to the regulations, and staff conducted 264 site visits.

Eighty-five staff exemptions were issued to licensed service providers resulting in a significant reduction from the previous year. Forty-two site assessments were conducted in South Australia during the national field test of the National Quality Standard.

In preparation for transitioning to the new National Quality Standard, audits were merged with key quality areas of the National Quality Standard. Ten new audit/assessments were conducted with child care centres.

The Licensing and Standards team also led and contributed to the development of advice and conducted consultations relating to the new national and State law and National Quality Agenda implementation. This included developing the regulations and services operating policy, and streamlining

the National Quality Standard and the national information technology system.

Staff skills were increased through training covering consistent decision making, the Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Standard assessment and child-safe environments.

From July 2011, Children's Services Licensing and Standards will continue to prepare for the transition to the new regulatory authority and the start of the National Quality Standard as of 1 January 2012.

Out of school hours care

Out of schools hours care (OSHC) is the fastest growing child care service over the past decade. OSHC services contribute to a healthy and successful life for school-aged children by providing quality care and recreational experiences before school, after school, on pupil-free days and during school holidays.

In 2011, there were 334 OSHC services operating in South Australia. More than 60% of OSHC services are operated by public school governing councils. This integration of education and school-age care services on a school site provides accessible, affordable quality care and assists families to manage the competing demands of work, study and family responsibilities.

Access

Out of school hours care (OSHC) places, 2009-2011

Out of school hours care	2009	2010	2011
OHSC before & after school care	22 416	22 471	23 200
Vacation care	12 868	13 206	13 475

This table shows the number of OSHC FTE places available for SA children to access. This does not reflect attendance rates.

Notes:

Figures include Commonwealth-approved places and State-funded vacation care places. Approved OSHC services are required to register with the National Childcare Accreditation Council and participate in quality assurance. Services on DECS sites are required to comply with the South Australian OSHC standards. Source: DECS Office of Early Childhood Services and Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

The demand for these services increased from June 2010 by 998, making a total of 36,675 places available for before and after school care and vacation care. Maintaining quality and meeting service demand are issues for this growing sector.

Intervac funding is provided by the State Government to out of school hours care services and State-funded vacation care services where there is a need for additional educators to facilitate the inclusion of children with additional needs or disabilities.

Family day care

Family day care offers local home-based child care in a warm and caring environment where the low carer-to-child ratio encourages development of strong, trusting relationships with one primary care provider and with other children in their group. Numbers of children in care at any given time is limited to four children under the age of five plus three school-age children (outside of school hours).

Family day care operates during standard hours, overnight, weekends, school holidays, and before/after school.

DECS family day care supports more than 800 family day care providers from a diversity of cultural backgrounds across South Australia. During 2010-11, support for care providers continued maintaining delivery of a contemporary quality child care practice to ensure ongoing positive outcomes for the children in their care.

Family Day Care Certificate in Children's Services training

In 2010, the Certificate III in Children's Services was provided through online delivery, independent study, and support from the facilitators of the program and family day care staff. Four courses were run in 2010-11 with 93 participants completing the Certificate III in Children's Services. The qualification covers 15 competency standards from the Community Services Training package.

Access

Family day care, 2009-2011

Number of	2009	2010	2011
Occupied FTE places	3 472	3 511	3 422
Educators (care providers)	848	822	816
Children registered	10 516	10 054	10 070

Notes:

Excludes licensed family day care services not sponsored through DECS-administered family day care schemes.

Source: DECS Family Day Care Harmony Database

This table shows the number of family day care educators who provide a service for the number of children registered across SA, and the attendances of those children.

An occupied place is the equivalent of 35 hours.

Diploma of Children's Services (Early Childhood Development)

In 2009-11 the two-year program was customised for applicants who are current family day care care providers. This is a recognition-of-prior-learning program, which is supported with interactive online content sessions on a monthly basis. Participants may complete the program sooner dependent on prior learning experience. Sixty-five participants achieved competency in the Diploma of Children's Services.

Respite care

The DECS *Respite care* program is jointly funded by the Australian Government Home and Community Care (HACC) program through a collaborative arrangement with the Minister for Ageing. The program targets support for families with moderately to severely disabled children, including those with complex health needs. Respite care is provided by trained care providers either in their own home or in the family's home.

Capital works/facilities

As part of the 2010-11 *Capital works* program the following highlights were achieved:

Construction was completed during 2010-11 at a further 10 children's centres. Nineteen of the 20 original centres are now operational and are located at Angle Park (The Parks), Enfield (Café Enfield), Elizabeth Grove, Hackham West, Renmark, Taperoo (Ocean View), Wynn Vale (Keithcot Farm), Port Augusta, Elizabeth (Kaurna Plains), Paradise (il nido), Woodcroft Heights, Mount Gambier, Cowandilla, Kirton Point, Murray Bridge

Access

(Tinyeri), O'Sullivan Beach, Parafield Gardens, Plympton South (Forbes) and Trinity Gardens.

The Gawler Children's Centre proceeded during 2010-11 to the tender stage as part of the *Education works* initiative involving Gawler High School, Evanston Primary School and Evanston Preschool.

New children's centre facilities were also completed as part of the *Education works Stage 1 – New schools (Public Private Partnerships) project* at Mark Oliphant College B-12 at Munno Para West, John Hartley School B-7 at Smithfield Plains, Blair Athol North School B-7 at Blair Athol, and Woodville Gardens School B-7 at Woodville Gardens.

Planning started during 2010-11 on the design of the four Aboriginal children and family centres to be constructed in Ceduna, Whyalla, Ernabella and Christies Beach.

