



Children's Plan

First Year Action Plan Report 2021–22





Greater Dandenong City Council acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of this land, the Bunurong People, and pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We recognise and respect their continuing connections to Climate, Culture and Country.

Executive summary

The Children's Plan 2021–26 was developed in consultation with children, local service providers and various Council departments. The plan's vision is for children and their families to be valued, celebrated, respected and supported to reach their full potential. It outlines an integrated approach in working together with and for children 0–13 years, acknowledging the important role of parents, carers and their extended families in supporting each child's development in education, health and wellbeing.

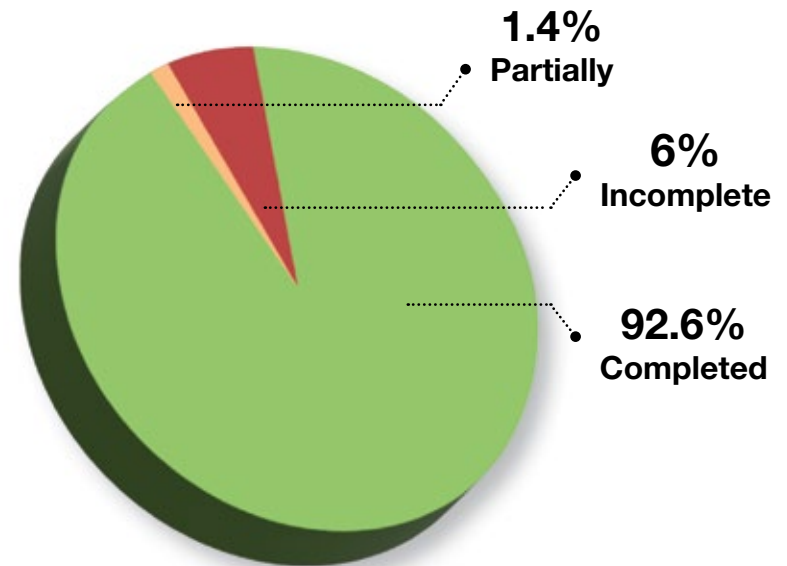
This report is the first progress update for the plan and highlights a number of a key successes in 2021–22. The delivery of a number of programs and activities were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic but the commitment, creativity and professionalism of staff during these adverse times is reflected in the number of activities successfully delivered to the community.

The First Year Action Plan Report 2021–22 contains 68 actions across five strategic objectives. These actions are the responsibility of many different Council departments and the delivery of the plan is a collaborative effort.

Progress summary

Progress Key

	Percentage
● Completed	92.6 per cent
● Partially	1.4 per cent
● Incomplete	6 per cent



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. In the first year of the plan these service planning and advocacy efforts were reflected in the following achievements.



8 Child and Family Partnership meetings



Children and families accessed culturally appropriate food supports and other specialist services



2288 children enrolled for kindergarten in 2022

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

Health and wellbeing encompasses physical, emotional and mental health and is supported by Council through the provision of universal health services, early intervention support services and health promotion and prevention activities. In 2021–22 key initiatives included:



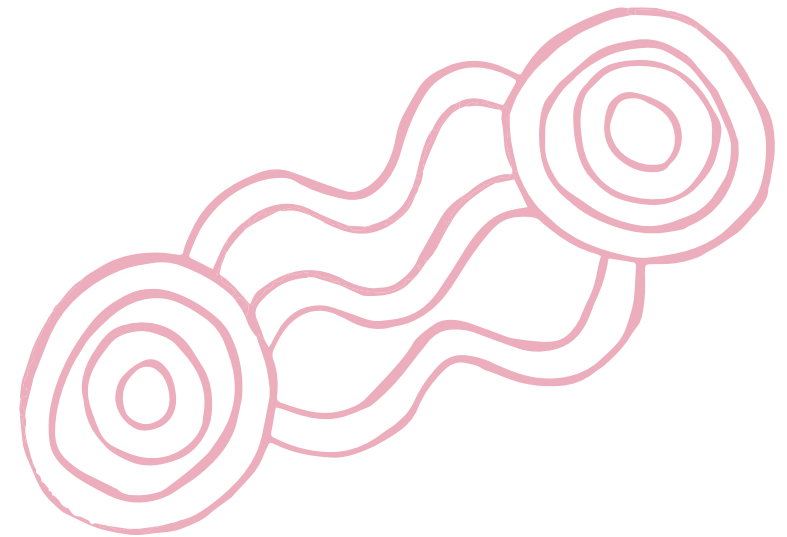
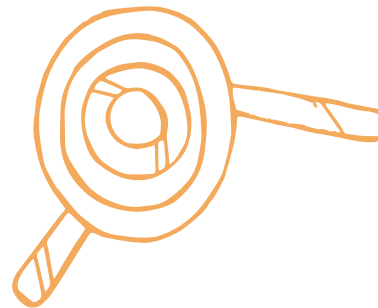
1000 Play Streets
launched



