



Strategy for Leading  
Catholic Education to  
New Levels of Excellence

Community Paper  
JANUARY 2015





# The Strategy *Leading Catholic Education to New Levels of Excellence* presents the key initiatives that the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools will progressively introduce to strengthen, transform and promote Catholic Education in South Australia and outlines the actions it will undertake to implement the initiatives.

The Strategy *Leading Catholic Education to New Levels of Excellence* presents:

- the commitment to strengthen and transform the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia as an accessible, viable and real option and choice for all children and students and their families in the full range of communities
- the commitment to ensuring that Catholic Education in South Australia continues to recognise its partnership with families and to provide excellence to students, families and their communities
- the initiatives and actions that Catholic Education in South Australia will implement to address the significant changes that challenge all South Australian schools and school sectors
- the commitment of Catholic Education in South Australia to provide all children and students from all communities with successful pathways and transitions in their learning, including those students who do not have parental support as well as those who do.

The Strategy reflects the Commission's commitment to engage with children and students in an active way that then shapes its response to them. It reflects its commitment to base decision-making on research and evidence, together with the engagement of governing bodies, leaders, teachers and parents in determining how best to serve children and students.

The Strategy Paper uses the nomenclature 'Catholic Education in South Australia' or at times just 'Catholic Education' to refer to all Catholic schools within the state including both diocesan and non-diocesan schools in the Archdiocese of Adelaide and the Diocese of Port Pirie.

The Strategy Paper represents an integral phase in the decision-making process of the South Australian Commission of Catholic Schools to determine how to strengthen and transform the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia while also maintaining its excellence.

The Commission's decision-making process is based on the following five phases:

- 1. Data Gathering:** The Enrolment Study and the five Planning Working Groups have provided the gathering and analysis of quantitative and qualitative information on which the planning of the future directions of Catholic Education in South Australia has been based.
- 2. Strategy Formulation:** The Strategy Paper, together with the attached reports from the five Planning Working Groups, presents the proposed Strategy for moving forward.
- 3. Commission Endorsement:** The Strategy will be presented to the Commission for in-principle endorsement. It will then form the basis for engagement with the Dioceses, governing authorities and other key stakeholders about the Strategy.
- 4. Community Engagement, Detailed Costings, and Analysis:** Following Commission endorsement, further analysis of the Strategy initiatives and 10-point Action Plan will be undertaken, together with further dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders.
- 5. Development of Implementation Plan and Commission Approval:** On the basis of the further analysis and stakeholder engagement, a costed Implementation Plan will be prepared and presented to the Commission for final approval.

Catholic Education in South Australia is a living expression of the Catholic faith and the partnership of schools with families to create opportunities for encouraging life to the full in all its personal, spiritual, social, ecological and cultural dimensions.

The 103 schools in Catholic Education in South Australia presently deliver a high quality education to approximately 20% of all school students in South Australia.

Catholic Education is committed to maintaining excellence in its provision of education to students and their families.

This commitment presents Catholic Education with the challenge to develop new structures and systems to meet significant challenges facing the wider South Australian society and economy.

#### Demographic changes in South Australia

The demographic profile of South Australia has been undergoing significant changes in recent years:

- South Australia's population is ageing:
  - the latest ABS census data in June 2012 shows South Australia has the second oldest population in Australia, with a median age of 39.5 years (behind Tasmania with 40.4 years)
  - in the decade from 2001-2011, the number of people aged over 65 years in South Australia increased by 19.5%; over the next 25 years, this number is projected to double and would then make up about 25% of South Australia's population
- South Australia's fertility rate (a good indication for the future number of school aged children) is declining:
  - between 2004 and 2009 South Australia's total fertility rate increased from 1.70 in 2004 to 1.91 in 2009
  - it was stable in 2010; it then decreased to 1.88 in 2012
  - State Government population projections predict 1.88 births per woman until 2018-19 and then 1.80 births until 2036
- latest census figures indicate that the net overseas migration was the most significant contributor to population growth in Australia:
  - 85% of the population growth between 2006 and 2011 was created by net overseas migration
- as of June 2013, Australia's population was 23,130,900, an increase of 1.8% over the year. South Australia's population was 1,670,800, an increase of 0.9% over the same year
- the proportion of the South Australian population relative to the Australian population has declined from approximately 8% to less than 7%

#### Economic changes in South Australia

For the last two decades South Australia's economic growth rate has been around 3% but the forecast for the next decade is 2% (Deloitte Access Economics, Quarterly Business Outlook 20/7/14).

The main drivers for this change include:

- the economic impact of the deferral of major mining projects
- the potential cancellation and ensuing uncertainty regarding defence contracts
- the impending closure of both Holden and Toyota automotive plants and the flow-on effect for other local and regional manufacturing industries

Lower growth will directly impact on employment opportunities and therefore population growth. For rural and regional locations, these changes can have a further compounding effect on previously existing negative economic and demographic conditions.

While growth is still expected, the general slowing in growth rates will impact most in the previously identified industrial and residential growth areas. This will also impact the historic school growth areas, most noticeably the northern areas of metropolitan Adelaide.



### Changes in profile and numbers of students attending school in South Australia

Between 2001 and 2006, the number of school aged children (5-17 year olds) in South Australia declined by 2.2%. Although at a less significant rate, this trend continued between 2006 and 2011 with the number of school aged children decreasing by 0.7%.

In the ten year period from 2001 to 2011, Catholic student numbers increased by 6.7% in primary schools in South Australia and 17.9% in secondary schools.

This overall growth was due to the increase in enrolments in schools in the Adelaide Archdiocese. The enrolment trend was different in schools in the Port Pirie Diocese where there was a decrease in primary enrolments and a minimal increase in secondary enrolments.

