



Government of South Australia

Department of Education and
Children's Services



The South Australian Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program

Overview and Guidelines 2009

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INTRODUCTION TO THE EARLY YEARS LITERACY AND NUMERACY PROGRAM

Improving literacy and numeracy outcomes for all learners is a priority for the South Australian government.

The 2004/05 State budget allocated an additional \$35 million over four years for schools and preschools for the Early Years Literacy Program.

The vision is that all children are competent communicators and effective participators. This can be enabled through effective literacy and numeracy teaching and learning.

The South Australian Strategic Plan 2008 – 2009

<http://www.stateplan.sa.gov.au/>

has updated and added targets that relate specifically to literacy.

They are

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY

EARLY CHILDHOOD

T6.2 Early childhood – Year 1 Literacy (new):

By 2014 achieve a 10% improvement in the number of children reading at an age appropriate level by the end of Year 1.

EDUCATION

T6.12 – Year 3 (existing – modified):

By 2010, 93% of students in Year 3 to achieve the national benchmarks in reading, writing and numeracy.

T6.13 - Year 5 (existing – modified):

By 2010, 93% of students in Year 5 to achieve the national benchmarks in reading, writing and numeracy.

T6.14 – Year 7 (existing – modified):

By 2010, 93% of students in Year 7 to achieve the national benchmarks in reading, writing and numeracy.

T6.18 – Aboriginal education – early years (new):

Increase yearly the proportion of Aboriginal children reading at age appropriate levels by the end of Year 1.

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program is a proactive, intervention initiative focussing on improving the literacy skills, dispositions and outcomes of all young children leading to the achievement of these targets. It will, of necessity, achieve more than this if South Australian children and students are to maximise their opportunities to participate in their current and future environments.

Children without the literacy skills and abilities to read, write, use language and understand its meaning in a range of contexts will struggle to realise their true potential and capabilities.

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program provides resources, professional learning and materials to assist educators to increase children's literacy engagement and achievement.

There is a range of effective literacy and numeracy practices occurring in our schools and children's services. The program is building on these and assists early years educators to:

- reflect on the challenges presented by current research
- make decisions about the best ways to optimise the achievement of all learners through effective, inclusive literacy and numeracy pedagogy
- meet the needs of particular learners at particular times through the most effective intervention strategies.

Site leaders have a key role to play in ensuring that there is cohesion within their sites in implementing this program and developing a strong culture of improvement in relation to literacy and numeracy teaching and learning.

The Early Years Scheme that follows on from the JP 160 program has included reduction of class sizes for all categories of schools. In 2007 the allocation of extra teachers in year 3 has been factored into the program. This resource has become an important link with the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program.

In 2009 the program includes the prior initiatives as outlined above.

This document provides a reference point for optimising resources. It is complemented with information that is being provided through professional learning, program updates, information sheets curriculum resource materials and the program website www.earlyyears literacy.sa.edu.au.

AIM OF THE EARLY YEARS LITERACY AND NUMERACY PROGRAM

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program aims to improve literacy and numeracy engagement and achievement for all children in all schools and preschools. It provides a consistent focus for early years literacy and numeracy in South Australia.

PRINCIPLES

The following principles guide the implementation of the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program, the design of resource materials and professional development, and the work in schools and preschools.

- A whole site and system approach to improving literacy and numeracy learning outcomes is a continuous and revisited

process, guided by contemporary research, effective practice and analysis of data

- High expectations for all, and sufficient time and focus, lead to increased engagement and achievement
- *Assessment for learning* and *of learning* is essential
- Educators are skilled professionals who continue to learn in supportive environments
- Parents and educators have different but complementary roles in supporting children's learning
- Consistency and coherence in improving literacy and numeracy outcomes is a shared responsibility across DECS
- Engagement and responsiveness to diversity are keys to effective learning
- Effective learning is optimised in balanced and contextual learning programs.

These principles relate to those principles that already guide our work with young children in early education and care services in South Australia. ***See Appendix 1***

POLICY CONTEXTS

Common and agreed goals for schooling have established a foundation for action among the different levels of government within Australia.

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program is one strategy that contributes to the achievement of the national goal relating to all students having

- *attained the skills of numeracy and English literacy; such that, every student should be numerate, able to read, write, spell and communicate at an appropriate level.*

The National Literacy and Numeracy Benchmarks clarify minimum

standards for literacy and numeracy achievement in Australia.

