

Review of additional sites, services and programs

YourSAy consultation report

Background

Following the announcement of the review of additional sites, services and programs on 1 July 2025, the Department for Education received several enquiries regarding opportunities to contribute to the review.

To complement the suite of targeted stakeholder activities, an open submission process was conducted between 12 September 2025 and 28 October 2025. Submissions were provided through either the YourSAy survey tool or email.

The survey tool was open between 12 September and 3 October 2025. Several organisations requested extensions for submissions, as negotiated with the review team. Email submissions were accepted until 28 October 2025. Overall, 25 submissions were received.

Who we heard from

Type of stakeholder	Submissions*
Organisation	9
Family member (parent/grandparent)	12
Department for Education staff member	4
Former teacher/staff member	3
Other	3

*Some submissions have been counted multiple times in the chart above, as the author belonged to several categories.

Of the 12 responses from family members:

- 2 were from former families, 10 were from current families.
- 10 related to Home Education, 1 related to Open Access College and 1 related to both Home Education and Open Access College.

Of the 9 responses from organisations:

- 4 were based interstate.
- 5 provided general feedback relating to all additional settings and the education system.
- 2 provided feedback specific to Home Education and 2 provided feedback specific to Open Access College.



Of the respondents who were department employees:

- 2 are principals.
- 1 is an education director.
- 1 is a policy officer.

Settings addressed

The following settings were discussed in submissions:

Setting	Submissions
Home Education	11
All settings/feedback across system	7
Open Access College	3
Better Behaviour Centres	2
Hospital School	1
Youth Education Centre	1
Learning Centres	0
Bowden Brompton Community School	0

Two submissions discussed other additional or specialist settings including Warriappendi Secondary School, the Wiltja Boarding Program, Thebarton Senior College, South Australian School and Services for Vision Impaired, the Australian Science and Mathematics School, Montessori schools and Steiner schools. Although not in-scope, the interest in other additional and specialist settings is noted for consideration in future reviews.

Themes from submissions

Despite differences in the settings discussed and the experience of respondents, common strengths, challenges and opportunities for further exploration were raised in multiple submissions.

Strengths

Strength 1: Staff in additional settings.

All submissions related to individual sites were complimentary of the staff in additional settings, with many submissions praising their understanding of neurodiversity and disability, as well as their focus on building relationships with learners and families.

Strength 2: Flexibility of Open Access College and Home Education settings.

Both families and organisations praised the flexibility of the Home Education and Open Access College models. Submissions detailed how these settings allow children more freedom to pursue learning related to their interest and design their own learning environment.

Challenges

Challenge 1: Lack of flexibility in school environments can be a barrier to engagement for children and families with additional complexity.

Several submissions raised concerns about a lack of flexibility across the system regarding timetables, expectations of the Australian curriculum, physical environments, and support strategies for children and young people.

Several submissions from families advised they enrolled in an additional setting due to a lack of support from their school in meeting children's needs related to disability, anxiety or neurodivergence.

Challenge 2: Concerns about overrepresentation of certain demographics in additional settings.

Submissions from disability advocacy organisations raised concerns about the lack of support for children with disabilities or medical conditions in schools. Although they were positive about the support offered in additional settings, concern was expressed that children and families were being redirected to these settings rather than schools seeking to become more inclusive.

One submission raised concerns regarding the high numbers of Aboriginal children represented in some settings compared to the low number of Aboriginal staff at these sites.

Challenge 3: Families in Home Education advise of administrative issues due to not being officially enrolled in a school.

Families accessing Home Education raised concerns regarding administrative problems arising from children not being recognised as part of a local school. These included inconsistent access to student identification cards and education email addresses, the age of exemption impacting their children's pathway choices and financial issues (related to both impacts on work patterns and eligibility for some Centrelink payments).

Challenge 4: Transitions between settings are often lengthy and stressful for families and children.

Several submissions identified transitions between settings and schools (both entry and exit) as stress points. Some respondents advised difficulty with transitions was due to schools being unaware of additional settings and their associated referral pathways.

Opportunities

Opportunity 1: More connection between mainstream and additional settings for both staff and children.

Several submissions spoke of how more connection between staff in schools and additional settings could benefit both cohorts in terms of wellbeing support, mentorship, shared professional learning, professional networks and two-way learning.

Opportunity 2: Strengthening schools through upskilling of staff, environmental adjustments and support strategies.

Several submissions believed building the capacity of leaders and staff in schools through professional learning would improve inclusion in all schools, with suggestions related to trauma informed practice, differentiated learning and providing cultural safety for Aboriginal learners.

Submissions also advocated for more education regarding the existence of additional settings and their referral pathways, along with suggestions for strategies to improve inclusion in schools.

Several submissions from current or former staff members expressed more measures to ensure staff wellbeing would enable educators to better support children and address barriers to engagement.

Opportunity 3: More collaboration and consultation with families to understand their barriers to success and design approaches.

Families and organisations both raised the need for schools and additional settings to consult and collaborate with families more to design appropriate approaches and make decisions about the learning environment.

Several submissions highlighted co-design and consultation opportunities as especially important for Aboriginal families and families with lived experience of disability and/or neurodivergence.

Opportunity 4: Lessons from Home Education in other jurisdictions.

Many submissions from Home Education families and advocacy organisations spoke about policies in other jurisdictions that could be explored in South Australia, including the Victorian annual review model, the Certificate of Completion for Year 10 in New South Wales and the ability for Home Education families in Queensland to enrol in distance education schools.

Next steps

We are grateful to all respondents who took the time to share their views and experiences.

Findings and themes from submissions were provided to the review team for consideration while preparing the final report.

Further information about the outcomes of the review will be shared in 2026.