Construction works continued on the new Child Parent Centre at Nairne Primary School, with a completion aimed for November 2011. Construction works commenced on new preschool facilities as part of the relocation of Burton Park Preschool onto the Burton Primary School campus. Design work started on the redevelopment of Kalaya Children's Centre, relocation of Jamestown Children's Centre on to the Jamestown Community School Campus, and integration of Miltaburra Child Parent Centre into Miltaburra Area School facilities.

Construction commenced on two new child parent centres being developed as part of *Education works* initiative at John Morphett Primary School (formerly Wallara) and Reynella East College.

The 2010-11 State Budget announced the establishment of a children's centre at Lake Windemere Primary School (formerly Direk Primary School) generated by the *Education works* initiative involving Direk and Salisbury North West schools.

Planning commenced during 2010-11 on the development of the next 10 children's centres announced as part of the 2010-11 budget. The locations of the next 10 are Aldinga, St Agnes (Ardtornish Primary School), Goolwa (Goolwa Children's Centre), Seacombe Gardens (Darlington Primary School), Salisbury North (Lake Windemere), Port Pirie (Port Pirie West Primary School), Hillcrest (Gilles Plains Primary School), Ingle Farm (Ingle Farm Primary School), Hewett (Elsie Ey Kindergarten), and Adelaide (Sturt Street Community School).

Work commenced during the year on the identification of preschools to be relocated onto existing school sites as part of the \$14.4m *Preschool works* initiative announced as part of the 2011-12 State Budget.

Access

Assisting young children with disabilities

Preschool support programs

The *Preschool support* program supports children with disabilities and/or additional needs to access their local preschool. The program ensures meaningful participation in the curriculum and maximises learning outcomes for these children.

Children are supported in their eligible preschool year. Early entry to preschool for children with additional needs and disabilities is at the discretion of the director or principal and is dependent on the capacity of the centre to provide places for their four-year-olds at any given time.

Children with significant and/or complex additional needs may be eligible for funded early entry if they cannot attend without that support. These children may be identified as:

- having severe multiple disabilities or complex health needs requiring intensive support
- requiring ongoing supervision for their own safety and safety of peers/staff.

A total of 1,872 children received support from this program during 2010-11 and 72 children received early entry support.

Inclusive preschool programs

Inclusive preschool programs (IPP) cater for children who have significant and severe disabilities who require a high level of support to access and participate in the curriculum. The program is implemented within a mainstream preschool with an emphasis on play-based learning designed to support the access and participation of all children.

Specialist staff work within a multi-disciplinary team framework. Therapy staff from other agencies provide specialised support and programs to ensure a balanced curriculum for all children.

There are seven IPP centres located across the metropolitan and country areas. These programs provide support for up to six children in each centre.

Early intervention consultancy

Early intervention consultancy is a statewide service provided by specialised teachers from the Briars Early Learning Centre and supports mainstream preschool staff where there are children with high support needs including autism, severe multiple disabilities and/or complex syndromes.

Auslan early learning

Hearing impairment is a low-incidence disability, and while the educational and social impact upon the individual child is significant, the prevalence is low.

The *Auslan early learning* program is based at Klemzig Primary School and caters for children aged from 3½ years of age who are hearing impaired, and for hearing children whose parents are deaf and use Auslan (Australian Sign Language) as their home language.

The program focuses upon the development of language and social skills to prepare these children for school entry. It is designed specifically for hearing-impaired children where all instruction is provided in Auslan. The program is staffed by an early childhood teacher of the deaf and an early

Access

childhood worker who is a member of the deaf community and fluent in Auslan, providing a role model for language and social skills.

Newborn hearing screening

The psychologist – Hearing, Disability Services – works closely with the paediatric audiologists from the *Universal newborn hearing* program in SA Health to ensure all families who have a baby diagnosed with impaired hearing are informed of the value and availability of early intervention support. Families are provided with guidance and support, and then referred to specialised early intervention services to ensure each child has the best opportunity to develop age-appropriate language to optimise their success on school entry.

The Briars consultants work with preschool staff, assisting them to modify and adapt the curriculum and to develop strategies for working with children with complex needs.

Speech and language programs

Speech and language programs are located in eight preschools in the metropolitan area, providing specialised support for children with severe specific speech and/or language impairments. The programs aim to lessen the impact of severe speech and/or language impairments by improving communication, social interaction and development skills through specialised intervention in an inclusive preschool setting – enhanced by the involvement and support of the child's family.

An average of 56 children access these programs at any one time.

School for vision impaired

Early intervention and home support for children with visual impairment is provided by CanDo4Kids, with links to the specialist staff from the South Australian School for Vision Impaired (SASVI) to ensure smooth transition to preschools and schools.

Specialist staff from SASVI provide statewide support for those attending local preschools to ensure curriculum access and participation is achieved. Upon reaching school age, children with impaired vision may attend the state-of-the-art South Australian School for Vision Impaired or receive support in their home school from the advisory support teachers.

SASVI has an enrolment of 31 students onsite, with another 27 students supported through specialist outreach programs.

Disability support program

The *Disability support* program is the program, service and resourcing gateway for students with disabilities. It provides students with disabilities with additional supports to enable their access, participation and achievement in the curriculum.

Of the 15,171 students with disabilities who met the eligibility criteria and received support under the *Disability support* program, 3,975 were children in the early years.

Information about the eligibility criteria is available on the DECS website under the *Special needs* programs link at www.decs.sa.gov.au/svpst/pages/info/dsp/

Access

During the past year the newly developed educational support needs matrix has been trialled. This is a profiling instrument used to summarise the adjustments provided for a child or student with disabilities regardless of the type and cause of disability.