The draft National Agenda for Early Childhood gives prominence to

- *greater opportunities for early learning experiences from birth and improved access to quality formal early learning settings*
- *higher levels of literacy and numeracy and reduced educational inequalities.*

Both of these initiatives highlight the need to act so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children have the same life opportunities as other children, have equitable access to, and opportunities in schooling, and that their learning outcomes, over time, match those of other students.

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program pays particular attention to this issue through targeted professional development and resources. For further information about the Aboriginal 3 Year Old Resource **See Appendix 2**

The South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework (SACSA)

The SACSA framework provides the DECS policy context for literacy and numeracy in the early years. The following page provides an overview.

THE EARLY YEARS LITERACY AND NUMERACY PROGRAM AND SACSA

SACSA defines literacy as

the ability to understand, analyse, critically respond to and produce appropriate spoken, written, visual and multimedia communication in different contexts.

Literacy focuses on language conventions, text genres, literacy processes and critical literacy.

Literacy in the Early Years

Children read, listen to and view a range of texts to identify some ideas, events and information. They compose texts with some related ideas, understanding that texts are constructed to represent real and imaginary experiences.

This includes such learning as:

- Making connections between words/symbols and their meaning in relation to specific ideas and experiences
- Explaining, describing and discussing events, feelings and ideas, and posing questions
- Using several strategies for selecting and responding to texts
- Selecting and sequencing information for several purposes
- Using some strategies to compose texts, including spelling strategies and conventions of punctuation and grammar
- Expressing meaning in a range of communication modes (print, oral, visual, graphic)
- Demonstrating a beginning awareness of audience and purpose using some context-specific vocabulary
- Understanding that texts include information intentionally selected by authors.

Literacy in the Primary Years

Students read, listen to and view an increasing range of texts to identify specific information about less familiar topics. They plan and compose structured texts, recognising that all texts represent particular versions of events and experiences.

This includes such learning as:

- Identifying and interpreting features of texts in a range of modes
- Integrating several strategies for critically interpreting information from texts

- Identifying, describing and recording observations and findings
- Experimenting with the structures and features of texts to increase their effectiveness
- Identifying and examining how language is used to express cultural meanings
- Using a range of strategies for composing texts including some drafting and editing skills
- Composing texts that include interrelated ideas and information about familiar and some unfamiliar topics
- Using symbols, maps, models and flow charts to describe information
- Demonstrating an increasing awareness of audience and purpose in text construction
- Understanding and using the conventions of some text types

South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability framework 2001

SACSA defines numeracy as

the ability to understand, critically respond to and use mathematics in different social, cultural and work contexts.

These understandings relate to measurement, spatial sense, patterns and algebra and data and number. Children's learning in mathematics enables them to explore the relationships between different mathematical ideas and apply mathematical understandings to their learning in all learning areas.

Numeracy in the Early Years

Learning mathematics is an engaging and active process. The Mathematics learning area aims to develop in all children, capabilities to:

- Understand the social and work purposes, uses and practices of mathematics and how these relate to each other and shape futures

- Understand and use mathematical language in creative and critical ways – both terminology and symbols
- Be confident users of mathematics who choose appropriate and accurate means of exploring the world and conducting their lives
- Gain pleasure from mathematics and appreciate its fascination and power
- Appreciate that mathematics is a dynamic field with roots in all cultures
- Apply their mathematics learning to other learning areas, to life in the wider community, to the virtual community and in accessing further education and training.

The Developmental Learning Outcomes, Curriculum Standards and the Key Ideas are key reference points for ensuring that literacy features across the curriculum.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND CONCEPTS

Consistency

Statewide consistency with local application is a key concept of the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program.

Consistency will be achieved in a number of ways.

- Using a common definition of literacy and numeracy
- Applying the common principles
- Using a common conceptual template for addressing all aspects of literacy and numeracy
- Ensuring that all program design elements are covered within a site
- Using School Entry Assessment **See Appendix 3**
- Using a common instrument (running records) for data collection about year 1 and year 2 reading levels
- Using the Program Design Elements Resource material

package to guide practice through the identified key concepts.

Local application will achieve in-site consistency and will involve educators choosing a variety of resources to fit: for example:

- the purpose
- individual learner
- group
- nature of community
- age of children
- site type (e.g. integrated, preschool, school).

Program Design Elements

The links between contemporary research, policy and practice have been explored in designing the program. In 2004 a number of prominent academics from the fields of literacy, numeracy and early childhood education provided advice which has continued to be used to shape and fine-tune the program's implementation. Lessons have also been learnt from other education systems in Australia. Recent research and curriculum projects carried out in our schools and children's services also informed this work.

