

**Best Start  
Best Life**

# Recruitment Kit for Employers

Advice and resources to support early childhood providers and services attract staff to meet their recruitment needs for 2023-24.



# What's inside

What's inside.....	2
Introduction.....	3
The 5 Key Tips for Early Childhood Workforce Recruitment.....	4
<b>1. Workforce planning</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>2. Attracting early childhood teachers and educators</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Use a mix of channels to advertise your vacancy .....	4
Use a targeted approach.....	5
Position yourself as an 'employer of choice' .....	5
Know your audience and choose your language accordingly .....	6
Attracting staff to a rural or regional service .....	6
Securing candidates.....	6
<b>3. Drafting a job advertisement</b> .....	<b>6</b>
A compelling job ad is crucial to attracting a strong pool of candidates. ....	6
Key elements of the advertisement .....	6
<b>4. Social media advertising</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Social media text examples.....	8
Example for rural and regional services .....	8
<b>5. Financial Incentives</b> .....	<b>8</b>
How to include Individual Incentives.....	9
How to include Location Incentives .....	9
<b>6. Additional Information</b> .....	<b>9</b>

© State of Victoria (Department of Education) 2023



Recruitment Kit for Employers is provided under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence. You are free to re-use the work under that licence, on the condition that you credit the State of Victoria (Department of Education), indicate if changes were made and comply with the other licence terms, see: [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

The licence does not apply to:

- any images, photographs, trademarks or branding, including the Victorian Government logo and the DET logo; and
- content supplied by third parties.

Copyright queries may be directed to [copyright@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:copyright@education.vic.gov.au)

**Best Start  
Best Life**

# Introduction

The Victorian Government's \$14 billion Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) reform is the most significant change to Victoria's early childhood sector in a generation.

The BSBL reforms include:

- **Free Kinder:** Free Kinder is now available for Victorian three- and four-year-old children at participating services in standalone (also called sessional) kindergartens and long day care settings – a saving of up to \$2,500 per child, every year.
- **Pre-Prep:** Over the next decade, Four-Year-Old Kindergarten will gradually transition to 'Pre-Prep' – increasing to a universal 30-hour a week program of play-based learning for four-year-old children in Victoria by 2032.
- **Three-Year-Old Kindergarten:** The roll-out of Three-Year-Old Kindergarten continues, with programs increasing to 15 hours a week across the state by 2029, providing Victorian children with two years of a quality kindergarten program before school.
- **Early learning centres:** We are establishing 50 Victorian government-owned and operated early learning centres. These centres will be built in areas with the greatest need and will make it easier for families to access childcare. The first of the centres will be available in 2025.

The ambitious reforms show the Government's commitment to the early childhood education sector and the capability of its highly skilled workforce.

The Victorian Government has invested record funding to support the attraction, retention, and quality of the early childhood workforce, recognising it is early childhood teachers and educators who will make the reforms possible.

Whilst growing the early childhood workforce is a priority, it is essential that Victoria's current early childhood teachers and educators know they are valued and supported in their roles.

This Recruitment Kit contains guidance and resources (including sample content) to support early childhood providers and services attract staff to meet their recruitment needs.

Information for parents and carers, prospective and current early childhood professionals, and the broader community can be found at [Kindergarten - Best Start, Best Life](#).

# The 5 Key Tips for Early Childhood Workforce Recruitment

## 1. Workforce planning

Workforce planning is a dynamic process to ensure that the right early childhood professionals, including leadership and supporting staff, are in place and supported to deliver a high quality, accessible and inclusive service that meets the needs of local children and families.

Good workforce planning involves an understanding of the current workforce profile, forecasting supply and demand, and identifying opportunities to prepare for the workforce of the future. This includes clearly defined activities around attraction, recruitment, retention, professional development, meaningful career pathways, performance management and succession planning.

There are also several internal options to consider before exploring attraction and recruitment options. For example, you may want to consider if current staff are interested in increasing hours, or in upskilling to become Diploma educators or early childhood teachers.

Information about supports to study and upskill can be found at [Early Childhood Teaching: make a difference](#).

Staff retention is also important when planning your work needs. There are a range of professional development and career supports available for early childhood teachers and educators, including experienced staff and those at the start of their careers. Your recruitment activities can coincide with the promotion of these supports to your current workforce.

For information about professional development and career supports, visit [Training and Support for Early Childhood Professionals](#).

If you choose to proceed with recruitment options, consider how you can improve the attractiveness of the role to increase your chance of successful recruitment. For example, you could consider highlighting:

- capacity to offer combined roles across services to maximise the volume of hours on offer.
- attractive salary and/or conditions.
- non-contact time (flexible times to suit individual's needs where possible).
- leadership and professional development opportunities.
- culture, environment, and educational philosophy of the service.

Wherever possible, it is best to plan in advance for your workforce needs to maximise opportunities for success.

## 2. Attracting early childhood teachers and educators

Thinking about your strategy before you start the recruitment process can help you attract a strong pool of candidates.