Baby Bounce
delivered 69 sessions
to 2,433 participants



20 Supported
playgroups engaged
with 760 families



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 including:



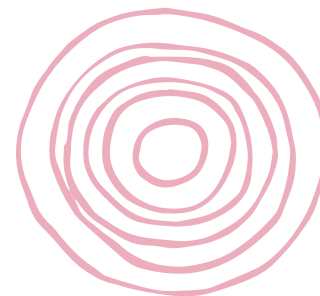
349 vulnerable children attending Early Start Kindergarten



Reading Buddies in Schools



Information Sessions delivered online in eight different languages





**Sharon,
keep your
hair On**
Gillian Rubenstein David Mackintosh

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. This year to improve engagement and participation the following projects were delivered:



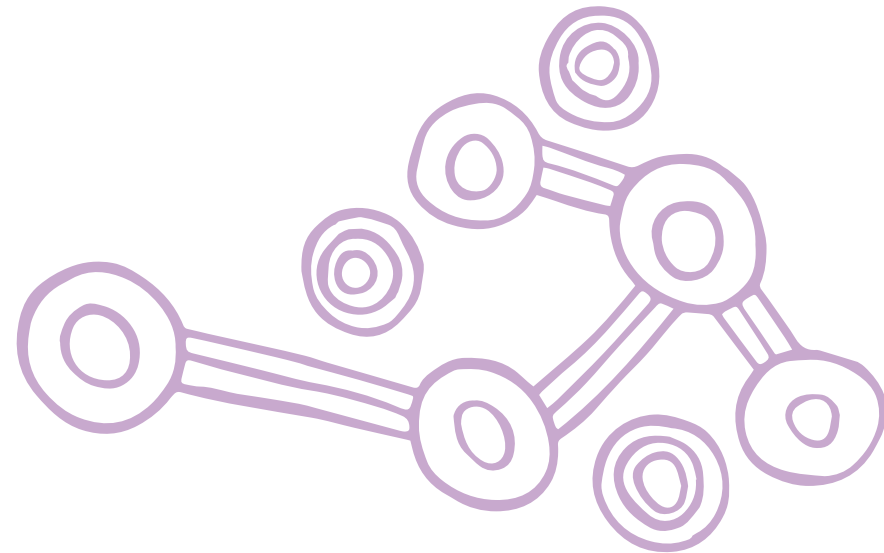
10th Greater Dandenong
Children's Festival



Early years services
supporting the
Reconciliation
Action Plan



Hemming St public art
project launched



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.



140 students
attended the online
Children's Forum



New Junior Mayor
nominated for 2022



Children actively
participated in the
planning of JB Sheen
Reserve and Sandra
Reserve new playgrounds



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	Facilitate bimonthly Child and Family Partnership meetings	●	Eight Child and Family Partnership meetings were run throughout the year, with 33 partnering organisations attending.
1.2 Explore external funding opportunities to be responsive to policy change in implementing timely three-year-old kindergarten provision	Promotion of three year old kindergarten	●	Kindergarten was promoted through Council's social media channels, monthly magazine and on the website. 2,288 children were enrolled in for kindergarten in 2022.
	Review Infrastructure Plan annually for timely infrastructure development	●	Council Officers met with the Victorian School Building Authority and Department of Education to ensure there is adequate infrastructure to meet the demand for 15hrs of both three and four year old Kindergarten. In partnership with the Victorian School Building Authority, Keysborough Primary School Kindergarten opened in 2022.
1.3 Advocate for the provision of flexible, quality, affordable childcare options for families	Conduct mapping around local childcare fees	●	Fee comparisons and mapping was collected for Family Day Care, Springvale Service for Children, Market St Child Care, and other local government childcare providers to ensure market share can be maintained.
	Re-establish childcare network	●	This network was affected by COVID-19 restrictions and will be reestablished in the new financial year.

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
1.4 Advocate for continued funding to the national quality reforms for childcare and early childhood	Facilitate a local media campaign	●	Funding has been secured until 2032, with a major policy reform in the provision of 30 hours of kindergarten (pre prep) to be rolled out from 2025–32 in childcare and sessional kindergartens. This is in addition to the investment in 15 hours of three-year-old kindergarten.
	Write Mayoral letters to Federal and State Government	●	The State and Federal Governments announced a four-year funding commitment for four-year-old kindergarten to continue to be offered up to 15 hours per week, therefore no letters to advocate for additional funding were required.
1.5 Advocate for the provision of support services dedicated to helping children and their families living in generational and situational disadvantage	Advocate for social and affordable housing for children and their families	●	Council in partnership with a local philanthropist and WAYSS purchased a block of land for construction of social housing for women and families affected by family violence. Council participated in the bi-monthly meetings of the Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter group of councils with the finalisation and distribution of the group's 2021 Final Report.
	Partner with external agencies to plan and provide support services to children and families	●	Initial community consultation for an Anti-poverty Strategy for Greater Dandenong was conducted. Children and families accessed culturally appropriate food supports and other specialist services that were tailored to their specific requirements. Community Activation and Social Isolation extension work assisted to develop ongoing relationships with local service providers to form a network of agencies that clients could be linked to.
1.6 Advocate for additional funding sources to support the Community Hubs in Schools model	Participate in State Government Community Hubs in Schools meetings	●	Meetings were delayed due to COVID-19. The funding for this program is ongoing; no further action was required.
	Write Mayoral letters to local MP's to support ongoing funding commitment	●	The Community Hubs in Schools Project received an ongoing commitment of funding from the Federal Government until 2025 and expanded their service delivery into the City of Casey.