Selected South Australian schools have participated in the trial of the national model for identifying school students with disability. This is an Australian Government initiative to better identify students with disability who are provided with additional educational support.

An innovative short-course training program has been developed which provides intensive training in disability specific topics to raise awareness in schools.

Kilparrin Teaching and Assessment School and Services (Kilparrin)

Early intervention support

Kilparrin provides an onsite preschool and school program in addition to a statewide support program for learners (Preschool-Year 12) with hearing and/or vision impairments and additional disabilities.

Early intervention programs are provided statewide for babies and young children (birth to three years), who have both vision and hearing impairment.

This support includes information and resources to facilitate early learning experiences to promote the development of vision and hearing skills. This is provided in homes and centres and includes:

- playgroups held at Kilparrin or in a neighbourhood setting

- family support service through home visits (weekly or fortnightly where possible)
- support to childcare centres
- specialised assessment
- information about future preschool options.

Currently support is provided for 15 babies and young children. The Kilparrin Distance Education Facility enables staff to link more frequently with families through video conferencing and supplements face-to-face visits.

Kilparrin Early Learning Centre (KELC)

KELC is a highly specialised preschool program for children with complex needs resulting from hearing and/or vision impairments and additional disabilities based at the Forbes Children's Centre with a teacher and school services officer. The program provides five sessions over two and a half days each week and has capacity for four enrolled learners.

In addition to a regular preschool program the KELC program includes:

- a focus on assessment
- strategies for promoting the functional use of vision and hearing
- orientation and mobility programs
- the use of adapted switch toys and communication devices
- a strong focus on identifying and developing preferred communication modes
- developing social skills
- implementation of health support plans.

Access

Acoustic modifications

To improve curriculum access for children and students with impaired hearing, support service staff are trained to support sites in improving the acoustic environments of learning spaces. Hearing service coordinators use specially developed acoustic kits to measure noise and reverberation levels and provide advice on modifications. When preparing recommendations, the acoustic properties of the learning space are compared with the acoustic performance standards developed by the department.

These standards are applied in the construction of all new facilities and are used to guide the retrofitting of spaces where there are learners with a hearing impairment. Modification projects totalling \$290,000 for approximately 19 early childhood learning spaces were approved by the department in the past year.

Classroom amplification devices

These devices, also known as soundfield systems, provide improved learning environments for all children and especially those with impaired hearing, by raising the level of a teacher's voice to overcome intrusive background noise in classrooms.

Forty-five systems are available for loan through the Special Education Resource Unit to assist preschools or schools to determine if a room's acoustics are suitable for amplification prior to purchase and installation of a system. The Early Intervention Service Hearing Impairment provides another 14 systems for use in preschools.

Preschools and schools are supported with trials, installation and staff training.

As part of the DECS *Aboriginal Strategy*, preschools and schools with significant Aboriginal enrolments were supported with the purchase of soundfield systems. Sixty soundfields have been provided at no cost to 50 early childhood facilities in the past year.

All learning spaces in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands now have soundfields, which have been audited to ensure optimum performance this year.

Auslan support

To support children who use Auslan (Australian Sign Language) as the primary form of communication, preschools are provided with additional support to ensure these children have access to the curriculum. This funding may be used to engage an expert to provide training for staff and other children in the centre in Auslan sign language, to purchase resources, and/or to engage role models.

An allocation of \$1,200 per year for each preschool child and \$3,000 per year for each school child year is provided. At June 2011, 25 children in early childhood settings were accessing this support.

Access

Auslan training

Training courses in Auslan were provided during the year for early childhood workers and families. Eight-week courses were provided at the Klemzig and Brighton centres for hearing impaired. These courses focus upon developing sign language skills appropriate for early childhood settings and are delivered by highly skilled instructors for whom Auslan is their first language.

A training program has been introduced in conjunction with Adelaide TAFE to deliver Auslan training classes through video conferencing to early childhood staff in country regions. Weekly classes have been delivered to Leigh Creek, Pt Augusta, Pt Lincoln and Roxby Downs and staff are working towards certification in Auslan Level 2.

Otitis media project

In promoting curriculum access and retention of Aboriginal students with otitis media (middle ear infection), a cross-agency project was developed with Flinders University that identifies those students who have experienced otitis media with periods of hearing impairment and consequent language delay.

Data indicates that 33% of Aboriginal children and students in metropolitan early childhood facilities have impaired hearing. Following identification of impaired hearing, support service staff provide training and resources to promote curriculum access and improved language outcomes.

The project is the only Australian longitudinal study of hearing in Aboriginal children in a metropolitan area. Project reports have been provided in journals and at health and education conferences.



Access

Learning Difficulties Support Team

This team provides a responsive service to preschools and schools throughout the state. Training provided onsite and in regional facilities has included a range of workshops about explicit teaching in literacy and numeracy. The team works collaboratively with the Literacy Secretariat to develop resource papers to build educator capacity in literacy development.

Literacy Toolbox 1 was developed by the team and distributed to regional offices to provide preschools and schools with information about assessment and interventions for children and students with learning difficulties.

The team also provides advice and support to families who have concerns about their child's learning and progress at school.



Chapter Two: Connections



Services will focus on the individual learning needs of young people from diverse cultural and social backgrounds, particularly Aboriginal people.

Connections

State reform agenda

A Child Friendly South Australia was approved by the SA Government as a policy priority in November 2009. The priority is being led by the department in consultation with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC).

The initiative expands on the UNICEF Child Friendly Cities framework that has been adopted in many countries throughout the world. South Australia aims to develop a network of child-friendly communities and cities linking together to realise the state-wide child-friendly vision.

