

Strategic Plan

2025-2028



Government
of South Australia



Every

young

South

Australian

counts

Acknowledgement of Country

Aboriginal peoples have made and continue to make a unique and irreplaceable contribution to South Australia.

The Child Development Council acknowledges and respects Aboriginal peoples of South Australia as the Traditional Owners and occupants of the lands and waters. We honour their rich cultural, spiritual and historical knowledge.



Foreword

Watching my three daughters grow up, I am reminded every day how important it is to listen to children and young people and to act on what they tell us.

The Child Development Council's Strategic Plan 2025–2028 shows how we can better understand and respond to the needs of young South Australians. Through improving data capability, sharing insights and listening to young people, we can make policy decisions that genuinely improve lives.



The Outcomes Framework and the Charter for Children and Young People guide this work. They remind us what children value most: a good education, space to play and be creative, wellbeing, and opportunities to develop skills for the future. These themes are echoed in South Australia's Public Education Strategy, reinforcing our shared vision that all children can learn and thrive. The Charter Ambassador Program brings these principles to life, with young leaders inspiring change in schools and communities. These are actions that unlock their potential now and in the future.

Strengthening the way we measure child development needs collaborative partnerships with government and organisations. It requires

walking side-by-side with families, communities, and service providers.

The Malinauskas Government is committed to building a fairer, stronger South Australia - and that starts with our youngest citizens.

This plan supports this vision by ensuring the right evidence, partnerships and cultural inclusion guide us. Importantly, it reinforces our commitment to reconciliation by recognising the importance of Aboriginal data sovereignty and embedding the voices of Aboriginal children and families.

Together we have a responsibility to deliver the best start in life for all children and young people - because every young South Australian counts.

Hon Blair Boyer MP

**Minister for Education, Training and Skills
Minister for Police**

About us

Every young South Australian counts.

The Child Development Council (CDC) is a legislated body under the *Children and Young People (Oversight and Advocacy Bodies) Act 2016*, that maintains *South Australia's Outcomes Framework for Children and Young People* (Outcomes Framework) including the Charter for Children and Young People (Charter). Using data and insights we help policymakers in making evidence-based decisions to improve outcomes for all young South Australians.

The CDC also advises and reports to the Government on the effectiveness of the Outcomes Framework including ensuring that priority cohorts including Aboriginal children and young people are represented.

The **Outcomes Framework** places young South Australians, birth to 18, at the centre of 5 key Areas:

- Wellbeing
- Health
- Safety
- Education
- Preparing for adulthood.

The Outcomes Framework provides a shared goal to guide State authorities to develop strategies, objectives, policies and programs.



The [Charter for Children and Young People](#) outlines 20 aspirational conditions, aligning with the 5 key Areas. The Charter is an integral component of the Outcomes Framework and was informed by the voices of young South Australians



The [Charter Ambassador Program](#) enables young South Australians to engage in civics, build connections beyond their communities, promote the Charter, initiate positive change and engage in experiences that provide inspiration for their future