### Use a mix of channels to advertise your vacancy

These could include:

- the free [Early Childhood Jobs Website](#)
- social media channels

- community online platforms (town, council, or regional closed Facebook groups, websites, and job boards)
- promotion through your local community hubs (playgroups, school newsletters, community noticeboards, community facilities, parent groups, maternal and child health services, local council, local allied health providers or school communication channels)
- other online job boards (SEEK, Indeed, council websites, the Early Learning Association Australia [Job Board](#))
- local newspapers.

Also consider partnering with local universities, school careers advisors or training providers to promote placement opportunities and attract graduate early childhood teachers and educators.

### Use a targeted approach

It's important to tailor your recruitment strategy to address all the needs and concerns of prospective candidates. Different cohorts may be attracted to your vacancy depending on the job specifications.

For example:

- **New graduates** tend to be attracted to full-time roles and are more likely to consider moving for a job.
- Candidates looking to **join or re-join the sector**, for example returning from parental leave or who are close to retirement, may be more interested in part-time and flexible opportunities.
- Services in regional and rural communities that are looking to attract people to **relocate** for the role should appeal to potential candidates who are looking for a change of pace and want a 'tree change' or 'sea change'.

### Position yourself as an 'employer of choice'

Include the following information in your job advertisements:

- employee onboarding and induction processes
- pre-service training and support for study leave
- training, professional development and professional recognition opportunities
- career progression pathways
- wellbeing supports, including access to Employee Assistance Programs
- information about your local community and factors like work-life balance
- supports your service or community offers, and other wrap-around supports (recreational groups, sporting and community activities, housing assistance etc.)
- any financial incentives that may be available through the [Early Childhood Teacher Incentives and Targeted Educator Incentives programs](#).

You can also provide information about your service's culture and philosophy, learning approach and facilities. For example, you could highlight your service's commitment to:

- building children's confidence, sense of wellbeing and supporting outcomes in line with the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
- reflecting on and continually improving practice based on contemporary research and evidence, in line with the VEYLDF Practice Principles.

## Know your audience and choose your language accordingly

Knowing your audience is key to figuring out the kinds of messages potential employees care about most. Write to attract your ideal candidate, using plain English, short sentences, and meaningful language.

Market research shows that early childhood professionals respond strongly to language that highlights:

- the opportunity to make a difference using highly skilled practices.
- the ability to see the difference they make as children grow and learn in the early years.
- the opportunity to work in a field that suits their personality.

## Attracting staff to a rural or regional service

Here are some tips that can be used by any rural or regional service to attract staff.

### Take them on a tour

What is your town or community best known for? Any best-kept secrets? Explain what makes your community unique.

Your job ad could:

- draw on local council and tourism resources (including videos, and photographs).
- link to a video as a 'virtual tour' of the kindergarten and community, with introductions to key people in the service.
- include or link to a short case study, to hear directly from someone in the community.
- highlight the importance of your kindergarten within your community and explain how vital the kindergarten teachers and educators are.
- links to local council or tourism websites.

## Securing candidates

**Early engagement with candidates is essential.** Prioritise candidate screening and scheduling interviews as soon as possible. Once a candidate is offered a role, you should ensure that contracts can be generated quickly to secure the candidate.

## 3. Drafting a job advertisement

A compelling job ad is crucial to attracting a strong pool of candidates.

### Where to advertise?

#### The Early Childhood Jobs Website

The Victorian Government's [Early Childhood Jobs Website](#) is free to sign up as a member, post ads and connect with candidates. This site is accessed by local, interstate, and overseas candidates.

There are additional advertising platforms (such as Jora, Seek or Indeed) or community-based services such as the ELAA jobs noticeboard that can also be considered.

## Key elements of the advertisement

### Introductory blurbs - Examples for all services

- Join a modern, growing service with exciting development opportunities.
- Apply your expertise to Victoria's nation-leading reforms and be a part of early childhood education history in Australia.

- Make a difference by giving children the support they need to become confident, involved learners.

### *Attractions of the role*

You may want to list in bullet form a few key attractions of the role. Review [Position yourself as an 'employer of choice'](#) for ideas about what attractions you could include.

Examples of lines you might include are:

- Professional development opportunities, as you help to support families and children with additional needs.
- Lead and mentor a team of early childhood professionals working together to build exceptional practice and help young children thrive.

### *Describe your service*

Include essential information about your service. This could include information about:

- your team
- your culture, philosophy and pedagogical approach
- facilities, enrolments, and number of rooms
- Indigenous perspectives and/or language programs
- your service type.

### *Role summary*

Describe the role briefly, including the number of hours per week, whether the role is full-time or part-time, and workdays. You may want to include if non-contact days/times are negotiable.

It is important to highlight the kindergarten setting, the Agreement or Award that applies to the position, and what expectations that you have around experience of the National Quality Framework, the Early Years Learning Framework and the VEYLDF.

### *Outline the necessary qualifications*

Early childhood teaching or educator qualifications are essential, and teachers must be registered (or eligible to register) with the [Victorian Institute of Teaching \(VIT\)](#).

