Flying Start for kids

Flying Start Policy and Funding Guide

Provider Obligations

Government of South Australia

Acknowledgement of Country

From the heart:

We acknowledge the Aboriginal peoples as the First peoples of South Australia and as custodians of the lands, waters, skies and communities where we live, learn and raise children.

We recognise Aboriginal peoples as having the longest living culture, raising children safe and strong in their Identity, Community, Culture, and connection to Country.

We pay our deep respects to Elders past and present, and their role as the first knowledge sharers for children. We follow in their footsteps.

Aboriginal peoples, working with and for children, are central in shaping our work. Their wisdom, advice, and guidance enriches our practices, creating a more inclusive and culturally safe environment for children and families.

We respect Aboriginal peoples' ways of being, doing and wise practices guiding our continual learning.

Together we walk and build stronger, more supportive communities for all children.

What you'll gain from today

Understanding of the key changes to the Policy and Funding Guide for 2027 delivery, including:

- Why the Guide has been redesigned – the '3 to be' and connection to the Flying Start Partnership Plan
- 2027 approach for consent to share information and confirmation
- Notification requirements for service changes
- Transparency between providers and their services
- 60-day supportive period
- New funding streams
- Funding and administration changes

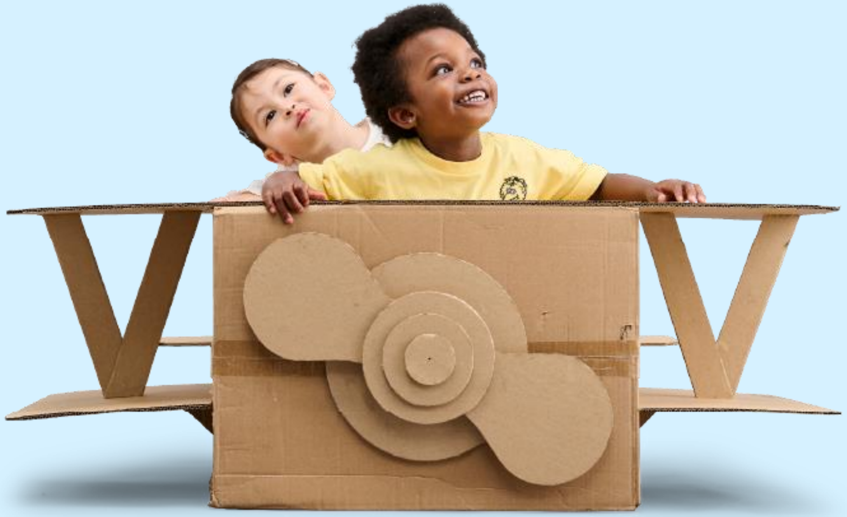
Purpose of the Policy and Funding Guide

The Policy and Funding Guide Version 2.0 (Guide) sets out the policy and funding arrangements for the 3- and 4-year-old Flying Start preschool program.

It forms part of the Flying Start Funding Agreement and details:

- Requirements for Flying Start Partner Providers and Partner Services
- Funding and associated spending rules
- Additional supports available.

The Guide is updated annually.



The ‘3 to be’

The updated **Policy and Funding Guide** for 2027 delivery has been redesigned to directly align the 3 things services need to prioritise, including relevant funding programs. This creates a clear account of what is funded and expected, and – critically – why.

1. **Warm and welcoming**: a place that families, caregivers and children from all backgrounds want to be in and can be in – actively inclusive, trustworthy and Culturally responsive.
   You can’t be a great service for a child if they aren’t there.

2. **Committed to quality**: a place that provides a quality service across the National Law and National Quality Standards, including warm and responsive relationships and intentional play-based practice.
   Being a good service is good, being a great service is better.

3. **Acting early, with others**: a place that reliably identifies and actively addresses children’s specific developmental vulnerabilities, working with other types of professionals (e.g., allied health) and parents/carers.
   Some children need better connected support to thrive.

Providers must create these conditions in their services and with their workforce deliver against these priorities.

Consent to share information

From 2027 there will be a new approach and options to gaining consent to share information with the OECD from parents/guardians.

Option 1 Partner Providers and Services will be able to include standard text in their long day care enrolment forms and/or annual consent processes, supported by a new stand-alone privacy notice available on the OECD website.

Option 2 Parents/guardians can provide consent by signing a stand-alone consent form (similar to the existing process).

Providers are required to ensure parents / guardians with children that are aged two (2) and above provide their consent through either of these options. If consent is not obtained the OECD will not be able to provide funding.

Consent covers both Flying Start universal preschool and Preschool Plus information sharing requirements.

Whatever option you choose, these consent forms should be classified as a child enrolment record for the purposes of regulation 160 of the National Regulations.

Confirmation

Confirming 3- and 4-year-old preschool

A new confirmation process will support enrolments into Flying Start 3- & 4-year-old preschool from 2027 onwards.

3-year-old preschool

Partner Providers will issue a **3-year-old preschool confirmation notice** to families of eligible children. The notice will:

- ✓ confirm the child's eligibility to commence 3-year-old preschool
- ✓ advise that funding will follow the child if they remain enrolled at the service
- ✓ only require families to respond if their circumstances mean the child will **not** receive their funded preschool program at that service (for example, if they are deferring commencement, moving to another service, or accessing their entitlement through a government service).

