

South Australia: Implementation Plan and Performance Report (Plan) - 2022

PRESCHOOL REFORM AGREEMENT – 2022 TO 2025

PART 1: PRELIMINARIES

1. This Plan is a schedule to the Preschool Reform Agreement 2022 – 2025 (the Agreement) and should be read in conjunction with the Agreement. It covers the period from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022.
2. The Agreement reaffirms a national commitment to provide universal access to, and improved participation by, children in quality preschool programs in the year before full-time school (YBFS), with a focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and disadvantaged children. These programs should be delivered in a manner that meets the needs of children, parents and communities at a cost which does not present a barrier to participation.
3. The objective of the Agreement is to facilitate children’s early learning and development and transition to school by maintaining universal access to quality preschool programs for all children, improving participation in preschool programs and maximising the benefit of the preschool year by improving outcomes for children.
4. The Agreement supports the delivery of 15 hours a week, or 600 hours a year of quality preschool programs, by a degree qualified early childhood teacher for all children, regardless of the setting in which programs are delivered, in the year before school.
5. The Agreement has a focus on improving preschool participation and outcomes including for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and disadvantaged children.
6. This Plan is the first of four annual implementation plans that will build on each other to deliver the reforms outlined in the Agreement.

PART 2: TERMS AND DEFINITIONS OF THIS PLAN

7. This Plan will commence as soon as it is agreed between the Commonwealth of Australia, represented by the Minister for Education and Youth, and the State of South Australia, represented by their Minister for Education.

8. As a schedule to the Agreement, the purpose of this Plan is to provide the public with an indication of how the State of South Australia demonstrates its capacity to achieve and deliver the outcomes of the Agreement.
9. This Plan will cease on completion of the final performance reporting and the processing of final payments against the performance benchmarks or milestones set out within it for 2022.
10. The Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment and central agencies will develop a new template for Implementation Plans from 2023 in consultation with States and Territories. The Commonwealth will require new and additional information in accordance with the Preschool Reform Agreement and the Federal Funding Agreements Principles from 2023.
11. This Plan may be varied by written agreement between the Commonwealth and the responsible State Minister.
12. The Parties to this 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.
13. States may also use this section to clarify or elaborate on how terms or definitions for '*Disadvantaged children*' and '*Preschool program*' are realised in their specificity within that jurisdiction as per the Agreement (Definitions, p.15 of the Agreement refers).

PART 3: FUNDING CONTRIBUTION

Commonwealth Funding Contributions

14. The Commonwealth's estimated total financial contribution to the State of South Australia is set out in Tables 1a (program year) and 1b (financial year) of the Agreement.
15. However, the Commonwealth's financial contribution in individual program years is adjusted in accordance with the notes to Tables 1a and 1b of the Agreement. Consistent with the agreed adjustment process, the final amounts for 2022 are set out in **Table 1**.
16. The Commonwealth contribution can only be moved between years with the agreement of the Commonwealth.

Table 1: 2022 Commonwealth financial contribution to the State of South Australia

Category	Amount ¹
Estimated YBFS Contribution	\$27.353m
Adjustment to Estimated YBFS Contribution	N/A
Top-up to maintain 2021 levels	\$0.87m
Implementation Project funding	\$4.0m
Total Budget	\$32.223m



*Figures may not add due to rounding.

17. Table 2 should be used to show how the State of South Australia will use Commonwealth funding to meet the objectives of the Preschool Reform Agreement. This may include strategies to facilitate preschool attendance by children in the year before full-time school.

Table 2: Program/activities objectives and outcomes

	Program/activity	Outputs	Objectives	Outcomes	Estimated C'th funds allocated
1.	Funding allocations to government and non-government preschool program providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Continue provision of additional funding to government preschools ii. Continue to administer funding grant payments to approved child care centres, non-government schools and non-government preschools 	To facilitate children's early learning and development, by maintaining universal access to, and improving participation in, affordable, quality preschool programs for all children	All children, including disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality preschool program	\$ 25.583m
2.	Inclusion programs and projects to improve participation in preschool for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and disadvantaged children	Delivering programs targeting the participation in quality preschool programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and disadvantaged children	To facilitate children's early learning and development, and improving preschool participation and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and disadvantaged children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. All children, including disadvantaged children, have access to, and participate in, an affordable, quality preschool program All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in remote communities have access to preschool education 	\$2.64m

State context and funding contributions

18. Context influencing the State of South Australia's delivery of preschool and the States' investment in preschool for 2022 is covered in this section.
19. The South Australian Department for Education (department) is the agency responsible for the delivery of universal state government preschool in South Australia for all children in

their year before full time school, and Aboriginal children and Children in Care from three years of age.