Bringing together this knowledge has led to five program design elements

- Effective teaching and learning for young children
- Effective use of evidence and data
- Whole site commitment and focus
- Professional learning and leadership
- Working within community

These elements are relevant across both preschool and school settings but will be applied differently. Each site's priorities in relation to a focus on all five elements are to be identified in the Early Years Plans.

Effective teaching and learning for young children

Sound early learning, including literacy and numeracy learning, is built on what children know and how their competence is extended, allowing for children's different developmental pathways. Successful early learning programs combine understanding of the cultural, social, and personal purposes and functions of literacy within authentic contexts of play.

First-hand experiences and play, as well as explicit teaching of reading and writing skills, are important as children come to understand the new culture of schooling and its specific demands and discourse.

A strong relationship exists between children's early language skills and later reading abilities.

High expectations of all learners to make progress, given sufficient time and support, as well as persistence are essential characteristics of literacy and numeracy teaching and learning. Positive outcomes for young children are linked to adult-child interactions that involve 'sustained and shared' talking time, open-ended questioning and ongoing feedback during activities.

Specific one-to-one interventions are essential for those learners who do not progress as expected by Year 1. Interventions are most successful when they are linked to sound classroom teaching programs which incorporate a range of strategies, without relying on only one method or set of resources.

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program will provide advice about recommended strategies as well as intervention approaches.

These will include resources currently used in teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and ESL learners.

Effective use of evidence and data

Effective teaching and learning programs are evidence-based. Data will provide insights about teaching and learning emphases so that educators can make sound decisions and articulate reasons for choosing particular teaching and assessment strategies.

Data comes from a range of sources including children themselves and family members. It will provide information about what children bring to learning situations as well as what they gain from them. Detailed systematic and ongoing profiling of each child's literacy progress needs to be undertaken to finely tune the teaching to each learner's needs.

Evidence about children's learning can be documented in a number of ways ranging from illustrative and narrative strategies to specific assessments that may be norm-referenced and provide quantitative data as a measure of progress or to aid diagnosis. The Statewide Literacy and Numeracy Tests' results are an important part of the data jigsaw.

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program professional development and resource materials will outline the evidence for particular teaching and assessment strategies.

Schools will be asked to collect data about reading levels for Year 1 and 2 children by taking running records; an assessment process already in place in many South Australian schools. Baseline data was sampled early in 2005 and data collected thereafter each year. This data will provide one indication of the effects of the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program and will assist planning in sites and at a system level.

Whole site commitment and focus

A key factor in strengthening literacy and numeracy achievement is consistency within a site, devoting sufficient time and focus to literacy and numeracy without disconnecting it from other parts of the curriculum is important. Site leaders have a key role in ensuring cohesion within their sites in implementing this program and developing a strong culture of improving literacy and numeracy teaching and learning. Developing common understandings of literacy and numeracy in all its aspects, discussing and resolving issues, identifying the most effective practices within the site, posing critical questions about daily practice, and collecting and analysing data can centre attention to guide future planning.

All educators have a role in formulating, monitoring and evaluating the Early Years Plan for the site and contributing ideas about how resources are allocated to the agreed site priorities.

Whole site commitment also means informing and involving the Governing Council in planning for the best use of available resources.

Professional learning and leadership

The nature of literacy and numeracy is changing as society changes. Tried and tested ways of teaching will be combined with new aspects to ensure that children's skills are useful in today's and tomorrow's world. The new program will build on the excellent practice already present in many schools and centres in South Australia. Professionals, educators and leaders can use their new knowledge to benefit learners.

Professional learning associated with this program will occur in various ways. All Preschool to Year 3

teachers will be attending core literacy sessions each year and will also participate in a range of other planned activities. These activities will relate to the site priorities as outlined in the Early Years Plan, and range from learning very specific technical skills to conducting research into their own practice.

Some schools also will have teachers who undertake more intensive professional development programs such as the year-long Reading Recovery teacher training.

The work of mentor teachers is centred around collegiate learning – joint problem-solving, coaching, applying new teaching techniques and analysing strategies for their effectiveness.

Working within community

Long before they enter a formal education setting, children take the first steps towards literacy and numeracy within their families and communities. Because of familial and cultural differences, children bring a diversity of knowledge and experience with them to any new setting. Educators have the responsibility to build on this learning. Knowing the community and its resources is crucial if the school or preschool is to be an integral and respected part of the community.

Parents and educators each hold complementary perspectives and knowledge about children and can bring these together to optimise individual children's learning. Sharing information about children's styles and preferences, providing knowledge about how children learn to be literate and numerate and ways this can be supported, and working together more intensively on family programs are some examples of how this can be achieved.

