DECD Governance Framework 2016-2018

Summary

The Governance Framework is provided to clearly articulate the vision and values of the department and the principles of good governance. The Framework outlines the key elements that determine, influence or shape decision making and it articulates the authorities under which these are made.

Table 1 - Document details

Publication date	1 July 2016
File number	16/09805
Related legislation	All Acts and regulations applicable to DECD are identified in the Governance Framework
Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	All DECD policies, procedures and guidelines are referenced in the Governance Framework
Version	3.0
Replaces	Update 2.0
Policy officer	Manager, Strategy and Governance
Policy officer	8207 2194
Policy sponsor	Director, Office of the Chief Executive
Executive responsible	Senior Executive Group
Applies to	All DECD staff
Key words	Governance, Framework, Corporate Governance, Site Governance, Governing Councils
Status	Final
Approved by	Senior Executive Group
Approval date	28 April 2016
Review date	April 2017

Table 2 - Revision record

Date	Version	Revision description
December 2014	2.0	Revised and updated framework
April 2016	3.0	Major review

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Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development

1. Title

DECD Governance Framework

2. Purpose

This document defines governance for Department for Education and Child Development (DECD). The purpose of this document is to clearly articulate the vision and values of DECD and the principles of good governance. The Framework outlines the key elements that determine, influence or shape decision making and it articulates the authorities under which decisions are made. The Governance Framework contributes to DECD's strategic plan priority: Build a better system by establishing a whole-of-department integrated governance framework.

Whilst the revised Framework describes principles and elements which will drive improvement focused on high quality customer service and accountability as well as meeting our legislative and corporate obligations, it is acknowledged that significant reform work continues. In this ongoing reform environment the Governance Framework will continue to evolve to reflect our core service delivery drivers, our strategic priorities and our structural alignment.

3. Scope

The Framework applies to all DECD staff and non-staff representatives on governance committees.

4. Detail

4.1 Vision

The DECD Strategic Plan 2014-2017 sets out DECD's vision for *a high performing system that improves the educational attainment and wellbeing of South Australia's children and young people.* Decisions made at the corporate, partnership, site and service level are founded on this vision. To enact this vision and ensure department wide alignment to it, business and operational plans at all levels of the department will be developed in accordance with the planning cycle articulated in the DECD strategic management cycle.

4.2 Values

Under the authority of the Public Sector Act 2009 all DECD employees will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector and are required to comply with the Code. As a department we embrace the values that are the foundation of ethical behaviour in the South Australian public sector and the values and standards of professional conduct set out in the Code including:

- Professionalism
- Service
- Collaboration and engagement
- Sustainability
- Courage and tenacity
- Trust
- Respect
- Honesty and integrity

In order to uphold these values, as per the Senior Executive Group (SEG) decision of 21 May 2015, it is mandatory for all DECD employees to complete the online course developed by the Office for the Public Sector. Executive and site leaders are responsible for monitoring and compliance of completion of online training; implementation of the Code in performance and development planning and communication of the Code and its requirements in local work places.

In South Australia, the Children's Protection Act 1993 requires certain organisations to put in place policies and procedures to establish and maintain safe environments for children. A commitment to the safety of children and young people is embedded in our department's values and culture, reflected in our policies and procedures and understood and practiced at all levels of the department.

In addition, the SA Government has committed that all agencies will gain workplace accreditation as a White Ribbon organisation. DECD is working towards achievement of accreditation as a White Ribbon organisation and is committed to encouraging greater understanding, knowledge and action around the prevention of violence against women.

4.3 Definition

DECD adopts The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) *Public Sector Governance Better Practice Guide* (June 2014) definition of Governance:

> *The set of responsibilities and practices, policies and procedures, exercised by an agency's executive, to provide strategic direction, ensure objectives are achieved, manage risk and use resources responsibly and with accountability.*

4.4 Governance Principles

DECD will govern itself using the nationally recognised ANAO best practice governance principles:

- **Legal and policy framework** – *Appropriate knowledge of overarching legislation better positions individuals within the organisation for effective planning and implementation of programs and services.*
- **Performance orientation** – *A clear understanding of how outcomes and achievements will be measured and assessed and a willingness to engage with risk to foster innovation.*
- **Openness, transparency and integrity** – *Appropriate levels of openness, transparency and integrity are required to ensure stakeholders have confidence in public sector decision making.*
- **Effective collaboration** – *Engaging effectively with others to achieve mutual benefits.*
- **Strong Leadership and Culture**– *Strong leadership, at all levels of the organisation is essential to achieve outcomes and maintain a high standard of conduct consistent with public expectations.*

These principles are implicit in the following described elements.

4.5 Governance Elements

The Governance Framework has been designed around six inter-related elements that describe responsibilities and roles for all areas of the department. The elements articulate the mandated positions under which DECD must operate to ensure consistency of practice and good customer service delivery that is the foundation of the Public Sector Values and the vision for *a high performing system that improves the educational attainment and wellbeing of South Australia's children and young people*.

The elements and principles inherent in them, are designed to support high quality delivery of education and care services.

Element 1: Legal and Authorising Environment

DECD operates under a legislative framework in which decision making is based ultimately on legislation. In addition there are a number of other mandates that determine how we govern and make decisions. All staff must develop an understanding of this environment and commit to enacting, legal and mandated requirements appropriate to their specific roles.

