

# South Australia's Implementation Plan

## NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT ON UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

### PART 1: PRELIMINARIES

1. This Implementation Plan is a schedule to the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education (NP UAECE or National Partnership) and should be read in conjunction with that Agreement.
2. The objective of the NP UAECE is to maintain Universal Access to quality early childhood education program(s), with a focus on improved participation of vulnerable and disadvantaged children, and in a manner that meets the needs of children, parents and communities and ensures that cost is not a barrier to participation.

### PART 2: TERMS OF THIS IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

3. This Implementation Plan will commence as soon as it is agreed between the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the Assistant Minister for Education, and the State of South Australia, represented by the Minister for Education and Child Development.
4. As a schedule to the NP UAECE, the purpose of this Implementation Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how Universal Access is intended to be delivered and demonstrate South Australia's capacity to achieve the outcomes of the NP UAECE by the expiry of the National Partnership.
5. This Implementation Plan supports the national approach to the regulation and quality assessment of education and care services consistent with the National Quality Framework.
6. This Implementation Plan will cease on completion or termination of the NP UAECE, including the acceptance of final performance reporting and processing of final payments against performance benchmarks.
7. This Implementation Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and State Ministers with responsibility for Early Childhood Education under the overarching NP UAECE.
8. The Parties to this Implementation Plan do not intend any of the provisions to be legally enforceable. However, that does not lessen the Parties' commitment to the plan and its full implementation.

## PART 3: STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### Project information

9. The NP UAECE supports Universal Access to and improved participation by children in quality early childhood education in the year before full-time school, with a focus on vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Commonwealth, State and Territory governments will collaborate to develop a nationally agreed definition of vulnerable and disadvantaged children over time. This will be progressed through the Early Childhood Development Working Group. In South Australia, vulnerable and disadvantaged children are provisionally defined as children who reside in a location assessed as being in the lowest quintile of the ABS Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2011 – Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD).

10. The project elements planned are as follows:

#### **Element 1: Providing access to 600 hours of preschool**

Provide access to 600 hours of preschool to children in their year before full time school delivered by a degree qualified early childhood teacher who meets the National Quality Framework requirements, as follows:

- maintain access to 600 hours of preschool in state funded preschool (up from a base of 480 hours for state funded programs in 2008).
- designated small rural preschools (previously resourced to deliver preschool over 18 months) to convert their services to provide access to 600 hours of preschool over 12 months in the year before full time school
- child care centres, non-government schools and preschools with an approved Funding and Service Agreement for the Provision of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education to continue to provide access to 600 hours of preschool to children in their year before full time school

#### **Element 2: Providing access to 600 hours of affordable preschool for Aboriginal children, vulnerable and disadvantaged children**

Provide additional funding to service providers to facilitate the provision of access to 600 hours of affordable preschool to 95 % of the population of Aboriginal children, vulnerable and disadvantaged children in their year before full time school delivered by a degree qualified early childhood teacher who meets the National Quality Framework requirement. Strategies will include, but are not limited to the following:

- state funded preschool to continue to provide access to 480 hours of preschool to Aboriginal children and children under the guardianship of the Minister from three years of age
- all preschool programs to continue to provide access to Aboriginal children from four years of age to 600 hours of affordable preschool in the year before full-time schooling, including all Aboriginal four year old children residing in remote communities
- maintain the DECD policy that ensures that children are not excluded from DECD preschools due to parents inability to pay preschool fees

- continue to provide targeted child subsidies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children holding the following cards: Health Care Card, Pensioner Concession Card, Temporary Protection/Humanitarian, asylum seeker on bridging visa and Department of Veteran Affairs Gold Card to service providers with an approved Funding and Service Agreement for the Provision of Universal Access to Early Childhood Education to support access for these children to preschool in the year before full-time schooling.
- continue to provide access to 600 hours of supported preschool programs for children with additional needs including children with disabilities and children from a non-English speaking background. Provision of preschool access will also include specialist programs such as Inclusive Preschool Programs and the Hospital Based Preschool Program that provide up to 600 hours of individually tailored preschool programs.