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program provides learning

opportunities for sites to undertake innovative approaches to working with families and communities.

Resource materials have been developed in 2006 sharing strategies used in schools, preschools and child care centres (as part of the *Learning Together* project).

These resources are based on the best of South Australian research and experience, national and international research and other successful literacy programs and are available at

www.earlyyears literacy.sa.edu.au

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR LITERACY

Reference points

Freebody and Luke's work on the four interrelated roles of a reader is used by many South Australian educators to plan a print based literacy curriculum. This work includes a focus on code breaking and meaning making or comprehension while also adding two important aspects: text analyst or text critic based on critical literacy; and text participant or text user based on the work of the genre theory and ways readers participate with different text types.

Code breaker: *How do I crack this code?*

This involves the activities related to the alphabetic code, punctuation, high frequency words and vocabulary.

Meaning maker: *How do I comprehend this text?*

This involves all the activities that focus on comprehending the text, as well as illustrations, to gain knowledge and understanding from the text.

Text user: *What is the function and form of this text?*

Here the text user is involved in activities that help analyse the particular purpose of the text, its form and language features.

Text critic: *What does this text want me to feel, do or think?*

This involves a critical awareness of the intent or purpose of the text.

Durrant and Green have suggested teachers use a 3D model to conceptualise a technology, literacy and numeracy curriculum. The 3D model has three integrated dimensions: operational, cultural and critical.

The **operational** dimension involves technical competence and knowledge in ICT: how to 'turn it on', make it 'work', open files and documents, or use the internet or email.

The **cultural** dimension involves understanding how texts and technologies do things in the world and how they are used for our own and others' purposes, either in school or everyday life. The focus is on both making meaning from texts and creating texts that make meaning for others.

The **critical** dimension involves understanding that there is no one universal truth and in any story or any curriculum what is told and studied is selective.

A multiliteracies perspective from the New London Group places a focus on the following:
situated practice, overt instruction, critical framing and transformed practice.

Situated practice: How and in what way do multiliteracies relate to children's interests, lifeworlds and local communities?

Overt instruction: What language and teaching is required to communicate the operational uses of texts and technologies?

Critical framing: How do learners develop a critical stance in which to view a text in relation to its context and understand how texts position the text user?

Transformed practice: How are learners developing and designing texts using the skills and processes embedded in one task, then identifying and using them again in another task?

The new literacies that children of today engage with are multimodal — visual, auditory, interactive and fast moving. It is not a question of print based versus digital literacies, but a recognition of both- multiliteracies.

The Multiliteracies Map

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program has drawn on the work of a recently completed DECS/ University of South Australia research project *Children of the New Millennium; What can young children do with ICT?*

Using the theoretical constructs mentioned above, this project developed a **Multiliteracies Map** that has four dimensions:

The **functional** dimension involves technical competence and 'how-to' knowledge.

The **meaning-making** dimension involves understanding how different text types and technologies operate in the world and how they are used for our own and others' purposes. The focus is on the function and the form of texts to make meaning.

The **critical** dimension involves understanding that there is no one universal truth in any story and that what is told and studied is selective.

The **transformative** dimension involves using what has been learned in new ways and new situations.

Core professional learning will continue to elaborate on these dimensions. Opportunities for educators to be involved in further expanding them to relate to practical aspects of spoken, written, visual and multimedia communication have been prepared.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Educators are critical in making a difference to children's learning outcomes.

Effective early years literacy and numeracy educators have:

- a sound understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of effective literacy and numeracy practice
- understandings and abilities to integrate literacy and numeracy across the curriculum
- the ability to teach specific skills and support the development of dispositions essential for ongoing literacy and numeracy development
- a commitment to developing new knowledge that enables them to keep abreast of contemporary pedagogical approaches.

Aims

- To ensure a consistent statewide focus.
- To engage all early years educators in preschools and school in increasing their own knowledge and skills about contemporary, inclusive literacy and numeracy pedagogy (incorporating both teaching and assessment)
- To improve practices in relation to each of the elements of the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program.

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program provides 3 TRT days for every classroom and pre-school centre teacher for each of the three years of the program.

In order to ensure consistency there is an expectation that all teachers

will participate in core professional learning and will commit to the equivalent of at least three days each year for professional learning that supports the implementation of the program. The priorities in each site's Early Years Plan will help to determine each teacher's participation.

Leaders have a key role in ensuring that all early years teachers are enabled to participate in professional learning.

The model

Professional learning for this program for educators in preschools and schools is being provided in a number of ways.