Our Legal and Authorising Environment includes mandates for appropriate action arising from:

- 4.5.1.1 Legislation
- 4.5.1.2 Delegations and Authorisations
- 4.5.1.3 Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and National Agreements
- 4.5.1.4 State Memorandum and agreements that impact on governance
- 4.5.1.5 Premier and Cabinet Circulars and Treasurer's Instructions
- 4.5.1.6 State Strategic Plan / seven strategic priorities
- 4.5.1.7 DECD Strategic Plan and Families SA Service Plan
- 4.5.1.8 Election and Governor's Speech commitments
- 4.5.1.9 Royal Commissions / Coroner's recommendations / external reviews.

4.5.1 Legislation

Section 5(7) of the *Public Sector Act 2009* requires public sector agencies to:

- Implement all legislative requirements relevant to the agency.
- Properly administer and keep under review legislation for which the agencies are responsible.

The Minister for Education and Child Development and the Minister for Child Protection Reform have ultimate responsibility to implement and administer powers under the various Acts and Regulations assigned to their portfolio. In many cases these responsibilities are delegated to the Chief Executive. As the Ministers' responsible agency, the Chief Executive and the department are charged with implementing the Acts tabled in the supporting documents section (p. 24) of this Framework.

The Minister for Health and Ageing has also delegated powers and functions under the Health Care Act 2008 to the Minister for Education and Child Development in an instrument of delegation dated 15 December 2011. The instrument of delegation operates in relation to a program of activity known as the *Child and Family Health program* delivered by the Women's and Children's Health Network. See Governance element 2, (p. 14) for further detail.

Further detailed advice on legislative responsibilities under each of the Ministers' Acts is also provided in the DECD Ministers' and Chief Executive's Legislative Responsibilities document

4.5.2 Delegations and Authorisations

Delegations and authorisations are formal documented processes that establish who is empowered to make decisions and to take specific actions within the department, based on legislation.

Position statements specify the delegated powers that are entrusted to an officer. Delegations and authorisations are an important source of authority for staff to do their work. The proper use of delegations and authorisations is vital for good decision making in DECD.

Line managers will ensure all staff are informed of the delegations and authorisations for their role from their first day of the employment as part of the induction process. All staff are accountable for ensuring they are aware and act and make decisions in accordance with their delegated authority.

The [Delegations intranet page](#) outlines categories of delegations and authorisations used in DECD and include the following policies and guidelines that prescribe requirements for authorisation:

HR management delegations guidelines

DECD procurement governance policy

Financial authorisation policy

Relevant corporate offices maintain delegations and must ensure they are updated annually and/or in line with changes to relevant legislation. Changes to delegated authorities must be approved by the Chief Executive.

4.5.3 COAG and National Agreements

There are a number of National, multilateral and bilateral agreements and memoranda that Ministers, through COAG and Education Ministers agree to from time to time. These set out joint policy and program areas that are binding and require implementation, monitoring and reporting.

The Office for Strategy and Performance has lead responsibility for the administration of COAG and National Agreements. Further advice about these should be sought from that office: 8226 4355.

4.5.4 State Memorandum and agreements

There are a number of intra and inter-government Agreements and Memoranda that the Ministers' or Chief Executive agree to enter into from time to time. Formal agreements may, amongst other things set out joint policy and program areas, decision making authorities for practice, monitoring and compliance and/or funding arrangements. Memoranda are informal agreements which are designed to outline the intention of the parties including but not limited to policy and program areas, decision making, consultation and authorities for practice. All Memorandum and Agreements must be drafted in consultation with DECD Legal Services Directorate. Relevant corporate offices maintain these agreements and are responsible for effectively communicating the requirements of agreements to impacted staff. Impacted staff are responsible for enacting obligations under the agreements.

4.5.5 **Premier and Cabinet Circulars** and **Treasurer's Instructions**

Premier and Cabinet Circulars and Treasurer's Instructions are used to communicate matters of whole of Government policy, resource management and issues of strategic importance to the State. Circulars and Instructions are binding and require implementation and monitoring as per individual stipulations. The relevant corporate office is responsible for effectively communicating the requirements of circulars and instructions to impacted staff. Impacted staff are responsible for enacting obligations under the circular or instruction.

4.5.6 South Australia's Strategic Plan / seven strategic priorities

The Chief Executive is responsible for general duties established in Division 3 of the *Public Sector Act 2009* ("the PS Act"). Specifically, this refers to each Chief Executive's responsibility for:

- making an effective contribution to the attainment of the whole-of-government objectives that are communicated by the Premier or the agency's minister.

Whole-of-government objectives are outlined in the South Australia's Strategic Plan. DECD is accountable for a number of South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP) targets including implementation, monitoring and reporting on progress.

Alongside the SASP are the SA Government's seven strategic priorities. Implementation, monitoring and reporting on progress against the priorities relevant to DECD is a DECD corporate responsibility.