Also list any other non-negotiable qualifications or credentials your service or service provider requires. This may include knowledge of the VEYLDF, First Aid and Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training, asthma and anaphylaxis certifications, and knowledge of the [Child Safety Standards](#).

### *List desirable qualities*

What personal and professional qualities are you looking for? Examples could include an applicant who:

- is open to new ideas.
- has excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- works well in a team.
- is interested in continual professional development and ways to maximise our impact on young children.

### *Text for recruiting early childhood educators*

Many of the tips above apply to attracting early childhood educators as well as teachers. If you are specifically seeking to recruit an educator, you could also consider including text that:

- demonstrates how your service values the role of educators in supporting children's learning and development, and in developing strong relationships with families.

- outlines the level of the responsibilities the educator may be expected to undertake, e.g., Lead Educator, Assistant Educator, Room Leader, etc.
- refers to any exciting opportunities for educators for professional development and career progression pathways.

#### *Language that taps into professional pride and purpose*

Like people in many professions, early childhood professionals also respond well to language that highlights opportunities to make a difference through their work; the ability to see the difference they make as children grow and learn quickly in the early years; and the opportunity to work in a field that suits their personality and values.

Refer to [Know your audience and choose your language accordingly](#) for more information about language to use in your advertisements.

#### *Explain clearly how to apply and include contact details*

List what documents are required for an application to be considered. For example, you may ask for:

- a resume and one-page cover letter that addresses the necessary credentials and qualities.
- qualifications, Australian work rights, and VIT registration (if applicable)
- details of experience as an early childhood teacher/educator
- other qualifications, experience, and relevant professional and personal qualities.

Explain who the candidate can contact if they would like to discuss the role and want further information.

## 4. Social media advertising

Social media is being increasingly used within the sector to attract candidates on channels such as Facebook, Instagram and Tik Tok. Services can use these platforms to promote roles, provide virtual tours or photos of the service and staff. This type of advertising often appeals to new graduates.

### **Social media text examples**

Are you a qualified early childhood teacher? We have [insert quantity] openings to join our modern, growing service with exciting development opportunities. Government incentives worth \$9,000 are available for eligible candidates, plus relocation support. See more information here [insert link].

Be a part of the sector's growth and development and apply for a role as a [insert role] at [insert service name]. We offer great professional support and opportunities and are keen to hear from candidates from a range of backgrounds.

### **Example for rural and regional services**

Great job, great lifestyle: join [insert town name] Kinder and help country kids get equal access to quality early education. You'll be welcomed with open arms and be able to bring your valuable skills and experience to the region.

## 5. Financial Incentives

The Victorian Government offers financial incentives to attract eligible qualified early childhood teachers and educators to work in funded kindergarten programs. Services may be able to refer to these incentives in their job advertisements.

Please read the Early Childhood Teacher Incentives Program and Targeted Educator Incentives Program guidelines on the [department's website](#) for more information.

### How to include Individual Incentives

Individual Incentives and Educator Individual Incentives are available for eligible individuals taking up roles at **any service delivering funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten**.

**All services offering funded Three-Year-Old Kindergarten** can include Individual Incentives in their job advertisements.

For example:

- We are interested in hearing from candidates of all backgrounds. Victorian Government incentives of \$9,000 are available for this role for eligible qualified early childhood teachers and educators who are moving from interstate or overseas to take the role **OR** have not worked as a teacher or educator in the sector for the past 12 months. See the [Department's website](#) for more information.

### How to include Location Incentives

**Select services** are able to include Location Incentives and Educator Location Incentives in their job advertisements.

Services **must be pre-approved by the department** (via written communication) to offer these incentives. If you would like to be considered for pre-approval for a Location Incentive, please contact your local [Early Childhood Improvement Branch](#).

If pre-approved, a service should tag their job advertisement on the Early Childhood Jobs website by selecting the relevant incentive option from the 'DE Location Incentive' drop down menu.

**Note:** be clear whether your service is offering a Location Incentive for early childhood teachers, an Educator Location Incentive for early childhood educators, or both.

#### *Example 1 (a service with a Location Incentive)*

Candidates may be eligible for a \$[insert value] Victorian Government 'Location Incentive', plus relocation supplements of up to \$8,000. Eligible candidates may be able to access this Location Incentive, as well as a \$9,000 Individual Incentive. Refer the [Department's website](#) for more information.

#### *Example 2 (a service with an Educator Location Incentive)*

Boost your career as an early childhood educator: apply now for a job at [insert name] Kinder and give local children the best start in life. Eligible candidates can access a \$9,000 Victorian Government Educator Location Incentive, plus relocation supplements of up to \$8,000. You might also be eligible for a \$9,000 Educator Individual Incentive. See the [Department's website](#) for more information.

## 6. Additional Information

The following online resources are available:

[Financial support to study and work in early childhood](#)

[Recruitment strategies, resources and support for service providers to help fill vacancies](#)

[The Best Start, Best Life campaign website](#)

[Early Childhood Jobs website](#)