

PARENTS SAY

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL PARENT COMMUNITIES INC.
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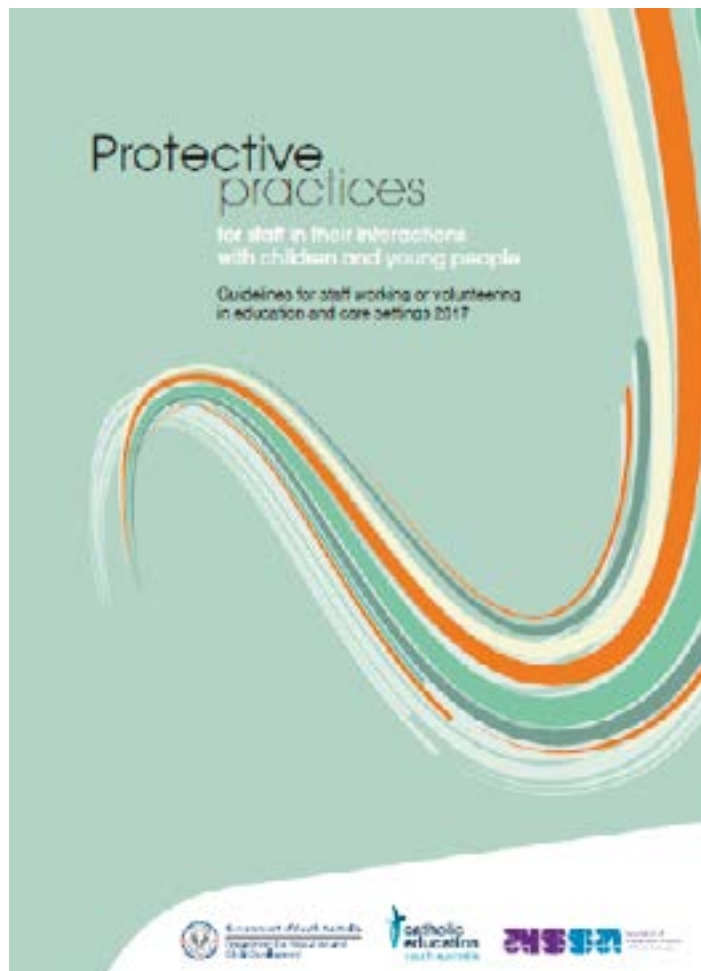


**SIMS FARM
CLEVE AREA
SCHOOL**



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HAVE YOU SEEN THIS NEW BROCHURE?



Protective practices are standards of behaviour that staff **and volunteers** are expected to meet in their interactions with children and young people.

They apply to all adults working or volunteering in government, Catholic, or independent education or children's services settings.

When you volunteer in a school or preschool you can help to support these standards by taking action if you see or hear about adult behaviours that are not in line with the protective practices.

The full document can be found on the Department for Education website and the brochure for volunteers in schools is available at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/protective-practices-parents-caregivers.pdf> or just ask at your school or preschool for a copy.

SAASPC contact details

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email info@saaspc.org.au | www.saaspc.org.au | we are also on Facebook and Twitter

PRESIDENT'S SAY

On behalf of us all at SAASPC I congratulate the Education Minister, the Hon John Gardner and his wife on the birth of their first child, a daughter, Emma. We hope that he is enjoying his new role, and that already he is reading to her and perhaps even listening to and learning the actions to Wiggles songs.

Parent groups

Often we receive enquiries about forming parent groups or re-establishing one that had closed previously.

It is important to know that:

- a parent group may be formed, or re-established after closure, by seeking the cooperation of the preschool director/school principal to call an open meeting of parents and interested community members to discuss the issue
- at this meeting, it is desirable to elect an interim convener (president) and a committee
- the committee should draw up suggested aims for the group, following the advice received from the open meeting, and be responsible for calling the next meeting
- the group may take the responsibility for its own name eg parent club, parents and friends, friends of the school, parent involvement committee or any other appropriate name decided upon by the group
- the group makes decisions with regard to how often the group meets, dates, times and venues
- a constitution should be adopted as soon as possible. **Any group that operates without an approved constitution will not be covered by Department for Education insurance and MUST NOT undertake ANY activities eg fundraising, events.** A model constitution may be found on our website www.saaspc.org.au/resources
- in order to remain an effective and relevant part of the preschool/school, a parent group should review its aims and functions from time to time and the group's current constitution should be checked when doing so.

