

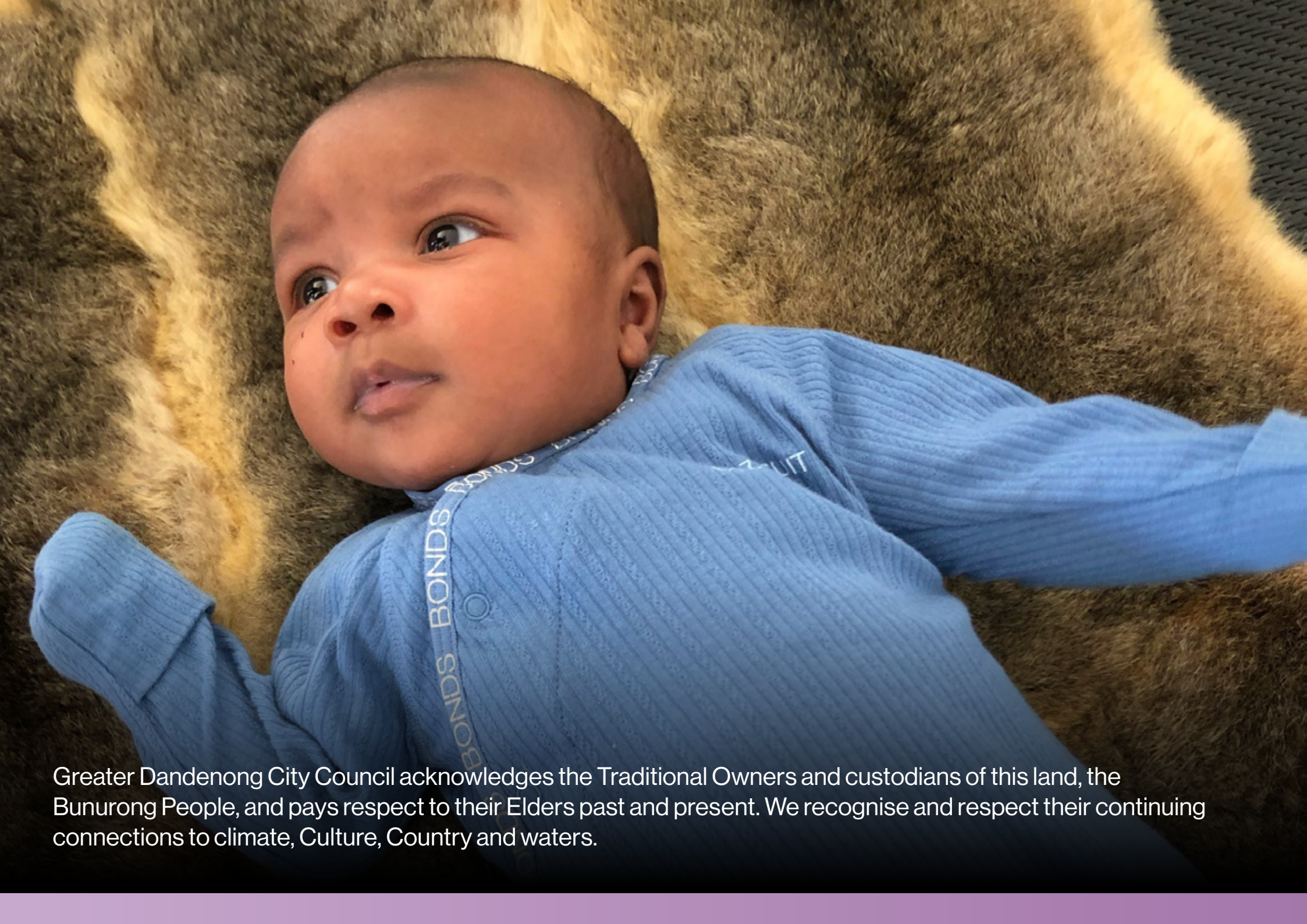


GREATER
DANDENONG
City of Opportunity

Children's Plan

Year 3 Action Plan Report 2023-2024





Greater Dandenong City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and custodians of this land, the Bunurong People, and pays respect to their Elders past and present. We recognise and respect their continuing connections to climate, Culture, Country and waters.

Executive summary

The vision of the **Children's Plan 2021–2026** is for children and their families to be valued, celebrated, respected and supported to reach their full potential. It was created in consultation with children, local service providers and a number of Council departments. This integrated approach values collaborating with children aged 0-13 years, as well as acknowledging the critical role that parents, carers and their extended families play in supporting the development of each child's education, health and wellbeing.

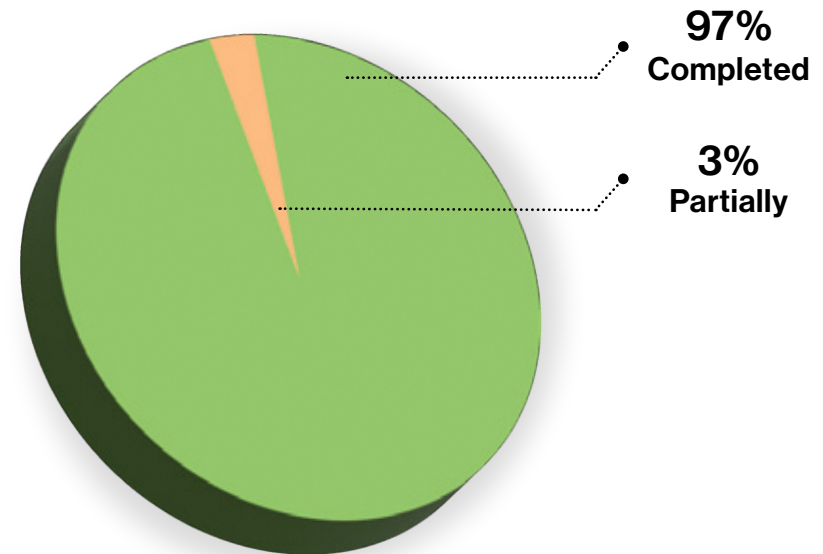
This report covers Council's progress on our annual actions for the third year of the Children's Plan, the period 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, and highlights a number of key achievements.