Over the same period, the Catholic Education sector's share of primary school enrolments relative to the other school sectors grew from 16.7% in 2001, to 18.2% in 2006, through to 19.2% in 2011.

In secondary schools, the Catholic Education sector's share of enrolments relative to the other school sectors increased from 17.9% in 2001, to 19.8% in 2006, to 20.8% in 2011.

In the context of a decline in overall student numbers, it is evident that the Catholic sector, along with the non-government school sector, increased its share of enrolment relative to the Government school sector.

During the period 2001 to 2011 the Independent sector's primary enrolments increased by 21% compared with Catholic Education sector's 6.7%, and the Independent sector's secondary enrolments by 26.5% compared with Catholic Education sector's 17.9%.

The Independent sector as a whole established seven new schools in the period 2001 to 2012. They have also had a number of extensions of year levels in current schools.

In the period 2001 to 2012 three new Catholic schools commenced, two of which are the Technical Colleges, along with Galilee. There have been three amalgamations - Nazareth Catholic College, Tenison Woods College and Samaritan College. One primary school, St Francis de Sales, became an R-12 school. In addition, St Barbara's Parish School (Roxby Downs), which started in 2000, extended to a middle school from 2013.

### Imperative to act to meet emerging challenges

Catholic Education in South Australia is faced with the essential challenge of how to ensure the ongoing excellence of its educational provision in the context of significant demographic and economic changes and, where appropriate, to transform the delivery of this provision.

This will occur in the context of limited and probably reducing resources for education.

Catholic Education in South Australia must develop new solutions to meet new challenges, whilst maintaining its commitment to educational excellence for students and their families. The structures and systems of the past are insufficient to meet the challenges of the future.

A decision not to act is tantamount to a decision to go backwards.

The Strategy *Leading Catholic Education to New Levels of Excellence* presents how Catholic Education in South Australia will build on the work already begun and, by thinking collectively and acting collaboratively for the common good, will achieve new levels of excellence through faith, vision and innovation.



## Strengthen and transform the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia

The goal of the Strategy *Leading Catholic Education to New Levels of Excellence* is to strengthen and transform the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia.

Catholic Education in South Australia represents the commitment to a physical, social and spiritual reality within the various educational communities of the Archdiocese of Adelaide and the Diocese of Port Pirie.

Catholic Education in South Australia is the face of the Catholic Church expressed through its educational and schooling ministry:

- It is characterised by partnerships with parents, relationships and educational practices where the dignity of every person, the commitment to inclusion, a preferential option for the marginalised, a passion for learning, and a sense of hope and wonder are evident
- It is the irrefutable knowledge that all people are gifted with great potential for growth to reach fullness of life and joy, and are each worthy of respect
- It is the responsibility for a local environment and world where each person, free from any discrimination and free from all barriers to life, can express their full potential and know the reality of God's love: 'I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full' (John 10:10).

The goal of the Strategy *Leading Catholic Education to New Levels of Excellence* is to strengthen and transform Catholic Education as a living expression of the presence of the Catholic faith in the partnership of schools with families to create opportunities for encouraging life to the full in all its personal, spiritual, social, ecological and cultural dimensions.



### Strengthen and transform the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia

for all children, students and families in all communities

as a system of schools and early years services

The Strategy *Leading Catholic Education to New Levels of Excellence* is based on two fundamental principles that define the key initiatives and actions that Catholic Education in South Australia will use to achieve the goal of the Strategy:

- Catholic Education seeks to be an option of first preference for Catholic families along with all families from the full range of backgrounds in our community who seek a Catholic education for their children.
- Catholic Education in South Australia operates as a system of schools and early years services working in partnership for the common good as this is understood in Catholic social teaching.

**PRINCIPLE ONE: Catholic Education seeks to be an option of first preference for Catholic families along with all families from the full range of backgrounds in our community who seek a Catholic education for their children.**

The focus of Catholic Education in South Australia is to present an accessible, viable and real option and choice for all children and students and their families in the full range of communities:

- a) Catholic Education in South Australia continues to operate as a community of schools in which students, staff and families are educated in the light of the Catholic faith and contribute to each other's growth.
- b) Catholic Education in South Australia continues to recognise its essential relationships with families and the broader Church.
- c) It continues to be committed to building life-long relationships between schools, families and the Catholic Church.
- d) Catholic Education in South Australia also strives to be a system of choice for students and families from the full range of communities.
- e) It is committed to the uniqueness and worth of every individual and to the value of learning and education in their lives.
- f) It is committed to the development of every individual and to providing each with pathways that assist their transition into future opportunities both during school and beyond school.

**PRINCIPLE TWO: Catholic Education in South Australia operates as a system of schools and early years services working in partnership for the common good.**

Catholic Education in South Australia is based on the collaboration of individual Catholic schools working in close partnership with a shared vision, purpose and commitment to the common good, as this is understood in Catholic social teaching, and one which is characterised by the commitment to interdependence, reciprocity and mutuality:

- a) Catholic schools and early years services strive to meet the needs of each child and student in South Australia through a shared vision, a unity of purpose and commitment to the common good.
- b) The Catholic Education in South Australia system of schools and early services is based on collaborative relationships between individual schools and early years services.
- c) It is based on the reciprocal and mutually respectful relationship between the Catholic Education Office and schools and early years services and the fair and transparent deployment of resources.
- d) The Catholic Education's system of schools and early years services in South Australia is based on a common understanding of directions, strategies and outcomes that promote equity, justice, access and sustainability.
- e) It is committed to the development of its own people and to their effectiveness as leaders, teachers, carers and support staff.
- f) The Catholic Education in South Australia system of schools and early years services represents the commitment to think and act as a collective system in the interests of each child and student, rather than in the exclusive interests of an individual school or service.