Canteen Forum

Our Canteen Forum was held in June. It was very informative with extremely valuable information being shared by our speakers from the Department for Education and the SA School Canteen Network. If you weren't able to get there you can find useful information on the websites www.education.sa.gov.au/sites-and-facilities/canteens and sascn.com.au.



JENICE ZERNA
PRESIDENT

Meetings with the Chief Executive and the Minister

Since the last issue of Parents Say we have had the pleasure of meeting with Rick Persse, the Chief Executive of the Department for Education on two occasions, and we look forward to continuing to meet with him on a regular basis. One of the issues on the agenda at the last meeting was the transition of Year 7 students to high school – this is to occur by 2022; information on this important change is available at www.education.sa.gov.au/sites-and-facilities/year-7-high-school.

We are also looking forward to commencing regular meetings with the Education Minister, beginning with our meeting scheduled in September. This will give us the opportunity to discuss education matters and share information with him.

Parents in Education Week Tuesday 28 to Thursday 30 August 2018

This year's theme is Behaviours for learning: skills for life. Each evening you can hear speakers and panel guests provide information and useful ideas for parents, caregivers and educators of children from 0 to 18 years. All seminars are free. You can read more about the PIE week activities in the article by Ann-Marie Hayes, Executive Director Early Years and Child Development Department for Education on page 5.

Information sessions

SAASPC continues to run free information sessions for preschools and schools on

- *Parent groups*: what is a parent group, the role of a parent group, developing a constitution for the group, how it can operate
- *Responding to Abuse and Neglect: Education and Care sessions for volunteers*
- *Merit selection sessions for governing council nominees and interested people*: to inform and assist the nominee in their role when they are sitting on a panel for the appointment of principal/preschool directors. It is highly recommended that the Governing Council nominee attends an information session before sitting on the panel; and more than one person from a site can attend a session.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like more information, to organise an information session or a visit, or to raise any concerns or issues that you may have.

**THE HON
JOHN GARDNER MP
MINISTER FOR EDUCATION**



THE FIRST 100 DAYS

This year seems to be passing very quickly and we already find ourselves in term 3. The Liberal Government has recently passed the 100 days milestone. As Education Minister, I have been working to fulfil the commitments we made to the students and families of South Australia during the election – particularly those commitments we undertook to commence within the first 100 days.

We know that many of the jobs of tomorrow do not exist today. We must be forward thinking in the way we prepare our students to be ready for the work that the next generation will undertake. The Liberal Government is committed to entrepreneurial education. A call for applications has been issued for four high schools to be designated entrepreneurial schools. These schools will be supported to develop and deliver entrepreneurial skills for their students. Two of these schools will be based in metropolitan areas and two will be in rural and regional areas.

The SACE Board has already begun their work to develop new business and entrepreneurialism focused SACE subjects, as per our election commitments, which will be available to these entrepreneurial schools, and indeed any schools that wish to introduce them.

We have also called for expressions of interest in delivering a new Technical College with a focus on building skills for our Defence workforce, either through a new campus or converting an existing campus to a technical school.

With the migratory nature of employment opportunities and increasing multicultural nature of the world, the importance of language in schools is more important now than ever before. A package of measures has been initiated including increased support for ethnic schools' language programs and new professional development opportunities for teachers. Another measure which will strengthen our second-language learning outcomes, and indeed provide more options for students in our public school system, is the opportunity for four new public schools across South Australia to offer the International Baccalaureate to some students in their school.

We are committed to ensuring that the SACE is recognised worldwide for its outstanding quality, and to that end a formal review of Stage 2 SACE requirements is underway. The Review, being supported by the SACE Board, is being led by Wendy Johnson, the well regarded Principal of Glenunga International High School.

Alongside these important educational initiatives, we are also addressing truancy in schools. We have commenced a range of measures designed to ensure that our children are at school. Legislation has been introduced to deter chronic truancy, including mandated family conferencing and updating penalties for families who refuse to engage. We have also undertaken an audit of public school's truancy and bullying policies to ensure they meet satisfactory standards.