The **Year 3 Action Plan Report 2023–2024** contains 75 actions stemming from five strategic objectives. These actions are the responsibility of many different Council departments, and the delivery of the plan is a collaborative effort. In 2023–24, we are tracking well, with 97 per cent of planned actions completed.

Progress summary

Progress Key

| | Percentage |
|--------------|-------------|
| ● Completed | 97 per cent |
| ● Partially | 3 per cent |
| ● Incomplete | none |



Strategic Objective 1: Provide leadership and advocacy in planning for children and families

The City of Greater Dandenong has a central role to play in local infrastructure, service planning and the provision of high quality, sustainable services. Council's close proximity to the community means it is well-placed to be an advocate for community needs. Council works with all levels of government, various sectors, organisations, services and community members to create effective community outcomes.



The Child and Family Partnership brings together 118 individual members representing 43 key stakeholder organisations to facilitate activities for children and families.



The Municipal Early Years Infrastructure plan has been updated, based on population estimates, to take into account the demand for Pre-Prep programs.



About 400 families attended the Dad's Group initiative, designed to bring families together, giving fathers a chance to socialise, and connect them to resources, information, and support.

Strategic Objective 2: Strengthen health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families

Health and wellbeing encompasses physical, emotional and mental health. Council supports positive health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families through:

- universal health services
- health promotion and prevention activities
- building resilience in children and strengthening families
- early intervention support services
- promoting social inclusion and connectedness.



Developed and distributed resources and videos to raise awareness of immunisation, among culturally diverse families (including Dari and Burmese translations), and 'Stay Strong and Deadly: Immunise Bubup', a resource for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.



Implemented two new programs to support newly arrived families with 'catch-up' immunisations.



Delivered 25 Supported Playgroups (engaging 180 families including 26 families via In-Home Family Support) and provided assistance to Community Playgroup Leaders who ran 32 community playgroups.

Strategic Objective 3: Support engagement in learning, skill development and vocational pathways

Learning 'is a continuous process throughout life', children 'learn through a variety of formal and informal experiences within the classroom and more broadly in their home and in the community.' Council supports the provision of high-quality early learning and care services.



Preschool Field Officers collaborated with local early years services to support 270 children to participate in Kindergarten programs.



The Community Engagement Officer visited 11 kindergarten, 17 playgroups and 7 Maternal and Child Health (MCH) groups to raise awareness of Kindergarten programs.



Over 8,000 children (Foundation, Grade 1 and Grade 2) received one-on-one reading assistance to support children's learning and development.



Strategic Objective 4: Improve safety and accessibility for children and families to participate in the community

Council has an important role to play in supporting the safety of children and families from bullying, discrimination and in accessing public spaces and amenities throughout the municipality.



Festivals and Events delivered child-friendly activities at Council's 11 major events, including Noble Park Community Fun Day and Keysborough's Big Picnic, and the Children's Festival calendar.



Sensitive storytime sessions assisted 178 children with sensory processing or developmental challenges.



To support a culturally responsive workforce, 38 allied health professionals took part in the Balit Booboo Narrkwarren training and developed resource toolkits with Aboriginal Elders.

Strategic Objective 5: Value active participation and engagement of children and families in the community

A child friendly city implements the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1990) to local communities in partnership with children. Central to the Child Friendly City concept is that children's 'voices and opinions are taken into consideration and influence governance, decision making at a local level including laws, policies, programs and budget to improve the lives of children and to create sustainable environments now and into the future.



Draft Keysborough South Community Hub Strategic Plan, Frederick Wachter Reserve, various playground re-design, Shape Up Springvale, Light Up Noble Park, and Little Day Out event planning.



The Festivals and Events team engaged 136 children in planning inclusive and child friendly council events. The team also supported 15 children in delivering Little Day Out activities including the Drawing Competition.



More than 200 local students contributed to the development of the Community Climate Change Engagement and Mobilisation Plan as well as reviewing and providing feedback on the draft Plan.



Part B: Action Plan Progress

Strategic Objective 1: Provide leadership and advocacy in planning for children and families

The City of Greater Dandenong has a central role to play in local infrastructure, service planning and the provision of high quality, sustainable services. Council's close proximity to the community means it is well-placed to be an advocate for community needs. Council works with all levels of government, various sectors, organisations, services and community members to create effective community outcomes.

