

Staff digital device (preschools and schools) 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 operational policies](#) page.

Overview

This policy underpins implementation of the Staff digital device policy, an initiative of the [Digital Strategy 2023 to 2026: Embracing Today, Shaping Tomorrow](#). It specifies that site leaders (principals and preschool directors) are expected to provide all teachers at their site with access to an up-to-date, portable, personal digital device to use for teaching and student administration. This expectation also applies to other staff in schools and preschools who require a device for their work.

Digital devices are a vital piece of equipment for effective digitally-enabled teaching, as well as enabling administrative efficiencies, tracking of students' progress, collaboration with colleagues and communication with students and their caregivers.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- principals and preschool directors of government schools and preschools
- teachers and educators at government schools and preschools*
- all other staff in government schools and preschools whose site leader makes an assessment that they require a digital device for their work.

Preschools please refer to the [preschools frequently asked questions \(PDF 134KB\)](#) for further information about what this means in your context.



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Detail

Objective

The objective of this policy is to ensure that all educators and support staff (where it is appropriate to their role) in schools and preschools, whether full-time, part-time or casual have an up-to-date device for their exclusive use to support teaching and student administration. This will enable:

- educators to deliver effective digitally-enabled teaching
- administrative and management efficiencies, freeing up time for more student facing work
- access to digital tools that help teachers track students' progress and provide targeted support to students
- effective collaboration and communication by educators with each other, students and their parents or guardians.

Benefits

The department has launched its [Digital Strategy 2023 to 2026: Embracing Today, Shaping Tomorrow](#) (the strategy), which outlines:

- how we can use digital technology to empower schools and preschools to deliver highly effective education
- how we can help children and students to thrive in a digital world.

The department has invested heavily in setting up our schools and preschools with the right digital foundations – connecting them to high speed internet, upgrading ICT infrastructure and implementing a suite of modern, user-centred digital platforms.

The strategy builds on these foundations, providing a sustained focus on digital improvement at a whole-of-system level, and the advice, resources and support that schools and preschools need to support their improvement. One key focus of the strategy involves initiatives to support equitable access to technology for students and staff.

For staff, the department is:

- setting the expectation that all educators (and support staff, where it is appropriate to their role) should be provided with an up-to-date personal digital device as a 'tool-of-the-trade'
- providing guidance on the types of devices that staff should have in different settings
- providing cost savings to sites by leveraging its bulk-purchasing power.

The department will additionally provide resources and support to help staff develop their digital skills, so that they can use their devices effectively.

Research indicates that existing technologies can help teachers reallocate a significant proportion of administrative time to activities that support student learning. Research also suggests that teacher access to

a device has a greater impact on learning outcomes than student access. However, research and consultation activity carried out in the development of the Digital Strategy revealed significant variance in teachers' access to devices across the system. This policy seeks to address the current variance, and ensure an equitable baseline across all schools and preschools is achieved.

School staff devices requirements

Section 8 of the *Education and Children's Services Act 2019* requires the Chief Executive to maintain efficiency and competency in the teaching service; in the digital age, personal digital devices are necessary for an efficient and competent teaching workforce.

From the 2024 school year onwards, all government schools and preschools in South Australia must provide their educators/teachers (and support staff where it is appropriate to their role) with access to their own portable digital device for their work. The devices must be available to staff by the start of the school year, and devices must be available for new staff when they start their role. Schools and preschools will have until the commencement of the 2025 school year to meet this policy expectation in its entirety, purchased from within schools' resources.

Schools must ensure that devices are refreshed at the end of their optimal lifecycle to ensure effectiveness and currency of technology, and should factor this into their budgets. Planning tools from the digital maturity assessment – another initiative of the Digital Strategy – will assist schools to develop long term ICT budgets.

Minimum device standards

The general principle is that the standard of devices must ensure that the devices will reliably and effectively carry out the functions that staff require as part of their work. Minimum specifications for teacher devices are aligned to corporate standards.

Devices should meet any specific needs of individual members of staff. In line with the department's [guidance on supporting people with disability at work](#), devices should include assistive technology/programs that staff need when they are available, and the need has been identified.

Schools should consider whether to provide the same types of devices to teachers as those that students are provided with or expected to buy. Using the same types of devices will give teachers familiarity with students' devices, enabling teachers to demonstrate its use and support students.

For further information and advice regarding device standards, contact the Digital Equity Team at education.SchoolDeviceProgram@sa.gov.au.

Part-time and casual staff

All staff, whether full-time, part-time or casual, must be provided with a device for their exclusive use.

Schools must ensure that they have enough spare devices for casual staff to use during their time working at the school. Part-time teachers must be provided with the same resources for their work as full-time staff.

When part-time teachers work across more than one school, those schools should share the costs of the

device proportionately between themselves.

Purchasing devices

Schools are encouraged to purchase school devices through the department's provisioning arrangements for digital devices. By purchasing devices through the department (directly or via a vendor we negotiate with) schools will benefit from:

- a reduced administrative burden associated with procurement
- bulk purchasing discounts negotiated by the department
- multi-year repayment options.

Purchasing through the department's arrangements for digital devices will also support more consistency and therefore supportability of devices.

Roles and responsibilities

Information and Communication Technology Services Division

Monitor, evaluate and review this policy to ensure that staff in schools and preschools are being provided with the digital devices they need for their work, and that the department's procurement arrangements save schools and preschools time and money.

Develop and implement a communications strategy (with Communications Directorate) to ensure that schools and preschools are aware of this policy and of support available to them to implement it.

Negotiate bulk purchasing discounts with ICT vendors, and set up arrangements for sites to purchase devices (either via the department or directly from vendors) that minimise administration and costs for sites.

Review (annually) the minimum device standards.

Principals and preschool directors

Assess which non-teaching staff require a personal digital device for their work.

Purchase devices for all staff who work on their sites and are covered by this policy.

Provide devices to staff covered by this policy, and ensure that staff

- have access to the information, training and support they need in order to be able to use the devices
- are aware of the department's [mobile communication devices procedure \(PDF 130KB\)](#).

Complete an annual device census/attestation to ensure staff to device access ratios are met.

Employees

Comply with the requirements of the mobile communication devices procedure, including about personal and unacceptable usage.

Comply with the security standards set out in the department's ICT cyber security standard.

Access information and undertake any training required in order to be able to make effective use of the device.

Definitions

digital device

A laptop, notebook or tablet that uses wireless/mobile telecommunications technology, and that is for the exclusive use of the staff member to whom it is allocated.

teacher

A person who is registered or provisionally registered as a teacher and who is employed under the *Education and Children's Services Act 2019* to teach, or supervise teaching, in any course of preschool, primary or secondary education.

Supporting information

[Improve student access to devices through the School Device Program](#)

Related legislation

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

Related policies

[ICT cyber security standard \(PDF 488KB\)](#)

[Induction and onboarding guideline](#)

[Mobile communication devices procedure \(PDF 130KB\)](#)

[Part-time teachers \(schooling sector\) operational procedure \(PDF 397KB\)](#)

[Provision of mobile communication devices procedure \(PDF 117KB\)](#)

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