4.5.7 DECD Strategic Plan and Families SA Service Plan

The DECD Strategic Plan and Families SA Service Plan authorise decision making at the corporate and site level. They also determine the planning and operational responsibilities of the agency. This is further articulated in the planning element - 4.5

4.5.8 Election and Governor's Speech commitments

At the 2014 State Election the Government made a series of commitments to the South Australian people. In addition at the opening of Parliament 2015, the Governor of South Australia made a series of commitments that the Government must enact. DECD has lead responsibility for 56 commitments in total. The commitments are binding and require resource allocation, full implementation and monitoring and reporting of progress against the commitment.

Implementation, monitoring and reporting on progress of all commitments is a DECD corporate responsibility.

4.5.9 Royal Commissions / Coroner's recommendations / external reviews

From time to time there are commissions and external reviews that make recommendations about the policy and practices of DECD. Recommendations arising from these, which are accepted by the government (Cabinet or Minister) require full implementation, monitoring and reporting. Responsible staff are accountable for ensuring policy and practice changes are effectively communicated to relevant staff and monitored. Relevant staff are responsible for enacting required policy and practice changes.

Implementation, monitoring and reporting on progress of all recommendations is a DECD corporate responsibility. A list of reviews and associated recommendations can be found here.

Element 2: Organisational Alignment

DECD was established in 2011 to bring together key functions of government that deliver services for children and their families. To manage the diverse and complex range of services provided through DECD the department is aligned as per the below model.

Our organisational groups are designed to ensure effective alignment of functions and operations for the delivery of high quality education and care services. It is also designed to provide clear lines of reporting and accountability to support appropriate, open and transparent decision-making.

Successful organisational alignment requires strong commitment from all of our leaders and a cascade of this commitment across the department. To achieve this, effective communication at all levels of the agency is required to ensure congruence and a clear line of sight from our Strategic plan to individual performance and development plans.
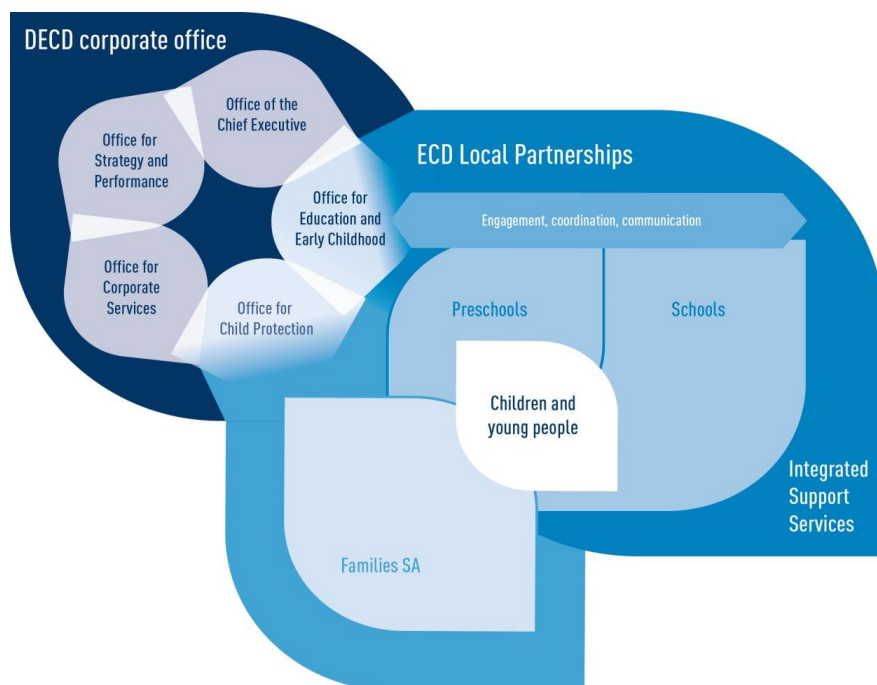
Organisational groups, with a cascading hierarchy of decision making, commencing with the Chief Executive include:

- 4.6.1 Corporate office
- 4.6.2 Families SA specialised metropolitan Hubs and country District Offices
- 4.6.3 Local Education Teams
- 4.6.4 Education and Child Development (ECD) Local Partnerships
- 4.6.5 Education Offices
- 4.6.6 Schools, preschools and Children's Centres
- 4.6.7 Governing Councils/School councils/Management committees
- 4.6.8 Child and Family Health Services

4.6.1 Corporate office

Corporate Office will provide the following decision making functions:
- developing and implementing strategic and operational policy for early childhood education and care, school education and child protection
- supporting and monitoring the achievement of statutory child protection obligations
- building and maintaining system infrastructure to enable effective delivery of services
- providing targeted corporate services
- planning investments and deploying resources
- monitoring and evaluating the performance of the system.

4.6.2 Families SA specialised metropolitan Hubs and country District Offices

Families SA specialised metropolitan Hubs and country District Offices will provide the following decision making functions:

Assessment and Support Hubs and teams who are responsible for:
- Initial investigation and assessment with families to assess their safety, risk and needs.
- Undertaking assessments and identifying appropriate supports and services for the family in the first instance.
- These teams deal exclusively with those under Investigation and Assessment Order or Voluntary Custody Agreements. Once other orders are made, the case must be transferred to Protective Intervention or Guardianship dependent on the type of order.

Protective Intervention Hubs and teams who are responsible for:
- Family Preservation and Reunification. Family Preservation teams work exclusively with families where the child remains at home and is an open child protection case. This occurs usually with or without a Supervision Order, extension of an Investigation and Assessment Order or a Youth Court Family Care Meeting agreement.
- Reunification teams work with those children on 12 month Care and Protection Orders with a view to reunite them with their family.