There will be *core* learning throughout the program. This learning covers the essential aspects of the program, the design elements and the multiliteracies map which will support the consistency of approaches across preschools and schools. All teachers who are provided with the TRT resource are expected to participate. Leaders also are encouraged to participate with their staff teams wherever possible.

The core learning will be delivered differently according to the nature of the districts and will take into account local issues such as availability of relief staff.

In 2005 the introductory core session covered program overview and design, planning and practicalities. During the program additional introductory core sessions will continue to be provided for new teachers and those returning to teaching.

In 2006, 2007 and 2008 core learning continues to address the five program design elements in more detail and extend the introduction to the multiliteracies map. District based professional learning activities related to the

program design elements are being convened according to identified needs as determined through site and district plans and other needs analysis processes.

Cluster or network based professional learning that relates to the program design elements and the multiliteracies map may also be supported by the use of the TRT resource.

A statewide professional learning program on the particular requirement of the program for running records is being made available during 2006, 2007 and 2008.

Individual site based professional learning activities that focus on program design elements and the multiliteracies map may be supported by using the TRT resource and closure days.

Professional learning consists of a range of approaches, from learning a set of technical skills (eg how to administer an assessment instrument) to undertaking a process of collaborative inquiry about a priority aspect of the site's early years literacy plan.

Specialised professional learning

Reading Recovery Training

Each year schools will be invited to nominate one or more teachers to participate in the year-long intensive Reading Recovery program. There will be a limited number of training places available for this program of fortnightly contact sessions. A selection process will be undertaken and the program guidelines as internationally agreed will be used. The two trained Reading Recovery Tutors will run the program. This training will be provided at the purpose built Reading Recovery Centre at Clapham Primary School.

Professional learning for mentor teachers

Specialised professional learning is being provided for all mentor teachers. This covers aspects of mentoring and coaching and other ways of working as well as in depth literacy learning. Schools with mentor teachers are being provided with further details about this professional learning that is shared between centrally coordinated activities and district coordinated activities.

Facilitator training

Educators have opportunities to become facilitators in running records and mapping multiliteracies. This training provides the educators to work with teachers to offer professional learning further supporting the key literacy understandings in reading and contemporary multimodal concepts. Further information about these opportunities are available from District Co-ordinators and Project Officers in the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

Teachers received resource folios when they attended the introductory core professional learning session in 2005.

Additional resource materials focussing on key aspects of program design elements have been developed and are being distributed to schools and preschools during 2006 and 2007.

An Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program website is available at www.earlyyears literacy.sa.edu.au to extend and supports the print resource materials for the design elements.

ONE TO ONE INTERVENTION

The effects of one to one and small group interventions are maximized

when they are planned and carried out in concert with a well designed classroom or centre program and with all educators who are involved working as a team.

Specialised interventions related to early literacy are required for any number of reasons and at various points in a child's learning.

Through the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program funding is provided to schools for one to one interventions for year 1 children who are assessed as requiring particular interventions as they have not yet acquired literacy levels as anticipated and are having difficulties.

Schools are required to make local decisions about the types of interventions they use for individual children.

READING RECOVERY

Reading Recovery is a major strategy of the DECS Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program and schools are strongly encouraged to consider how they can use Reading Recovery programs as their methodology for one to one targeted intervention for Year 1 children.

Schools may want to explore several possible options to include a Reading Recovery component in their Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program, using the additional funding provided for one to one targeted intervention for Year 1 students

- Identify a teacher to undertake training during 2008
- Many schools may have a previously trained Reading Recovery teacher on staff who is not currently delivering the program. Re-training programs (based on individual needs) can be negotiated to support these teachers if schools now wish to establish a program.

Smaller schools may wish to consider collaborating to train a teacher who can provide support over two or three schools. Schools considering this option are encouraged to discuss possibilities with a member of the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program Team to ensure all options are investigated.

The Reading Recovery Program guidelines based on international requirements for delivery of the program are located on the website <http://www.earlyyears literacy.edu.sa.au/>

MENTOR TEACHERS

Schools in disadvantage categories 1 – 4 with three or more junior primary classes are eligible to identify a mentor teacher and receive a funding allocation to provide release time. Schools that are eligible for this funding have been notified of their allocation for 2008.

School based mentor teachers

- work alongside classroom teachers, providing pedagogical support to improve quality of literacy teaching and learning
- support effective whole school planning and literacy teaching
- are supported by targeted state wide professional learning to ensure consistent high quality practice.

Funding for the mentor teacher resource is calculated on the cost of 40 weeks TRT days according to the site's allocated time.

