



NSWPPA

New South Wales Primary Principals' Association

www.nswppa.org.au

NSWPPA POSITION | P – 6 Staffing of Schools

Background

The NSWPPA is committed to ensuring that all students in NSW public schools receive the highest quality teaching and learning experiences, delivered by highly trained, well supported teachers. As DoE and societal expectations of schools continue to increase, workload demands for principals, executive staff, teachers, and support staff have escalated - school staffing entitlements have not kept pace.

The Valuing the Teaching Profession 2020 (the Gallop report), Deloitte Principal Workload and Time Use Study 2017, the Australian Principal Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey 2020 Sydney University study and others have described the impact of increasing workload on principals and other school staff.

Rationale

- It is not possible under the current staffing formula to guarantee maximum Kindergarten classes of 20, Year 1 of 22 and Year 2 of 24.
- Lower class sizes in Years K-2, based on the government class size reduction initiative, have created inequity for Year 3-6 classes in student access to learning resources and teacher workload.
- The enrolment of students with disabilities in mainstream classes requires significant sensitivity and equity in student placement to provide the best provision of educational outcomes for students and equitable workloads for staff.
- The formula for the staffing of TP1 schools raises Health and Safety issues about duty of care for students and staff working conditions. At times, there is only one person with duty of care on site at TP1 schools - meaning that the minimal industrial entitlement of a 30-minute unpaid break cannot occur.
- Increasingly devolved administrative and fiscal responsibility has significantly increased principal, executive, class teacher and SASS workload.
- The establishment of additional DoE preschools is a positive initiative that is supported by the NSWPPA and all DoE preschools need to be staffed appropriately to uphold educational integrity, child safety, and the long-term success of NSW's expanded public preschool initiative.

Position

The NSWPPA believes that:

Class Sizes

- Existing K-2 class sizes promote positive outcomes for students and the model should be extended to reduce Year 3-6 class sizes.
- Principals should form classes that are educationally sound, meet local needs and expect to be resourced accordingly via an appropriate staffing formula. The existing staffing allocation formula for K-2 should reflect more accurately the reduced numbers initiative, viz:
 - K: 0.0500 (currently 0.0513)
 - Y1: 0.0455 (currently 0.0435)
 - Y2: 0.0417 (currently 0.0400)
- Students with a disability confirmation in mainstream classes must be calculated into the staffing formula with a need equivalent to or greater than that which they would receive if they were enrolled in a support class. (e.g., classes for students with a moderate intellectual disability are capped at 8, therefore I.O. students in mainstream classes in Years 3-6 should count as an enrolment of at least 3.75 – one eighth of 30) This should not impact on Integration Funding Support which eligible students receive.

Release Time for Teachers

- Release time for P-6 teachers should be increased to 4 hours per week to facilitate time for administrative tasks and allow for collaborative practice across areas such as data analysis, lesson preparation and professional learning, and lesson preparation addressing the individual needs of students.

Executive Roles in P-6 Schools

- Increased release time for teaching principals and executive staff must be added to school staffing allocations to address administrative workload. This should supplement existing QTSS allocations, which addresses improving teaching quality and student outcomes. The PPA's position is:
 - Teaching principals should have a 0.5FTE teaching load,
 - Assistant Principals should have a 0.6FTE teaching load
 - Deputy Principals should have a 0FTE teaching load
- That the highly impactful position in primary schools of Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Instruction be maintained as an Assistant Principal, Teaching & Learning to support the implementation of Our Plan for Public Education
- The formula for staffing TP1 schools must ensure that there are at least 2 people with duty of care on site at any time.

Preschool Staffing

- Schools with a DoE preschool onsite should have included in their entitlement an Executive position under entitlement that is preschool specific with the working conditions of a preschool director.
- Schools with a DoE preschool onsite should have included in their entitlement School Administration support increase of 0.4FTE.
- All teacher placements into NSW public preschools must undergo a suitability interview conducted in partnership with the school principal.
- Suitability criteria must reflect not only early childhood teaching standards but also regulatory knowledge, inclusive practice, and interpersonal skills.