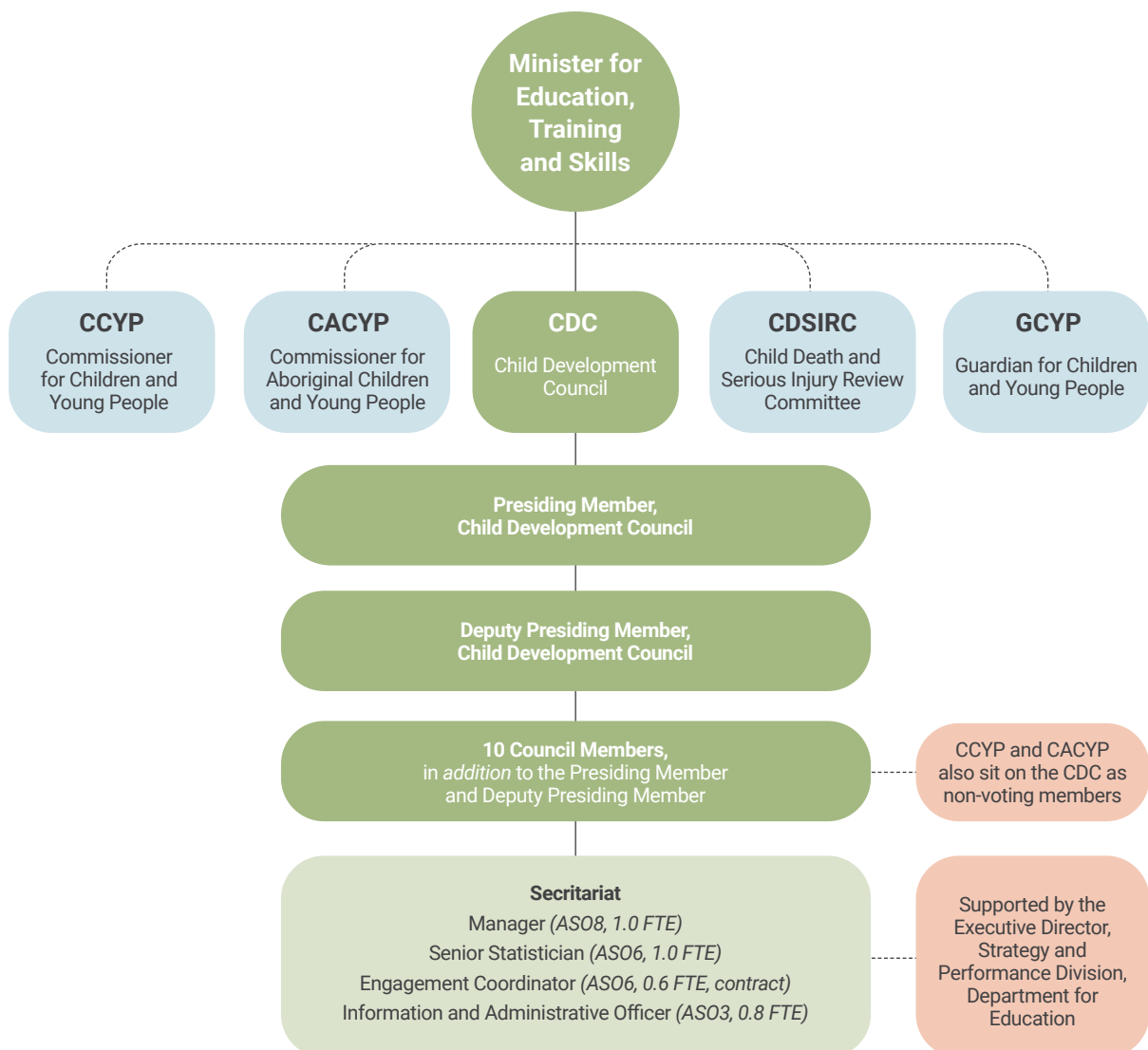


South Australia's [Report Card](#) for children and young people uses population-level data to track the Measures in the Outcomes Framework, to reveal current trends and areas for improvement. Where possible, we disaggregate the data into relevant groups of interest

Our team

The CDC reports to the Minister for Education, Training and Skills and operates independently. It is supported by a small secretariat.

The CDC works together with the Oversight and Advocacy Bodies which are an integrated system of oversight and advocacy, upholding the rights, development and wellbeing of children and young people in our State.



**Data opens doors, but
sustained relationships are
what keep them open.**



Our purpose

Vision

To be the trusted, independent voice that brings meaning to data, prompting action and better outcomes for all young South Australians

Commitment

- To provide decision-makers with quality data and insights to facilitate meaningful change for children and young people in our State
- To engage with stakeholders and young South Australians to support them in using the Outcomes Framework and Charter to make a positive impact



Our values



Connection

We commit to working as a team, leveraging networks and connections to increase our impact



Diversity

We value diverse perspectives, expertise and shared contributions to ensure every child and young person is represented in our work



Integrity

We act with honesty and accountability, foster trust, strive for excellence, and embrace adaptability and continuous improvement to create meaningful impact