The Marshall Liberal Government takes a proactive approach to education about healthy living and the issue of substance abuse. Non-government organisations will be engaged to deliver effective, evidence-based healthy living and substance abuse prevention programs. SAPOL will also become more involved in delivering anti-drug messages in schools.

Finally, the Literacy Guarantee package was a cornerstone commitment and the Literacy Guarantee Unit was established within the first hundred days. New literacy coaches will work with our schools to improve literacy and numeracy outcomes for all South Australian students. Our new coaches are experienced educators – in particular in the field of teaching students with dyslexia and other learning difficulties. Information has been provided to schools and training provided to teachers ahead of the year one phonic checks being undertaken in all south Australian schools during term 3.

This focus on literacy and numeracy in the early years, along with the delivery of all of our other commitments, is critical in achieving our ambition to see our schools recognised as the best in Australia. We want every child in every classroom supported to enable them to fulfill their potential.

PARENTS IN EDUCATION WEEK

As an engaged parent you will no doubt be interested in ways to support your child's learning beyond the classroom.

An upcoming series of free parenting seminars will give you expert, take home tips to help set your child up for success.

Register now to attend the annual Parents in Education (PiE) week speaker program, to be held at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre from 28-30 August. The event will feature education experts sharing helpful advice for supporting children's learning and development from birth right through their years of schooling.

Parents in Education week is presented by a steering group representing all three of the state's education sectors, parents and staff across South Australia. This year's program focuses on how to help your child to develop the kinds of behaviours and skills that will support their learning and wellbeing for life.

Promoting the importance of parent engagement in children's learning is a priority for the Department for Education and Parents in Education week is a key element of this approach. Minister for Education John Gardner will open the program on Tuesday evening 28 August at 7.00pm ahead of the first night's thought provoking seminar.

The first night's seminar looks at the tricky balance between children's technology use and their learning and development. *How much screen time is too much in a world* where technology use is increasing by the moment? In their talk entitled *How to live positively in a digital world* Linda Cranley from the University of Notre Dame and Genevieve Johnson from La Trobe University will look at the pros and cons of children's technology use and how to strike the elusive balance.

The seminar will address the impact of technology on young children's social and emotional development. You'll hear tips on how to work with educators and professionals to help your child to develop positive digital behaviours and what positive relationships look like in a digital world.

The second seminar on Wednesday 29 August will feature Dr Justin Coulson, popular parenting expert and father to six daughters. His talk entitled *Behaviours for learning and wellbeing* will put the spotlight on children's behaviour and look at what specific behaviours are trying to tell you. Dr Coulson will



ANN-MARIE HAYES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR EARLY YEARS
AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION

discuss the fact that all behaviours have a purpose and are ways that children communicate. You will hear about ways to help your child to develop behaviours that will help them to learn and enhance their wellbeing. These include building confidence, resilience, self-awareness, dealing with stress and managing their emotions.

The final session entitled *No more bullying* on Thursday 30 August is a panel discussion on a critical and concerning topic for parents and caregivers. You will hear from an expert panel including eSafety Commissioner representative Lesley Harrison, five times Australian of the year nominee and antibullying campaigner Brett Murray, and clinical psychologist Andrew Fuller from the University of Melbourne. Panellists will lift the lid on bullying behaviour and help you learn to spot and prevent bullying in your child's life. The discussion will describe various types of bullying including the growing issue of cyberbullying. It will teach you to identify behaviours that could indicate that your child is being bullied or is being a bully to others. There will also be advice and tips on how to help children develop behaviours and skills that will help put a stop to bullying.

If you are unable to attend the live events there are a number of ways to view the Parents in Education week content. Many schools, preschools and other sites around the state are holding live events to bring their parent communities together to view the seminars. You can also live stream the content and get the same hints and tips in the comfort of your own home. Whether you are at the Entertainment Centre or at a live stream event you'll be able to interact with the panel and keynote speakers and ask questions.

There is also a recorded viewing option for those busy parents and caregivers who would prefer to check in with the seminars at a later date. The full program will be recorded and available from 10 September until 30 November. You can watch the seminars on YouTube at a time that suits you or register to attend a local viewing hosted by a number of preschools and schools across the state.