A memorandum of understanding was developed in 2010-11 with the Local Government Association and individual councils will become accredited 'child-friendly cities' from 2012.

In late 2010, the department led trial consultations to capture the voices of young children in the review of South Australia's Strategic Plan. These consultations had a strong focus on Aboriginal children, children with additional needs, and children living in remote or isolated areas. Research and tools from the consultations were developed by the de Lissa Chair in Early Childhood Research to support the development of 'children's plans' at the local government level. This important partnership with the de Lissa Chair supports evidence-based policy and the linking of research, policy and practice.

Culturally appropriate curriculum

The Early Years Learning Framework is based on a set of principles that reflect contemporary theories and research evidence concerning children's learning, and underpin educator practice. The framework highlights the importance of educators demonstrating their ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural competence in a two-way process with families and community. Culturally appropriate curriculum is developed when educators have the ability to understand, communicate with and effectively interact with people across cultures.

The learning of all children is best supported by culturally competent educators. Professional development for early childhood professionals across the State aims to hone skills, attitudes and knowledge in order to build relationships with Aboriginal children and their families.

Aboriginal children and family centres

South Australia is establishing four Aboriginal children and family centres under the Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership. (For full details see page 17.)

The centres will support Aboriginal families to provide the best possible start in life for their children. Services will include child and maternal health, high quality early learning programs for young children, parenting and family support and community development activities.

Connections

Community development coordinators at each location worked with families during 2010-11 to identify areas of need and priority programs and services. Service delivery will commence within existing facilities at all locations while new facilities are being constructed.

Three family services coordinators will be recruited in 2011-12 to improve outcomes for children and families experiencing disadvantage, parenting difficulties and child development issues.

Early childhood centres on the APY Lands

Two new early childhood centres for young children and their families are being developed at the Anangu schools at Amata and Indulkana on the APY Lands in partnership with the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace

Relations (DEEWR) and the local communities. New facilities funded by DEEWR are currently being constructed and are due for completion by the end of 2011.

The centres will complement the school based preschool program for 3-5 year olds by providing playgroups, crèche and other early learning and development activities that engage very young children and their families.

Preschool enrolments, Aboriginal children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Term 2, 2009-11

Preschool enrolment	2009	2010	2011
Total number of centres	416	416	412
Total number of children enrolled	17 555	18 339	18 771
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	1 218	1 242	1 275
Culturally and linguistically diverse background ¹	2 047	2 182	2 351

Notes:

- 1 Defined as children where a main language other than English is spoken at home most of the time.

Source: DECS Preschool Staffing Data Collection, Term 2, 2007-11

Includes children enrolled in all DECS-funded or managed preschools (ie, includes child-parent centres, children's services centres, centres known as 'affiliates', grant-funded, Catholic, integrated, special preschools and children's centres). Excludes playcentre enrolments.

Connections

Initiatives to increase the number of early years Aboriginal teachers

The department's *Aboriginal recruitment guarantee* provides teacher education students (inclusive of early childhood education students) and qualified teachers with the opportunity for permanent employment within public schools and preschools.

Aboriginal teaching scholarships are available for Aboriginal teacher education students, including those studying early childhood. The scholarships provide \$10,000 financial

assistance and result in permanent employment in government schools. Fourteen people are currently receiving a scholarship from the department to study an early childhood degree.

DECS teachers who identify as Aboriginal were also notified of preschool leadership opportunities available through the QSchool early years initiative. Two participants joined the program as a result.



Chapter Three: Early Foundation



Families and communities will have the confidence, knowledge and capacity to support the early development of their children.

Early Foundation

Engaging families in the early childhood development story

Engaging families in the early childhood development story is a Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEECDYA) national project that aims to increase parents' and caregivers' understanding of neuroscience evidence about development in early childhood. The project is founded on two critical assumptions for which there is compelling evidence:

- Parenting matters: "Parents are the first and primary educators of children". (OECD, 2006)
- Brain development in the prenatal period and early years affects physical and mental health and learning in childhood and adult life.

Promoting positive understandings about early development has the potential to lead to the reduction of many aspects of disadvantage, including later learning problems and developmental delays. The aim of *Engaging families in the early childhood development story* is to build parent and community knowledge using a nationally consistent and universal approach through easily understood key messages.

The first stage of the project was a research stage that delivered the following products:

- A review of research in the neurosciences about brain development in early childhood and identification of key messages to be shared with parents and carers.

- A national survey of parents of children from birth to age eight to find out parents' current understanding about brain development in the early years, their sources of information and their preferences for accessing information.
- A 'snapshot' of existing national, state and territory parenting programs and initiatives to examine what messages are being delivered to parents and the methods used to deliver those messages.
- A final report summarising the findings.

MCEECDYA endorsed the release of the reports on 8 December 2010.

In March 2011, MCEECDYA approved funding of \$680,000 over two years for SA to lead Stage 2 of the project that will include:

- building a coalition of interested organisations to develop a long-term, sustainable social marketing campaign to share key early childhood messages with the community
- trialing and refining strategies, including social media, to engage parents, in particular, grandparents as carers, fathers, and Aboriginal families
- progressing recommendations made in Stage 1, particularly a parenting toolkit.

A national steering group, comprising representatives from three ministerial advisory committees, is providing advice on the direction to the project.

Early Foundation

Australian Early Development Index

The Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) provides population-level information about early childhood development for communities and regions within South Australia.

The AEDI has been endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG). In South Australia, DECS is the lead agency in implementing the AEDI. A South Australian coordinating committee with representatives from health, education (including Catholic and independent schools) and community sectors, oversees the implementation of the AEDI.