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|--|
| 1.1 Facilitate local service networks and joint planning to meet the changing needs of children and families | 1.1.1 Facilitate bimonthly Child and Family Partnership meetings | ● | The Child and Family Partnership brings together 118 individual members representing 43 key stakeholder organisations. The Partnership met four times to facilitate activities for children and families. |
| 1.2 Explore external funding opportunities to be responsive to policy change in implementing timely three-year-old kindergarten provision | 1.2.1 Review Infrastructure Plan annually for timely infrastructure development | ● | The <i>Municipal Early Years Infrastructure Plan</i> was reviewed and updated to align with the municipality's changing population forecasts and infrastructure needs. |
| 1.3 Advocate for the provision of flexible, quality, affordable child-care options for families | 1.3.1 Conduct mapping around local childcare fees | ● | Cost analysis and fee comparisons of local childcare fees was completed. Local childcare fees are monitored, and information shared with providers to ensure that families have access to affordable childcare options. |
| 1.4 Advocate for the provision of support services dedicated to helping children and their families living in generational and situational disadvantage | 1.4.1 Partner with external agencies to plan and provide support services to children and families | ● | <p>Council delivered Dad's Group program, to bring families together, provide an opportunity for fathers' social connection, and to connect with support services, information and resources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivered nutrition session for parents in partnership with Monash Health. • Ran sessions fortnightly at Dandenong and Springvale libraries (total of 40 sessions). • Approximately 400 families attended. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|--|
| 1.4 Advocate for the provision of support services dedicated to helping children and their families living in generational and situational disadvantage <i>(continued)</i> | 1.4.2 Advocate for social and affordable housing for children and their families | ● | <p>Greater Dandenong Council participates in the Regional Local Government Charter Group of Councils and is supporting the development of a messaging guide regarding the framing of Social Housing messaging to different audiences.</p> <p>Advocacy efforts include a collective submission to the <i>Federal Government's National Housing and Homelessness Plan Issues Paper</i> a submission and evidence to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Rental and Housing Affordability.</p> <p>Council officers attended the Housing and Homelessness National Community of Practice addressing challenges faced by local governments. Council in partnership with WAYSS conducted a Homelessness Week event in Harmony Square supported by local agencies.</p> |
| 1.5 Undertake infrastructure planning to ensure timely and targeted provision of facilities and services for children and families | 1.5.1 Support children to inform the design of Council's Sport and Recreation facilities | ● | <p>Over 80 children contributed to Council's Sport and Recreation planning at a session held at the Children's Forum. The 'Make Your Move – helping kids to get active' consultation gathered ideas and preferences on sport and physical activity participation and an all-abilities sport day.</p> <p>The update of the <i>Sports Facilities Plan</i> is in progress.</p> |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|--|
| 1.5 Undertake infrastructure planning to ensure timely and targeted provision of facilities and services for children and families (<i>continued</i>) | 1.5.2 Review and develop concept plans for open space, parks, and playgrounds to meet community needs | ● | <p>Children were engaged in consultation activities, including incursions for a range of park and playground projects, including: Bakers Reserve, Madison Reserve, Springvale Reserve, Pitman Reserve, Browns Reserve, George Andrews Reserve, Barry Powell Reserve and Frederick Wachter Reserve.</p> <p>Over 80 children shared innovative and well considered design ideas at the Children's Forum through the activity 'Living in the city – Create a laneway and an open space for a residential apartment building in three dimensional form'.</p> |
| | 1.5.3 Review and develop the Early Years Infrastructure plan to meet the infrastructure needs for 30 hours of Pre-Prep | ● | <p>Population forecasts were analysed to determine additional infrastructure needs for the (30-hour) Pre-Prep rollout and this informed the <i>Early Years Infrastructure Plan</i>.</p> <p>Council worked collaboratively with the Victorian School Building Authority, Department of Education, Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan team and the Kindergarten on School Sites team in planning.</p> |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete



Strategic Objective 2: Strengthen health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families

Health and wellbeing encompasses physical, emotional and mental health. Council supports positive health and wellbeing outcomes for children and families through:

- universal health services
- health promotion and prevention activities
- building resilience in children and strengthening families
- early intervention support services
- promoting social inclusion and connectedness