Parents in Education Week will be held from Tuesday 28 to Thursday 30 August from 7pm to 8.45pm each night.

To register go to www.education.sa.gov.au/pieweek and check the website for a list of livestream locations.

STUDENTS ON THE MOVE AT ASCOT PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

As the only primary specialist Physical Education and Sport School endorsed by the Department for Education, Ascot Park Primary School has made it a priority to get their students moving.

The Department of Health provides guidelines for physical activity based on research that indicates that increased physical activity (including the amount, frequency, intensity and type of physical activity) can reduce the risk of chronic disease and obesity, as well as improving academic learning outcomes for children.

Every class begins the day with a variety of physical activities and teachers are encouraged to use physical activity throughout the day to decrease sedentary time. The school's Physical Education program, based on the Australian Health and PE curriculum, has a strong focus on acquiring and developing fundamental movement skills through a range of physical activities. Since 1989 there has been a particularly strong focus on gymnastics in the school's dedicated gymnastics hall that features trampolines, climbing ropes, ladder walls, and balance beams. Local kindergartens are also able to benefit from the facilities with the school providing KinderGym programs and transport to and from their site in the school's bus.

The school also offers a playgroup session called Gym-Play for toddlers and children to preschool age. It is a movement pro-

gram held in the gymnastics hall to encourage children's physical, social and emotional development through structured and active play. It is a great social outing for families and provides parents, grandparents and carers an opportunity to connect with other families in the local community, while helping to develop their child's coordination and fundamental movement skills.

The school has a close partnership with Gymnastics SA and Diving SA and not only provides transport for those students participating in their elite squads, but also provides extra support for students in the classroom when lessons are missed due to training or competitions.

The school also offers specialist sport programs in soccer, netball and gymnastics. These programs are provided by highly qualified coaches and allow students to develop their interest in their chosen sport. The sessions are offered at school before the school day commences, meaning students start the day with active movement and can still participate in their club activities in the afternoons. While these programs can cater for all levels of ability, the school has a rich history of providing a strong start for future athletic success, including multiple Commonwealth Games gold medallists, such as Sam Offord and, more recently, Chris Remkes.

Sam Offord has competed in six World Gymnastics Championships and won two gold medals at the 2010 Delhi Common-



wealth Games. He is currently completing a Masters in Sports Physiotherapy and looks back on his time at Ascot Park fondly:

“Being part of the program at Ascot Park allowed me to get the most out of schooling and gymnastics without having to sacrifice either. The close relationship between the school and Gymnastics South Australia, especially the transport provided by the school, also meant I could continue with less burden on my parents.”

Chris Remkes was in the school’s senior gym program from 2008-09 and won a gold medal for vault at the recent Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. Andrew Cordery, the school’s gym coach and PE teacher, was a judge at the Games.

The school is committed to supporting community sporting groups with groups such as soccer, cricket, basketball, Zumba, martial arts and Little Kickers able to use the school’s facilities throughout the year. These groups also include 2017 gymnastics club of the year, Alpha Gymnastics, which offers gymnastics programs to toddlers through to adults.

“Ascot Park offered us a great environment to start our specialised sporting club. The school has a great facility and we are

lucky enough to be able to use it to provide gymnastics to over 200 community members each week,” said Andrew Cordery, director of Alpha Gymnastics.

Ascot Park principal, Julie Hibell, believes that family life has changed dramatically over the years with us leading busier lives and the influence that technology has on how we spend our time. “Children need to be able to participate in a range of physical activities confidently, competently and creatively. Participating in sport and spending time outdoors help children better regulate their emotions, learn to work with others and develop their confidence and resilience,” said Julie.

Ascot Park Primary School has plans to further increase physical activity and community engagement with the construction of a nature playground and community garden due to commence in August, thanks to the school’s successful application for funding through the Government of South Australia Fund My Neighbourhood program.

For more information about the school or the specialist sport program please phone 8276 3055 or email dl.0340.info@schools.sa.edu.au



SIMS FARM AT CLEVE AREA SCHOOL

Imagine being a full time student and having the opportunity to learn the skills needed to be a farmer by actually managing a broadacre farm. Senior school students at Cleve Area School have enjoyed this opportunity since 1975.

Sims Farm, which is Cleve Area School's training farm, is South Australia's largest school based farm and is the only commercially operated, stand-alone farming business of its type in the state.