The Strategy goal of strengthening and transforming the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia through the two defining principles will be achieved through the implementation of the following initiatives:

- Clear pathways and transitions for children and students
- Expansion of Early Years Services
- School structures that meet the learning needs of students
- Regional collaboration between Catholic schools and early years services to best meet the needs of families and communities
- Placement of resources where the need is greatest

### Strengthen and transform the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia

for all children, students and families in all communities

as a system of schools and early years services

Early Years Services

Student pathways and transitions

School structures

Regional collaboration

Placement of resources

#### Strategy Initiative One: Clear pathways and transitions for children and students

Catholic Education in South Australia will work as a system of schools and early years services to build identifiable pathways with clear transition points for each child's and student's achievement of excellence, starting in the early years and continuing throughout their years of schooling and into their post-school pathways.

The initiative will be achieved through activities that include the following:

- a) The building of collaborative arrangements between early years services and schools at the regional level to create Birth to Year 12 pathways for children and students where they do not exist in individual early years centres or schools.
- b) The progressive expansion of early years services into Catholic schools to provide a continuum of learning for children in the early years and a pathway into Catholic schooling.
- c) The commitment to minimise the number of entry points into the years of schooling and the progressive movement towards Reception and Year 7 as the main entry points in ways that respect educational value and history of preceding arrangements.
- d) The development of consistent enrolment policies and processes across the Catholic system of schools and early years services, including the development of regional enrolment statements and policies that enhance clearly defined pathways and choices for the Birth to Year 12 experience of Catholic Education in South Australia.



- e) The development and provision of promotion and marketing materials for use at the local and whole-of-system levels that highlight the Catholic commitment to successful pathways and transitions for children and students and to promote Catholic schools and early years services as centres of choice for families.
- f) The commitment to ongoing processes of consultation, engagement and communication to achieve Catholic Education's focus on clear pathways and transitions for each child and student across its system of schools and early years services.

### **Strategy Initiative Two: Expansion of Early Years Services**

Catholic Education in South Australia will progressively introduce early years services into Catholic schools to contribute to the achievement of excellence in learning outcomes and the wellbeing of children and to provide a continuum of learning for children in the early years, and a pathway into Catholic schooling.

The initiative will be achieved through activities that include the following:

- a) The commitment to include early years services in Catholic schools to provide continuity in transition for children and families and a service from the perspective of the child through relationships, systems and culture.
- b) The development of an Early Years Services Framework to outline and define the principles, services and structures that underpin the early years services provided in Catholic Education in South Australia.
- c) The identification of strategic relationships with other providers of early years services and other allied services that highlight the Catholic presence and commitment to provide service to families.
- d) The development of a business case that identifies the establishment and recurrent costs of progressively expanding early years services into Catholic Education in South Australia.
- e) The development of an Implementation Plan based on a staged and flexible implementation process and timeframe that recognises the needs of families and local communities, that focuses on the delivery of excellence in learning outcomes and the wellbeing of all children, and that addresses the capacity of schools to introduce early years services.
- f) The commitment to ongoing processes of consultation, engagement and communication to assist the implementation process.

### **Strategy Initiative Three: School structures that meet the learning needs of students**

Catholic Education in South Australia will progressively introduce consistent organisational structures across the Catholic system of schools and early years services that best serve the learning needs of children and young people and their families.

The initiative will be achieved through activities that include the following:

- a) The operation of consistent organisational structures across Catholic system of schools and early years services.
- b) The commitment to move progressively towards a school structure across the Catholic system of schools that is based on Years R-6 and Years 7-12 in ways that respect educational value and history of preceding arrangements.
- c) The commitment to minimise the number of entry points into the years of schooling and the progressive movement towards Reception and Year 7 as the main entry points.
- d) The development of consistent enrolment policies and processes across the Catholic system of schools and early years services.
- e) The development of a business case to identify the establishment and recurrent costs of moving to a Years R-6 and Years 7-12 school structure across the Catholic system of schools with respect to the financial impact on families, existing regional arrangements, human resource implications, capital, financial and infrastructure implications, transition arrangement, and risk management.
- g) The development of an Implementation Plan for moving to a Years R-6 and Years 7-12 school structure across the Catholic system of schools based on a staged and flexible implementation process and timeframe that recognises the needs of families and local communities, that focuses on the delivery of excellence in student pathways and learning outcomes, and that addresses the capacity of schools to introduce the new structures.
- f) The commitment to ongoing processes of consultation, engagement and communication to assist the implementation process.

#### **Strategy Initiative Four: Regional collaboration between Catholic schools and early years services to best meet the needs of families and communities**

Catholic Education in South Australia will build regional networks of collaboration between Catholic schools and early years services to strengthen the presence of Catholic Education in local communities and to provide successful pathways and transitions for each child and student.

The initiative will be achieved through activities that include the following:

- a) The development of collaboration protocols for regional arrangements across the Catholic system of schools and early years services.
- b) The development of cluster arrangements in regions to provide best pathways and transition points for children and young people in the Catholic system of schools and early years services.
- c) The development of regional enrolment statements and policies that enhance clearly defined pathways and choices for children and students and that possess elements common to all regions as well as elements that are particular to the circumstances in different regions.
- d) The alignment of Catholic Technical Colleges and Registered Training Organisations with schools through arrangements that assist student pathways within and across regions.
- e) The development of guidelines that enhance mutual responsibility amongst colleges and parish schools within a region with regard to their communication materials around enrolment processes and pathways.
- f) The commitment to ongoing processes of consultation, engagement and communication to strengthen the relationships between early years services and schools within a region and the families and communities of the region.

#### **Strategy Initiative Five: Placement of resources where the need is greatest**

Catholic Education in South Australia will make the best use of available resources across the Catholic system of schools and early years services to achieve the best outcomes for each child and student.