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|--|---|--------|--|
| 2.1 Increase participation of families with children aged 12 months and older in Maternal and Child Health consultations | 2.1.1 Provide outreach Maternal and Child Health services at Dandenong PALS Playgroup and the Afghan Women's Group to improve family engagement | ● | <p>Maternal and Child Health (MCH) offered two outreach services, attending both the Dandenong PALS Playgroup and Dandenong South Primary School Community Hub each month, to connect families with the MCH Service.</p> <p>Enhanced MCH Nurses, together with the Community Connection, Dad's Support worker, helped connect refugee families to the MCH service.</p> |
| | 2.1.2 Provide outreach Maternal and Child Health services at childcare, family day care and playgroups | ● | <p>Maternal and Child Health offered eight outreach services at childcare centres, playgroups and Early Years Hubs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 group Key Age and Stage sessions • 4,586 one-on-one Key Age and Stage consultations for children 12 months and older |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|--|
| 2.1 Increase participation of families with children aged 12 months and older in Maternal and Child Health consultations (<i>continued</i>) | 2.1.3 Promotion of Maternal and Child Health services to internal Council departments to strengthen referral pathways | ● | Maternal and Child Health (MCH) attended meetings with 10 key Council departments to promote MCH services and strengthen internal referral pathways. |
| 2.2 Increase attendance of vulnerable, refugee and newly arrived children at immunisation sessions | 2.2.1 Partner with external service providers to support Refugee, asylum seeker and other newly arrived families to access immunisation sessions | ● | <p>Through partnerships with other Council departments and key external service providers, and funding from the South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN), Council developed engagement strategies including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the recording of overseas vaccinations and update of immunisation history statements through the City of Greater Dandenong website. • Delivered outreach immunisation sessions each month at Viv's Place. • Collaborated with Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services and Children's Services to design a referral pathway to assist families with timely access to vaccination. |
| | 2.2.2 Promoting immunisation to all children | ● | Council implemented two new programs to support newly arrived families with 'catch-up' immunisations, Greater Dandenong Childhood Immunisation Program and Supporting Refugee catch up Immunisation, with funding from South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN). These programs offer additional after-hours immunisation sessions, a recall system for children, home visits, and education. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|---|
| 2.2 Increase attendance of vulnerable, refugee and newly arrived children at immunisation sessions (<i>continued</i>) | 2.2.3 Develop immunisation promotional tools for vulnerable, refugee, asylum seeker and other newly arrived children | ● | Council received funding from the South Eastern Melbourne Primary Health Network (SEMPHN) and worked in collaboration with key stakeholders to develop resources and engagement strategies including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and distribute culturally adapted resources and videos to raise awareness of immunisation, including translations (Dari and Burmese), and <i>Stay Strong and Deadly: Immunise Bubup</i>, a resource for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. |
| | 2.2.4 Continue partnerships with MCH to promote immunisation from birth, engaging with families of infants in the municipality | ● | Through key partnerships between the Immunisation Team and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Nurses, Enhanced MCH Nurse and Refugee Health Nurse Outreach service, timely access to vaccination immunisation was promoted to over 1,700 families at Key Ages and Stages (KAS) consultations. |
| 2.3 Encourage children and families to be physically active and participate in sport and recreational opportunities. | 2.3.1 Facilitate opportunities for families to get active through programs, events and partnerships with South East Leisure and other community groups | ● | A variety of family-oriented programs and initiatives were implemented in partnership with South East Leisure, including Active and Healthy Families event at Springers Leisure Centre, which gave families opportunities to try new sport and recreation activities, learn about healthy eating and connect with local clubs and services. There were 150 people in attendance. |
| | 2.3.2 Continue to support and advocate for the use of streets to facilitate play | ● | The Play Streets program encourages the use of residential streets for play. The program was used in two events over the year. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|--|--|--------|---|
| 2.4 Support preventative health initiatives and education for children and families in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nutrition and healthy eating • dental health and hygiene • adequate sleep and exercise • self-care and resilience | 2.4.1 Promote sleep and settling programs to new parents | ● | <p>Maternal and Child Health (MCH) offered 133 Sleep and Settling Sessions to 1,429 families (with 33% attendance rate) and 296 outreach visits to the family home.</p> <p>Sleep and Settling Sessions are promoted widely to all first-time parents and at Key Ages and Stages (KAS) consultations and First Time Parent Group. Sessions are also promoted on the Council website and social media platforms, as well as through community-strengthening activities, such as speaking with parents at playgroups and events.</p> |
| | 2.4.2 Increase active travel to and from school | ● | Seven schools registered for the Get Active Get Moving campaign, encouraging 3,149 students to get active. The Mayor awarded the most active school with a trophy and other prizes at the end of the campaign. |
| | 2.4.3 Partner with external agencies to promote preventative health programs and education | ● | Through the VicHealth Local Government Partnership, strong partnerships with key external agencies have been fostered including; Monash Health, Casey Council, Cardinia Shire, Southeast leisure, Enliven, Vic Kids Eat Well, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, and material aid agencies. |
| | 2.4.4 Empower and enable women and girls to get active through local promotion of This Girl Can – Victoria 2023 and beyond | ● | Various programs for women and girls were promoted during This Girl Can Week via Council social media channels. Council partnered with parkrun to create an event that welcomes and encourages women and girls to participate. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|--|
| 2.4 Support preventative health initiatives and education for children and families in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nutrition and healthy eating • dental health and hygiene • adequate sleep and exercise • self-care and resilience <i>(continued)</i> | 2.4.5 Include children and young people in planning and policy creation | ● | Under the VicHealth Local Government Partnership, children and young people were supported to participate in the planning and policy of healthy eating and physical activity projects. The Children's Advisory Group and Student Representative Councils participated in consultations. |