20. The department is also responsible for the implementation of the PRA. In 2022 South Australia will continue with the following approaches the department has previously implemented to support the delivery of 600 hours a year of quality preschool programs to all children in the YBFS regardless of the setting:
 - a. Increased service provision in existing preschool services: Children enrolled in one of the over 380 department operated preschools have an increased annual provision from 480 hours to 600 hours of preschool in their year before full-time school. Department operated preschools are provided with additional staffing allocations and other resourcing to enable the delivery of 600 hours of preschool.
 - b. SA also applies PRA funding for programs and subsidies with an emphasis on participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and disadvantaged children. In department operated preschools and services, inclusion and support programs have been expanded to support access to preschool for children with a disability. Other programs include the Hospital Based Preschool program and Indigenous Children with Impaired Hearing Support program.
 - c. Child care operators and non-government schools and preschools are provided with funding subsidies on an application basis to assist with offsetting the cost of a qualified early childhood teacher to deliver a preschool program to children in their year before school not accessing department preschools. Over 280 non-government early childhood education and care services have an existing funding agreement to deliver 600 hours of quality preschool programs to children in the YBFS.
 - d. Non-government services funded for preschool also have access to targeted additional subsidies to offset the cost of delivering preschool to children of families from disadvantaged backgrounds and for Indigenous children. Other subsidies are available for non-government services for children with a disability to provide access to and enable regular participation in the preschool program.
21. The South Australia government's total annual expenditure on in preschool services over the past 5 years is made available in the annual publication of the Productivity Commission's Report on Government Services: Early Childhood Education and Care section data tables (refer table 3A.6). The Commonwealth government's contribution through the former National Partnership on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education agreements is also published in the data tables (refer table 3A.7).
22. Complementary to the PRA's objectives of improving outcomes for children, South Australia has commenced implementing the Early Learning Strategy 2021 – 2031, which has as one of its goals, "high-quality educational preschool programs underpinned by excellence in teaching and learning".

Implementation Project Funding Contributions

23. This section will include a State's summary of details of implementation project funding provided by the Commonwealth including funding amounts and purpose. States will be required to provide details of how Implementation Project Funding will be used to deliver reforms, including key performance indicators (KPIs) and timing. Details will be captured at Table 3.

Table 3: Overview of Implementation Project Funding for State of South Australia - Statement of Allocations (updated by 31 January 2022)

Implementation Project (details)	Commonwealth funding	Actions (incl. deliverables)	KPI	Timing (incl. delivery schedule)
Funding follows the Child – projects to support the rapid deployment of funding to non-government providers, by investing in improved systems and processes	\$1.62m	1) Reform paper-based non-government preschool funding application process to online form 2) Back-end data collection systems for non-government services reviewed and enhanced 3) Grant/payments management system replaced 4) Develop and implement new non-government services funding arrangements/ agreements for 2023 – 2025 5) Develop enhanced funding	1) Paper based application process replaced 2) Non-government services payment timelines reduced 3a) Procurement approach in place 3b) Non-government services payment timelines reduced 4) New non-government funding arrangements implemented for 2023 5) Acquittal and transparency process requirements documented.	1) Completed by end of December 2022 2) Completed by end of December 2022 3) Progressed by end of 2022 4) Completed by end of Dec 2022 for 2023 implementation 5) Completed by end of Dec 2022 for 2023 implementation

		acquittal and transparency processes		
Attendance strategies and measurement - IT systems development and enhancement projects to increase the quality and quantity of attendance measurement	\$2.38m	<p>1) Replace manual parent sign in/out with electronic process for government preschool data administration systems and explore opportunities for any non-government preschools not approved for CCS.</p> <p>2) Develop new or enhance existing government data administration systems for attendance measurement</p> <p>3) Replace or enhance existing Non-Government Preschool Data System</p>	<p>1) Electronic sign in/out system implemented</p> <p>2),3) Government and non-government preschool enrolment and attendance data complies with agreed attendance measurement requirements</p>	<p>1) Throughout 2022</p> <p>2,3) Commencement of projects from 2022 contingent on development and agreement by Education Ministers of PRA Appendix A.1 – Enrolment and Attendance Measures</p>

24. Consistent with the terms of the Agreement, Commonwealth funding for Implementation Projects will be provided as part of the first milestone payment of the Agreement, subject to the Commonwealth and State agreeing to this Plan.

Risk Management

25. The State of South Australia will actively identify, monitor and manage the risks associated with delivering outcomes under the Agreement, such as through maintaining a risk management plan.

PART 4: REFORMS

26. As part of the Agreement, the State of South Australia and the Commonwealth agree to work collaboratively to implement reforms outlined in the Additional terms in the Agreement.
27. The actions that the State of South Australia will undertake to meet these commitments are detailed in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Planned Actions for the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022 for the State of South Australia

