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## **SCHOOLS AS COMMUNITY CENTRES (SaCC)**

Model of service delivery 2017:  
child-focused, family-centred

# INTRODUCTION

**The SaCC program forms part of a child-focused, family-centred service model supporting families with young children in their local school community. There are currently 45 SaCC projects hosted by 46 NSW public schools with each project being led by a SaCC facilitator.**

SaCC facilitators are responsible for coordinating and managing a range of community engagement initiatives and programs to enhance the early learning and wellbeing of children birth to 8 years. Key accountabilities of SaCC facilitators are outlined in the Role Description (Appendix B).

SaCC facilitators are required to work collaboratively to:

- deliver evidence-based initiatives and programs that are inclusive and responsive to families and the school community
- engage and sustain partnerships with stakeholders to support the capacity of the community to enhance early development outcomes for children birth to 8 years.



# SaCC PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

**The SaCC program offers a holistic approach to early learning and wellbeing with four key interconnected elements of collaborative service delivery: the early development of children; key life transitions; positive parenting; and safe, healthy and connected communities.**

Within the Framework, each school in consultation with its community identifies key local priorities that meet the needs of their community to enhance early learning and wellbeing outcomes for children birth to 8 years. The Framework is outlined in the diagram below and example initiatives for each program element are listed in Appendix A.



## PROGRAM FOCUS

**The primary focus of the SaCC program is to enhance the early development outcomes of children birth to 8 years through the holistic approach outlined in the Framework. The focus on the early development of children is based on well-established evidence that the first years of a child's life are crucial for setting the foundation for life-long health and learning outcomes.**

Supporting the early development of children includes an emphasis on learning through play and learning at home as well as key transitions such as starting playgroup, playgroup to pre-school, preschool to kindergarten. The [Early Years Learning Framework for Australia; Belonging, Being & Becoming](#) and the [Australian Early Development Census](#), as well as school data, are key planning tools for use by SaCC facilitators.

The SaCC program delivers high quality playgroups and other early learning experiences that foster children's early language acquisition, cognitive development, sense of self and security, emotional regulation and their ability to form positive peer and other relationships.

SaCC projects model and support play based learning which '...provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine. When children play with other children they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other's thinking and build new understandings' (Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia; 2009; Australian Government DEEWR).

Both supported and community (i.e. family-led) playgroups can operate out of SaCC sites. Supported Playgroups are led by the SaCC facilitator or partner agency and intended for families who may benefit from additional parenting support and are held on site or in an outreach setting. Community Playgroups are run by participating families and held on the SaCC site with support from the SaCC facilitator as required.

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**THE SaCC PROGRAM DELIVERS HIGH QUALITY PLAYGROUPS AND OTHER EARLY LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT FOSTER CHILDREN'S EARLY LANGUAGE ACQUISITION, COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT, SENSE OF SELF AND SECURITY, EMOTIONAL REGULATION AND THEIR ABILITY TO FORM POSITIVE PEER AND OTHER RELATIONSHIPS.**

## PROGRAM FOCUS (CONT'D)

Families who have benefited from supported playgroups may be able to move into a community playgroup allowing for increased access to the supported playgroups by the families who most need this service. Some families may only need access to a community playgroup, but would benefit from other initiatives offered by the SaCC project and the on-going connection with the school. Family-led community playgroups may provide capacity-building opportunities for parents/carers.

The SaCC program recognises that parents/carers are the first and most important educators of their children, 'For all children, the quality of the home learning environment is more important for intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income.

What parents do is more important than who parents are' (Early Years Evidence Pack; 2011; Department of Education Gov. UK). Parenting information, workshops and side by side support are key aspects of the SaCC model of support.

It is important that SaCC facilitators enter into genuine partnerships with families to ensure that the SaCC project is welcoming, inclusive and provides opportunities for all families to voice how SaCC initiatives can best meet their needs.



## PROGRAM INITIATIVES

**Each year around 5000 families participate in SaCC activities. In 2015 82% of the initiatives were delivered in partnership with other agencies as part of a child-focused, family-centred service model (see Appendix A).**

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The school principal or delegate where the SaCC project is located is the SaCC project manager and the SaCC facilitator's line manager. The principal or delegate supports, encourages, mentors and supervises the SaCC facilitator to achieve the project's strategic priorities and is responsible for supporting the SaCC facilitator's professional development. Consultation with the community is managed through existing community engagement structures or through another process identified locally.

The Family and Community Engagement Manager in the Department's Learning and Wellbeing directorate is responsible for oversight of the program.