The initiative will be achieved through activities that include the following:

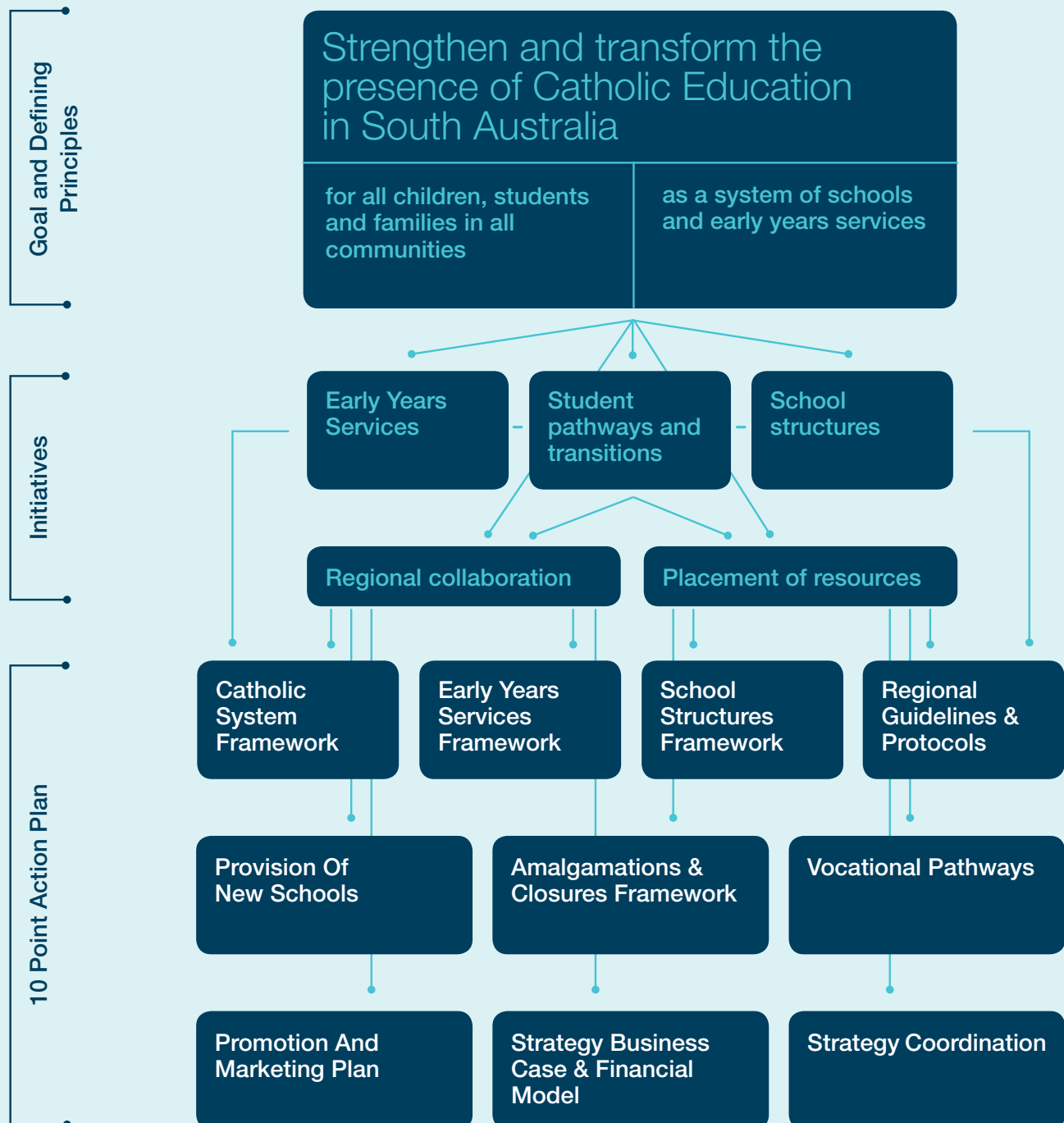
- a) The provision of new Catholic schools and early years services in areas of confirmed growth.
- b) The development and use of protocols for the amalgamation and/or cluster arrangements between schools where the new structures will improve the pathways and transition points for children and young people and the combined arrangements will lead to the most effective management of human and financial resources and the improved provision of Catholic Education in South Australia.
- c) The development and use of protocols for the closure of Catholic schools where a decline in student enrolments and/or over-servicing within a region may diminish the educational value of an individual school's program to existing students.
- d) The redefinition of the services provided by Catholic Education Office and the realignment of resources allocated for the provision of these services.
- e) The operation of a funding formula across the Catholic system of schools and early years services that delivers the fair and transparent deployment of resources.
- f) The commitment to ongoing processes of consultation, engagement and communication to ensure the deployment of resources achieves the best outcomes for every child and student.

Providing successful  
pathways and  
transitions for each  
child and student





The following 10-point Action Plan will be used to achieve the Strategy's goal, defining principles and initiatives.



## ACTION ONE

# Framework for Catholic system of schools and early years services

### Significance and purpose of Action One

Catholic Education is comprised of schools that are governed by Dioceses, Religious Congregations and a number of new ecclesial entities. Some are systemically funded, some are individually funded, and those schools vary according to these governance and funding arrangements. However they share a common Catholic identity and mission and operate as a community of schools under the leadership and direction of the South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools.

The goal of strengthening and transforming the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia and the key principle of building identifiable pathways with clear transition points for each child and student will be achieved most effectively by Catholic Education in South Australia operating as a system of schools and early years services.

The term “system” in this context is derived from systems-thinking theory and practice that emphasises the interconnections and interdependencies of parts of a system and describes how they can best operate in relation to each other to achieve shared and common outcomes.

By working as part of the Catholic Education in South Australia system, each school and provider of early years services will demonstrate Catholic Education’s identity and core values and contribute to the common good.