| | 2.4.6 Support community partners to promote dental health to support preventative health initiatives | ● | <p>The New Directions Program promoted dental health by conducting educational campaigns, sharing information about accessing dental services, and providing Dilly Bag resources at regional Yarning Groups.</p> <p>Through collaboration with local health professionals and dental clinics, Maternal and Child Health, Monash Aboriginal Midwives and Koorie Maternity Services, families and children also received oral health checks.</p> |
| | 2.4.7 Embed healthy food options in policy at the four sites of South East Leisure | ● | A Partnership Agreement between Southeast Leisure and Monash Health supports healthy eating alternatives at South East Leisure's four locations. |
| | 2.4.8 Develop nutrition and healthy eating resources to support preventative health initiatives | ● | Nutrition and healthy eating resources were developed in collaboration with the Koorie Maternity Services, Peninsula Health, Maternal and Child Health and Monash Aboriginal Midwives, providing nutrition information for pregnant mums and bubs. Deadly Dingo education sessions and Bush Tucker workshops, designed for young children, were delivered through Kirrup Aboriginal Playgroup, at Nairn Marr Djambana Gathering Place. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|--|
| 2.5 Increase awareness of mental health and supports available for children and families | 2.5.1 Strengthen partnerships with external providers to support mental health of children and families | ● | <p>The New Directions Program team fostered strong partnerships with key regional organisations including Maternal and Child Health, Families where a Parent has a Mental Illness (FaPMI) program team, Koorie Maternity Services, Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-Operative Ltd, Bunurong Health and Monash Aboriginal Midwives. These partnerships support the mental health of children and families by facilitating cultural engagement activities, including making possum skin cloaks, pregnancy belly casting, painting and Bush Tucker knowledge, sharing of resources, and access to referral pathways.</p> <p>The Aboriginal Nurse Liaison role attended 30 Yarning Group sessions, offering support and facilitating 40 referrals.</p> |
| | 2.5.2 Ongoing promotion of the importance of Mental Health Week and the available resources and supports for families | ● | <p>Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Nurses supported clients with mental health by sharing information, education and referral into support services. The MCH service promoted mental health awareness throughout Mental Health Week and Mental Health Month.</p> <p>A Senior Mental Health Nurse worked with the Enhanced MCH team, through a partnership with Monash Health, and provided support, resources, secondary consultation and pathways to mental health services.</p> |
| 2.6 Support initiatives to reduce the adverse effects of alcohol and drug use impacting children and their families | 2.6.1 Strengthen partnerships with community partners who provide support services to support children impacted by drug and alcohol use. | ● | <p>The New Directions Program team formed strong alliances with key regional organisations, including Koorie Maternity Services, Peninsula Health Koorie Maternity Services, Regional Maternal and Child Health, healthAbility Balit Booboop Narkkwarren, Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-Operative and Bunurong Health, to support referral pathways for mums and bubs impacted by drug and alcohol.</p> <p>The regional Aboriginal Nurse Liaison role attended 30 yarning group sessions providing Key Ages and Stages checks, consultations and over 40 referrals.</p> |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|---|--------|---|
| 2.7 Support opportunities for children and families to build social connections | 2.7.1 Facilitate supported and community playgroups | ● | <p>Council delivered 25 Supported Playgroups (engaging 180 families including 26 families via In-Home Family Support) and provided assistance to Community Playgroup Leaders who ran 32 community playgroups across the municipality.</p> <p>Council supports Community Playgroup Leaders with professional development opportunities, including networking through regular meetings and training sessions. Four Playgroup Leader Training Sessions were held with an average of 30 attendees. Speakers shared information on topics including Sleep and Settling Program, Springvale Library, Music and Movement, Playgroup Victoria, Autism, Preschool Field Officer Support, Centrelink, The National Disability Insurance Scheme and Orange Door. Training for new Leaders was offered each quarter with an average 15 attendees.</p> |
| | 2.7.2 Deliver First Time Parent Groups to families | ● | <p>All first-time parents are invited to join a First Time Parent Group, where they can meet other families and discuss a range of parenting topics. 59 First Time Parent Groups were provided, reaching 381 families.</p> |
| | 2.7.3 Deliver Storytime, Baby bounce and Toddler time in Springvale and Dandenong Libraries | ● | <p>Baby Bounce sessions: Songs, stories and rhyme time for parents and carers and babies aged from birth to 2 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 67 sessions, to 5170 participants <p>Toddler Time sessions: Stories, songs and rhymes for children aged 2 to 3 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71 sessions, to 2643 participants <p>Storytime sessions: Storytelling, songs and craft for children aged 3 years and over.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65 sessions, to 2586 participants |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|--|--|--------|--|
| 2.8 Develop partnerships with key health and wellbeing agencies to deliver activities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families | 2.8.1 Deliver primary health and wellbeing activities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families | ● | <p>The New Directions team supported three Yarning Groups, attracting 467 mums and carers. In addition, over 127 mums and pregnant women with 96 babies attended Kirrup Playgroup and Nairn Marr Djambana Playgroups. The Bubup Swim and Yarn sessions was attended by 64 participants.</p> <p>Collaboration with key partners (Koorie Maternity Services, Dandenong and District Aborigines Co-Operative Limited, Bunurong Health, Peninsula Health Koorie Maternity Services, regional Maternal and Child Health (MCH), Immunisations, and Monash Aboriginal Midwives) has facilitated the delivery of Health Yarning sessions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 mums and 16 pregnant mums completed MCH Key Ages and Stages checks, and Annual Health Checks. • Referrals to Hearing Australia, speech therapy, NDIS supports. • Regional Aboriginal Nurse Liaison role - Attended 30 Yarning groups, 40 referrals and supports provided • Balit Booboop Narrkwarren (Baby Makes 3) trained 35 regional champions. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Strategic Objective 3: Support engagement in learning, skill development and vocational pathways