AEDI information gives communities a national progress measure of early childhood development. It assists communities to build rich and supportive social environments and an accessible system of services that are able to support families with young children.

In the latest Budget, the Australian Government has committed to ongoing three-yearly cycles of the AEDI. Future AEDI cycles will support the AEDI's use as a national progress measure of early childhood development and will also provide evidence of developmental vulnerabilities at the community level, including regional, remote and Indigenous. This information will be invaluable to government (at all three tiers) and community organisations working at the local level.

Data, including community profiles, was released nationally in April 2010. These profiles inform communities of their children's development in each of the five domains:

physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge.

South Australian AEDI data results are made up of 16,706 individual child records. This means that South Australia now has publicly available data for 387 out of a possible 397 local communities.

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has provided South Australia with funding to support community engagement through the *Local champions* program. This is supporting increased development of local networks for further engagement and planning.

Learning together

The *Learning together* program is an intergenerational early childhood program that aims to improve early learning for children from birth to three years. A growing body of research shows that involving families in their children's learning makes a positive difference to adults and children within the family.

The program connects families to each other and to a range of service providers in family-friendly environments, builds social capacity and enables the development of shared understandings about children's learning. By engaging parents and carers in the learning and development of their children, parents themselves grow in both formal and informal ways, including connecting with further education.

Early Foundation

One of the aims of *Learning together* is to 'strengthen communities through interagency collaboration and coordination in the provision of family-focused programs and services'. Each *Learning together* program has developed strong connections with a range of interagency partners to enhance their work with families.

Collaborating agencies include Children, Youth and Women's Health Services, Community Health, hospitals, Families SA, Communities for Children, and Centacare.

The program was expanded in 2010 and at June 2011, it involved 1,073 families with 1,334 children participating (an increase of 44% from June 2010. For the 2010-11 year there were 47,910 attendances, an increase of 57% over the previous year.) Nine per cent of these families were from Aboriginal backgrounds, which was a percentage drop although the actual numbers of Aboriginal families participating has remained constant.

Ongoing programs operate from Café Enfield, Fraser Park School in Murray Bridge, Carlton Aboriginal School in Port Augusta, Christie Downs School, and Para West Adult Campus.

Two new programs were established in Port Pirie (Airdale Primary School) and Millicent (Newbery Park Primary School) in 2010 as a result of funding available from the Communities Making a Difference national partnership. In addition, five outreach teachers are now linked with existing *Learning together* programs at Christie Downs School, Enfield Primary School, Para West Adult re-entry campus and Carlton Aboriginal School in Pt Augusta. These

teachers are extending the program to 13 schools in surrounding areas.

In June 2011 there were 335 families attending in these new locations, making up approximately 31% of all participants.

Learning together @ home is primarily a home visiting program although fieldworkers also connect with families through groups.

There are 22.8 (full-time equivalent) fieldworkers in most areas of South Australia. The purpose of the program is to support families' ability to be involved with their children's learning through play.

Eligibility includes families who are socially or geographically isolated, families with physical or mental health issues, and children at risk due to poverty, delay or disability.

In Term 1 of 2011, 592 families with 770 children were receiving services through this program. There were 2,740 contacts with families and 2,270 of these were home visits.

Healthy eating and physical activity in the early years

The *Healthy eating and physical activity in the early years* project (2007-2012) is jointly supported by SA Health and DECS.

To date, 98 early childhood sites were involved in action research projects. The project aims to change educators' knowledge, skills and practices around healthy eating and daily physical activities.

Twenty-seven early childhood services across SA completed their 10-month cycle of action research. A new group of 24 began in August 2011.

Early Foundation

The current model for the project is more regionally based, allowing stronger networking between educators and links with other SA Health projects such as *Eat Well, Be Active* primary schools.

Preschool bilingual program

The *Preschool bilingual* program provides access and participation within government preschools for four-year-old children and their families from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) and Aboriginal backgrounds who have limited or no English.

While supporting the maintenance of children's home language, the program develops each child's use of the English language. It also supports preschools to develop a curriculum that fosters the child's home language and identity, and provides professional development for preschool staff, specialist support for children and families who have experienced trauma, interpreting and translating services for staff and families with negotiated education plans.

In addition the program provides extensive information for parents from CALD backgrounds about the role of play in the learning and wellbeing of young children.

The number of CALD children identified by preschools as requiring bilingual support reflects humanitarian intakes, migration of skilled workers and family reunions taking residence in South Australia.

In 2010-11, support was provided to approximately 3,000 CALD children in 150 preschools by 120 early childhood workers bilingual in 40 community languages including Aboriginal languages.

In 2010-11, the *Preschool bilingual* program delivered information sessions to ethnic specific community groups about public school programs and new government initiatives. Particular attention was given to areas such as literacy and numeracy initiatives, Early Years Learning Framework, transition from home into early childhood services and schooling, healthy eating and child protection.

Skilled migrants settling in rural areas continue to be supported through the program. This initiative opens up opportunities for parents to have a more active role in their children's learning. The program has increased the recruitment of multilingual speaking personnel, to match the needs of skilled migrant families.

Starting Out Right

The *Starting Out Right* program aims to increase Aboriginal parents' and caregivers' understanding of neuroscience evidence about development in early childhood. A series of workshops were developed in partnership with Aboriginal parents and caregivers to increase the number of Aboriginal children who have a successful start in school.

Early Foundation

This initiative recognises Aboriginal parents and caregivers as the first educators of their child and builds on this knowledge to increase awareness of parenting practices that will provide the best possible start for their child.

Child wellbeing in the early years

The *Learner wellbeing framework for birth to Year 12* supports preschools and schools to improve children's wellbeing.