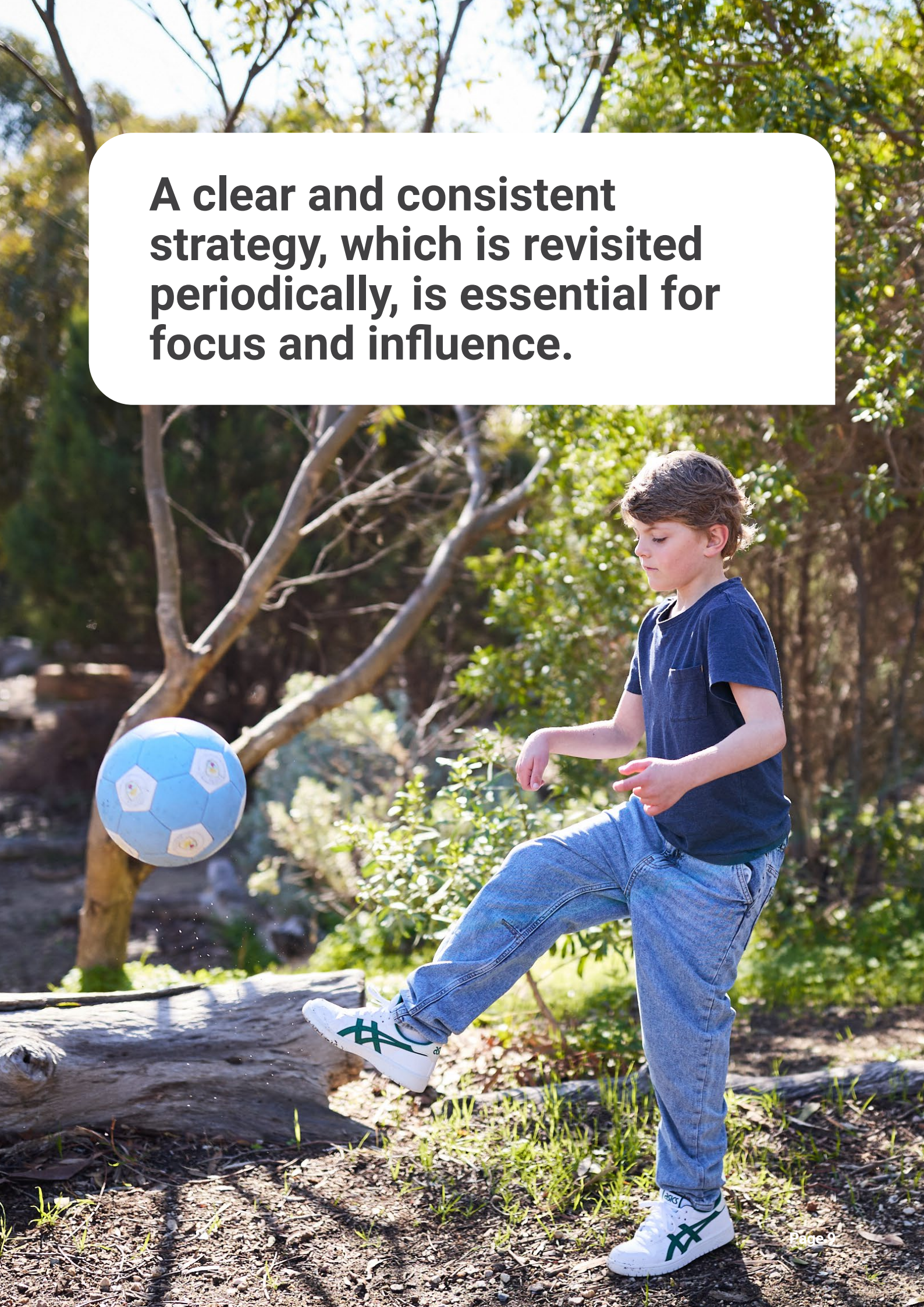
Lessons from experience

Since 2016, the CDC has established a strong foundation through the establishment of its Outcomes Framework, the development of online data reporting to provide insights for policy makers, and the creation of a successful Charter Ambassador Program in schools, including regional South Australia.