**Element 3: Maintain attendance at 90% or above for all children enrolled in preschool in their year before full time school**

Aim to improve attendance for Aboriginal children, children with a disability, children living in low socio economic communities, children living in areas identified with high population of vulnerability, children from recently arrived families and children living in remote communities. Strategies may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Funding a dedicated early childhood leadership position in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands to develop and implement early years strategy aimed at strengthening teaching and learning in the 9 APY land communities
- Funding attendance improvement initiatives that are specifically targeted to address preschool programs with low attendance rates.

**Element 4: Improve the supply of four year university qualified early childhood teachers**

Develop and implement strategies to support the recruitment and retention of qualified early childhood teachers in hard to staff services and locations. Strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Additional scholarships for Diploma qualified early childhood staff to upgrade to an early childhood teaching qualification
- Supporting final year early childhood teacher student practicums in hard to staff locations
- Supporting new graduates to consolidate their early childhood practice

**Table 1: Project elements**

No.	Short description	Planned start date	Planned end date	Dependent on projects
1	Providing access to 600 hours of preschool	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	4
2	Providing access to 600 hours of affordable preschool for Aboriginal children, vulnerable and disadvantaged children	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	1
3	Maintain attendance at 90% or above for all children enrolled in preschool in their year before full time school	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	1,2
4	Improve the supply of four year university qualified early childhood teachers	1 July 2013	31 Dec 2014	

**Estimated costs**

- The maximum financial contribution to be provided by the Commonwealth for the project to South Australia is \$44.1 million, payable in accordance with performance milestones and benchmarks set out in the National Partnership. All payments are exclusive of GST.
- The estimated overall budget (exclusive of GST) is set out in Table 2. The budget is indicative only and South Australia retains the flexibility to move funds between components and/or years, as long as outcomes are not affected. The Commonwealth contribution can only be moved between years with the agreement of the Commonwealth.

**Table 2: Estimated financial contributions**

(\$)	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15*	Total
Project payment	\$988,042			
Element 1		\$27,239,182	\$14,710,288	\$41,949,470
Element 2		\$520,484	\$270,652	\$791,136
Element 3		\$160,802	\$911,913	\$1,072,715
Element 4		\$168,000	\$84,000	\$252,000
Total estimated budget		\$28,088,468	\$15,976,853	\$44,065,321
less estimated Commonwealth contribution	\$988,042	\$27,288,774	\$15,788,505	\$44,065,321
equals estimated balance of non-Commonwealth contributions**		-	-	-
Total Commonwealth contribution***	\$988,042	\$27,288,774	\$15,788,505	\$44,065,321

\* Funding for the sixth month period to 31 December 2014

\*\* States are responsible for the provision of early childhood education services and allocate their own source funding and provide in-kind contributions accordingly. Funding contributions by each jurisdiction will be considered as part of the review of the National Partnership, consistent with clause 37(a) of the National Partnership.

\*\*\* Commonwealth is also separately contributing \$3 million in 2013-14 and \$1.5 million in 2014-15 nationally for early childhood data development, review and research activities.

**Note:** This table does not include direct child care assistance to parents, by the Commonwealth, to help improve the affordability of child care centres that provide preschool programs..

## Program logic

13. The project elements detailed in this Implementation Plan will achieve the outcomes and objectives stated in the National Partnership including for vulnerable and disadvantaged children as defined in Clause 10, by South Australia.
14. The way in which these project elements will achieve the outcomes and objectives set out in the National Partnership is detailed in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Program logic**

Project elements	Outputs (services delivered)	Outcomes	Reform/ Project Objectives	Responsibility
<p>Providing access to 600 hours of preschool</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Providing access to 600 hours of affordable preschool for Aboriginal children, vulnerable and disadvantaged children</p>	<p>South Australian will implement strategies and actions that provide access to quality early childhood education programs which meet the needs of parents and communities at a cost which does not present a barrier to participation, particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged children through the provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 600 hours of preschool in DECD preschool services</li> <li>• 600 hours of preschool in child care centres and non-government schools and preschools</li> </ul>	<p>i) Vulnerable and disadvantaged children will have access to affordable, quality early childhood education program.</p> <p>ii) Indigenous children will have access to an affordable, quality early childhood education program.</p> <p>iii) the achievement of the Closing the Gap target will be maintained, to ensure access to early childhood education for all Indigenous four year olds in remote communities.</p>	<p>Access to 600 hours of preschool to children in their year before full time school is maintained</p>	<p>South Australia</p>
<p>Maintain attendance at 90% or above for all children enrolled in preschool in their year before full time school</p>	<p>South Australian will implement strategies and actions aimed at improving attendance, with a particular focus on:</p> <p>i) vulnerable and disadvantaged children</p> <p>ii) Indigenous children</p>	<p>i) Participation in early childhood education programs for vulnerable and disadvantaged children will be maintained or improved</p> <p>ii) Participation in early childhood education programs for Indigenous children will be maintained or improved</p>	<p>Maintain or improve participation in preschool programs</p>	<p>South Australia</p>