### Proposed activity

- a) The Strategy goal of strengthening and transforming the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia and its key principle of building identifiable pathways with clear transition points for each child and student challenges all schools to consider what it means to work as part of a “system” of Catholic Education.
- b) The Catholic Education Office, in collaboration with its key stakeholders, is to prepare for the Commission’s consideration a Framework for defining the *Catholic system of schools and early years services*.
- c) The Framework is to address, amongst other things, the following:
  - i. The governance relationships between the Catholic Education Office, regions and individual schools and individual schools and early years services
  - ii. The reciprocal responsibilities that operate between Catholic Education Office and individual schools and early years services, including the services provided by the Catholic Education Office
  - iii. The primary role of families in their children’s education and the principles for enhancing the partnership between schools and families
  - iv. Principles for the development of leaders, teachers, carers and support staff in the individual schools, early years services and the Catholic Education Office
  - v. Principles for enhancing mutual responsibility amongst colleges and parish schools
  - vi. Principles for the development of enrolment policies and communications across Catholic schools and early years services
- d) The Catholic Education Office, in collaboration with its key stakeholders, is to develop a new Catholic Education SA Strategic Plan 2015 - 2019

### Indicative timeline

1. Framework development	2015
2. Preparation of Catholic Education SA Strategic Plan 2015 - 2019	2015

## ACTION TWO

# Framework for Catholic Early Years Services and Implementation Plan

### Significance and purpose of Action Two

The cohesive, coordinated and strategic provision of early childhood services creates the capacity for Catholic Education in South Australia to provide greater continuity in transition for children and families. The provision of early childhood services will work towards further strengthening a family-centred Church in South Australia.

Catholic Education in South Australia is committed to progressively expanding the early years services into Catholic schools. A growing body of research stresses the importance of the early years in a child's personal, cognitive and social development and on their future learning. There is a range of educational, social and strategic factors that affirms the value of expanding early childhood services into Catholic schools.

The commitment of Catholic Education in South Australia to introduce the early years services requires a Framework that defines the scope of the services, clarifies their purposes and identifies the associated human, financial and physical resource dimensions.

The commitment of Catholic Education in South Australia to further services requires an Implementation Plan that identifies the scope, sequence and timing of the phased introduction of the services.

### Key considerations

- a) The specific nature of the early years services to be introduced into Catholic schools now needs to be defined. By general definition, early years services can include any centre based, residual or out of scope education and care service for children 0-5 years, including centre based services, residual services and out of scope services such as long day care, occasional care, playgroups, preschools and out of school hours care.
- b) For a range of reasons, the development of stand-alone preschools, or school based preschools, is a restricted option for Catholic Education in South Australia.
- c) Long day care services are possible but particular conditions are required. Current staffing costs for services with children below 36 months make it a less likely possibility for Catholic Education in South Australia. Staffing costs are due to increase because of changes in the adult to child ratios from 2016. These factors would make long day care mostly prohibitive for Catholic Education.
- d) More detailed modelling and analysis are required of the staffing levels and costs to obtain more accurate forecast models to apply to any proposed centres as the process moves into identifying specific locations.
- e) It is proposed that Catholic Education in South Australia create a system of early years services for children 0-6 years with a focus on two distinct groups: 0-3 year olds and 3-6 year olds. It proposed that the focus of the first phase of this initiative should be children aged 3-6 and that this system should be part of an overarching pedagogical and structural focus on continuity and transition.
- f) Attention will need to be given to the strategic location of any services. They would be best located in areas that address the needs of families and that recognise issues of affordability and accessibility. It may be desirable to locate the services in schools that have the space and existing facilities to accommodate the program or where they can collaboratively serve several Catholic schools.
- g) It is intended that all schools may choose to participate in the provision of early years services through play groups and long term occasional care programs that offer opportunities for transition and continuity of learning.



### Proposed activity

a) The Catholic Education Office, in collaboration with the Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Committee, is to develop the *Framework for Early Years Services in Catholic schools*, with particular attention to:

- continuity and transition as the overarching principles of the framework
- the focus on the two distinct groups of 0-3 year olds and 3-6 year olds, with the initial focus on children aged 3-6 in Catholic Education of South Australia's provision of early years services
- the initial focus on playgroups, occasional care services and integrated Long Day Care Services in Catholic Education of South Australia's provision of early years services
- guidelines and criteria for the identification of Catholic primary schools to provide early years services
- criteria for service agreements
- the identification of the policies and procedures that will need to be developed for the governance and management of the early years services in Catholic Education

b) The Catholic Education Office, in collaboration with the Early Childhood Education and Care Advisory Committee, is to develop the *Implementation Plan* that identifies the scope, sequence and timing of the phased expansion of early years services in Catholic Education, with particular attention to:

- further engagement with key stakeholders
- further research and analysis
- the identification of locations for the introduction of early years services

- further financial analysis and modelling of the viability and implications of early years services at both the whole-of-system and local school levels
- the development of policies and procedures for the governance and management of the early years services in Catholic Education
- the development of cohesive, coordinated and strategic management structures for the provision of early years services in Catholic Education
- the investigation of possible partners in the provision of early years services in Catholic Education

### Indicative timeline

1. Preparation of Framework for Early Years Services in Catholic schools	2015
2. Preparation of Implementation Plan	2015
3. Progressive implementation	2016 ongoing





### ACTION THREE

## Framework for Catholic School Structures and Implementation Plan

### Significance and purpose of Action Three

The organisational structures of primary schooling and secondary schooling are intended to address students' developmental and learning needs.

The structures also affect students' transition points and pathways during their years of schooling.

Catholic Education in South Australia is committed to minimising the number of entry points in the years of schooling and to maximising the success of students' pathways.

The commitment leads Catholic Education in South Australia to consider how the organisational structures of primary and secondary schools can be strengthened by the move towards more consistent transition points and the minimisation of entry points.