Improving wellbeing is fundamental to improving learning outcomes. Fifty-eight schools and preschools (seven preschools and 51 R-12 schools) were involved in the 2008-10 *Wellbeing for learning inquiry*, which is based on this principle.

Work focused on strategies that promote wellbeing, involvement, and engagement in learning, addressing a range of relevant regional and site improvement priorities. When wellbeing for learning was valued as 'core business', students, schools and preschools demonstrated both improved wellbeing for learning and learner achievement.

The report, *Thriving at our place: findings from the Wellbeing for Learning Inquiry* details the learning and good practice derived from site research 2008-10 and is available at www.decs.sa.gov.au/learnerwellbeing.

Child protection in the early years

Schools and children's services make vital contributions to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people through:

- supporting their attendance and engagement with education and care
- recognising when children and families need support
- taking steps to find that support
- modifying their care and teaching programs for children and young people harmed through family violence, neglect or abuse.

Children (under the guardianship of the Minister) attending preschool

The department works in collaboration with Families SA and other agencies to support the education of children in care, who are entitled to attend preschool from three years of age, and continue until they are six.

In government schools interagency behaviour support coordinators liaise with leaders in schools to facilitate the process of developing individual education plans (IEP) for all students under guardianship. A parallel process, with early childhood consultants liaising with preschools to facilitate the IEP process, was developed in 2010. Collaboration to design an efficient system for collection of preschool data for children in care and sharing of information, including Department of Families and Communities case file numbers is ongoing.

Early Foundation

Regional IEP information sessions were promoted to preschool directors and collaboration with the Early Years team resulted in the publication of the *Children under the guardianship of the Minister attending preschool* information sheet available from the preschool site leaders section of the DECS website. The January 2010 IEP newsletter, distributed to all preschools, included information about children in care and included a good practice preschool case example.

Three *Strategies for managing abuse-related trauma* (SMART) full-day seminars with an early childhood focus were offered in 2010-early 2011 and well attended by preschool and children's centre staff. The online discussion paper *Trauma in the early years* was the most frequently downloaded in 2010.

Port Lincoln Junior Primary School participated in the SMART=ER *Action research* program in 2010, publishing its project in the *Transforming trauma 2011* resource. In 2011 the school is building the capacity of staff and parents/carers to provide optimal environments for the education and wellbeing of children in the early years.

In 2011 Sturt Street Community Preschool is involved in the SMART=ER program with a focus on improving engagement of children and their families.

Chapter Four: Maximising Potential



Young people will have access to services that provide the opportunity for them to reach their potential.

Maximising Potential

Children's centres for early childhood development and parenting

Children's centres are an innovative concept in the delivery of early childhood services that recognise the vital importance of the early childhood years. The services and programs offered at children's centres reflect community needs.

The State Government is establishing 34 children's centres for early childhood development and parenting to provide easy access to family support, child care,

education and health services for children from birth to eight years and their families.

At 30 June 2011 there were 23 children's centres operational across South Australia. For the full list see pages 23-24.

Children's centres are staffed by multidisciplinary teams including teachers, child care workers, community development coordinators, allied health workers and family services coordinators.

Community development coordinators focus on community capacity building as an integral part of the children's centre model.

Number of early childhood services by type June 2009-11

Service	2009	2010	2011
Preschools ¹	388	383	367
Children's centres ^{2,3}	7	13	23
Integrated centres ³	21	22	22
Playcentres	29	30	29
Child care centres	329	335	337
Family day care ⁴	848	822	816
Rural care	13	13	14
Occasional care ⁵	86	86	87
Vacation care	250	253	256
Out of school hours care ⁶	329	331	334
Learning Together @ Home	15	15	12

This table shows the different types of services available in SA that DECS either operates, sponsors, funds or licenses, noting that children may use more than one service.

Notes:

- 1 Includes centres staffed or funded by DECS including some non-government preschools, children's services centres and school-based preschools (including Aboriginal and Anangu preschools). Excludes outreach centres, integrated centres and children's centres.
- 2 Children's centres are integrated services for children aged 0-8 and their families. They offer a range of education, licensed care, health and family services provided by DECS, SA Health, SA Department for Families & Communities and non-government organisations.
- 3 Figures reported separately for integrated centres and children's centres.
- 4 Figures represent the number of family day care educators.
- 5 Occasional care includes DECS-funded services in preschools, community-based and other funded programs.
- 6 OSHC services include Australian Government-approved before, after and vacation care services and State-funded vacation care services. Figures include all outreach services. Services offering vacation care are included in both the number of vacation care services and the number of out of school hours care services in this table, therefore if determining the total number of early childhood services the vacation care figure must not be included.

Source: Location Services System, DECS Office of Early Childhood Services

Maximising Potential

Community development coordinators are appointed at each children's centre to develop partnerships within the community and with other agencies, and to encourage and support parents and families to actively participate in all the activities of the children's centre.

To improve outcomes for children and families experiencing disadvantage, parenting difficulties and child development issues, 16.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) family services coordinators provide support to targeted children's centres.

Children's health needs are supported through the provision of allied health programs. Throughout 2010-11, six FTE allied health positions, including speech pathologists and occupational therapists, were employed in SA Health teams to complement programs in children's centres. Some of the health promotion programs provided included dental health, nutrition, physical exercise and healthy lifestyles.

Local councils and non-government organisations are important partners in extending the work of the children's centres within their communities.

Participating non-government agencies include Anglicare SA, Australian Breastfeeding Association, Australian Refugee Association, Autism SA, Centacare, Community and Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association, Good Beginnings, Lutheran Community Care, Novita, Playgroup SA, Relationships Australia SA, Save the Children, The Smith Family, Uniting Care Wesley and YWCA.