# PROGRAM EVALUATION

**Results-Based Accountability (RBA) is used as the state-wide service performance measurement tool. There are three performance measure categories: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off? (Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough; 2015 [ed]; Mark Friedman; PARSE Publishing).**

SaCC facilitators keep agreed program data and provide the data each February to state office for analysis and reporting purposes. A state-wide Annual Results-Based Report (ARBR) is then published.

Outcomes of local projects are used to inform each school's reporting and planning and feed into state-wide program evaluation.

### **Sample SaCC project outcomes**

Each SaCC project develops its own project outcomes which address the four interconnected elements of the SaCC Framework: the early development of children; key life transitions; positive parenting; and safe, healthy and connected communities. Sample outcomes that cover the four program elements are:

- Children's early language acquisition, cognitive development, sense of self and security, emotional regulation and ability to form positive peer and other relationships are maximised
- Children are set up for success in the remainder of their schooling through effective transitions
- Parents/carers have the knowledge, skills and support they need to enhance their nurturing behaviours and positive parenting strategies.
- Parent/carers' confidence and skills are increased as their child's first teacher
- Family, school and community efforts are integrated so that children grow up in safe, healthy and connected communities

### **Project outcomes specific to context:**

- Schools may also choose to identify additional context-specific outcomes to support the early learning and wellbeing of children identified through the school's planning and reporting processes and community consultation. For example context specific outcomes may be around cultural competencies or English as an Additional Language/Dialect; another community may have a specific health outcome.

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**OUTCOMES OF LOCAL PROJECTS ARE USED TO INFORM EACH SCHOOL'S REPORTING AND PLANNING AND FEED INTO STATE-WIDE PROGRAM EVALUATION.**

## PROGRAM EVALUATION (CONT'D)

### Performance measurement evidence includes:

- **Data Survey:** state-wide instrument completed in February each year and provided to state office for analysis and compilation of the Annual Results-Based Report. Used to gather quantitative information from SaCC projects including the number of families with young children participating in SaCC project initiatives and the number and types of partnerships with human service agencies. The SaCC data survey provides evidence for the RBA performance measure categories: How much did we do? How well did we do it? Is anyone better off?
- **Case Studies:** collected by SaCC facilitators on an on-going basis to provide stories behind the statistics that demonstrate how individuals are better off.
- **Parent Survey:** state-wide or local survey used to gather qualitative information about whether families raising children birth to 8 years are better off.





# PROGRAM EVALUATION (CONT'D)

## Example measure of project outcomes using Results-Based Accountability

Project outcomes	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?	Is anyone better off?
	<p><b>Quantity of effort</b> – examples include: number of children and their families participating and number of activities delivered</p>	<p><b>Quality of effort</b> – examples include: playgroups address AEDC identified vulnerabilities; families participating regularly; new families joining SaCC; partnerships with other agencies; staff have skills and knowledge in early development of children</p>	<p><b>Quantity and quality of effect</b> – examples include reported: % of parent/carers who read to their child more frequently; % of children starting school that are school ready; % of parents/carers who feel more confident to support their child; % of parent/carers who have made a new connection through the SaCC project</p>
Children's early language acquisition, cognitive development, sense of self and security, emotional regulation and ability to form positive peer and other relationships are maximised			
Children are set up for success in the remainder of their schooling through effective transitions			
Parents have the knowledge, skills and support they need to enhance their nurturing behaviours and positive parenting strategies			
Parents' confidence and skills are increased as their child's first teacher			
Family, school and community efforts are integrated so that children grow up in safe, healthy and connected communities			

# APPENDIX A

## THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

### Project initiatives

Please note that while the examples below have been grouped under the elements of the SaCC Framework, many initiatives go across the four key interconnected elements. SaCC projects also support other initiatives relevant to their local context recognising and respecting diversity and promoting inclusivity.

### Playgroups

In addition to general supported and community playgroups, many SaCC projects also run playgroups responding to identified needs including disability and chronic illness, English as an additional language or dialect, early intervention, water safety – babies and toddlers swimming programs, baby development, healthy eating, rhyme and music, social skills and play therapy. In some communities, Aboriginal language and culture playgroups operate through SaCC projects.

In addition, some SaCC playgroups are designed with specific parent/carer groups in mind, including young mums, grandparents and dads with children with disability. SaCC playgroups also operate off-site including in local parks and gardens and in partnership with sporting activities. A number of resources are also distributed through SaCC playgroups including local playgroup directories.

