

Position Description

Principal Policy Advisor

Why work with us

The Office for Early Childhood Development was created to champion change and to help build a system that gives all South Australian children a flying start to life.

Guided by the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care, the Office for Early Childhood Development is the steward of the early childhood development system in South Australia.

The Office is tasked with a significant responsibility: bringing together a holistic, connected system for early childhood development across South Australia, with the goal of reducing the rate of children entering school developmentally vulnerable. Critical to this is the roll-out of universal 3-year-old preschool from 2026, giving every child access to 2 years of teacher-led, play-based early learning before school by 2032.

Our values

We are part of the South Australian public sector and share the values of:

							
SERVICE	PROFESSIONALISM	TRUST	RESPECT	COLLABORATION & ENGAGEMENT	HONESTY & INTEGRITY	COURAGE & TENACITY	SUSTAINABILITY
We proudly service the community and the South Australian Government.	We strive for excellence.	We have the confidence in the ability of others.	We value every individual.	We create solutions together.	We act truthfully, consistently, and fairly.	We never give up.	We work to get the best results for current and future generations of South Australians.

About this role

The Office for Early Childhood Development (OECD) will coordinate the response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission for Early Childhood Education and Care (working across all tiers of government) and work across sectors to plan for and implement preschool for 3-year-olds and other recommendations. The Office serves as a steward, leading change and overseeing the South Australian early childhood development system.

The Government Relations and Strategy team is responsible for providing strategic advice to the Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team on key priorities and whole of government issues. The Principal Policy Advisor will lead the development of strategic policy analysis, expert advice, and high-level papers and briefings to support the development of whole of government policy positions impacting on early childhood.

The position leads high-level strategic engagement with key government and non-government stakeholders to provide advice on whole of government policy, Cabinet and Parliament, governance, legislative policy and intergovernmental relations issues.

Position title	Principal Policy Advisor
Classification	ASO8
Division	Government Relations, Workforce and Quality
Directorate	Government Relations and Strategy
Location	30 Flinders Street, Adelaide, with flexible working arrangements available
Reports to	Assistant Director, Government Relations and Strategy
Direct reports	Nil
Role description date	September 2025

What you will do (key outcomes)



1. Lead the development of strategic advice to the Chief Executive, Executive Leadership Team and Minister's Office on issues of strategic importance.
2. Lead and manage the preparation and delivery of strategic advice on whole of government policy papers and submissions related early childhood education and care, including undertaking expert policy and legislative analysis of issues being considered by Cabinet and Parliament.
3. Provide strategic advice and support to the Chief Executive and Minister on intergovernmental relations issues, including analysis of national reports and liaison with key stakeholders to inform a state position that supports the best outcomes for South Australian children.
4. Lead the coordination and development of strategic advice to support the Chief Executive's attendance at key meetings, including cross-government and intergovernmental meetings.
5. Maintain strategic oversight of governance structures guiding and authorising the work of the Office for Early Childhood Development.
6. Develop and maintain effective professional relationships and networks across the office, and across government, to support high quality and timely advice to the Chief Executive.
7. Help to maintain a safe and healthy working environment by proactively reporting incidents, hazards and injuries.

The capabilities you will bring (key competencies)

- **Strategic policy analysis:** Extensive experiencing in analysing and evaluating complex and sensitive policy issues and developing policy advice under broad direction, including interacting with and managing processes of obtaining expert analysis from other agencies or from non-government providers.
- **Autonomy:** Demonstrated ability to work under broad policy guidelines, either independently or as a member of a team, determine priorities, plan, implement, evaluate, and manage tasks, projects and research and analyse, integrate and report on a range of data and information from a variety of sources, with due regard to policy and political imperatives of the subject matter.
- **Adaptability:** Proficient in managing high volumes of complex work with the ability to readily adapt to changes in work direction or focus to deliver key outcomes within tight timeframes and in accordance with government policy requirements.
- **High level written and verbal communication:** Proven skills in developing written briefings of a high standard that convey complex information in a clear, succinct manner for a range of audiences, including senior levels of government and for public release, as well as successfully consulting, negotiating, and influencing stakeholders in a manner that fosters collaboration and achieves high quality outcomes.
- **Commitment to safe and inclusive work practices:** Demonstrate knowledge and commitment to promoting and creating a culturally safe and inclusive work environment.
- **Knowledge of early years landscape (desirable):** A detailed understanding of the early years sector, including the roles and responsibilities of government agencies and non-government stakeholders and the key players likely to influence outcomes.

Who you will work with (key relationships)	Qualifications
Chief Executive, OECD Senior Executives of the OECD Senior Executives of the Department for Education Directors, managers, and staff across the OECD and Department for Education Other state and federal government departments as required.	Essential: Nil Desirable: A degree in a relevant discipline.

Corporate responsibilities	Special conditions
<p>Keep accurate and complete records</p> <p>Act appropriately in line with the Public Sector Code Ethics at all times</p> <p>Support diversity and promote an inclusive workplace everyone</p> <p>Maintain a commitment to Work Health and Safety legislative requirements</p>	<p>You may need a current driver’s license and be willing to drive</p> <p>You may be asked to work out of hours</p> <p>You may need to travel within or outside South Australia</p> <p>You need to achieve mutually agreed performance goals</p> <p>You must have a current Working with Children Check</p> <p>You must do Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care training</p> <p>You must be an Australian resident or provide evidence you have a current work permit</p>

<p>Assessed by: Rhiannon Edwards A/P&C Consultant</p>		<p>Approved by: Bec Curtain, Executive Director, Government Relations, Workforce & Quality</p>	
<p>Date: September 2025</p>		<p>Date: September 2025</p>	