

Position Description

Senior Policy and Contracting Officer

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 Senior Policy and Contracting Officer operates within the Funding Operations and Monitoring team in the Funding Operations and Evidence Division, and is responsible for the oversight of operational policy, commissioning approaches, funding operations and monitoring to support the effective delivery of early childhood reforms, with a focus on preschool services.

This position supports the management of preschool funding arrangements by monitoring provider performance and contributing to the development and design of operational policies, procedures and documentation.

Position title	Senior Contracting and Policy Officer
Classification	ASO7
Division	Funding, Operations and Evidence
Directorate	Funding Operations and Monitoring
Location	60 Flinders Street, Adelaide, with flexible working arrangements available
Reports to	Principal Contracting, Policy and Monitoring Lead
Direct reports	Nil
Role description date	May 2026

What you will do (key outcomes)

1. Manage, coordinate, maintain and update funding agreements, variations, and other contractual agreements required to deliver funded preschool programs in early childhood settings.
2. Coordinate the delivery of preschool program outcomes through effective contract monitoring, including development of monitoring and audit plans, liaising with partners, ensuring compliance with relevant policies and standards and the escalation of risks or issues where required.
3. Lead innovative change in contracting and monitoring processes by providing expert advice, guidance and support, and overseeing reviews to identify risks, gaps and issues, driving continuous and improvement and ensuring alignment with directorate and agency objectives.
4. Deliver the implementation and ongoing management of the State Government's preschool funding arrangements through associated planning, monitoring, and evaluation of providers' performance against key performance indicators, targets and deliverables as defined by funding obligations and contracts.
5. Plan, coordinate, and implement complex policy and change management functions, applying high level judgement to monitor effective implementation of funded preschool programs.
6. Oversee the management of systems for data collection, verification and analysis to support informed decision making and strengthen the Office for Early Childhood Development's stewardship of preschool funding arrangements.
7. Deliver high-quality documentation including policy development, reports, briefings to the Minister and other leaders and stakeholders, and ensure accuracy and quality assurance of project information.
8. Help to maintain a safe and healthy working environment by proactively reporting incidents, hazards and injuries.

The capabilities you will bring (key competencies)

- **Project Management:** Proven experience in the planning, development, and delivery of complex and significant projects to achieve successful outcomes, including implementing strategies for monitoring outcomes and for the development, and the management of contracts and service providers.
- **Contract Management:** Proven experience in the drafting and development of contracts and grant/funding agreements, including taking a partnership approach in providing advice and support to internal and external stakeholders and knowledge of contracts management policies.
- **Communication:** High level of communication and negotiation skills and working effectively with people at all levels within and outside the public sector in a professional, confidential and a tactful manner, with proven skills in developing and maintaining networks, working with astuteness and discretion in a sensitive/political environment.
- **Policy:** Proven experience in providing high level advice and support services to a range of stakeholders in relation to complex policy, changes, evaluations and risks and knowledge of relevant government policies and operations.
- **Autonomy:** Demonstrated ability to work under broad direction, in a highly effective manner, either independently or as a member of a team, to analyse and resolve complex problems using considerable initiative and judgement, whilst managing high volumes of work, changing priorities, and meeting critical deadlines in a challenging environment.
- **Discipline Knowledge:** Knowledge of early childhood education issues and trends, agency policy and procedures, policy implementation strategies, and key documents that underpin operational and management practices.
- **Work Health and Safety:** Demonstrate knowledge and commitment to promoting and creating a safe and inclusive work environment, and the legislative requirements of Equal Opportunity and Work Health and Safety legislation.

Who you will work with (key relationships)	Qualifications
• Executives and staff across the Office • Other state and Australian government departments • Non-government early childhood services sector	Essential: Nil Desirable: A tertiary qualification in the relevant discipline

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

Assessed by: Rhiannon Edwards, P&C Consultant		Approved by: Georgy Grundy, Director, Funding, Operations and Evidence	
Date: May 2026		Date: May 2026	