Preschools

Preschool education programs are provided in a range of government-funded centres, including kindergartens, school-based preschools (also called child-parent centres), and integrated centres (including some children's centres for early childhood development and parenting).

These centres provide sessional preschool for eligible children integrated with long-day care.

Children may attend up to 15 hours of preschool per week in their eligible kindergarten year. Some children have access to early and extended enrolments. Lunch-time care may be available for children attending whole days.

By 30 June 2011, there were 367 government-operated and grant-funded preschools with 18,771 enrolled children. Preschool programs are play-based educational programs designed and delivered by degree-qualified teachers using an approved curriculum framework.

South Australia's preschools are using the national Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being and Becoming (EYLF).

Maximising Potential

Child care centres

Child care centres (not operated by the department) provide full-day and part-time child care for babies, toddlers and children under the age of six. Centres are open for a minimum of eight hours a day, five days a week, 48 weeks a year. In 2011 there were 337 licensed child care centres in South Australia.

Occasional care

Occasional care provides child care sessions in preschools located in communities where there is no other child care within easy access for parents. It is provided on an hourly or sessional basis. The early learning environment is managed by the preschool leader who provides families with support for their participation in the workforce, respite, or other activities.

At the end of June 2011, funded occasional care was offered at 87 sites across South Australia, with the capacity to cater for more than 3,325 children each week.

Babysitting agencies

These agencies are individual or registered businesses that refer people to care for children in their home while parents are temporarily absent. The department licenses 17 babysitting agencies under the *Children's Services Act 1985*.

Rural care

Rural care is jointly funded by the Australian and South Australian governments. It enables the provision of seven long-daycare places in selected rural government preschools.

There are 14 rural care sites. Cleve, Tumby Bay and Cummins rural care services have continued to provide an increase in their number of places to further support local families. Keith commenced rural care provision in the latter part of 2010, to support the community in part provision of childcare after the local childcare centre closed.

Maximising Potential

In-venue family day care

In-venue family day care offers child care within existing preschools or other community venues in rural and remote locations. These programs are currently operating at Lock and Gladstone preschools when the centres are not offering a preschool program. A community venue at Marion Bay operated for part of 2011 but closed due to the relocation of the family day care provider.

Integrated services

Integrated centres offer a preschool program together with a licensed child care service from the one location. In 2011 a new centre was established at Jamestown to meet local early learning and care needs, taking the total number of integrated centres to 23 in South Australia.



Chapter Five: Focus on Learning



Young people will be effective learners and will be supported to achieve their best.

Focus on Learning

South Australia's Strategic Plan target – literacy in the early years

During 2011, the *Early years literacy and numeracy* program continued to build on the State Government's commitment to literacy and numeracy improvement in the early years, via South Australia's Strategic Plan Target T6.2 (Early Childhood -Year 1 Literacy).

The program funds 305 preschools and 493 schools through the funded components of:

- teacher release time for targeted professional learning
- an allocation to provide one-to-one intervention support for Year 1 children requiring extra literacy support
- mentor teacher time in 124 disadvantaged schools to release 160 skilled teachers to work alongside classroom teachers to model and guide effective literacy practices
- additional resources for Aboriginal children in preschools. In 2011, 14 centres with high numbers of Aboriginal three-year-old children received additional teacher time to support young children and their families.

The Year 1 reading data in 2010 showed no significant change for either Aboriginal or all Year 1 students. However in 'narrowing the gap' between Aboriginal students and all students the results showed improvement for Aboriginal students beyond Year 1 and into Year 2.

Preschool educators have had further opportunities to learn about young children's literacy learning with additional professional learning opportunities using *Reflect, Respect Relate* and The Early Years Learning Framework. In particular, preschools with Aboriginal children are focusing their learning upon the interconnected role of family and children's wellbeing, language and literacy learning.

In schools an important area of learning is the increased emphasis upon the effective use of running records in teaching practice. In 2011 the *Running records professional learning package* was updated and aligned with the literacy improvement model. Significant numbers of teachers (more than 4,000) have now been trained over the last six years.

Twenty-five sessions were conducted in 10 regions during 2010-11 to meet the needs of 500 teachers. The department also offers an amended course to preservice teachers in their final year at Flinders University and the University of South Australia.

The Literacy Secretariat promotes high quality literacy teaching, learning and leadership through a focused approach to literacy improvement from birth to Year 12 for public education locations and regions. As a result, early years educators have greater access to a range of practical teaching resources. The current focus of these resources is in the area of understanding the reading process available in both print and web-based mediums – with a particular emphasis upon phonics.

Focus on Learning

Early years mentors across the State network with leaders from regional and Central Office to support local literacy initiatives linked to State and regional plans. A new DVD was produced to support new and ongoing mentors in the role within schools.

The department's Literacy Leaders' Network established in 2010 emphasises the role of leadership to support early years literacy improvement. The network has held specific early years forums regarding mentoring, the Early Years Learning Framework and whole-site approaches.

Professor Pauline Harris, The Lillian de Lissa Chair, Early Childhood (Research) University of South Australia and DECS, was engaged as the keynote for the 2010 Literacy and Numeracy Expo. Her presentation was about what works and why in literacy education, reflecting on messages from research, policy and practice.

The Literacy Secretariat will continue to focus in 2011-12 upon early years literacy improvements, in particular, to strengthen educator's knowledge and practice about literacy acquisition, with a strong emphasis upon the role of family and community.

Early Years Learning Framework

The development of a national Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) is part of the national early childhood agenda endorsed by COAG. Information for families about the EYLF is now available in 20 languages.

