

Recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools policy

This is a mandated policy under the operational policy framework. Any edits to this policy must follow the process outlined on the [creating, updating and deleting policy documents](#) page.

Overview

This policy outlines the principles and process for the appointment of teaching staff in standalone preschools.

Scope

This policy outlines the principles and processes for recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools, and must be read in conjunction with the [recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools procedure \(PDF 619KB\)](#) which provides details of the process steps and employee entitlements.

The policy applies to all teachers employed under the [Education and Children's Services Act 2019 \(SA\)](#) in standalone and children's centres.



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Detail

The policy for the recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools must be read in conjunction with the recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools procedure. The following principles underpin the policy:

- Teacher quality is a major determinant of quality education outcomes for children and we will seek to attract and retain the best teachers to all Department for Education preschools, to inspire and support children.
- Appointment of teachers to preschools is made by the Chief Executive or delegate under section 97 of the [Education and Children's Services Act 2019 \(SA\)](#). All teachers appointed to preschools are employees of the department.
- Preschools should have the maximum flexibility to select teachers who best suit their needs and circumstances within established and agreed industrial frameworks, including the preschool staffing formula. Selection of staff is based on merit principles.
- Wherever practicable, teachers will be appointed on a permanent basis to a specific preschool. Preschools are required to declare ongoing positions wherever possible.
- As a rule, permanent teachers will not remain in temporary (PAT) positions for periods of longer than 12 months.
- The department is committed to the appointment of existing permanent teachers into ongoing positions wherever possible.
- Preschools are responsible for effective workforce planning to ensure they have the right balance of teaching staff to meet the needs of their children, so that they have access to a broad range of curriculum offerings.

Workforce planning

Preschool Directors will develop their site's workforce plan in consultation with their staff team.

The workforce plan will identify staffing requirements, taking into account the current and future needs of the site. The plan will be regularly updated to reflect changes to the composition of the workforce, site requirements, child profile, curriculum changes, enrolments and budget.

Describing positions

Preschools will describe vacant teaching positions consistent with the requirements identified in their workforce plan and in consultation with the staff team.

The position descriptions will detail whether the vacancy is ongoing or temporary and other relevant information, as described in the [recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools procedure \(PDF 619KB\)](#).

Ongoing positions

An ongoing position does not have an end date, and can be described when:

- the position is vacant, is maintained in the school's workforce plan and no existing, permanent teacher holds right of return to the position
- a new vacancy is created that can be funded on an ongoing basis from the preschool's resource budget i.e. the funding source is ongoing.

Ongoing positions will be described unless the criteria for a temporary position are met. For all vacancies resulting from teachers winning advertised teaching or leadership positions, or by teachers resigning, retiring, etc., it is expected that an ongoing position will be described by the preschool unless strong evidence can be provided as to why the resultant vacancy cannot be filled permanently.

Temporary positions

A temporary position is for a fixed period of time with a specified commencement and end date.

Temporary vacancies have a minimum tenure of 20 duty days. They can be up to two years if the vacancy is, for example, behind a teacher who holds right of return to the preschool.

A temporary position may only be declared when:

- a teacher holds a right of return to the preschool
- the preschool is undergoing a major change
- the preschool is undergoing enrolment decline and an ongoing position cannot be sustained
- a teacher has an approved temporary change in time
- there are special short-term funding arrangements
- a position needs to be maintained behind an acting leadership position of 12 months or less.

Temporary relieving teacher (TRT)

A TRT can only be accessed where there are unexpected short term absences of another employee or an unforeseen event(s) which could not reasonably have been planned for. TRT positions have a minimum tenure of half a day and a maximum tenure of 19.5 duty days.

Position tenure review panel

A joint department/AEU position tenure review panel considers concerns raised relating to the tenure of positions, i.e. when a temporary position is described which appears to meet the criteria for an ongoing position. Either the department or the AEU can initiate a meeting of the panel and would operate on an exception basis rather than review all temporary positions. The panel would conduct an annual review of the terms of reference and any recommendations, if agreed by the department and the AEU, would be implemented. See [recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools procedure \(PDF 619KB\)](#).

Filling vacancies

Ongoing positions

The process for filling ongoing positions:

- Prior to the commencement of each new annual recruitment and selection exercise, all permanent teachers who are in temporary positions or require placement will be appointed, where possible, to ongoing positions in preschools, in the first instance, through a centrally-managed process.
- Country Guarantees will then be placed.
- In all country preschools and children's centres conversion to permanency can take place prior to the first rounds of advertising, subject to specific criteria.
- Positions will then be advertised.
- If an appointment is not made from advertisement, applicants with a 'T' transaction type will be considered.
- If still unfilled, the vacancy may be considered for a conversion to permanency process, subject to specific criteria, as outlined in the [procedure document \(PDF 619KB\)](#).
- If the position is not filled through any of these processes, the vacancy may be re advertised, if timelines permit.
- If there is insufficient time to advertise at the end of the year, the vacancy will be filled through a centrally managed process overseen by the Assistant Director, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools

Advertised positions

Advertised vacancies are open to all eligible teachers, whether or not they are currently employed by the department. Applications for advertised vacancies are lodged online and are managed by a Local Selection Panel, in accordance with the process outlined in the [recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools procedure \(PDF 619KB\)](#).