Learning 'is a continuous process throughout life', children 'learn through a variety of formal and informal experiences within the classroom and more broadly in their home and in the community.' Council supports the provision of high-quality early learning and care services.

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|--|
| 3.1 Promote and support children to enrol in and participate in 3- and 4-year-old Kindergarten programs, particularly vulnerable children | 3.1.1 Support children with additional needs inclusion into kindergarten | ● | The Preschool Field Officer collaborated with local early years services to support 270 children to participate in Kindergarten programs. |
| | 3.1.2 Promotion of the benefits of kindergarten for both 3- and 4-year old's | ● | The Community Engagement Officer conducted outreach and engagement activities, including visits to 11 kindergarten, 17 playgroups and 7 Maternal and Child Health (MCH) groups to raise awareness of Kindergarten programs. Families were given information, through interpreters and translated resources, about early childhood services as well as how to manage the kindergarten enrollment process. Over 200 children were supported to enrol in 3-year-old and 4-year-old Kindergarten, including 82 children and families from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds. |
| | 3.1.3 Support vulnerable families to enrol in kindergarten | ● | Assisted 269 children and families facing barriers to enrol into kindergarten through referrals from Supported Playgroups and community playgroups, Maternal and Child Health Nurses and Community Engagement Officer. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete



| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|--|--|--------|---|
| 3.2 Strengthen the capacity of parents and carers to support children's learning and development | 3.2.1 Promotion of external agencies who deliver programs to strengthen parental capacity in children's learning | ● | The Child and Family Partnership brings together 31 organisations that provide parent support programs (including City of Greater Dandenong Libraries, Community Hubs, Playgroups, Link Health and Community, Young Parents Education Program, and Access to Early Learning). These programs are promoted at Partnership meetings and via the Partnership social media platform. |
| | 3.2.2 Deliver Family Literacy Project through reading buddies and reading programs in schools and early childhood services | ● | The Reading Buddies program provides one-on-one reading support to children in Foundation, Grade 1 and 2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 739 Reading Buddies sessions in schools, to 7626 participants • 39 Reading Buddies sessions in Dandenong Library, to 518 participants |
| | 3.2.3 Develop an early literacy resource to support families | ● | The planning and development of an early literacy resource to support children's learning and development is in progress. An external consultant has been engaged to assist with the production and publication. |
| | 3.2.4 Support children to participate in activities offered at Springvale Community Hub | ● | New programs and activities have been launched at the Springvale Community Hub based on feedback from children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During Lunar New Year children were invited to write their aspirations for the Year of the Dragon and add it to the Wishing Tree. • Annual Deckchair movies offered in the outdoor space, and regular after-school soccer sessions • Children's Week presented the 'WOW Exhibition – Up in the Sky'. The exhibition was a result of an Artist in Residency collaboration with artist and Keysborough Primary School students. • Children participated in a range of holiday craft activities, outdoor movie experiences and visits with Santa. • The local home-schooling community are supported to participate in group activities like chess tournaments and sports carnival activities. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|--|
| 3.3 Support initiatives and activities for successful transition of children through key educational milestones of kindergarten, school, and special education. | 3.3.1 Support School Readiness Programs with local kindergartens and schools | ● | <p>Working in partnership with key stakeholders in the community, the Community Engagement Officer conducted information sessions in Primary Schools, Kindergartens, and Community Hubs, presenting information to families to support children making the transition through key educational milestones.</p> <p>Through these activities, nine newly arrived children were assisted with the transition to primary school. Families were assisted with finding primary schools, completing enrolment forms, and attending orientation sessions.</p> |
| 3.4 Develop pathways for newly arrived and refugee families to access English language education to support children's literacy and learning | 3.4.1 Promotion of referral pathways to Library and Community Hubs English language programs | ● | Referral pathways were promoted to 43 key stakeholders of the Child and Family Partnership and shared through the Partnership's social media platform. |
| | 3.4.2 Deliver weekly Conversation Circle sessions | ● | <p>Conversation Circle is an opportunity for community members to practice speaking English in a friendly, relaxed and safe environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 39 Conversation Circle sessions delivered to 615 participants. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete



Strategic Objective 4: Improve safety and accessibility for children and families to participate in the community

Council has an important role to play in supporting the safety of children and families from bullying, discrimination and in accessing public spaces and amenities throughout the municipality.

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|--|---|--------|--|
| 4.1 Support initiatives to address family violence | 4.1.1 Inform the community about sources of advice and support in relation to family violence | ● | Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Nurses ask questions about family violence at each Key Ages and Stages (KAS) consultation and provide families with advice and resources regarding the support services available. The MCH Service worked in partnership with WAYSS and is supported by a Senior Family Violence Practitioner who supports staff with education, and provides assessment, support and referrals to families who experience family violence. |
| | 4.1.2 Promote activities that support the prevention of family violence | ● | Programs that support the prevention of family violence were promoted to 43 key stakeholders of the Child and Family Partnership and shared through the Partnership's social media platform. Children's Services strengthened their partnership with the Southern Melbourne Family Violence Regional Integration Committee by participating in monthly Working Group meetings. |
| 4.2 Support positive parenting programs, to build the capacity of parents and carers | 4.2.1 Deliver supported playgroups, and in-home support to support parental capacity | ● | Delivered the Smalltalk program, an evidence-based positive parenting program, to 25 Supported Playgroups each term, together with In-Home Family Support, reaching almost 800 families. |
| 4.3 Promote activities that encourage gender, race, and disability equity for children | 4.3.1 Promote and deliver an all abilities sports day | ● | Springers Leisure Centre hosted a successful All-Abilities Sport Day in partnership with South East Leisure, Rugby League Victoria and five local clubs who provided activities for people with a disability. |

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
|---|--|--------|---|
| 4.3 Promote activities that encourage gender, race, and disability equity for children (<i>continued</i>) | 4.3.2 Promote additional education and programming opportunities aiding club development and community participation | ● | <p>Sport and Recreation partnered with Monash Health to deliver six workshops and events as part of the Healthy Sports Clubs initiative which encourages clubs/associations to create healthy, safe and inclusive environments.</p> <p>Promoted the Healthy Sports Club program, workshops, resources and information via partnerships such as Reclink, South East Leisure, local community groups, clubs and schools, and via regular updates to around 100 network members.</p> |
| | 4.3.3 Support and advocate for access and inclusion initiatives | ● | <p>Partnerships with other council departments facilitates the continual development of programs and ensures programs are accessible to children, families, and carers. Libraries offers Sensitive Storytime, where neurodivergent children can enjoy storytime in a safe and inclusive space led by a council librarian.</p> <p>Supported and advocated for programs aimed at increasing access and inclusion, in collaboration with local community organisations. Hosted the Southern Region Disability Alliance and participated in events, including the annual Springvale Park Special Development School onsite Community Services Expo. Participation opportunities were promoted via the Disability Advisory Committee, eNewsletters, partnership meetings, and face-to-face engagement.</p> |
| | 4.3.4 Promotion of LGBTIQ+ networks and events | ● | <p>Council promoted LGBTIQ+ events, including Wear It Purple Day, Midsumma Pride March, IDAHOBIT and Pride Month to raise awareness and foster respect for diversity.</p> |