Project elements	Outputs (services delivered)	Outcomes	Reform/ Project Objectives	Responsibility
<i>Improve the supply of four year university qualified early childhood teachers</i>	<i>South Australian will implement strategies and actions aimed at improving the supply and retention of degree qualified early childhood teachers</i>	<i>All early childhood education programs will be delivered by a degree qualified early childhood teacher who meets the National Quality Framework requirements<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Improve the ability of service providers to recruit and retain degree qualified early childhood teachers</i>	South Australia

### **Risk management**

15. The South Australian Department for Education and Child Development has a risk management plan in place. Risks have been actively identified, entered into a risk log and categorised in terms of impact and likelihood.

### **South Australian Context**

The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) is the agency responsible for leading the implementation of the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education strategies in South Australia.

South Australia is using the following approaches to maintain the Universal Access initiative:

- 1) **Increased service provision in existing preschool services:** Children enrolled in State funded preschools have an increased annual provision from 480 hours to 600 hours of preschool for children in their year before full-time school.
- 2) **Expanded service provision to provide new preschool places:** Funding and service agreements have been, and will continue to be, entered into with child care operators and non-government schools to provide access to early childhood education to children not accessing, or unable to access, State funded preschools.

<sup>1</sup> Includes service waivers with respect to early childhood teachers under the National Quality Framework

16. In developing this Implementation Plan consideration has been given to relevant context. Preschool in South Australia is funded by the State Government. Under the current DECD preschool enrolment policy, four and five year old children, three year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children under the guardianship of the Minister for Education and Child Development (children in care) may access an annual provision of up to 480 hours of preschool. Providing that a DECD preschool has the capacity to do so, early entry preschool programs are also provided to children with additional needs including children with a disability and newly arrived children from a non-English speaking background.

In terms of progress on early childhood development, the latest AEDI survey conducted in 2012 when compared to the results in 2009 indicated an increase in the proportion of children determined to be developmentally vulnerable in South Australia (from 22.8% in 2009 to 23.7% in 2012). This result defied the national trend where every other State and Territory recorded a decrease in the proportion of developmentally vulnerable children between 2009 and 2012. Increased participation in preschool is seen as one method of lowering the proportion of children who enter school who are developmentally vulnerable.

DECD is transitioning in 2013 from a continuous intake enrolment policy to a single intake policy whereby children in their year before full-time schooling are enrolled in preschool at the beginning of the school term following their fourth birthday. By 2014, all children who are four years of age prior to 1 May of that year may commence preschool from the beginning of the first school term of the year. The single intake preschool enrolment policy is also phasing out the special allowance for DECD preschool services operating in small rural communities. Children enrolled in one of the designated small rural preschools were entitled to commence preschool from three years and six months of age. These children received their entitlement to 600 hours of preschool over six school terms (18 months) rather than four school terms (12 months).

Recruitment and retention of degree qualified early childhood teachers continues to be an issue, particularly for child care centres and preschool services operating in hard to staff locations. A scholarship program funded under the former National Partnership for Early Childhood Education targeting Diploma qualified staff employed in child care centres aims to improve the supply and retention issue for these service providers.