### Early literacy activities

SaCC projects are involved in a range of community-wide literacy initiatives including: Paint the Town/Lake REaD, Family Fun Reading Day, Born to Read, Reading Down Town, Let's Read, Booktalk, Aboriginal Early Literacy project, Early Learning Action Group, Read to Me, Stories from the Street and Words on the Street.

Books and literacy packs are widely distributed through SaCC initiatives including Books in the Home, Sow the Seed to Read and Learning Strong Reading Stations. These types of initiatives provide children's reading books in 'nooks around town'; i.e. in places frequented by families which generally involve waiting time, such as doctor surgeries. Books are replaced and updated regularly. Baby literacy packs are given out at hospitals for parents with newborns and through the Aboriginal Medical Service and second hand books are distributed through schools and community facilities.

SaCC projects operate toy and/or book libraries and reading clubs and also lend a range of resources including bilingual books, literacy packs, photo books made locally and books published through the SaCC centre such as the Deadly Aunties book series. Visits to school and community libraries are also arranged by SaCC facilitators and storytelling takes place under the trees and in story circles and through the 'Imagination Library'.

Reading tips for parent/carers are published and distributed and activities to support children's oral language development are implemented across SaCC projects.

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**BOOKS AND LITERACY PACKS ARE WIDELY DISTRIBUTED THROUGH SaCC INITIATIVES INCLUDING BOOKS IN THE HOME, SOW THE SEED TO READ AND LEARNING STRONG READING STATIONS.**

## SaCC projects support parents through a range of formal and side by side parenting initiatives.

### General parenting programs

These programs are offered widely across SaCC projects. Some SaCC facilitators have undertaken training to deliver parenting programs, while other parenting programs are delivered in partnership with government and non-government agencies. There are also a number of private providers who offer training programs and resources in positive parenting for a cost.

### Parenting programs for specific needs

Run through a number of SaCC programs, these include programs addressing child safety in the home, parenting a child with disability, developing resilience in children, helping parents with new technology, supporting children with challenging behaviours and early language development. SaCC projects also offer context-specific programs including parenting in a new culture and parenting programs in languages other than English. Some projects also offer parenting programs specifically for grandparents and other carers.

### Side by Side initiatives

These initiatives include diverse activities designed locally for target groups such as fathers or male carers, parent/carers under 21 years and grandparents or other carers. 'Drop in' centres and parent café initiatives operate across a number of projects and these, and a number of other SaCC initiatives, support parent/carers' social connections. Many SaCC facilitators use opportunities such as

cooking and sharing a meal together to support families. A number of SaCCs lead, or are active in, their school gardens which provide positive environments for families to connect in and learn new skills. Aboriginal foods and medicine gardens have been established across a number of SaCCs promoting cross-cultural understandings. In addition, many SaCCs are involved in information sharing and operate parent libraries and borrowing facilities and participate in local community events including contributing to information stalls at local fetes and shows.

### Adult learning

A range of initiatives have been implemented to support adult learning. This includes partnerships with TAFE such as a Taste of TAFE; Safe Food Handling Cert III, Certificate IV in Education Support, TAFE Outreach and the Certificate in Spoken and Written English (AMES course). First Aid for Kids and Senior First Aid are offered across many SaCC projects and beginning English classes and English conversation groups have been set up for families from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Parents/carers are offered opportunities to develop their computer skills and money management initiatives are implemented through a range of activities.

Excursions are also widely implemented to demonstrate low cost activities that can be undertaken with children (and in some cases to reduce location isolation) and partnerships with universities have been established. Other initiatives include craft groups, Centrelink information sharing, work skills workshops, Parents as Tutors, resume writing and career pathway activities and sewing workshops.

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**SOME PROJECTS ALSO OFFER PARENTING PROGRAMS SPECIFICALLY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND OTHER CARERS.**

## KEY LIFE TRANSITIONS

Many SaCC projects support their local school's Transition to School program through a range of strategies including leading the healthy snacks and lunch box initiatives and providing free resources delivered to each school starter such as Let's Read Early Literacy Packs, starting school magnets, Free Stuff for Big School, School Readiness Backpacks and Transition Backpacks.

SaCC projects contribute to school and community information expos, events and orientations for school starters and their families. Many SaCC projects also lead transition to school playgroups and programs including embedding social skills and literacy activities.

## SAFE, HEALTHY AND CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

SaCC projects work collaboratively with NSW Health to offer a range of screening activities and follow ups especially for ear (including otitis media and the 'ear bus' project), eye (STePS Eye Screening) and oral health. Early childhood, maternal and child and family health nurses; as well as occupational, speech and physio therapists operate clinics and/or visit playgroups.