Originally Sims Farm was the family farm of Thomas Sims who settled in the Cleve District in the late 1800s. The farm, 401 hectares in size and located five kilometres east of Cleve, was subsequently inherited by Gordon Sims who gifted the farm on his death in 1960 to the State of South Australia for the purposes of research and education. The farm was taken over by Cleve Area School's agriculture faculty in 1975 and has been continuously managed by school staff and students ever since.

The farm's business plan incorporates broadacre wheat, barley and oat cropping, legume pastures and grain legume production. Hay production, when seasonally possible, is an important long term strategy. Sims Farm is noted for its sheep enterprises, with a self replacing Merino flock and a prime lamb enterprise being highly valuable aspects of the farm business.

Sims Farm is a busy learning site, with an emphasis and philosophy of hands-on learning central to its function. Senior school students can choose a range of study pathways to suit their intended career. These include a Certificate 2 in Agriculture undertaken as either a VISA or Training Guarantee for secondary schools, or a Certificate 3 in Agriculture associated with an Australian School Based Apprenticeship in Agriculture.

Central to students' learning is the Terry Hampel Agricultural Skills and Trade Training Centre. This building incorporates a purpose built state-of-the-art shearing shed, agricultural workshop and conference room. In addition to school based curriculum delivery, Regional Skills Training and TAFESA regularly deliver units of competency using the farm's resources. Dedicated automotive and machinery maintenance trainers, V-Tech, also utilise the farm's workshop, conference room and homestead accommodation to deliver relevant workshops to both school based and adult apprentices, predominantly from rural farm and vehicle dealerships.

Cleve Area School offers its agricultural courses to secondary students from across the state, with boarding facilities available on a five day and seven day basis. Students come from



CLEVE AREA SCHOOL

CERTIFICATES IN AGRICULTURE
Educating our future farmers

- S. A.'S LARGEST SCHOOL BASED, COMMERCIALY OPERATED FARM - SIMS FARM.
- SPECIALIZING IN MINIMUM TILLAGE CROPPING, WOOL AND PRIME LAMB PRODUCTION.
- GAIN HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE VIA CERTIFICATES IN AGRICULTURE AND RURAL PRODUCTION.
- 'STATE OF THE ART' AGRICULTURAL SKILLS AND TRADE TRAINING CENTRE.
- CONFERENCE CENTRE, TRADE TRAINING CENTRE AND SIMS FARM HOMESTEAD AVAILABLE FOR HIRE TO SCHOOL AND FOR PRIVATE FUNCTIONS.
- BOARDING FACILITIES AVAILABLE.

For more information phone 08 86282 104 or visit www.cleveas.sa.edu.au

all points of the compass and all bring their own special skill sets and attitudes to a vibrant and enthusiastic student cohort. Boarding students contribute greatly to the sporting and social life of the Cleve District.

Our agriculture faculty prides itself on the provision of training across a broad spectrum of academic and practical competencies for students embarking on a career in agriculture. The school has a record and reputation for training its students to the level of being work-ready or with the knowledge and skills to enter tertiary agricultural education.

The agriculture course uses local farmers as an off site learning resource and students participate in a station camp held biennially where arid rangeland sheep production can be compared with that in the sheep/cereal zone.



'A day in the life' of an agriculture student could comprise broadacre crop establishment, fencing and water supply, sheep management operations, shearing, crutching, wool classing and tractor and machinery operation. Academic pursuits consist of agricultural management and production offered as SACE Year 11 and Year 12 subjects.

Integral to the course is participation in out-of-school agricultural competitions and events. The school is represented at the Royal Adelaide Show Interschool Merino wether competition; a win at the 2016 Royal Show amongst 33 competing schools was an exciting reward for effort. Similarly, students won awards at this year's National merino challenge (an initiative of Australian Wool Innovation attracting students from agricultural high schools across Australia including Tasmania).

Sims Farm is historically significant, with the farm's centrepiece 'Dingle Dell' available for accommodation. Built in 1913, the

homestead is state heritage listed and has been fully restored by the Sims Farm Operations Association. It offers bunk style short or long stay accommodation for school study groups, workshop participants or private individuals.