Guardianship Hubs and teams who are responsible for:
- Providing case management services to children under Guardianship in Out of Home Care; they deal exclusively with children on long-term Care and Protection Order under Guardianship of the Minister until they turn 18.

4.6.3 Local Education Teams
Local education teams will provide the following decision making functions:
- Identification, selection and recruitment of site leaders
- Educational leadership to all sites in partnership Birth-12
- Partnership improvement planning reflective of the organisation's strategic plan
- Leading sites through continuous improvement to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people.

4.6.4 Education and Child Development (ECD) Local Partnerships
ECD local partnerships will provide the following decision making functions:
- Building strong partnerships with the local community to support the education of children and young people
- facilitating collaboration between sites
- sharing knowledge and expertise between sites
- identifying and understanding the needs of children and young people
- developing strategies to meet children and young people's needs
- identifying opportunities to deploy resources to improve outcomes.

4.6.5 Education Offices – Integrated Support Services

The department has a range of provisions to assist children and students with disability or additional needs in preschools and schools. These services are delivered from offices spread across the State and accessed directly by schools and preschools. There are six distinct disciplines that make up the services distributed equitably across the state:

- attendance and engagement officers
- special educators
- educational psychologists
- behavior coaches
- social workers
- speech pathologists.

4.6.6 Schools, preschools and Children's Centres will provide the following decision making functions:
- delivering educational services
- improving teacher practice
- lifting educational outcomes
- implementing specific programs and initiatives
- ensuring the safety of students and employees
- managing site resources and infrastructure.

4.6.7 Governing Councils/School Councils/Management Committees
Site alignment is the joint responsibility of the relevant council/committee and the principal/preschool director. It is important to note that the functions, roles, powers and operational rules are different depending on the Act and associated model constitution. Further information is provided on the Governing Council portal.

Governing Councils will provide the following decision making functions:
- Setting the broad direction (in conjunction with the site leader)
- Developing broad directional Policy
- Initiating and approving recommendations and strategies
- Monitoring progress
- Reporting progress

School Councils are advisory bodies only and have limited role and functions. School Councils provide the following functions:
- Providing advice to the principal so as to strengthen and support public education in the community.

Preschool Councils do not operate under the same constitution and legislative requirements as those operating under the *Education Act 1972*. Preschools use the Preschool Model Constitution, under the *Children's Services Act, 1985.* Both Acts, through an approved constitution, incorporate a Governing Council and provide for the functions, roles, powers and operation of a Governing Council.

In the above three models site management and educational leadership is the responsibility of the principal and staff. It is not a part of the governing committees role.

4.6.8 Child and Family Health Services (CaFHS)

Child and Family Health Service are delegated to the Minister for Education and Child Development. With the exception of the Strong Start Programs, all employees are employed by SA Health. The State-wide Services and Child Development directorate supports the healthy development of infants and young children through the promotion and support of 'effective parenting' and provides information, support, services, interventions and links families to other community supports and providers. A Memorandum of Administrative Agreement (MOAA) between DECD and SA Health outlines the policy leadership of DECD, in partnership with the Women's and Children's Health Network, in the following decision making functions:

- Child and Family Health Services
- Parenting SA
- Early Childhood Intervention Program

Element 3: Policies and Procedures

DECD policies and policy instruments (procedures, frameworks and guidelines) provide guidance around the application of specific Acts and Regulations and the core business and objectives of the department. They are the department's evidenced informed position statement that guides decision making and practice. They will provide a concise and definitive declaration of the department's position and direction and mandate the requirements for the delivery of high quality education and care services.

All DECD staff are accountable for complying with policies, frameworks and procedures.

A guideline is a recommended course of action based on evidence-based best practice. Guidelines provide specific detail on matters that are the subject of legislation, regulation, policy or decision by agency executive and are discretionary.

DECD Corporate office, in collaboration with sites and services, is responsible for the development of all policies and policy instruments. These must be developed in line with the Policy Framework. The Policy Framework will clearly articulate the prescribed methodology and process for the development of policy and policy instruments. Only the SEG has the authority to initiate and approve policy and policy instruments.

Current policies and policy instruments are available on the Policies Intranet page and are searchable through the A-Z and advanced search function. The SEG has approved corporate office establishing a set of high level policies as per recommendations made in Change Priority Project 4 – Policies and Processes: *Establish a set of high level policies based on the business and core objectives of the department.*

Guidance supporting specific site level work practices to implement the policies and procedures will be provided in guidelines. Guidelines must be congruent with DECD policies, frameworks and procedures and are to be approved by the relevant Executive.

The corporate Central Policy Unit (CPU) is responsible for monitoring the policy register, providing advice to staff developing and reviewing departmental policy, and ensuring periodical review of the Policy Framework.

Specific advice about policy should be directed to the CPU: decd.policy@sa.gov.au / 8226 2895. For specific Families SA and Office for Child Protection policy advice please contact: decd:familiesservice_development@sa.gov.au.