Depending on the site specific allocation, larger schools may elect to identify more than one mentor teacher to work with their colleagues.

Schools determine the best way of using this resource, e.g. the mentor teacher may work with particular teachers for concentrated blocks of

time or spread the support evenly across the year.

The mentor teacher works with their colleagues by modelling effective literacy pedagogy, assisting with identification of children needing specific interventions, co-planning teaching, learning and assessment programs, initiating action research involving cohorts of learners and increasing understanding and use of literacy benchmarks and literacy outcomes in the SACSA framework.

In most instances mentor teachers are selected from within school staffing allocations, according to their demonstrated literacy knowledge and expertise.

The mentor teacher role is not a leadership position and therefore a panel process is not required.

State wide professional learning is identified for mentor teachers during each year of the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program. This includes aspects of mentoring as well as literacy teaching and learning.

The allocation of mentor teachers is intended to achieve the following outcomes

- Enhancement of teachers' repertoires of early literacy practices
- Deeper understanding of outcomes relating to literacy, early years learning and the SACSA framework
- Increased support for early years teachers in meeting the needs of identified learners
- Better analysis of data and monitoring student learning
- Improved home/school links and strategic community partnerships

The role of mentor teachers is to

- Collaborate in the development, implementation and monitoring of effective classroom programs and pedagogy
- Support systematic collection and analysis of performance data: child, class, whole school

- Make informed decisions, in collaboration with school leadership team, about 'impact' and 'coverage' in working with early years colleagues
- Work alongside class teachers, enabling them to retain responsibility and accountability for planning for student learning.

A mentor teacher should NOT be used as withdrawal, relief or NIT provider.

A mentor is:

- A role model
- A challenger
- An encourager
- Teacher and coach
- Approachable
- A receptive listener

The qualities of an effective mentor include:

- Credibility and experience
- Knowledge, skills and competence
- Commitment
- Appropriate interpersonal skills
- Communication skills
- Patience, sensitivity and perceptiveness.

ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

School Entry Assessment (SEA) will continue to be used by schools to document children's progress after 10 weeks following enrolment.

It will

- assist educators to identify what children know, understand and can do in relation to literacy and numeracy and aspects of early learning that lead to success
- enable teachers to plan programs based on that knowledge
- point to more in-depth assessments and diagnostic strategies that might be needed for some children.
-

DATA COLLECTION

In order to gain an indication of the success of the program, data will be collected in reading levels of year 1s and year 2s using running records as the assessment instrument. Many schools are already using this process. Professional learning in using running records will be provided for all year one and two teachers.

Baseline data has been collected from a sample of schools in 2005 for year 1s. In 2006 running record data was collected from over 18,000 year 1 and 2 children.

RESOURCE ALLOCATION FOR PRESCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS

All schools and preschools received information in 2004 regarding their indicative funding allocation. This was provided separately from the 2005 resource entitlement statement because of the high profile for this new program. In 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2009 all schools and preschools receive actual funding allocation advice through their Resource Entitlement Statement (RES).

The funds have been allocated to sites on the following basis for 2009.

One to one targeted intervention for Year 1 children

Allocative mechanism: An allocation based on Year 1 cohort.

3 days professional learning for Preschool to Year 3 class based teachers

Allocative mechanism: 3 TRT days per year for each class/centre based teacher, Preschool to Year 3

Mentor teacher allocation to support literacy pedagogy

Allocative mechanism: Category 1-4 schools only, with 3 or more JP classes.

Aboriginal 3 year old funding

Allocative mechanism: Preschools that have significant numbers of Aboriginal 3 year old children enrolled (average term 2 & 4 2008)

Aboriginal Literacy Grant

Allocative mechanism: Preschools and Child Parent Centres with Aboriginal 3,4 and 5 year old children enrolled (term 1 census 2008)

In addition to the allocations to sites specific funds have been allocated towards program support and coordination for:

- Reading Recovery tutors, enabling specialised training of additional Reading Recovery teachers
- Early Childhood Initiatives Coordinator to each district to support the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program as well as providing leadership for important work with young children and their families
- The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program team to coordinate the program, with its supportive resource materials and professional learning activities.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Site leaders are accountable for the effective use of resources provided for the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program.

Preschools and schools are being provided with their targeted resources subject to whole site planning – the development of an Early Years Plan, part of the Site Learning Plan, which documents:

- planned improvement targets based on available data/ evidence
- specific actions taken at each site to improve effective literacy and numeracy teaching and learning for young children
- collection and use of data to support planning and programming

- outcomes achieved as a result of actions
- allocation of resources as specified to achieve planned targets.