The farm is also home to a range of native flora and fauna, including over 60 bird species some of which are migratory or endangered. Of particular interest are a pair of majestic wedge tailed eagles and the endemic Eyre Peninsula Blue Gum.

Sims Farm is a significant source of community pride. Though completely self funded it also gratefully acknowledges the generous support of over 50 sponsors.

Visitors and prospective students are always welcome and are invited to contact Aleks Suljagic (Course and Agricultural Vocational Education Coordinator) or Julie Wetherall (Sims Farm Secretary) at Cleve Area School on 86282104.



MARTIN WESTWELL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
SACE BOARD OF SA



SACE UPDATE

The publication in April 2018 of the Gonski 2.0 review *Through Growth to Achievement: Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools* has sparked a great deal of debate about education in Australia. Much of the media discussion has centred on the academic performance of Australian students compared to other nations, and the proposed shift to using learning progressions to monitor student growth.

Now that the initial flurry of activity has died down, I have taken the opportunity to reflect on the 140 page report, to see where the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) and the SACE Board of SA sits in relation to the report's 23 recommendations.

I am proud to say that much of what the Gonski 2.0 review envisaged for the future of education, particularly senior secondary education, is already occurring in the SACE, which is great news for our students. We have already put into place many of the suggestions the report recommended long before it was published.

One of the report's key talking points was ensuring every student had the skills and knowledge to navigate a rapidly changing world by the time they have finished their schooling.

The report talked about the need to weave general capabilities into the curriculum to enable students to develop the ability to apply knowledge and skills in varying and complex circumstances. It also discussed how general capabilities should be at the core of our curriculum and teaching practice.

We have already recognised the importance of general capabilities and have seven key capabilities embedded into every SACE subject. These are:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and communication technology capability
- Creative and critical thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Ethical understanding
- Intercultural understanding

Through these capabilities, we are providing a qualification that prepares students for life, teaches them to be agile and innovative thinkers and equips them with the skills they need to be successful in today's global world. Importantly, if our young people can show us they can use their discipline knowledge to express their creative and critical thinking, in ethical ways and in doing so demonstrate their personal capabilities and intercultural understanding, we can be more confident they will be able to deal with whatever life may throw at them.

We are continually renewing our certificate and are currently undertaking an extensive process to redevelop more than 60 SACE subjects. But we are not undertaking this process in isolation. We work with the education community and industry to ensure the content of each subject is contemporary and relevant.

The flexibility of the SACE's curriculum also ensures there are plenty of pathways for students to take, from university or vocational training, through to the workplace. They can develop practical skills and the hands-on learning they need for a chosen career.

The Gonski 2.0 review highlights that South Australia is on the right track. We have a world class education system that is preparing our students to be confident and resilient learners.

LONG DAY CARE SETTINGS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS

Registered teachers work in a range of contexts from early childhood to senior secondary school, with each environment presenting its own unique set of challenges. While there has been a great deal of focus on school testing and school funding recently, there is also a growing understanding of the importance of early childhood education, particularly as the demands of the Australia workforce require parents to maintain employment with limited periods of parental leave. Research has shown that quality early childhood education has a positive effect on cognitive, emotional and social competence in middle childhood and adolescence, and that the demands on the intellectual, social and emotional practice of the teacher are just as stringent as those placed on teachers of older children.

The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) works to support children's education and care by providing guidance, resources and services for governments across Australia. This includes implementing the National Quality Framework (NQF) that provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care, and outside school hours care services (OSHC) nationwide. The NQF operates under the *Education and Care Services National Law 2010* (National Law) and *Education and Care Services National Regulations* (National Regulations). These prescribe, among other elements, the legal obligations of approved providers and educators.

While qualified early childhood teachers have been employed in preschools/kindergartens in South Australia for several decades, early childhood long day care settings were not required to employ teachers prior to the introduction of the National Law. From 1 January 2014 early childhood long day care settings were required to employ appropriately qualified early childhood teachers. These teachers were also required to hold



PETER LIND
REGISTRAR, TEACHERS
REGISTRATION BOARD OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA

teacher registration (or a Special Authority) with the Teachers Registration Board. The basis for this change comes from the knowledge that highly qualified educators, particularly early childhood teachers (ECTs), make a measurable positive impact for children attending these services. These positive benefits accrue through the quality of educator engagement, planning and programming with the intended result being improved educational and developmental outcomes for children.