Element 4: Governance Structures

A range of governance structures exist across the department to support evidenced based decision making and organisational alignment to our strategic vision and priorities. Appropriate committees support the Chief Executive to ensure there is provision for resourcing and support for effective delivery of the business and core objectives of the department. Committees also act to empower staff across the department and provide for accountability and setting and monitoring performance objectives for the department.

A common understanding is used to define the various forms of committee structures operating within the department. The four types of committee structures in DECD are:

- *Governance* – Directly supporting the Chief Executive or the SEG in meeting their roles and responsibilities.
- *Management* – Directly supporting a specific executive in meeting their roles and responsibilities.
- *Mandated* – Required by either legislation or government policy.
- *Discussion/Advisory/Reference* – provide input to the primary governance, management or mandated committees / groups.

Governance and mandated committees are described in this framework. Management and discussion/advisory groups will be further described in the DECD strategic management cycle.

Governance structures include:

4.7.1 Corporate Governance Structures
4.7.2 Partnership Governance Structures
4.7.3 School and preschool Governance Structures
4.7.4 Children's Centres Governance Structures
4.7.5 Child and Family Health Services Governance Structures
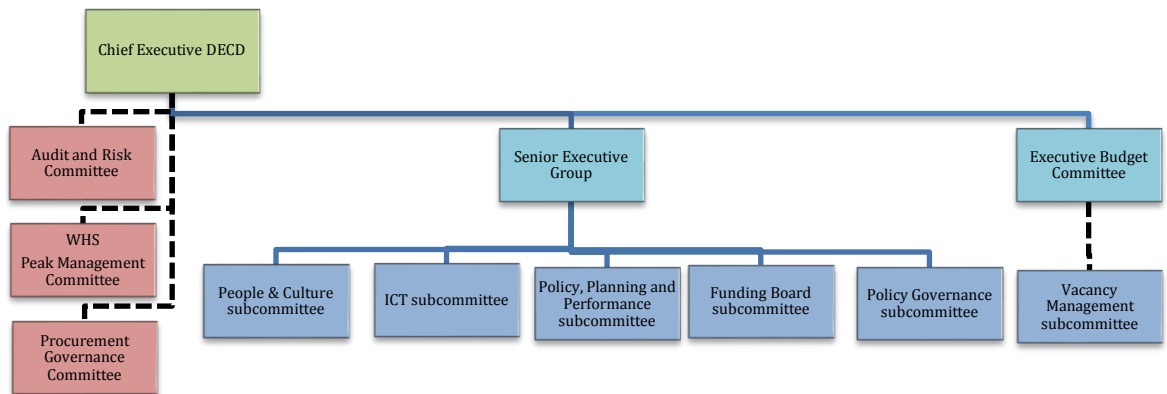
4.7.1 Corporate Governance Structures
DECD will establish corporate governance structures to support the Chief Executive in discharging his responsibilities. Corporate Governance committees will be formed at Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3.

Authority for establishing corporate governance structures
- Tier 1 committees may only be established under the authority of the Chief Executive and are established as the peak decision making groups for the whole department.
- Tier 2 committees may only be established under the authority of Tier 1 committees and are established as subcommittees to attend to specific strategic issues over a defined time to support the decision making of Tier 1 committees. The Chief Executive may approve additional Tier 2's by exception.
- Tier 3 committees may only be established under the authority of Tier 2 committees or the SEG (in the absence of an appropriate Tier 2 committee). Tier 3 committees are established as advisory and/or operational groups to support the work of Tier 2 committees.

The following diagram illustrates the current corporate governance and mandated structures supporting the Chief Executive's decision making.

*Key

Tier 1	
Tier 2	
Tier 3	
Mandated	

Other Corporate Governance Structures

Corporate Office Executive committees

Some corporate office groups also have an Executive Committee that supports their respective Deputy Chief Executive or Executive Director to set the strategic agenda and direction of their division within the Department's strategic agenda.

Boards

At the discretion of the Chief Executive short, medium or longer term Boards may be established to provide direction and advice to the Chief Executive and/or SEG. Terms of Reference for Boards must be approved by the Chief Executive.

Requirements for operating and maintaining corporate governance committees are articulated within the Terms of Reference of Tier 1 and 2 committees which are provided on the Governance page.

Terms of Reference for all corporate governance and mandated committees must be formulated in consultation with the Office of the Chief Executive to ensure consistency of governance practices across corporate office.

Naming conventions for corporate governance and management committees

Must reflect the following:

Governance committees:	Tier 1 – Senior Executive or Executive Group/Committee
	Tier 2 – Subcommittee
	Tier 3 - Advisory/reference group
Mandated committees:	(Title) committee
Management committees	Those directly supporting a specific executive in meeting their roles and responsibilities: Executive Management group/committee. Others: Management group

4.7.2 Partnership Governance Structures

All government preschools and schools are part of an Education and Child Development (ECD) Local Partnership. The key structure within the ECD Local Partnerships is a collective of geographically defined preschool and school sites and the communities they serve. There are 60 ECD Local Partnerships supported by 20 Education Director's. Each partnership has its own governance arrangements, appropriate to the local context. This typically includes a Chair, an Executive, a planning group and agreed expectations and decision-making protocols. Documentation regarding partnership structures is maintained by each partnership.

Local governance arrangements that support decision making connect back to corporate governance structures via Education Director's through line management to the Office for Education and Early Childhood.