Healthy eating and exercise programs for both children and adults operate throughout most SaCC projects including breakfast programs, music and movement classes, healthy eating/cooking sessions, food safety information, yoga, zumba and the 'Walking Bus'. A number of self-care initiatives are also implemented through the SaCC program.

Other local initiatives include: Aboriginal Medical Service parent support, Mental Health First Aid course, infant massage workshops, Keeping All Children Safe – protective behaviours information sessions, Women's Healing Circle – workshop for survivors of family and domestic violence, dietician visits, Road Safety workshops and support for a number of community wide events including the Festival of Ability and Harmony Day.

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**MANY SaCC PROJECTS ALSO LEAD TRANSITION TO SCHOOL PLAYGROUPS AND PROGRAMS INCLUDING EMBEDDING SOCIAL SKILLS AND LITERACY ACTIVITIES.**

## APPENDIX B

### ROLE Description – Schools as Community Centre (SaCC) Facilitator

**Cluster:** Education

**Agency:** Department of Education

**Division/Branch/Unit:** Learning and Wellbeing

**Location:** Various

**Classification/Grade/Band:** Clerk Grade 7/8

**Kind of Employment:** Temporary

**ANZSCO Code:** NA

**PCAT Code:** NA

**Date of Approval:** November 2016

**Agency Website:**

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/>

#### Agency overview

The NSW Department of Education serves the community by leading the provision of world-class education. The department protects young children by regulating preschool and long day care providers. Once children move into school, we provide them with a world-class primary and secondary education. We also work to advance the wellbeing of Aboriginal people.

Schools as Community Centres (SaCC) projects are located in NSW public schools in communities experiencing marked challenges of disadvantage.

#### Primary purpose of the role

SaCC facilitators are responsible for coordinating and managing a range of community engagement initiatives and programs to enhance the early learning and wellbeing of children birth to 8 years. SaCC facilitators use a child-focused, family-centred prevention and early intervention service model.

#### Key accountabilities

- Coordinating, managing and delivering a range of community engagement initiatives, in particular initiatives supporting young children and their families.
- Assisting in the development

and delivery of strategies and approaches identified through school planning and reporting processes to enhance the learning and wellbeing of children in the early years.

- Liaising with other government and non-government agencies and service providers in the development, implementation and/or evaluation of services and programs supporting children birth to 8 years and their families.
- Planning for the delivery of high quality supported playgroups and other early learning experiences that foster children's early language acquisition, cognitive development, sense of self and security, emotional regulation and ability to form positive peer and other relationships.
- Supporting parents as the first and most important educators of their children through the promotion of in home learning strategies and the delivery of a range of other initiatives including supported playgroups, transition to school, early literacy activities and parenting information and workshops.
- Establishing quality assurance

## APPENDIX B (CONT'D)

processes for the management and evaluation of strategies and approaches for family and community development and/or engagement.

- Participating in the on-going evaluation of the SaCC program initiatives and collecting and maintaining project data to inform school planning and reporting processes.

### Key challenges

- Delivering evidence-based initiatives and programs that are inclusive and responsive to families and the school community.
- Engaging and sustaining partnerships with stakeholders to support the capacity of the community to enhance early development outcomes for children birth to 8 years.

### Key relationships

Who	Why
<b>Internal</b>	
Principal / delegate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Is the SaCC facilitator's line manager and the SaCC project manager</li> <li>- Supports, encourages, mentors and supervises the SaCC facilitator to achieve strategic priorities and the SaCC facilitator's professional development</li> </ul>
School staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The SaCC facilitator is a member of the school team working on agreed priorities identified through school planning and reporting processes</li> </ul>
Key stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The SaCC facilitator collaborates locally as appropriate, shares initiatives and 'what works' more broadly</li> </ul>
<b>External</b>	
Children, their families and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The SaCC facilitator supports children's early development with a child-focused, family-centred approach</li> </ul>
Local child and family networks and other agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The SaCC facilitator partners in a local shared and consistent child-focused, family centred prevention and early intervention service model as required</li> <li>- The SaCC facilitator collaborates to deliver initiatives that meet the identified learning and wellbeing needs of local children birth to 8 years identified through the school planning and reporting processes</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX B (CONT'D)

### Role dimensions

#### Decision making

The SaCC facilitator works as part of the school team to identify local prevention and early intervention priorities and implement agreed strategies that meet the needs of the community to enhance the early learning and wellbeing outcomes for children aged 0 to 8 years. The role requires the SaCC facilitator to work in accordance with relevant legislative requirements, policies, procedures and guidelines of the NSW Department of Education.