The introduction of registered teachers into early childhood education settings was designed to be implemented over several years to allow educators and services time to comply with the new requirements. The final stage in the changes will come into effect from 1 January 2020. This stage will require providers of centre based early childhood services to have an additional ECT or other suitably qualified person in attendance. This does not alter educator to child ratios, however services will be expected to have one more part time highly qualified educator in attendance when more than 60 children under school age are in attendance and an additional full time early childhood teacher or other suitably qualified person when more than 80 under school age children attend.

All teachers need to have enthusiasm and passion for children and young people in their care and ensure their learning needs are met. Caring and supportive learning environments run by professional educators that promote optimal early childhood development are vital in assisting all children achieve the best possible learning outcomes. The intent of higher educator qualifications in early childhood services is to improve the educational and developmental outcomes for children attending these services and to promote continuous improvement in the provision of quality education and care services.

DISABILITY POLICY AND PROGRAMS PARENT FORUMS

Since November 2016 the Department for Education has held parent forums to build a stronger connection between parents, carers and the department. The forums have provided an opportunity for parents with children with disability to be listened to, share their experiences and discuss their views. The department has benefited by having a more insightful understanding of the impact of policies, procedures and programs has on families. The forums also give the department an opportunity to share their initiatives, demystify policy and procedure trails and keep our community informed and consulted.

The initiative was developed under the auspices of the Disability Policy and Program directorate and the leadership of the Director Ian May as a community consultative forum. From small beginnings it has grown into a robust meeting of parents, carers, department personnel and service providers once a term.

The topics raised and presented have been generated from parent phone calls and letters to the department. As the numbers and interest of participants grew, a parent forum reference group was established. The parent forum reference group aims to support the planning of the parent forums and identify issues or topics to be addressed. The parent forum reference group is accountable for:

- fostering collaboration
- maintaining at all times the focus on the education and care needs of children and young people with disability.

Five energetic and committed parents representing a cross section of the community were appointed. They are all on a journey with their children at different stages in their learning path from junior primary, primary and secondary levels of schooling in a variety of settings including mainstream, special class, special school and disability unit. The group meet regularly to support the planning of the forums.

The initial forums were held at the Education Development Centre but have since moved to Fulham Gardens Primary School performing arts centre co-located with the Special Education Resource Unit. This change of venue has provided the parents with the opportunity to gain more support for their as they can visit the resource centre meet and seek advice from the teachers and borrow resources while attending the forums.

The parent forum format has given parents and carers a time to meet with others, between 9.30 am and 2.00 pm, to discuss, workshop and provide advice in a safe environment. Topics that have been presented in the March and July forums have included:

- Grievance procedures
- Inclusion
- Select Committee Report on Access to the South Australian Education System for Students with Disability
- Enrolment and transition
- Disability standards for education
- Health support planning
- The impact of NDIS on education programs
- Inclusive school design
- One child one plan
- Dyslexia
- Autism
- The draft behaviour policy
- Special Education Resource Centre
- Funding model changes to how funding is provided to preschool and schools for children and students with disability
- Department update
- Conductive education

The focus of the forum in March was 'inclusion' with the premise that South Australia aims to be 'an inclusive education system for every child that is world class'.



Inclusion through a child's eyes was portrayed by four parents all members of the parent forum reference group. Each told their children's journey in education from a child's perspective. Their visions were captured through videos, photographs, interviews and enactments and were challenging to listen to, but inspiring and thought provoking. The parent's presentation was so moving and perceptive that it was presented at the recent expo for educators. Their response was overwhelming as captured in the following feedback.

Fantastic hearing the perspectives of the families.

I enjoyed the reinforcement of parents being their child's expert and therefore they need to be included in the educational journey.

The diversity of what inclusion can look like. How to support our parents and children to voice their needs?

The parents presentations and snapshots of information and videos are accessible on the Special Education Resource Unit (SERU) website web.seru.sa.edu.au. Further events connected to the parent forum are also shared from this site and provide an opportunity for parents from the country or far metropolitan areas to access information which could be shared in their local school or preschool community.