If families do not respond, no action is required and the service can continue planning for the child's preschool enrolment. Where a family advises of a change in circumstances, the service will update its records and exclude the child from the relevant data provided to the department.

4-year-old preschool

Partner Providers will issue a 4-year-old preschool confirmation notice to families of eligible children to confirm where the child will access their funded preschool program, including where they attend more than one service.

Guidance and supporting forms for the new consent and enrolment confirmation process will be available later 2026.

Notification requirements for service changes

Partner Providers must notify the OECD if there are any changes to its Partner Service(s) that may affect the application or conditions of the Funding Agreement, such as a:

- a change of ownership
- change of service approval details
- service closure
- withdrawal from preschool program provision

All service changes, including closures, **will now require 90 days' notice in writing** from the Partner Provider.

Transparency between Providers and services

Provider Obligations

Providers are required to:

- ensure funding associated with a Partner Service is attributed to that service, and that there is transparency in funding information between providers and services, and;
- to support and ensure partner services can meet their partnership requirements.

This includes shared planning through the Partnership Plan, requiring both service-level and provider-level sign off.

60-day Supportive Period

The 60-day period only applies when there is another registered ECT identified to coach and support programming and practice during this period.

- **60 business days** is applied over **12-month period** (calendar year from January to December).
- The **60-day period applies to all 'funded preschool program rooms'**, including both 3- and 4-year-old preschool rooms and mixed-age preschool rooms.
- It is calculated as **60-business days** and does not vary based on the different preschool delivery options or individual ECT working arrangements.
- The **60-days is not consecutive**, and a Partner Service may have multiple absences across the calendar year - this includes planned or unplanned leave, resignation or termination.
- Any absences of **5 consecutive business days or less** do not contribute to the 60-day count.
- It only applies **during program delivery**, therefore, where a long day care service is **delivering preschool 40-weeks per year** (as per a sessional model), any absences outside of this do not count towards the 60-days.
- The 60-day count does not reset with a change of Provider.

New funded program streams

The number of funded program streams has been expanded and now include:

- **Ready Set Preschool** (formerly Outreach) for Partner Services in SEIFA 1 and 2, designed to reduce barriers to preschool enrolment and attendance. Partner Services are required to plan the use of this funding through the Partnership Plan.

- The **Enhancing Quality program** - to improve service quality through targeted professional learning and development. Partner Services are required to plan the use of this funding through the Partnership Plan.

- **Fee Relief for Aboriginal children** in the two years before full-time school, promoting equitable access and reducing barriers to participation.

Additional optional opt-in programs, including the Trauma-informed Practice coaching program available in a Service's first year of delivering the Preschool Plus program, as well as the Provisionally Registered Teacher program.

Flying Start Partnership Plan

The new Flying Start Partnership Plan (Partnership Plan) brings together the funded programs under the Policy and Funding Guide that require a service level plan for approval by OECD:

- Ready Set Preschool (for SEIFA 1 & 2 services only),
- Preschool Boost, and
- The Enhancing Quality program

The Partnership Plan is also structured to align the funded programs to the three evidence-based service priorities and encourages services to think strategically about how they can strengthen practices across these priorities.

The Partnership Plan replaces the current Targeted Support plan (Preschool Boost) and will be sent directly to services for completion with their relevant OECD Local Team next week.

2026 and 2027 Guide

- If you're delivering Flying Start preschool in 2026, use the 2026 guide for your current funding and policy requirements.
- If you will begin delivery from 2027, the 2027 guide reflects your funding and policy requirements from when you start delivery.
- For the purposes of the Partnership Plan for 2027, all Partner Services (2026 and 2027) will need to refer to the 2027 Guide.
- The 2027 Guide will become the Guide for all Partner Services once the 2027 delivery year begins.

Next Steps

- **Policy and Funding Guide Version 2.0** will be published on the website available to all Provider/Partner Services.
- Your Local Team will distribute your individualised **Flying Start Partnership Plan**.
- Look out for today's **Partner e-Bulletin** for links to resources and further information.

Webinar Survey Results

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey. Your feedback will help shape our webinar schedule moving forward.

What we heard

- **Preferred days:** Tuesday, Thursday and Friday were the most popular, with similar levels of availability.
- **Preferred time:** **11am – 12pm** was the clear favourite, closely followed by **10am – 11 am**.

Going forward

- Webinars will be held on a **Thursday 11am – 12pm.**
- You will get an updated email invite with the reflected changes.

Webinar Schedule 2026

- Friday 11am -12pm
- Thursday 11am - 12pm

07/08/26	Flying Start Partnership Plans	All Partners
03/09/26	Workforce Spotlight: Initiatives, Opportunities & Supports	T3 2026 | T1 2027
01/10/26	EC Connect	All Partners
05/11/26	Readiness Check-in for 2027 Partners	T1 2027 Partners
03/12/26	EC Connect Launch	All Partners

Stay up-to-date & Connect with us

- Visit the Flying Start Partner Page
    - Password: FlyingStart!
- Stay up to date with the Flying Start partners e-bulletin
- Direct families to the OECD website for general information www.earlychildhood.sa.gov.au
- Encourage families to download the Early Years app
- Connect with us on social media:

Instagram: @earlychildhoodsa
Facebook: @earlychildhoodsa
LinkedIn: Office for Early Childhood Development

Questions