17. Key factors that have influenced the proposed direction are set out in Table 4.

**Table 4: Links with existing reforms or projects**

	<b>Existing reforms or projects</b>	<b>Complementary nature of activities</b>
Indigenous Early Childhood Development National Partnership	Four new Children and Family centres constructed	New centres provide quality integrated early childhood education and development programs to Aboriginal children in areas of high demand for the services provided

Remote Service Delivery National Partnership	A new early childhood centre constructed in areas of high demand in Amata	New centres provide quality early childhood education to Aboriginal children in areas of high demand
National Quality Framework	Quality improvement reforms	Improvements to the quality of preschool providers facilities, processes & staff

## PART 4: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

### Performance indicators, benchmarks and targets

18. Key indicators, data sources and benchmarks for assessing and monitoring performance are set out in Part 4 and Schedule A of the NP UAECE.
19. With regard to reporting on attendance, South Australia has agreed targets for 2013 and 2014 with the Commonwealth, as set out in Table 5 below, and will report on progress towards these targets as part of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection and via progress reports.

**Table 5: Bilaterally agreed attendance target/s**

Baseline data	2013 Target	2014 Target	Nationally Agreed Target
98.6% <sup>1</sup>	90%	90%	<i>90 per cent of enrolled children attending an early childhood education program to be achieved over time</i>

<sup>1</sup> 2012 National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection. Calculation of target is attendance divided by enrolment. Attendance is the number of children aged 4 and 5 years old as at 1 July of the collection year who are attending a preschool program in the year before full-time schooling. Enrolment is the number of children aged 4 and 5 years old as at 1 July of the collection year who are enrolled in a preschool program in the year before full-time schooling.

### Monitoring and reporting

20. Commonwealth and State based collections or data sources and methodologies, agreed by both the Parties to this Plan, to measure progress against performance milestones and benchmarks and targets in the NP UAECE are set out in Schedule A of the NP UAECE.
21. These data and performance specifications will be used to report South Australia's performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan in Schedule F.1 of this Plan.
22. Reports in the manner stated at (i) and (ii) of South Australia's progress in achieving the performance milestones and benchmarks, targets and any supplementary data.
  - i. Progress Reports must contain:
    - Progress in implementing the project elements undertaken to achieve the performance milestones and benchmarks and the bilaterally agreed annual



attendance targets in the reporting period, , including challenges and mitigating strategies, where relevant

- Where applicable, supplementary data reports for the performance milestones, benchmarks and targets listed in the NP UAECE or otherwise agreed in this Plan, and set out in Schedule A of the NP UAECE

ii. Progress Reports could include:

Case studies of services or children who are benefiting from universal access or from increased access or attendance.

iii. Supplementary data reports must contain the following details for each Performance Indicator where the method is not consistent with the Early Childhood Education and Care National Minimum Data Set (NMDS).

- Performance Indicator calculation description (numerator, denominator, computation and presentation)
- Numerator Information (collection name and population description)
- Denominator Information (collection name and population description)
- Calculation Notes (including any information about how the PI is calculated)
- Methodology
- Rationale for supplementary data and reporting (including any additional information to explain how and why the specifications for the supplementary data differ from the specifications in the NMDS).

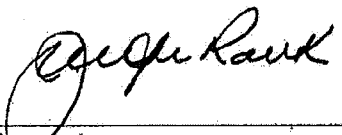
## Review

23. Both parties will jointly review the Implementation Plan, prior to June 2014, with regard to progress made by the Parties in respect of achieving the agreed outcomes that are supported by the Implementation Plan.
24. If required, an updated revised Implementation Plan will need to be submitted to the Commonwealth before June 2014. Where a state is not on track to meet its performance benchmarks, the Implementation Plan may require amendment before July 2014 to ensure that its strategies are adequate to achieve its performance benchmarks.