Given the structure of the Australian Curriculum and for consistency with other states, it is proposed that the entry points for Catholic Education in South Australia should be Reception and Year 7 (for Colleges that do not have a primary offering). By implication, Year 7 would become the year at which middle schooling commences in R-12 schools.

### Key considerations

- a) Consultation with key stakeholders has identified the importance of addressing the following matters in the move towards more consistent transition points and the minimisation of entry points:
  - a reasonable timeline for the new arrangements to be implemented
  - a change management process that reflects the Catholic, Christian belief in relation to a holistic and inclusive education, that respects the diversity and complexity of family gifts and needs, that treats families in a compassionate way, and that scaffolds students towards personal excellence
  - provision of opportunities to plan and consult at the local level, to address issues for staff directly affected by the move to new school structures, and to plan prudently for related building and refurbishment issues
  - support for primary schools during the transition period
  - consideration of the needs of country schools
  - consideration of existing successful arrangements at a regional local level, noting the successful arrangements operating in the South West Region
  - active and open engagement with parent communities throughout the process and provision of transparent and timely information about issues of relevance to families in relation to the proposed structural arrangement for Year 7.
- b) Initial analysis has identified the following possible timeline for the move to the new arrangements for Catholic school structures:
  - in 2019-20 all metropolitan Catholic schools move to a R-6 and 7-12 structure, (with the proviso to review the timeline if the Government makes a decision for the Department of Education and Child Development to change its structure earlier than 2019-20);
  - each region works together on the transition timing and process within 2019-20.

### Proposed activity

- a) The Catholic Education Office is to manage an engagement strategy with key stakeholders to identify and address issues of importance to them in relation to the proposed structural arrangement for Year 7.
- b) The Catholic Education Office is to develop the *Framework for Catholic School Structures*, with particular attention to:
  - the educational rationale and key principles for Catholic school structures
  - the balance between a consistent whole-of-system approach and specific regional arrangements, particularly where they already exist, such as in the South West Region or in other regional circumstances
  - differential operational issues for country and metropolitan locations
  - factors identified as critical to the implementation of the new structure
  - alignment with other school sectors
  - communication and information priorities and processes.
- c) The Catholic Education Office is to carry out detailed financial modelling for the proposed structural arrangement for Year 7 and to identify resource issues that must be addressed.
- d) The Catholic Education Office is to develop the *Implementation Plan* that identifies the scope, sequence and timing of the phased introduction of the proposed structural arrangement for Year 7, including particular attention to:
  - input and feedback from key stakeholders
  - key tasks and their timing
  - transition arrangements
  - differential implementation factors for country and metropolitan locations.

#### Indicative timeline

1. Stakeholder engagement	2015
2. Implementation planning and preparation	2015 - 2018
3. Progressive implementation	2019 - 2020



## ACTION FOUR

# Guidelines and protocols for regional models

### Significance and purpose of Action Four

The Strategy initiatives of providing each student with clear pathways and transitions, the progressive introduction of early years services, the progressive implementation of effective school structures and the effective use of resources are all related to and dependent on collaboration between schools and early years services.

Experience demonstrates that this collaboration operates most effectively at the regional level.

### Proposed activity

- a) The development of effective regional arrangements provides the following benefits for the *Strategy Leading Catholic Education to New Levels of Excellence*:
- the building of student enrolments and creating pathways for each child and student is enhanced by schools in regional proximity working together to provide the student and family with the pathway
  - the progressive expansion of early years services will lead to schools working collaboratively to share access to early years centres and programs; the geographical proximity of the early years centres with the schools will be best served through regional arrangements
  - the progressive introduction of new school structures and entry points, in particular the place of Year 7, will build on the successful operation of the current arrangements for school structures that are predominantly regionally based
  - the provision of new schools in areas of growth will affect other schools in the region and so collaboration is essential in the process; where enrolments are declining, schools can maintain their programs and provide pathways for students by working together through cluster or amalgamation arrangements
  - the reconceptualisation of the delivery of vocational education and training by the technical colleges points to the necessity of the colleges and schools working together to provide vocational programs for students both within and across regions.
- b) The Catholic Education Office is to identify effective models of regional collaboration and use these as the basis for the development of guidelines and protocols for use more widely across the system of Catholic schools and preschools. The guidelines and protocols to include, amongst others, the following matters:
- the value of collaboration and flexibility rather than a one-size-does-fit-all approach
  - the identification of effective cluster arrangements
  - development of regional enrolment statements and policies that enhance clearly defined pathways and choices for children and students
  - collaboration between colleges and parish primary schools regarding communication about enrolment processes and pathways.

### Indicative timeline

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|---|------|
| 1. Development of guidelines and protocols for regional collaboration | 2015 |
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## ACTION FIVE

# Provision of new Catholic schools

### Significance and purpose of Action Five

Current analysis of updated census data and population and enrolments trends for South Australia suggest growth is substantially slower than anticipated in the Greater Metropolitan Area 30-Year Plan. While growth is still expected, the general slowing in growth rates will impact most in the previously identified industrial and residential growth areas.

These population and enrolments trends will have an impact on the historic areas of school growth, most noticeably the northern Adelaide areas.

It will be important for Catholic Education in South Australia to respond to the pattern of the state's growth in a prudent and strategic manner. The provision of new schools and services will require flexibility, innovation and the recognition that slower rates of growth may require a delay in developing some school infrastructure to avoid incurring expense prior to sustainable enrolment income.

Initial analysis has identified a number of areas where further population growth is likely to occur, in particular the northern suburbs, southern suburbs and Adelaide Hills, and proposed options for how Catholic Education in South Australia might respond.

It is essential to monitor the future residential developments as well as the life cycle movements of suburbs in order to continue to assess the need for restructuring existing schools or opening new ones.