The Early Years Plan is due to be completed by end of term 1 in each year of the program. This plan sets yearly directions with built in annual review as part of a planning cycle. It is expected that agreement between the site leader and District Director will be reached and that the chair of the Governing Council is kept informed and involved. Progress made in relation to the Early Years Plan forms part of reporting to the community.

Support for the development of an Early Years Plan can be accessed through District coordinators. The Early Years Plan and some examples are provided on the program's website.

Schools and preschools have been provided with a reporting format for the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program as part of the broader DECS annual reporting process.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

One of the principles underpinning this program is shared responsibility for improving literacy and numeracy outcomes.

The different roles played by people in different part of DECS act together to make this possible.

In preschools and schools

Directors and Principals ensure that the Early Years Plan is developed, monitored and reported with staff involvement, and with Governing Council kept informed. They ensure site wide action to achieve improvements as identified in the plan, and keep the District Director informed about progress. They take steps to enable all early years'

teachers participate in core and targeted professional learning.

In many schools key literacy and numeracy leaders lead site improvements through professional learning, interventions and program implementation.

In district offices

A number of resource people exist in district offices to support program implementation.

The District Curriculum Advisors and the Early Years Initiatives Coordinators play a key part in providing information and facilitating professional learning.

District teams are working through existing district leadership structures and processes to identify and act upon emerging priorities and areas for action. This includes keeping the Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Team informed of district trends that in turn inform program design.

In central office

The Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program team is responsible for the overall program coordination and statewide leadership. Team members work closely with districts to coordinate and provide professional learning. They promote the program and publish curriculum resource materials.

Over the life of the program other central office units will take responsibility for resource allocation and data collection and analysis.

Educators, site leaders and parents have inspiring stories to tell and are already involved in district activities in sharing their ways of working. They are valuable resources in the implementation of this program, in professional learning as well as contributing to related resource materials.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR 2009

- Mentor teachers identified by schools by week 1, term 1
- Resource allocation for 2009 confirmed early term 1
- Mentor teachers' professional learning to commence during, term 1
- Early Years Literacy Plans to District Directors and signed off by end term 1
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- Key dates for entry of running record data into EDSAS for 20098-
 - Thursday April 9th – term 1 optional data collection
 - Friday September 25th – term 3 universal data collection
 - Running record reports are due in sites by the end of week 3 in terms 2 and 4
- SEA data collected for every reception child in reception after 10 weeks at school.

CONTACTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program Team

	Telephone	email
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Reading Recovery Tutors: Joan Hobbs Judy Keillor	0422 005 071 0428 210 389	hobbs.joan@saugov.sa.gov.au keillor.judy@saugov.sa.gov.au
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Director, Early Learning & Curriculum Gerry Mulhearn	8226 4096	mulhearn.gerry@saugov.sa.gov.au

For district specific information contact your Early Childhood Initiatives Coordinator / District Curriculum Advisor.

Guiding principles of our work with young children

These guiding principles have been developed with input from early years educators from sites, district offices, state office and delegates at the Our Children, the Future Conference. They provide a guide for all early childhood educators in their work with young children (Birth to Age 8). A commitment to the principles will be visible in our actions and interactions and in our daily work with children.

1 Children have rights, entitlements to a voice of their own and have intrinsic value in themselves as well as in being members of society.

2 Children's families, communities and cultural and social experiences are central to their development and learning.

3 Respectful connections with families foster partnerships to promote children's health, learning and wellbeing.

4 Recent research indicates that children's early social and emotional experiences critically influence early brain development and function with enduring consequences.

5 Connections between thought and language are securely laid down in the early years. Children's capacities to learn are enhanced by thoughtful language-based interactions.

6 Warm, responsive relationships are critical for a child's current wellbeing and ongoing harmonious development and contribute to later nurturing relationships and successful outcomes for individuals and society.

7 Children's development is holistic and integrated and involves different pathways and occurs at different rates.

8 Outcomes for children are maximised when persistent delays and interruptions to their learning and development are identified early and appropriate interventions are in place.

9 Children are active learners, constructing their knowledge, meanings and understandings through interactions in their physical and social worlds.

10 Play is fundamental to children's learning providing opportunities for children to express their ideas and feelings and engage in explorations, imagination, experimentation and manipulation.

11 Fostering positive and robust dispositions, such as autonomy, responsibility, interdependence, optimism, resilience and the enjoyment of learning, contributes to children's success as learners.

The South Australian Early Years Literacy & Numeracy Program

Aboriginal 3 Year Old Resource Information & Guidelines

2009

www.earlyyears literacy.sa.edu.au

The **Aboriginal 3 year old resource** is a component of the Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) **Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program**.