Partnerships are supported in their decision making through an Interface function based in the corporate office. The Interface is responsible for filtering and guiding corporate activity so it remains focussed on supporting the work of schools, preschools and partnerships.

4.7.3 School and preschool Governance Structures

School and preschool sites have local governance structures in place in line with the Education Act 1972, the Children's Services Act 1985 and the Administrative Instructions and Guidelines 1985. Currently, local governance arrangements that support decision making connect back to corporate governance structures via site leaders through line management to the Chief Executive and governing councils' accountabilities to the Minister. The governing council structure is directed by the constitution and members are required to follow a code of practice

A typical governing council structure includes:

- Mandated committees: Governing councils must have a Finance Advisory Committee, and if a site has a canteen and/or Out of Hours Care program, or other service, a committee must be established to support the service.
- Subcommittees: established to assist the governing council carry out its function more effectively.

Some sites may also have Affiliated Committees, which can include Parents and Friends Clubs, Aboriginal Community Voice (formally Yurrekaityarindi) and Old Scholars Associations. Affiliated Committees operate under their own constitution and are separate governance structures to school and governing councils.

4.7.4 Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting Governance Structures

Governance arrangements for Children's Centres is designed to support collaborative decision making between partners, including relevant government agencies and non-government service providers, in the local community. Partners may include, but are not limited to, agencies such as SA Health, CaFHS, Local Council, Centre Care. Children Centres operate within existing legislation and requirements for each partner agency.

The overarching Partnership Group bring together agencies to work together by providing integrated services around the family and child. An interdisciplinary Leadership Team takes on collective responsibilities for integrated service deliver.

4.7.5 Child and Family Health Services Governance Structures

In an instrument of delegation of 13 December 2011 and under a Memorandum of Administrative Arrangement (2013) DECD has lead responsibility for policy direction, initiatives, outcomes and outputs related to Child and Family Health Services, Parenting SA and the Early Childhood Intervention Program. To support this work a Child and Family Health Integration Committee has been established comprising:

- The Chief Executive of DECD
- The Chief Executive officer of WCHN
- The Executive Director, State-wide Services and Child Development
- The Chief Operating Officer - WCHN

With respect to policy directions, initiatives, outcomes and outputs, the Director, Child and Family Health Program, WCHN will report and be accountable to the Chief Executive, DECD via the Executive Director, State-wide Services and Child Development. Employing authority and human resource powers remain the responsibility of WCHN.

Element 5: Planning and Risk Management

Planning

The department's purpose and direction is guided and influenced by the legislative and authorising environment outlined in Governance Element 1. These are managed through the development of strategic planning and management documents that outline key objectives, strategies and performance indicators and the budget planning cycle to support these. DECD has an integrated planning system that cascades from the department's strategic plan through to corporate, sites and services as well as individual personal development plans.

Planning, monitoring and reporting are interdependent. Reporting feeds back into the planning process which relies heavily on monitoring information to guide or map future departmental directions. This interdependent relationship is articulated in the department's strategic management cycle.

Planning is enhanced when change management and project management are being both used and integrated. An integrated approach increases the effectiveness of delivery and increases the chances that sustained change happens. DECD has adopted an evidenced based, system wide project management methodology. This is outlined in the [Project Management Framework]. It is recommended that all DECD Project Managers follow this methodology and use the resources within it for managing their projects.

Risk Management

DECD is committed to embedding risk management in all its operations and its business culture. Risk management is an integral part of the department's planning and management processes and an essential function of good governance. The department's effectiveness is enhanced when risk management is part of the department's culture and is embedded in its values, practices and business processes. The management of risks and opportunities is the responsibility of all employees including contractors, business partners and volunteers.

DECD complies with the [SA Government risk management policy statement] which makes departmental and agency chief executives accountable to their ministers for the development and implementation of a risk management policy and framework.

The [DECD Risk Management Policy and Framework] embeds risk management into the governance and practices of the department which maximises opportunities and manages uncertainties to achieve departmental objectives.

A range of planning tools (that incorporate risk management) exist across the department to support decision making at various levels of authority. Planning tools include:

4.8.1 DECD Strategic Plan
4.8.2 Families SA Service Plan
4.8.3 Strategic management cycle
4.8.4 Performance Development Plan

4.8.1 DECD Strategic Plan

The [DECD Strategic plan 2014-2017] provides the highest level planning tool for the department with all other plans cascading from its authority. It outlines the vision for what the department aims to achieve over the planning cycle, and describes the key priorities and strategies that will deliver on the vision. It guides decisions on allocating resources, including capital and people against each of the six priority areas:

- Higher standards of learning achievement
- Improve health and wellbeing
- Improve and integrate child safety
- Engage children, families and communities
- Right service at the right time
- Build a better system.

4.8.2 Families SA Service Plan

The Office for Child Protection has lead responsibility for the Strategic Plan priority; Improve and integrate child safety. The Families SA Service Plan sets out the aspirations, mission and service directions of Families SA staff to achieve this priority. The objectives and strategies within the plan form the basis for improved service delivery for the key activities of the agency including:

- Promoting the protection of children
- Responding to concerns of immediate safety
- Intervening protectively
- Supporting children in our care to thrive and develop
- Providing safe and quality services.