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| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
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| 4.3 Promote activities that encourage gender, race, and disability equity for children (<i>continued</i>) | 4.3.5 Deliver family story time for families with children with a disability | ● | In Sensitive storytime sessions are adapted to assist children aged over 3 years with sensory processing or developmental challenges and children on the autism spectrum. The program relocated to Springvale Community Hub and Library in 2024. • 24 Sensitive Storytime sessions delivered to 178 attendees. |
| | 4.3.6 Support children to inform Council's Disability Action Plan | | The review of the Disability Action Plan 2017-2023 is underway. |
| 4.4 Provide welcoming, safe, inclusive, and culturally responsive services | 4.4.1 Support allied health services to be welcoming and culturally inclusive | ● | Twenty early years' service staff attended Cultural Responsiveness Training, provided by Brotherhood of St Lawrence and Foundation House. |
| | 4.4.2 Ensure all Council staff complete Child Safe Standards training to comply with the new standards | ● | Council is committed to constantly improving our Child Safety Policy and will continue to introduce new activities to make sure that our culture, staff, and systems prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children in all we do. Training is embedded in the induction process for all new employees and volunteers. |
| | 4.4.3 Support early years providers to create inclusive services | ● | The Preschool Field Officer program assisted 60 early childhood services to create welcoming and inclusive learning environments for all children. |

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| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
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| 4.5 Activate safe and accessible public spaces and amenities for children | 4.5.1 Create child friendly art and cultural spaces | ● | <p>Design and planning for child-friendly art and cultural spaces included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of child-friendly elements into current gallery exhibitions, encouraging interaction and learning through activities like writing on walls, touching exhibits, and participating in online workshops. • Created exhibition labels for children at the Walker Street Gallery to make exhibitions more accessible for children. • Activated Drum Theatre foyer with books and colouring activities during school holidays to engage young visitors. • Delivered an arts activity for Refugee Week, engaging over 30 children and adults. • Hosted bilingual Vietnamese storytime at Drum, with 90 attendees. |
| | 4.5.2 Deliver child friendly events and activities including the annual Children's Festival | ● | <p>The Festivals and Events team delivered child-friendly activities at the 11 major Council-led events, including Noble Park Community Fun Day and Keysborough's Big Picnic. The team also coordinated 33 child-friendly activities for the Children's Festival calendar and engaged approximately 300 children at Greater Dandenong Carols.</p> |

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Strategic Objective 5: Value active participation and engagement of children and families in the community

A child friendly city implements the 'Convention on the Rights of the Child' (1990) to local communities in partnership with children. Central to the Child Friendly City concept is that children's 'voices and opinions are taken into consideration and influence governance, decision making at a local level including laws, policies, programs and budget to improve the lives of children and to create sustainable environments now and into the future.

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
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| 5.1 Support children to actively participate in planning of the natural, built, environmental and economic processes of Council that impact their daily living | 5.1.1 Facilitate consultation with children around masterplans, parks, new facilities, and redevelopment | ● | Over 700 children were engaged in 30 consultation sessions designed specially to support children to contribute to 12 planning projects, including Draft Keysborough South Community Hub Strategic Plan, Frederick Wachter Reserve, various playground re-design, Shape Up Springvale, Light Up Noble Park, and Little Day Out event planning. The Children's Services team created tools to help children and caregivers contribute to the Council Plan consultation. They engaged with about 200 children and caregivers through local early childhood settings and primary schools. |
| | 5.1.2 Facilitate annual Children's Forum | ● | Children's Services hosted the 8th annual Children's Forum, attended by 84 students from Grades 5 and 6 in 20 primary schools. Six teams from Council led interactive workshops designed to engage children in planning and design, including Sport and Recreation, Open Space, Libraries, Waste and Sustainability. This event was planned with the Children's Advisory Group. |

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| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
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| 5.1 Support children to actively participate in planning of the natural, built, environmental and economic processes of Council that impact their daily living (<i>continued</i>) | 5.1.3 Support children to participate in planning for placemaking and revitalisation activities | ● | <p>Approximately 220 children participated in consultation on the development of the Springvale Revitalisation Action Plan.</p> <p>Over 400 students from multiple primary schools and kindergartens collaborated in the development and implementation of Noble Park activation programs including Our Street NPK (Noble Park) and Calendar of Activations.</p> <p>Key outcomes were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 schools and kindergartens running art classes to present artwork for inclusion in the first exhibition in Pudding Lanterns and an exhibition of 400 lanterns in Copas Park. • Noble Park Public Hall Laneway mural was co-designed and painted by children and ArtsBus. • 'Koala and Foxie' – Intergenerational Bollard project. • 2 pedestrian crossings on Douglas Street being coloured. |
| 5.2 Provide opportunities for children to be involved in civic engagement and leadership | 5.2.1 Facilitate Junior Children's Advisory Group | ● | A total of 60 students, from six primary schools, participated in an Advisory Group for younger children. Children met (eight times) with various Council teams and took part in planning and design activities that supported them to share their ideas about events and activities including Little Day Out and the Council Plan. |
| | 5.2.2 Facilitate Children's Advisory Group | ● | In total, 75 students from 21 primary schools, engaged in the Children's Advisory Group. Across a total of eight meetings, the Group met with different Council teams about projects in the city and contributed to planning and design on a range of matters such as playground re-design, festival and event planning, Placemaking activities, and to inform Strategic Plans. |