Conversion to permanency

Preschool Directors in accordance with the workforce plan can make a recommendation to the Assistant Director, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools to convert a temporary teacher to permanent, subject to specific criteria, as outlined in the [procedure document \(PDF 619KB\)](#).

In order to ensure that the overall needs of preschools and individual teachers are met, and in extenuating circumstances, the Assistant Director, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools, may approve special arrangements for the conversion of temporary teachers to permanency.

In country preschools and Children Services children's centres conversion to permanency can take place prior to the first rounds of advertising, if the following criteria are met:

- the position is identified as an ongoing position by the site
- there are no teachers available with specific placement rights through the Permanent Teacher Register (PTR) to fill the vacancy
- the incumbent was appointed through established recruitment processes and has occupied the position for a period of at least two years
- the incumbent has demonstrated satisfactory performance.

Temporary positions

Teachers in the PTR who are eligible to be considered for temporary positions are considered in the first instance for temporary positions, through a centrally-managed process. If an appointment is not made from the PTR, the position can either be advertised by the preschool or filled from the Employable Teacher Register (ETR), through the process outlined in the [recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools procedure \(PDF 619KB\)](#).

Appointment to preschools

Permanent teachers are appointed to ongoing positions, where possible, in preschools. All permanent teachers appointed to preschool will retain right of return to that preschool following periods of leave or following appointment to a leadership position or secondment of 12 months tenure or less.

Substantive teachers appointed to leadership positions, seconded teacher positions and/or secondments of more than 12 months will lose right of return to their preschool, unless otherwise negotiated.

If these teachers require an appointment to a preschool at the end of the tenured leadership position or secondment, they enter the PTR (Permanent Teacher Register) for placement as a teacher.

A secondment does not affect a teacher's status as a department employee.

Preschools may make an application to the Assistant Director, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools, to waive the right of return where special circumstances exist.

The permanent teacher register (PTR)

Essentially, teachers who are eligible to be included in the PTR are those:

Must place

- permanent teachers who do not hold a right of return to a specific preschool, after completing a leadership position of greater than 12 months
- permanent teachers who do not hold a right of return to a specific preschool, after returning from extended leave

- permanent teachers who do not hold a right of return to a specific preschool, and have been placed into a temporary position
- teachers identified for relocation due to significant enrolment decline.

Guarantee

- with a guaranteed right of return from the country to the metropolitan area.

Transfer

- permanent teachers in the metropolitan area who lodge a request to transfer following 10 years of service in their current preschool ('T' transaction type)
- eligible permanent teachers (as defined in the [procedure document \(PDF 619KB\)](#)) in country preschools who lodge a request to transfer to an alternative country location ('T' transaction type).

Selection process for the PTR

All teachers in the PTR are considered for vacancies for which they are eligible to apply. Teachers who have lodged a 'T' transfer request will be considered for any suitable permanent vacancies after other teachers in the PTR have been considered, the position remains unfilled after advertised and prior to conversions to permanency being considered. The appointment of teachers from the PTR to preschools will be managed centrally by Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools.

The Assistant Director, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools may approve special arrangements for the appointment of individual teachers where special circumstances may exist.

Teachers requiring alternative appointments

The Assistant Director, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools may approve alternative placements in special circumstances, such as for genuine compassionate reasons or where circumstances in a preschool warrant identification of excess staff due to significant enrolment decline.

Local selection process for advertised vacancies

All vacancies must be filled in accordance with the agreed local selection procedures set out in the recruitment and selection procedures. Any selected employable teachers who are recruited to these permanent positions will not be considered for other permanent vacancies at that classification/level until they have met the appropriate eligibility criteria (as outlined in the [procedure document \(PDF 619KB\)](#)).

Preschools are able to advertise vacancies after all the teachers that 'must be placed' and the guarantees are placed.

Grievance resolution

An employee may lodge a complaint if they consider they have been treated unreasonably or unfairly in the

application of this policy or its associated procedure as per the [employee complaints procedure \(PDF 1.8MB\)](#) (staff login required).

Roles and responsibilities

Preschool Director

Identify and describe a new vacancy with reference to the Site's workforce plan.

Make a recommendation to the Assistant Director, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools for conversion to permanency.

Approve leave up to and including 12 months.

Assistant Director, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools

Approve special arrangements for the filling of vacancies or the appointment of individual employees.

Approve conversions to permanency.

Approve the classification levels of Preschool Directors.

Approve Alternative Placement Requests.

Business Partner, Workforce Management – Schools and Preschools

Appoint permanent employees from the PTR.

Definitions

AEU

Australian Education Union (SA Branch).

ETR

Employable Teacher Register.

PAT

Permanent Against Temporary.

PTR

Permanent Teacher Register.

Supporting information

Related instruments

[Pre-school \(Kindergarten\) Teaching Staff Award](#)

[South Australian School and Preschool Education Staff Enterprise Agreement 2024 \(PDF 6.7MB\)](#)

Related legislation

[Education and Children's Services Act 2019 \(SA\)](#)

[Fair Work Act 1994 \(SA\)](#)

[Public Sector Act 2009 \(SA\)](#)

Related policies

[Employee complaints procedure \(PDF 1.8MB\)](#)

[Merit selection procedure \(PDF 666KB\)](#)

[Recruitment and selection of teaching staff in preschools procedure \(PDF 619KB\)](#)

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[Ask your question or lodge a request through edHR](#)