#### Reporting line

The SaCC facilitator reports to the Principal or delegate of the school on which the project is located.

#### Direct reports

Nil.

### Budget/Expenditure

The SaCC facilitator is responsible for overseeing the project's resources with input and endorsement from the school Principal or delegate in accordance with funding agreements and the Department of Education's policies.

### Essential requirements

- Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care or Diploma of Early Childhood and Care or demonstrated equivalent experience or capability.
- Knowledge of, and commitment to, the Department's Aboriginal Education policies.
- Current and valid NSW driver's licence.
- Valid and current Working with Children Check clearance.







## APPENDIX B (CONT'D)

### Capabilities for the role

The NSW Public Sector Capability Framework applies to all NSW public sector employees. The Capability Framework is available at: [www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/capability-framework/nsw-public-sector-capability-framework](http://www.psc.nsw.gov.au/workforce-management/capability-framework/nsw-public-sector-capability-framework).

### Capability summary

Below is the full list of capabilities and the level required for this role. The capabilities in bold are the focus capabilities for this role. Refer to the next section for further information about the focus capabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework		
Capability Group	Capability Name	Level
 <b>Personal Attributes</b>	Display Resilience and Courage	Intermediate
	Act with Integrity	Intermediate
	Manage Self	Adept
	<b>Value Diversity</b>	<b>Adept</b>
 <b>Relationships</b>	<b>Communicate Effectively</b>	<b>Adept</b>
	<b>Commit to Customer Service</b>	<b>Adept</b>
	Work Collaboratively	Adept
	Influence and Negotiate	Intermediate
 <b>Results</b>	Deliver Results	Intermediate
	<b>Plan and Prioritise</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>
	Think and Solve Problems	Intermediate
	<b>Demonstrate Accountability</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>
 <b>Business Enablers</b>	Finance	Foundational
	<b>Technology</b>	<b>Intermediate</b>
	Procurement and Contract Management	Foundational
	Project Management	Intermediate



## APPENDIX B (CONT'D)

### Focus capabilities

The focus capabilities for the role are the capabilities in which occupants must demonstrate immediate competence. The behavioural indicators provide examples of the

types of behaviours that would be expected at that level and should be reviewed in conjunction with the role's key accountabilities.

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework		
Capability Group	Level	Behavioural Indicators
<b>Personal Attributes</b> Value Diversity	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seek to promote the value of diversity for the organisation</li> <li>- Recognise and adapt to individual differences and working styles</li> <li>- Support initiatives that create an environment in which diversity is valued</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b> Communicate Effectively	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tailor communication to the audience</li> <li>- Clearly explain complex concepts and arguments to individuals and groups</li> <li>- Monitor own and others' non-verbal cues and adapt where necessary</li> <li>- Create opportunities for others to be heard</li> <li>- Actively listen to others and clarify own understanding</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b> Commit to Customer Service	Adept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take responsibility for delivering high quality customer-focused services</li> <li>- Understand customer perspectives and ensure responsiveness to their needs</li> <li>- Identify customer service needs and implement solutions</li> <li>- Find opportunities to co-operate with internal and external parties to improve outcomes for customers</li> <li>- Maintain relationships with key customers in area of expertise</li> <li>- Connect and collaborate with relevant stakeholders within the community</li> </ul>

## APPENDIX B (CONT'D)

NSW Public Sector Capability Framework		
Capability Group	Level	Behavioural Indicators
<b>Results</b> Plan and Prioritise	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the team/unit objectives and align operational activities accordingly</li> <li>- Initiate, and develop team goals and plans and use feedback to inform future planning</li> <li>- Respond proactively to changing circumstances and adjust plans and schedules when necessary</li> <li>- Accommodate and respond with initiative to changing priorities and operating environments</li> </ul>
<b>Results</b> Demonstrate Accountability	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Take responsibility and be accountable for own actions</li> <li>- Understand delegations and act within authority levels</li> <li>- Identify and follow safe work practices, and be vigilant about their application by self and others</li> <li>- Be alert to risks that might impact the completion of an activity and escalate these when identified</li> <li>- Use financial and other resources responsibly</li> </ul>
<b>Business Enablers</b> Technology	Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Apply computer applications that enable performance of more complex tasks</li> <li>- Apply practical skills in the use of relevant technology</li> <li>- Make effective use of records, information and knowledge management functions and systems</li> <li>- Understand and comply with information and communications security and acceptable use policies</li> </ul>



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Further information:

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