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| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
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| 5.2 Provide opportunities for children to be involved in civic engagement and leadership <i>(continued)</i> | 5.2.3 Facilitate Junior Mayor program | ● | The Junior Mayor program fostered opportunities for a local student leader to participate in civic engagement and leadership opportunities, including delivering a speech at a Citizenship Ceremony, Snow Fest and the Sustainability Festival. |
| | 5.2.4 Support children to inform activities and events at Springvale Community Hub | ● | <p>Children shared their ideas for activities and events at Springvale Community Hub through the Children’s Forum. This information will be used to inform future programs and activities. Opportunities to provide feedback into programming and activation is offered formally and informally including capturing Children’s voices during Reconciliation Week.</p> <p>Springvale Community Hub hosts regular Children’s Advisory Group meetings.</p> |
| 5.3 Support initiatives that promote a positive sense of pride in culture, identity and belonging for children | 5.3.1 Facilitate arts engagement opportunities | ● | <p>Arts engagement opportunities included multiple in-person and online school holiday workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distributed 1,500 AT HOME GALLERY Kid Kits for free at Walker Street Gallery and at various events, including National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children’s Day Event, to encourage children’s engagement with art. • Collaborated with Resurrection School in the School Community Arts and Environment Project, engaging 417 students and 17 teachers. • Delivered four Art Series workshops at libraries, suitable for children and families. • Offered free workshops to school groups visiting Walker Street Gallery, tailored for specific exhibitions like WILAM BIIK, A Tra\$hy Dreamland, and HOME24. • Hosted family-friendly exhibitions and workshops at Walker Street Gallery, providing an immersive environment for children. • Presented “Cat In The Hat” at The Drum, with 740 attendees. |

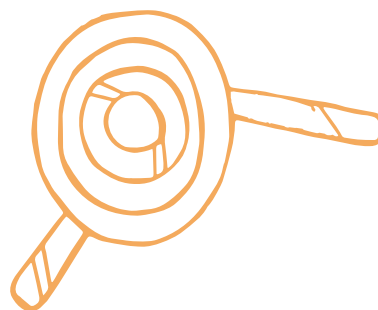


| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
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| 5.3 Support initiatives that promote a positive sense of pride in culture, identity and belonging for children <i>(continued)</i> | 5.3.2 Support children to inform council and community events that are inclusive and child friendly | ● | The Festivals and Events team engaged 136 children, through Children's Advisory Group meetings and Junior Children's Group meeting, to help plan inclusive and child friendly council events, such as Children's Festival calendar. The team also supported 15 children to actively engage in the delivery of Little Day Out activities including the Drawing Competition. |
| 5.4 Celebrate the contributions of children as active citizens | 5.4.1 Facilitate regular articles and promotional material highlighting the role of the Junior Mayor, Children's Advisory Group, and the Children's Forum | ● | Children were recognised and celebrated through five articles written by the Junior Mayor, published in Council News. The Junior Mayor featured on the cover of the June 2024 edition with the Mayor. The City of Greater Dandenong website was updated with articles that highlights the role of children in the annual Children's Forum and Junior Mayor program. The Junior Mayor featured in Council's social media platforms to promote Snow Fest. |
| | 5.4.2 Acknowledgement of Children's Advisory Group members at the Children's Forum with the Mayor presenting them with a certificate | ● | The Deputy Mayor attended the 2023 Children's Forum and presented Children's Advisory Group members (42 students) with certificates to thank them for their contributions and actively participating in the community. |
| | 5.4.3 Participate in Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities Network and Advisory Group to share children's contribution local voice | ● | Attended three Victorian Local Governance Association, Child Friendly Cities & Communities network meetings to recognise and share contributions made by children in the community. |
| 5.5 Support children to participate in climate change and sustainability measures impacting community life | 5.5.1 Provide opportunities for children to participate in Environmental Education and Engagement Programs | ● | The Parks Team delivered a variety of opportunities for children to participate in environmental education and engagement programs including regular Nature Play sessions, E-van sessions at Council events, Keysborough Big Picnic, Alex Wilkie Open Days, One Tree Per Child, Little Day Out, Adopt a Park and six community planting days. |

| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
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| 5.5 Support children to participate in climate change and sustainability measures impacting community life (continued) | 5.5.2 Engage children in the development of Council's Community Engagement and Mobilisation Plan | ● | More than 200 local students contributed to the development of the Community Climate Change Engagement and Mobilisation Plan. Children were also asked to review and provide feedback on the draft Plan. |
| | 5.5.3 Engage children to inform the climate change and sustainability plans | ● | Input from children and schools was essential in shaping the Draft Community Climate Change Engagement and Mobilisation Plan. Children shared their ideas and priorities through interactive activities at the 2024 Sustainability Festival and targeted feedback sessions, which was then incorporated into climate change and sustainability plans. |
| | 5.5.4 Deliver waste management programs in schools attend key Council events to promote key messages | ● | Ninety-seven waste management programs were delivered to 2,866 children in schools and kindergartens to promote key messages relating to waste and the environment. |
| | 5.5.5 Support <i>children to participate</i> in Council's sustainability events, festivals, and activities | ● | Two local primary schools showcased their climate change initiatives at the 2024 Sustainability Festival. Organising a local CERES Student Environmental Leadership Summit enabled 75 primary school students to attend. Working with the Children's Advisory Group and CERES in the planning and deliver of sustainability events, ensured children's perspectives and needs were incorporated. |
| | 5.5.6 Engage children in delivery of waste minimisation, recycling, and litter prevention messages | ● | Ten workshops were delivered and engaged 544 students in fun and interactive activities about waste, recycling and the environment. This included a whole school presentation as part of the School Community Arts & Environment Program. |

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| Priority | Action Name | Status | Progress summary |
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| 5.5 Support children to participate in climate change and sustainability measures impacting community life <i>(continued)</i> | 5.5.7 Support external partners to engage children in climate change and sustainability education | ● | Council engaged children in climate change and sustainability education through direct engagement with local schools, a 'Create Your Climate Superhero' activity at the Children's Forum, an education day on the Dandenong Creek corridor, and through collaboration with CERES in delivering the Student Environmental Leadership Summit. |





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