Recruitment of Graduate Teachers

- The staffing agreement must include targeted graduates as a central appointment option to ensure that as a system we are able to recruit the best and brightest teachers. System-wide directives should affirm their prioritisation in matching rounds and local appointments to maximise their contribution to NSW public education.

Support Staffing

- Schools should receive a Technology Officer allocation, paid at a rate that is competitive with industry, and works school hours.
- All schools with primary enrolments should have a full time SAM
- SAO allocations for P-6 schools should be sufficient to address current administrative workload. The PPA's position is:
 - entitlement of 0.886 SAO for schools with enrolments 51-199
 - entitlement of 3.282 SAO for schools with enrolments 200-500
 - entitlement of 6.082 SAO for schools with enrolments 501-1001

School Counsellor Allocations

- The formula to allocate School Counsellors / School Psychologists should be adjusted to 1:500 students and also take into account the complexity and need of schools and their communities.

NSWPPA President: Michael Burgess

Human Resources Reference Group Chair: Skye Ramsay

Human Resources Reference Group Executive Liaison: Leah Martin

Ratified: 5 September 2025

Suitability Interviews Are Critical for Staffing NSW Public Preschools

Position Statement

The NSW Primary Principals' Association asserts that suitability interviews must be mandated for all appointments to Department of Education public preschools. The increasing complexity of early childhood education, including legislative compliance, regulatory obligations, and vulnerable student populations, requires that only educators who are highly suitable, pedagogically and relationally, are placed in these foundational learning environments.

Rationale

- *NSW DoE preschools serve some of the state's most disadvantaged and developmentally vulnerable children, many with complex behavioural, disability, and trauma-related needs.*
- *Staffing decisions in early childhood must align with ACEQA's National Quality Standards and uphold compliance with early learning regulations.*
- *Principals report that preschool appointments made without suitability processes result in:*
 - *Mismatch of skillsets to student needs.*
 - *Compromised quality in learning and care.*
 - *Increased administrative burden and principal burnout.*
- *The NSWPPA Early Childhood Education Position Paper notes that early intervention is critical. The success of early childhood education relies on staff with deep pedagogical expertise, emotional intelligence, and capacity for interagency collaboration.*

Recommendation

To ensure high-quality, fit-for-purpose preschool staffing:

- *All teacher placements into NSW public preschools must undergo a suitability interview conducted in partnership with the school principal.*
- *Suitability criteria must reflect not only early childhood teaching standards but also regulatory knowledge, inclusive practice, and interpersonal skills.*
- *This measure is essential to uphold educational integrity, child safety, and the long-term success of NSW's expanded public preschool initiative.*

The Strategic Appointment of Targeted Graduates in NSW Public Primary Schools

Position Statement (match the emphasis of scholarships for high schools)

The NSW Primary Principals' Association strongly advocates for the inclusion and prioritisation of **Targeted Graduate Teachers** as a key and deliberate staffing option in the NSW Department of Education's school staffing processes, in particular primary school settings. In a competitive landscape where independent and Catholic systems are actively attracting high-performing graduates, the NSW public system must secure the best and brightest for our students.

Rationale

- Targeted graduates represent a **high-potential cohort** who have excelled during their professional experience placements and are endorsed by tertiary institutions and employing principals.
- These teachers are often eager, contemporary in practice, and highly adaptable, qualities essential for lifting student outcomes across diverse school contexts.
- Failing to prioritise Targeted Graduate placements risks losing them to non-government sectors, particularly when private schools offer certainty and immediate employment pathways.
- Ensuring this group is clearly prioritised in staffing language and process, including matching and direct appointment phases, would:
 - Support principals in building future-focused, dynamic teams.
 - Increase public school market share and system reputation.
 - Contribute to retention and career progression for high-quality early-career teachers within the system.

Recommendation

The staffing agreement must include targeted graduates as a central appointment option to ensure that as a system we are able to recruit the best and brightest teachers. System-wide directives should affirm their prioritisation in matching rounds and local appointments to maximise their contribution to NSW public education.