The EYLF focuses on the learning and development of children from birth to five years, and their transitions, especially from early childhood services to school.

The department's Early Childhood Services provides a number of professional learning activities across South Australia focused on strategic priorities. This work is done in conjunction with regions and some of it occurs in partnership with Gowrie Training.

Activities range from the production of resource materials, conducting case studies and project work to tailored group face-to-face sessions, guest speakers and workshops.

SA is contributing to national ongoing work to ensure that the links between EYLF and the National Quality Standard (NQS) are clearly articulated. (More about the NQS on page 15.)

Since 2009, more than 3,000 early childhood educators have participated in department-run face-to-face professional learning activities about the EYLF. These sessions have mainly been based in regions and jointly facilitated by central and regional staff. They have consisted of short familiarisation sessions and more in-depth sessions.

In 2010 the first phase of the EYLF leadership project was completed with 34 early childhood services participating. A number of resources were produced from this project as exemplars for promotion to all. Phase 2 of this project commenced during 2010-11.

Focus on Learning

Reflect Respect Relate

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) and educator guide have strong links to *Reflect Respect Relate: Assessing for learning in the early years using observation scales*, developed by DECS.

To support educators nationally in their implementation of the EYLF, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) has funded DECS to update and reprint *Reflect Respect Relate* so that it is consistent with the EYLF and links with the National Quality Standard.

The updated *Reflect Respect Relate* has been distributed by DEEWR to all early childhood settings across Australia. Surveys conducted regionally show that in South

Australia 90% of services are using the resource. The survey indicates that about 40% are using at least one scale to reflect on their current practice whilst some have indicated high levels of engagement to support quality improvement. Educators are making the links between the use of *Reflect Respect Relate* and engaging with the National Quality Agenda.

Working with regional early childhood consultants, in 2010-11 the department developed a professional learning resource to support educators to engage more deeply with the resource and to strengthen the links to the Early Years Learning Framework in the context of the National Quality Agenda. Targeted support is being provided across South Australia.

Type of service ¹	2009	2010
Preschools ²	1 990	2 061
Children's centres	123	202
Integrated services	386	369
Playcentres	32	34
Child care centres ³	4 070	4 070
Rural care	37	47
Occasional care	122	130
Out of school hours care ³	1 660	1 790
Vacation care ³	2 140	2 170
Learning Together @ Home	26	27
Total 5	10 586	10 900

Number of primary care staff employed in early childhood services, 2009 and 2010

Notes:

- Staff may be employed in more than one service.
- Figures for preschools are estimates and include staff on leave, contract staff employed to replace those on leave, support workers and bilingual assistants.
- Numbers of staff in child care centres, out of school hours care and vacation care are estimates, as the response rate for the annual census is less than 100%.

Source: DECS Annual Census of Children's Services

Focus on Learning

Early childhood workforce development

The department's Early Childhood Services is working in partnership with the University of South Australia to provide a customised post-graduate Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (Inservice) program to increase the number of preschool teachers employed in government-funded preschools who are four-year university qualified.

The aim of the post-graduate award is to upskill (to a fourth year standard) early childhood teachers who do not currently hold a four-year early childhood qualification.

In 2010 there were 56 early childhood teachers continuing the program with a further 36 commencing in 2011.

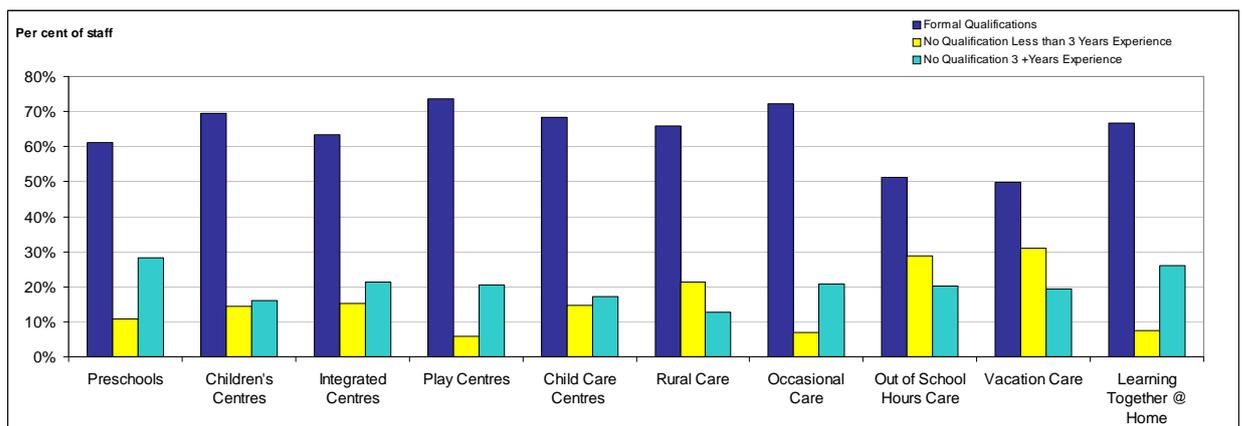
Of those 92 teachers, 43 are working in rural preschools and a further 11 are working in remote areas (ie, nearly 60% of the scholarships have been awarded to teachers in rural and remote areas).

Preschool leadership development

In 2011 two programs for preschool leaders were offered by DECS:

- 11 newly appointed preschool directors participated in a five-day induction and *Leadership development* program
- 10 preschool personnel participated in *QSchool for aspiring leaders in the early years* that included a four-day program and online activities.

Qualifications and experience of staff in early childhood services by service type, 2010



Note: Includes primary care staff only.

Source: DECS Annual Census of Children's Services