Cheryl Bauer, Chief of Staff, Office of the Minister for Education opened the July forum and reiterated the Minister's vision for our education system to be the best in the country. Ms Bauer highlighted some key directions including parent engagement, initiatives for supporting literacy, numeracy and dyslexia. Questions were taken from the floor with a commitment to follow them up. As one parent wrote "Enjoyed the succinct, current clear presentation by Cheryl Bauer and her promise to take a complaint to the Minister".

A snapshot on the Team Around the Child was presented by David Fourmy to provide parents with a perspective to support their communication and interaction with personnel when planning their child's education and coping with the complexity of lives and services at home, at school and in the community.

Parents had requested information and clarification about the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the inter-connect with education. A thought provoking topic, as parents want to gain a greater understanding of their entitlements and expectations. Presenters from Department of Human Services, Child Youth Service and provider engagement of National Disability Insurance Agency delivered an overview and listened to questions.

Another first step for the parent forum is the planning of a parent learning conference proposed for September this year, with participants at the forums sharing their ideas about topics,



presenters, venues and themes that would support their own learning in their journey with their child. The idea is to have parents bring their child's teacher or support person to the conference and share their learning together.

The following quote from one of our parents involved in the forums really encapsulates the purpose and need for the forums.

The forums allow an open platform to provide feedback and be heard regarding issues or concerns, and highlight student experiences with disabilities or additional learning needs. But it's not all about what's wrong with the system, the Forums are a place to highlight what is working really well in some schools and share ideas. It is a place to hear updates on programs and policy and have a say about these in practice. They are a way to collaborate to build a better system for all students. Information is provided, ideas discussed, stories are shared, tears are shed.

Personally we have had a long journey with the department and involvement in the forum has made me feel like promising steps are being taken towards a brighter future for students with disabilities and additional learning needs and parents and carers are helping this happen by being involved.

More information is available by emailing Education.DPP@sa.gov.au.

**ELIZABETH BARBER
DISABILITY ADVISOR, DISABILITY POLICY AND PROGRAMS
DIRECTORATE, SA DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION**

2018 VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE ONE-OFF GRANT PROGRAM

Applications for the Department for Education's Volunteers Make a Difference one-off grant program opened 12 February 2018 and closed 9 March 2018.

A total of 185 applications were received from across 60 Education partnerships that identified support for over 6,000 volunteers.

The Volunteer grant program provided over \$100,000 to support and equip 175 department schools, preschools and children's centres to purchase equipment, deliver training, activities or events to recognise or attract volunteers, and support Aboriginal people as volunteers.

Successful schools, preschools and children's centres received funding for resource, training and equipment through the fund such as:

- KidsMatter training to volunteers so they can learn how to support healthy child development and recognise and help children who may be at risk
- purchasing of gardening equipment to help volunteers work safely and minimise risk of injury while gardening
- training for volunteer coordinators to attend a workshop on managing and measuring the value of volunteers
- the purchase a new pie warmer for use by canteen volunteers allowing them to do their job in a safe manner.
- catering to host a monthly gathering to encourage and support Aboriginal contribution and voluntary participation at the school
- delivery of wellbeing and resilience training to volunteers
- create an Indigenous garden for Aboriginal parents to be involved in setting up, maintaining, and helping deliver Indigenous bush food talks to students about the plants and what they're used for.



From Department for Education. Volunteer Unit, Engagement and Wellbeing

Is your child's future important to you?

We know meetings can sometimes be boring but... WE NEED YOU

so why not join our
Executive Committee?

You may be surprised about what you learn
and how you can contribute

For more information contact SAASPC

Telephone 1800 724 640

Email info@saaspc.org.au



Online safety: what every parents should know

- When** 22 August 2018
10.00am-2.30pm
- Where** 163 Greenhill Road Parkside
- Speakers** Sonya Ryan, Carly Ryan Foundation
on *Keeping children safe online*

Helen Connolly, Commissioner for
Children and Young People SA on
Children and bullying

Department for Education,
Engagement and Wellbeing Term
on *Policies and approaches
to bullying*
- Cost** There is no charge to attend and lunch
will be provided; but registration
is essential



To register go to www.saaspc.org.au and click on the link

Enquiries to SA Association of School Parent Communities (SAASPC)

tel 1800 724 640 or email info@saaspc.org.au