4.8.3 Performance Development Planning

Performance and development planning is an ongoing process that connects the work of all employees to organisational planning, strategic objectives and relevant performance standards through individualised planning, learning and accountability. Implementing a performance and development system is mandated by the *DECD Performance and Development Policy* and *Guidelines*. The Policy is underpinned by the **Education Act 1972** and the **Public Sector Act 2009.** Induction is a critical component of Performance Development Planning and critical to staff understanding the governance arrangements of the department. This will be implemented and monitored in a consistent way across the department as outlined in the People and Culture Strategy.

4.8.4 Strategic management cycle

The DECD strategic management cycle will provide a coordinated approach to connecting strategic planning, operational planning, performance reviews and the implementation of system reforms in connection with the DECD Governance, Risk, and Performance and Development Frameworks. Further, the strategic management cycle will establish an articulated and clear line of sight from the strategic plan through to the annual business plans and individual Performance Development Plans.

In addition to these planning tools a number of high level strategies and master plans are currently used or are in development to guide high level planning for specific strategic priorities of the department. Examples include:

- Asset Master plan
- ICT Master plan
- Teacher quality strategy
- Leadership strategy
- Communications Strategy

Element 6: Transparency and Accountability

Public confidence in DECD requires the department to be open about its policies, decisions, actions and achievements. This encompasses public accountability and reporting on activities and expenditure that support accountability to the Government and the South Australian community.

Information Management

Reporting of department information must comply with relevant state policy and, in some cases, federal legislation regarding the gathering, use and retention of personal information. This is articulated in the DECD Information Management policy which details requirements relating to:

- Information privacy
- Information sharing
- Information security
- Freedom of Information
- Records Management.

Public accountability

External audit and review
The department is subject to the external review processes, including those conducted by the SA Auditor-General, including financial and compliance, information systems and performance management systems audits. Ombudsman SA conducts audits, conducts freedom of information reviews, and supports and monitors the implementation of the *Information sharing guidelines*. In addition, parliamentary committees investigate specific issues, with a role in monitoring and reviewing public sector organisations against relevant legislation, or particular areas of activity.

Internal audit
Internal Audit provides independent and objective audit and advisory services across all areas of the department including corporate office, Families SA sites, schools, and preschools. In turn, this improves departmental service delivery by identifying improvements in risk management, control and governance processes, systems and practices.

Public reporting
The department participates in various national and state agreements and performance reporting activities that define required public reporting.

National reporting
South Australia has agreed to national performance reporting that encompasses the following elements:
- streamlined and consistent reports on national progress including:
  - an annual national report on the outcomes of schooling in Australia
  - the biennial COAG report on *Overcoming Indigenous disadvantage.*
- national reporting on performance of individual schools to inform parents and carers and for evaluation by governments of school performance (via the *MySchool* website).
- provision by schools of plain language student reports to parents and carers and an annual report made publicly available to their school community on the school's achievements and other contextual information.
- national reporting on performance in delivering services to promote family wellbeing and to protect children (via Productivity Commission Report on Government Services).
- national reporting on detailed statistical information on state and territory child protection and support services (via Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Child Protection Australia report).
- national reporting on measures for out of home care standards.

State reporting

DECD's public reporting at a state level includes:

- an agency statement as part of the State Budget processes.
- an annual report about the department's activities and outcomes for each calendar year, including progress towards South Australia's Strategic Plan, audited financial statements, human resources and statutory reporting.
- the DECD website.

DECD information must also be published regularly online including details about Ministerial and Chief Executive expenditure on credit cards, mobile phones, and overseas travel. This is required by Department of the Premier and Cabinet Circular *PCO35 Proactive Disclosure of Regularly Requested Information.*

Local reporting

- Annual reports for individual schools and preschools are required under the Education Act 1972. These must be published on the schools website.
- Annual performance development plan (PDP) review dates must be recorded in the HR management information system (HRS or CHRIS). More information can be found on the page about PDP recording in the HRS.
- Additional annual school and preschool reporting requirements are articulated in the Site annual reporting requirements

Performance Measurement

Measuring the performance of DECD as an organisation is another avenue for ensuring the department is accountable to the South Australian public. Performance is measured through a range of performance indicators at various levels of the department. These include:

4.9.1 Corporate performance measures
4.9.2 ECD Local Partnership performance measures
4.9.3 School and preschool performance measures
4.9.4 Financial compliance measures

4.9.1 Corporate performance measures

DECD has undertaken to implement Performance Reviews for all aspects of its business. DECD Strategy and Performance are currently devising the design and a set of recommended options to commence the Corporate Performance Reviews.

4.9.2 ECD Local partnership performance measures

System-wide performance reviews are carried out that report on performance in strategically important areas for our preschools and schools at the ECD partnership level. These are data-driven performance reviews and are linked to the strategic plan, our educational standards, and to four strategic objectives relating to proficiency and academic excellence in numeracy and reading, as well as student engagement. The reviews consider outcomes for all children and students from preschool through to secondary school. Performance is assessed against past results and focuses on improvement. A standard methodology is applied that identifies improvement, decline or no change against a baseline for each partnership or site, for each measure.