### Proposed activity

The Catholic Education Office is to proceed with further detailed planning with regard to the feasibility of the following new school provisions:

- extension of St Joseph's School, Murray Bridge to Year 9 and in the long term to Year 12;
- extension of Galilee Catholic School, Aldinga to Year 9 and in the medium term to Year 12 dependent upon four streams being achieved in Years 8 and 9;
- provision for an increase in enrolments at St Francis de Sales College to meet projected growth in the Mount Barker region;
- monitoring developments at Roseworthy with an initial response being the extension of Xavier College to an R-12 school;
- establishment a new R-12 school in the northern suburbs in response to the Munno Para and Buckland Park developments.

### Indicative timeline

1. Extension of St Joseph's School in Murray Bridge to Year 9	2015 - 2017
2. Extension of Galilee Catholic School in Aldinga to Year 9.	As current Years R-7 reach two full streams.
3. Expansion of St Francis de Sales College in Mount Barker.	According to population trends
4. Establishment of Catholic provision in northern suburbs, beginning with establishment of early years services	According to population trends
5. Establishment of a Catholic school in northern suburbs.	To be determined

## ACTION SIX

# Framework for amalgamation and/or closure of schools

### Significance and purpose of Action Six

In times when there is restricted or uneven growth in South Australia's population and school enrolments, Catholic Education must ensure it makes the best use of its available resources to achieve the best outcomes for each child and student across the Catholic system of schools and early years services.

The commitment to maximise the effectiveness of available resources means that Catholic Education must balance the provision of new schools with the need to take action where a decline in student enrolments diminishes the educational value of the school's program for existing students.

The amalgamation of existing schools or, where appropriate, the closure of an existing school, are possible options for the effective use of available resources. These scenarios need to take into account the key circumstances facing the schools.

The application of these options can create significant challenges for the schools affected and their students, families and communities.

A framework that addresses matters relating to school amalgamations and closures is essential to ensure that the values of Catholic Education remain paramount throughout such a possible process, that the educational interests of students are at the forefront of decision-making, and that processes are consultative and transparent.

The framework should clarify the distinction between school amalgamations – that is the arrangement where existing individual schools combine to form a new entity – and school clusters – that is the arrangement where existing individual schools work collaboratively to maximise student options and pathways while maintaining their separate identities and structures.

### Proposed activity

1. The Catholic Education Office is to prepare a Discussion Paper for the management of *school amalgamations*, including clarification of their relationship with cluster arrangements, that takes into account the views of the governing authorities, Diocesan governance, local communities, state government statutory requirements and, where appropriate, national policy directions.
2. The Catholic Education Office is to prepare a Discussion Paper with regard to the circumstances, key considerations, protocols and procedures for possible *school closures*, that takes into account the views of the governing authorities, Diocesan governance, local communities, state government statutory requirements and, where appropriate, national policy directions.
3. Based on stakeholder engagement with the two Discussion Papers, the Catholic Education Office is to prepare and disseminate a Framework that addresses matters relating to the amalgamations and closures of Catholic schools.

### Indicative timeline

1. Discussion Paper on Catholic school amalgamations	2015
2. Discussion Paper on Catholic school closures	2015
3. Framework for Catholic school amalgamations and closures	2015



## ACTION SEVEN

# Provision of vocational pathways

### Significance and purpose of Action Seven

Catholic Education in South Australia is committed to providing every secondary student with a learning pathway that attends to their post compulsory schooling options and aspirations, including the opportunity to access relevant vocational education and training (VET) programs. St Patrick's Technical College and Marcellin Technical College have provided students with specialist VET programs not normally available in mainstream secondary schools.

Catholic Education in South Australia faces the challenge of maintaining the benefits that St Patrick's Technical College and Marcellin Technical College have delivered to students while ensuring the financial sustainability of the Colleges' operations.

### Proposed activity

- a) The Catholic Education Office, on behalf of the Archbishop, and in conjunction with St Patrick's Technical College and Marcellin Technical College and in consultation with families and communities, is to investigate further the feasibility of the following models to ensure the sustainability of the Technical Colleges:
  - Maintain status quo with internal rationalisation
  - Combine the two Technical Colleges
  - Align the Technical Colleges with Catholic secondary colleges
- b) The Catholic Education Office is to address the broader issue of Vocational Education and Training across Catholic Education in South Australia through the investigation of the implications of various entities providing VET (such as technical colleges and trade training centres) on the wellbeing and viability of the entities.
- c) The Catholic Education Office is to address the broader issue of Vocational Education and Training within Catholic Education in South Australia through the development of appropriate partnership arrangements with TAFESA, including the development and negotiation of a possible MOU between the two organisations.
- d) The Catholic Education Office, in conjunction with St Patrick's Technical College and Marcellin Technical College, is to develop and implement a communication strategy to inform staff at the two Colleges about the ongoing operations of the Technical Colleges and the plans to strengthen future enrolments.

### Indicative timeline

1. Investigation of Technical College models	2015 - 2016
2. Development of partnership arrangements with TAFESA	2015 - 2016
3. Communication strategy with staff of the two Colleges	2015 - 2016



## ACTION EIGHT

# Promoting Catholic Education in South Australia and developing a marketing plan

### Significance and purpose of Action Eight

The successful implementation of the initiatives and actions presented in the Strategy requires the clear and effective communication of Catholic Education's identity and core values, as well as the provision of information about the specific initiatives and actions.

A clear and effective communication of the sector's identity and core values will involve a fundamental shift of culture from how Catholic Education has been framed in the past, such that in the future the offerings and successes of schools will be made more visible and overt as important expressions of the mission of the Church and the service of Catholic Education to students, children and families.

It is strongly emphasised that the intention to present Catholic Education as a valuable and viable choice for families is not a stratagem to increase enrolments. It is about Catholic Education providing a service to families, students and children and highlighting the value of the service in their lives.