Performance Indicator	Supplementary data specification
<p>The proportion of children enrolled in the year before full-time school in quality early childhood education program(s) amended for the 2013 performance reporting only</p>	<p><u>Source:</u> National ECEC Collection</p> <p><u>Numerator:</u> The number of children aged 4 and 5 years old as at 1 July of the collection year (as identified at unit record level for each selected population group ie all children, Indigenous children and vulnerable and disadvantaged children), who are enrolled in a quality early childhood education program in the year before full-time school.</p> <p><u>Denominator:</u> Estimated number of children aged 4 years old, as at 30 June of the collection year.</p> <p><u>Computation:</u>  <math>(\text{Numerator} \times 1/0.79) \div \text{Denominator} \times 100 = \text{Proportion}</math></p> <p><u>Methodology:</u>  When the National ECEC Collection is conducted in August 2013, DECD preschools will be operating with an estimated 79% of usual enrolments resulting from the one-off impact of transitioning to a single intake preschool enrolment policy. This is due to there not being an intake of children to replace the children transitioning from preschool to school at the end of Term 2 2013. By indexing the numerator, supplementary data can be provided to estimate the proportion of the typical eligible preschool cohort enrolled in preschool in 2013.</p> <p><u>Key Definitions:</u>  Enrolment is defined in the Interpretation section of the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education – a child is enrolled if he/she is on the 'roll' for an early childhood education program, regardless of where that program is accessed.</p> <p>An Indigenous child is one who has (or has been) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Data on Indigenous children by remoteness areas (major cities, regional, remote and very remote) is to be reported at the national level only, consistent with reporting in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement.</p> <p>For disadvantaged children: currently National ECEC Collection uses SEIFA IRSD measure of disadvantage. May require further review in development of national definition(s).</p> <p>Disadvantaged and vulnerable children are to be defined through Implementation Plans with a view to agreement on national definition over time. South Australia's provisional definition of disadvantaged and vulnerable children is included in clause 10 of this Implementation Plan.</p>

**Sign off**

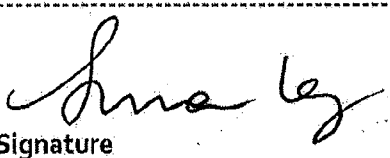
The Parties have confirmed their commitment to this agreement as follows:

Signature 

Date 18.11.13

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The Hon Jennifer Rankine MP  
Minister for Education and Child Development

Signature 

Date 31/10/13

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The Hon Sussan Ley MP  
Assistant Minister for Education

**Supplementary Data**

Amended calculation of performance indicators will be required in 2013 only as a result of a counting issue for the number of children enrolled in early childhood education in their year before full time school. This one-off issue is due to the transition from a rolling intake to a single intake preschool enrolment policy for DECD in 2013.

<p>The proportion of enrolled children, enrolled in the year before full-time school, in quality early childhood education program(s) available for 600 hours per year amended for the 2013 performance reporting only</p>	<p><u>Source:</u> National ECEC Collection</p> <p><u>Numerator:</u> The number of children aged 4 and 5 years old as at 1 July of the collection year (for each selected population group) enrolled in the year before full-time schooling in a quality early childhood education program(s) available for at least 600 hours in the collection year.</p> <p><u>Denominator:</u> Number of 4 and 5 year old children as at 1 July of the collection year, who are enrolled in an early childhood education program in the year before full-time schooling.</p> <p><u>Computation:</u>  <math>(\text{Numerator} \times 1/0.79) \div \text{Denominator} \times 100 = \text{Proportion}</math></p> <p><u>Methodology:</u>                  When the National ECEC Collection is conducted in August 2013, DECD preschools will be operating with an estimated 79% of usual enrolments resulting from the one-off impact of transitioning to a single intake preschool enrolment policy. This is due to there not being an intake of children to replace the children transitioning from preschool to school at the end of Term 2 2013. By indexing the numerator, supplementary data can be provided to estimate the proportion of the typical eligible preschool cohort enrolled in preschool in 2013.</p> <p><u>Key Definitions:</u>                  Enrolment is defined in the Interpretation section of the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education – a child is enrolled if he/she is on the 'roll' for an early childhood education program, regardless of where that program is accessed.</p> <p>An Indigenous child is one who has (or has been) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Data on Indigenous children by remoteness areas (major cities, regional, remote and very remote) is to be reported at the national level only, consistent with reporting in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement.</p> <p>For disadvantaged children: currently National ECEC Collection uses SEIFA IRSD measure of disadvantage. May require further review in development of national definition(s).</p> <p>Disadvantaged and vulnerable children are to be defined through Implementation Plans with a view to agreement on national definition by over time. South Australia's provisional definition of disadvantaged and vulnerable children is included in clause 10 of this Implementation Plan.</p>
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