Reform Element	Actions	Timing
<p>Reform Element One: Implement Commonwealth Funding Follows Child</p> <p>Steps to ready the state to ensure Commonwealth Funding Follows Child can be implemented in 2023.</p>	<p>Measures to be undertaken in 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SA already has in place a funding mechanism that facilitates excellent statewide coverage to provide preschool access to all children in the year before school which will limit changes required ensure Commonwealth funding follows child at the setting level can be implemented in 2023. <p>Plan for funding mechanism and/or actions to be taken to develop funding mechanisms to sectors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action: Continue funding mechanisms in place and review to ensure Commonwealth Funding Follows Child can be implemented in 2023. <p>How states will seek to engage unenrolled children in preschool programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action: South Australia will continue and expand an annual preschool enrolment promotion campaign that is both universal and targeted using social media. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The targeting of unenrolled children could be further enhanced subject to the Commonwealth being able to supply data that would enable identification of this cohort of children. <p>Plan to acquit, or plan to establish acquittal mechanism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action: A project will be undertaken in 2022 to collate and integrate relevant preschool financial and enrolment data from multiple systems to facilitate an efficient acquittal process. <p>Mechanism to provide transparency of Commonwealth contribution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action: The department will publish information on its preschool webpage on the amount of Commonwealth contribution by sector for both government and non-government. 	<p>Throughout 2022</p>

Reform Element Two: Implement a new national preschool attendance measure		
<p>Work to ready the State to measure preschool attendance in 2024 and provide baseline data to the Commonwealth in 2023.</p>	<p>Measures to be undertaken in 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The department will continue to collaborate with the Commonwealth on preparatory work to ready the State for introduction of this measure, subject to Ministers' agreements. • In addition, the department will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: Undertake preparatory work to replace manual parent sign in/sign out with an electronic system for our department preschools and any non-government preschools not approved for CCS. • Action: Implementation funding from the Commonwealth for attendance measure implementation projects will be utilised for initial project work. 	<p>Throughout 2022</p>
<p>Strategies to facilitate preschool attendance by children in the YBFS. For strategies relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, consistent with the Closing the Gap agreement, engage those communities and/or representative bodies in the design process.</p>	<p>Measures to be undertaken in 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action: An Early Years Engagement Officer employed to consult with, and work alongside preschool teachers and Anangu educators located in Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands schools with a school-based preschool, to deliver culturally responsive arts/literacy activities that are highly engaging for family carers to increase regular attendance of their preschool aged children. • Action: A multimedia universal and targeted preschool enrolment promotional campaign to provide information and encourage families to enrol their child in a department preschool. • Action: Initiate a project to improve government preschool accessibility, including through wraparound child care subject to the Commonwealth facilitating the necessary policy and legislative options under family assistance law for preschools that will enable service approval for Child Care Subsidy (CCS). • Action: Initiate a project to improve enrolment, attendance and quality participation of Aboriginal children and Children in Care in 3 and 4 year old preschool. 	<p>Throughout 2022</p>

Reform Element Three: Implement a new national Preschool Outcomes Measure from 2025		
Plans for how the State will work with the Commonwealth to develop the preschool outcomes measure.	Measures to be undertaken in 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The state undertakes to work collaboratively with the Commonwealth on the development of the Outcomes measure 	Throughout 2022
Reform Delivery/Implementation		
State-specific data and implementation issues and strategies for how these will be overcome in the context of assessing performance under the Agreement.	Measures to be undertaken in 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A State-specific data issue for South Australia is the timing of the August collection period of the NPC. South Australia has proposed that if the NPC were to be conducted using enrolment data from May/June, this would resolve issues related to achieving an accurate count. The planned approach to the NPC will be critical to resolving the issue. South Australia will participate in national discussions in good faith. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action: As an interim step, the South Australian department will submit preschool enrolment data collected by the department in May 2022 to the ABS to quantify the number of children who commenced school in August 2022. The intention is to use ABS findings as supplementary data in the performance assessment process. 	Supply term 2 2022 preschool enrolment data to ABS as part of NPC in Nov/Dec 2022

PART 5: PERFORMANCE AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

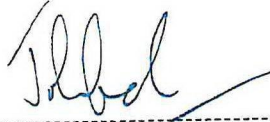
28. Part 5 sets out the performance and reporting arrangements for the State of South Australia for 2022.
29. Commonwealth and State based collections or data sources and methodologies, agreed by both the Parties to this Plan, to measure progress against the performance milestones and benchmarks and targets in the Agreement, are set out in Part 5 of this Plan and Appendix B of the Agreement.
30. These data and performance specifications will be used to report State of South Australia performance, except for the supplementary data agreed by the Parties to this Plan.
31. Supplementary data reports must contain the following details for each Performance Indicator (PI) where the method is not consistent with the Early Childhood Education and Care Minimal Data Set (NMDS):
 - a. PI calculation description (numerator, denominator, computation and presentation)
 - b. numerator information (collection name and population description)
 - c. denominator information (collection name and population description)
 - d. calculation notes (including any information about how the PI is calculated)
 - e. methodology
 - f. 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).

Performance requirements, reporting and payment summary 2022

32. Performance Reporting for 2022 will capture progress against planned actions undertaken by the State of South Australia as detailed at Table 4.
33. Performance results and reporting will be signed off by the Commonwealth Minister who will then inform the State of South Australia's Minister of the outcome through an exchange of letters.

Sign off

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



18/2/22

Signature

Date

Hon John Gardner MP

Minister for Education



10/3/22

Signature

Date

The Hon Stuart Robert MP

A/g Minister for Education and Youth