Learning from research

Research informs us that substantial difference occurs in children's literacy learning when:

- families are supported and are able to connect with the centre and staff
- children have greater opportunity to receive additional support and attention
- home environments and values of the children and their communities are included in their learning.

Aboriginal children's language development

Children bring to the early childhood settings the language/s and cultural understandings of their homes, families and communities. The resource supports children's language development in General Australian English and respects the Aboriginal English that children bring with them.

This is an important opportunity build upon prior learning and to extend our understandings around the way we make a difference for Aboriginal children's learning.

Planning and accountability

The Aboriginal 3 year old resource allocation and per capita funding is a component of the DECS Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program and is therefore accountable to DECS for planning and reporting

The centres design and develop their Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Plan by using the learning from the research component in conjunction with the Early Year Literacy design elements of

- effective teaching and learning
- effective use of evidence and data
- whole site commitment and focus
- working within the community
- professional learning and leadership

Centre Directors are expected to keep governing councils and management committees informed about the resource. Centres will be expected to included information about the use of the resource in their Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Plan and any systemic reporting.

The resource has two distinct and related funding components of 0.8 literacy teacher allocation and per capita funding for centres

10 CENTRES WITH A .8 LITERACY TEACHER

Since 2005 ten centres have received funding to support an additional 0.8 FTE teacher (0.6 direct child contact and 0.2 for professional learning and research). This allocation is based upon an average enrolment of eight or more 3 year old Aboriginal children.

The centres that have been allocated this resource are:

Minya Bunhii Child Care and Kindergarten (Ceduna)

Port Lincoln Children's Centre

Murray Bridge South Kindergarten

Kaurna Plains Preschool (Elizabeth)
Kalaya Children's Centre (Queenstown)
Kaurna Plains Child Care Centre (Elizabeth)
Christie Downs Kindergarten
Flinders Children'/TjiTji Wiltja Children's Centre (Pt Augusta)
Whyalla Stuart Early Childhood Centre
Kura Yerlo Child Care Centre (Largs Bay)

The intended outcomes of this resource are:

- reducing the child: staff ratio
- building upon the learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 3 year olds
- providing additional professional learning and research opportunities
- recognition of current effective practices
- developing sustainable teaching and learning approaches to support the literacy learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Research Component

Practitioner research component for these ten centres

The centres use the DECS Observation Instruments to inform inquiry based learning. These instruments focus on 4 variables of curriculum quality; the active learning environment and relationships and children's wellbeing and involvement. Early childhood sites (birth- 8 years) involved in early learning and curriculum projects including the Aboriginal 3 year old resource have been using the DECS Observations Instruments.

Sharing the Learning

The 10 centre centres present their learning journeys to colleagues including stories of significant change with evidence of the use of the DECS Observation Instruments.

ABORIGINAL 3 YEAR OLD RESOURCE FOR PER CAPITA CENTRES

Current information for 2009

Based on the previous year's census data centres with Aboriginal 3 year old enrolments have received per capita resource. This will support centres to build relationships with families and to engage in processes that make the connections between community and home literacies, preschool experiences and children's literacy learning. Centres will use the funds to increase opportunities to access additional community resource people and programs. *The resource cannot be used to purchase materials.*

The allocation will be reviewed annually for these centres. The management of this allocation at a centre level needs to take into account the cyclic nature of the allocation which is tied to enrolments of the previous year.

The intended outcomes of this resource for the per capita centres are:

- reducing the child: staff ratio
- building upon the learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 3 year olds
- providing additional professional learning
- recognition of current effective practices
- developing sustainable teaching and learning approaches to support the literacy learning of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Sharing the Learning

The per capita centres share their learning journeys to colleagues including stories of significant and evidence of improved learning outcomes for children

For further information: Margaret Sankey

Early Years Literacy and Numeracy Program Manager

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Appendix 3

School Entry Assessment (SEA) 2009

SEA remains as the expected assessment for children on entry to school – with the assessment undertaken during their first term at school.

SEA is a nationally recognised early years assessment tool that;

- is of and for learning
- includes literacy and numeracy data
- is aligned to SACSA
- supports educators to report learners' achievement towards SACSA Standard 1.

The intensive analysis and work conducted in the ELAM trial will inform development of a revised educator resource and associated professional learning.

At present the data entry process is under review.

From 2007

- information for educators - will be available on line.
- only the learner record books will be available in print.

For copies of the learner record please contact

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In 2009 central and district personnel will be coordinating further professional learning opportunities about SEA.