4.9.3 School and preschool performance measures

The DECD Improvement and Accountability Policy sets out the expectations for all DECD preschools and schools for quality assurance, and maximising each and every child and young person's learning through a process of continuous review, improvement and accountability. It clarifies the roles and responsibilities of preschool and school leaders in being accountable for clear, measurable improvement goals and plans against standards, effective planning, strategic intervention, evaluation and reporting through quality self-review processes to guide and monitor improvement and meet policy compliance requirements.

The National Quality Framework drives continuous improvement and consistency in Australian education and care services and applies to most long day care, family day care, preschool/kindergarten and outside schools hours care services. Under the Framework DECD early childhood services are assessed and rated against the National Quality Standard (NQS). Ratings are made public and promote transparency and accountability and help parents assess the quality of education and care services available.

Continuous improvement – school reviews

Over a 4-year period, all government schools will be externally reviewed against the question, 'how well does this school support student achievement, growth, challenge and equity? Schools will generally be reviewed every four years, however where greater improvement and support is required, a review may occur within one year. A high-level report is provided to each reviewed school and published on the school's website. In collaboration with the education director, the principal must develop an improvement plan that details the strategies and accountabilities to effectively implement the recommendations. The external review process is outlined in the DECD External School Review Improvement framework.

4.9.4 Financial management compliance framework

The Chief Executive has a responsibility to establish and maintain an appropriate internal control environment in accordance with Treasurer's Instruction 2 *Financial management*. The framework for financial management applying in the SA Public Sector has as its foundation the *Public Finance and Audit Act 1987*. The Act regulates the receipt and expenditure of public money and provides for auditing the receipt and expenditure of public money and for examination of the degree of efficiency and economy with which public resources are used. Treasurer's Instruction 28 *Financial management compliance program* requires a financial management compliance program to provide assurances with respect to those elements of the above framework that specifically relate to financial management.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Table 2 - Roles and responsibilities

Role	Authority/Responsibility for
Senior Executive Group and site management	Responsible for leading the application of this Framework to ensure DECD's legislative, strategic, ethical and financial obligations are met.
Senior executives	Responsible for developing a business plan to ensure that decisions made at the corporate, partnership, site and service level are made in line with the strategic plan vision and priorities.
Staff with line management responsibilities	Responsible for ensuring DECD staff are aware of and accountable for their responsibilities for compliance with the governance framework
Office of the Chief Executive - Strategy and Governance team	Responsible for monitoring implementation of the Framework, reporting on progress of implementation and reviewing the framework (in consultation with the SEG) in the ongoing reform environment to ensure it reflects our core service delivery drivers, our strategic priorities and our structural alignment.
DECD staff involved in managing or supporting DECD governance committee structures	Responsible for ensuring that the governance committees outlined in the Framework support the achievement of the Strategic Plan and DECD's operational objectives.
All DECD staff, Governing councils and mandated committees.	Responsible for compliance with the wide range of interrelated policies, procedures and frameworks referenced in this Framework which operate to drive and support good governance within DECD.

6. Monitoring, evaluation and review

- Monitoring of the implementation of the governance framework will be carried out by the Office of the Chief Executive
- The Governance Framework will be reviewed annually
- The review will occur in consultation with the Senior Executive Group
- The review will be led by the Office for the Chief Executive

7. Definitions and abbreviations

Table 3 - Definitions and abbreviations

Term	Meaning
ANAO	The Australian National Audit Office
CaFHS	Child and Family Health Services
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CPU	Central Policy Unit
DECD	Department for Education and Child Development
ECD	Education and Child Development
MOAA	Memorandum of Administrative Agreement
NQS	National Quality Standard
SASP	South Australia's Strategic Plan
SEG	Senior Executive Group

8. Supporting documents

Acts administered by the Ministers'

1. _Adoption Act 1988_ (SA)
2. _Adoption Regulations 2004_ (SA)
3. _Australian Education Act 2013 (Commonwealth)_
4. _Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Commonwealth)_
5. _Child Protection Review (Powers and Immunities) Act 2002_ (SA)
6. _Children's Protection Act 1993_ (SA)
7. _Children's Protection Regulations 2010_ (SA)

8. *Children's Services Act 1985* (SA)

9. *Children's Services (Appeals) Regulations 2008* (SA)

10. *Children's Services (Registered Children's Services Centres) Regulations 2003* (SA)

11. *Commission of Inquiry (Children in State Care and Children on APY Lands) Act 2004* (SA)

12. *Education Act 1972* (SA)

13. *Education Regulations 2012* (SA)

14. *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 (*SA)

15. *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Regulations 2011* (SA)

16. *Education and Care Services National Regulations (Commonwealth)*

17. *Family and Community Services Act 1972* (SA)

18. *Family and Community Services Regulations 2009* (SA)

19. *SACE Board of South Australia Act 1983* (SA)

20. *SACE Board of South Australia Regulations 2008* (SA)

21. *Teachers Registration and Standards Act 2004* (SA)

22. *Teachers Registration and Standards Regulations 2005* (SA)

23. *Teachers Registration and Standards (Elections for Board) Regulations 2005* (SA)

9. References

- Australian National Audit Office *Public Sector Governance – Better Practice Guide 2014*

- DECD acknowledges The State of Queensland (Department of Education, Training and Employment) *Corporate Governance Framework 2014 – 2018* which has been paraphrased in some sections of the Framework.