Through the 2025 Strategic Planning workshops and CDC member surveys, several key insights emerged:

- ➔ Data opens doors, but sustained relationships are what keep them open
- ➔ The way data is presented, through context and visuals, significantly affects its impact leading to greater potential for translation into action
- ➔ Visibility must be intentionally cultivated, it does not occur organically
- ➔ Relationships are front and centre for making a positive impact
- ➔ Children's and young people's voices are powerful and insightful tools for spreading cross-sector and community awareness about the Charter
- ➔ As a legislated body we are well positioned to increase our influence in the policy environment
- ➔ A clear and consistent strategy, which is revisited periodically, is essential for focus and influence

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Our focus areas

We will strengthen our role as a trusted and independent voice through focusing our efforts on the following four areas.

1

Effective Council

Supporting the CDC to be strong and inclusive

2

Core functions

Strengthening operational integrity and quality data practices to drive engagement

3

Positive impact

Building relationships and awareness to increase the use and value of our work

4

Operational activities

Delivering consistent quality outputs to ensure smooth operations and support strategic priorities



We will focus on

1

Effective council

Supporting the CDC to be strong and inclusive

- Re-design of the induction pack and operational guidelines
- Targeted forward planning of Agenda items for CDC meetings
- Maintaining diverse membership on the CDC
- Periodic strategic planning reviews

2

Core functions

Strengthening operational integrity and quality data practices to drive engagement

- Maintain and review the Outcomes Framework, which is the catalyst
- Update and enhance the Report Card to ensure accessible data for decision makers to improve outcomes for young South Australians
- We aim to publish data in culturally safe and responsible ways, guided by the CDC Aboriginal Reference Group as well as partnering with Aboriginal-led organisations. We commit to the five dimensions of the **Department for Education's 2023–2026 Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan**
- Maintain engagement with children and young people through the Charter Ambassador Program



3

Positive impact

Building relationships and awareness will increase the use and value of our work

- Invest in engagement resourcing and develop an engagement plan
- Promote awareness of the Outcomes Framework and Charter across our State
- Raise our profile through ongoing delivery of the Charter Ambassador Program
- Develop a targeted communications plan
- Review and update the CDC website

4

Operational activities

Delivering consistent quality outputs to ensure smooth operations and support strategic priorities

- Provide advice to the Minister, and on request from the Minister
- Deliver an Annual Report of the CDC's work by 31 October
- Secretariat will provide ongoing governance support, ministerial liaison, coordination of meetings, records management, and operational processes
- We will align our work with the Department for Education's 2023-2026 Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan

We measure our success by

- **Increased engagement and reach** demonstrated through growing website traffic, use of CDC data, and positive feedback from data users
- **CDC insights being cited and used by senior policymakers and public leaders** informing decisions that contribute to improved outcomes for children and young people
- **Stakeholders increasingly seeking out and relying on CDC outputs** (such as the *Report Card* and *Outcomes at a Glance*) due to their rigour, credibility, and relevance
- **The impact of the Charter Ambassador Program** as a sought-after civics and leadership program that enables young South Australians to engage in civics, build connections beyond their local communities, promote the Charter, initiate positive change, and engage in experiences that provide inspiration for their futures, evidenced by:
 - Positive feedback from educators and Charter Ambassadors
 - Recognition and ongoing support from Government

We won't focus on

- Undertaking research projects, directly collecting data or establishing longitudinal studies
- Developing or delivering policy
- Explicit advocacy; our role is to provide population level data to support the other Oversight and Advocacy Bodies and organisations to achieve this

Constraints and challenges

- The lack of data agreements with government and non-government organisations to secure essential datasets.
- Resourcing the secretariat to carry out its functions
- Accessing reliable and disaggregated data remains difficult

Conclusion

The CDC has significant strengths and assets and plays a unique role as the independent provider of data and evidence on how children and young people in South Australia are faring.

Rather than reinvent its role, the CDC has decided to refocus on how to bring its strengths and assets together for greater system-wide influence. By providing insights and leveraging data to support organisations to develop policies and programs, the CDC will position itself to fulfill its mandate more effectively.

The limited capacity of the CDC and associate Secretariat reinforces the need for clear focus and prioritisation.

As these efforts mature, the CDC aims to become an indispensable resource that not only monitors how children and young people are faring in South Australia but acts as a catalyst for meaningful action ensuring **every young South Australian Counts**.

Child Development Council

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