### Proposed activity

- a) The Catholic Education Office is to develop a multi-tiered promotion and marketing plan for the Catholic system of schools and early years services that takes into account the proprieties of the sector as a whole, the regions and individual schools.
- b) The promotion and marketing strategy is to take into account initiatives such as the following and other relevant matters:
  - the current marketing project focused on ten metropolitan parish schools with critical enrolment issues
  - support for schools to include a marketing plan as part of their strategic planning
  - advice from the Federation of Catholic School Parent Communities on how to include the parent voice in the promotion and marketing plan
  - analysis of research on parent choice.
- c) The promotion and marketing strategy is to take into account Catholic Education's introduction of early year's services, including the matter of whether this support should extend to a coordinated branding of the services and an associated communication and marketing plan.

### Indicative timeline

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|---|------|
| 1. Promotion and marketing strategy for the Catholic system of schools and early years services | 2015 |
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## ACTION NINE

# Consolidated business case and financial model for the Strategy

### Significance and purpose of Action Nine

The range of initiatives and actions included in the Strategy represent a major and complex development agenda for Catholic Education in South Australia. They are far-reaching in terms of the timeframe for their implementation and for their potential to connect with every school and family involved in Catholic education.

In many instances the initiatives and actions intersect and overlap. Their implementation will also need to be sequenced over time to ensure the most efficient and effective use of the available resources.

The expansion of early years services and the reorganisation of Year 7s are likely to generate Human Resource implications which will require thorough financial modelling and analysis. These have not yet been fully costed and further work is required in these areas.

The complexity of the development program will require the comprehensive and coordinated overview of the resource implications, together with a depth of understanding of the capacity of Catholic Education in South Australia to allocate and sustain the required resources.

The success of Catholic Education in South Australia's development program in the Strategy is directly dependent on its capacity to resource the program in both the immediate and longer term.

Given the scope and dimensions of the Strategy program, the lack of a comprehensive, rigorous and coordinated financial management structure would not only undermine the program's success, but it would also harm the viability and reputation of Catholic Education in South Australia itself and ultimately diminish its service to students, families and communities.

### Proposed activity

- a) The development of a consolidated business case and financial model is essential to address the overlap, the interdependencies and all relevant factors that arise with regard to the initiatives and actions of the overall Strategy.
- b) The Catholic Education Office is to establish the management structure for the comprehensive and coordinated overview of the resources involved in the reform program outlined in the Strategy for the life of the program.
- c) The Catholic Education Office is to identify personnel with the necessary financial and accounting expertise to undertake the following responsibilities and accountabilities and to allocate the time and resources for the work to be undertaken:
  - development of the financial management plan that outlines current commitments and forward projections for the total program
  - monitoring the resource allocations and cash flow of the total program
  - identifying liabilities and risks
  - proposing mitigation strategies.
- d) The Team Leader for the Strategy Coordination (identified in Action Ten) is to carry lead responsibility for the development of the consolidated business case and financial model for the overall Strategy and for the subsequent monitoring and reporting against the business case to the Director.

### Indicative timeline

1. The establishment and operation of the financial management structure and the preparation of the financial analyses should start immediately following the endorsement of the Strategy by the Commission.

## ACTION TEN

# Strategy Coordination: Team Leader and Team

### Significance and purpose of Action Ten

The development and implementation of the improvement program outlined in the Strategy demand a sophisticated management capacity to coordinate the initiatives and actions.

The management complexity created by the multiple and parallel activities, coupled with the overlapping timeframes, point to the importance of the Catholic Education Office putting in place a central coordination team, either as a stand-alone unit or as a cross-office team, to oversee and quality assure the planning and implementation processes.

### Proposed activity

- a) The Catholic Education Office is to establish a Strategy Coordination Team with a senior officer appointed as Leader of the team. The Coordination Team may be either a stand-alone unit or a cross-office team; however its members will need to possess the necessary and appropriate level of expertise and experience.
- b) The Strategy Coordination Leader and Team is to be allocated the following responsibilities and accountabilities:
  - development of a comprehensive and coordinated development plan and implementation plan for the Strategy
  - development, coordination and monitoring of project plans in relation to key initiatives and actions
  - oversight of the financial modelling and budget of the Strategy program of work
  - developing, monitoring and updating a Strategy Risk Management Plan
  - oversight and coordination of the information and communications for the Strategy initiatives and actions
  - oversight and coordination of the promotion and marketing of the Strategy initiatives and actions
  - providing regular reports to the Director and, through the Director, to the Commission.

### Indicative timeline

The establishment and operation of the Strategy Coordination Leader and Team should occur immediately following the endorsement of the Strategy by the Commission and should coordinate the further planning activity.



## CONCLUSION

Catholic Education in South Australia has already achieved great success and has much to be proud of in its achievements.

Catholic Education in South Australia, along with other school sectors across Australia, now faces the challenge of how best to develop new structures and systems that meet the significant changes occurring within our communities, society and economy.

The Paper presents the goal, defining principles, initiatives and 10-point action plan of the Strategy to address the challenge.

The goal of the Strategy is to strengthen and transform the presence of Catholic Education in South Australia.

The initiatives and actions through which Catholic Education in South Australia will achieve the goal are based on two defining principles:

- Catholic education seeks to be an option of first preference for Catholic families along with all families from the full range of backgrounds in our community who seek a Catholic education for their children.
- Catholic Education in South Australia operates as a system of schools and early years services working in partnership for the common good.

The Strategy presents the commitment of Catholic Education in South Australia to continue as a living expression of the Catholic faith and the partnership of schools with families to create opportunities for encouraging life to the full in all its personal, spiritual, social, ecological and cultural dimensions.



Pads  
Religion

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