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
1.7 Undertake infrastructure planning to ensure timely and targeted provision of facilities and services for children and families	Review Infrastructure plan and change management for three-year-old kindergarten	●	Council Officers met with the Department of Education, Victorian School Building Authority, Municipal Association of Victoria and local services to ensure adequate infrastructure, staffing and timetables are in place for the increase in hours for three year old kindergarten for 2023 and into the future.
	Review masterplans for open space, parks, and playgrounds to meet community needs	●	At the Children's Forum students shared their ideas for the new neighbourhood playground at Noble Park Reserve. Online consultations with students at Harrisfield Primary School occurred for the JB Sheen Reserve local playground design. Activity sheets were given to children to seek their ideas for the Sandra Reserve local playground. The engagement and feedback received from children on these particular playground projects was highly valuable in developing well considered final designs that are now being realised through their construction.
	Review Sport and Recreation facilities for timely infrastructure	●	The Sports Facilities Plan (Sports Facilities Plan Greater Dandenong Council) that guides the provision of sports facilities within the City of Greater Dandenong is currently being reviewed. Consultation will commence in 2023.



● 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	Promotion of Maternal and Child Health services to internal Council departments to strengthen referral pathways	●	Promotion of Maternal and Child Health Services to improve the uptake of families into the service has been achieved through connections with multiple teams across council including Media and Communications, Community Development, Children's Services, Youth and Family Services, Immunisation and Library Services to promote Maternal and Child Health Services.
	Provide outreach Maternal and Child Health services at childcare, family day care and playgroups	●	The Outreach Program connected with childcare, kinder, family day care and playgroups across the municipality to offer more accessible Maternal and Child Health Services for families. Afghan newly arrived clients proactively engaged within service. There was a slight decrease in children attending their Key Age and Stage Consultations over the 12 month to 3 ½ years of age for 21/22 as compared to 20/21 due to lockdowns associated to COVID-19. Council was also limited in its service delivery to young infants due to shortages in staff contributing to this decrease.

● 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>	Provide outreach Maternal and Child Health services at Dandenong PALS Playgroup and the Afghan Women's group to improve family engagement	●	COVID-19 and staff shortages impacted the running of this program. Maternal and Child Health continued to support the Dandenong PALS playgroup, meeting with newly arrived families and connecting them to the program.
2.2 Increase attendance of vulnerable, refugee and newly arrived children at immunisation sessions	Develop immunisation promotional tools for vulnerable, refugee and newly arrived children	●	<p>Council's Immunisation team continue to promote the service and immunisation to vulnerable groups through a range of tools targeting specific clients, groups, and the wider community including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information on Council's website ● Articles in Council News ● Text messages sent in different languages to clients to promote Council's service, with reminders of when vaccinations were overdue/due and how to make a booking ● Promotion on Council's social media pages ● Provision of a Greater Dandenong Immunisation Service card that included information for newly arrived and refugee families. This was distributed by Maternal and Child Health, customer service and the immunisation team ● Information in the South East Region Refugee and Asylum Seeker Service Directory ● A Refugee Projects Immunisation Flyer for humanitarian arrivals was produced in English, Dari, Arabic, Burmese and distributed to PRIME refugee project clients via AMES ● An Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islander flyer was developed

● 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>)	Partner with external service providers to support Refugee and newly arrived families to access immunisation sessions	●	Immunisation service supports refugee and newly arrived families to access immunisation through the Program for Refugee Immunisation, Monitoring and Education (PRIME). An increase in refugees arriving to the South East region has seen an expansion to PRIME to include the COVID-19 vaccination status of clients for 2022.
2.3 Encourage children and families to be physically active and participate in sport and recreational opportunities	Facilitate Active Families program	●	Community ambassadors were sought and engaged to assist with the Make Your Move campaign roll out. Ambassadors assist the campaign by sharing their stories and advocating for behavioural change in the community. COVID-19 required the stages of this program to be altered to suit the new landscape in school environments. This was achieved successfully with a positive response to the program.
	Facilitate Go Active	●	Various programs and activations were completed in the community such as the Active Families program, Noble Park revitalisation activities, Noble Park Big Day out, Keysborough Big Picnic, and celebrating International Day of People with a Disability at Noble Park Aquatic Centre (NPAC).



● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
2.3 Encourage children and families to be physically active and participate in sport and recreational opportunities (<i>continued</i>)	Launch Play Street project	●	<p>One of the most progressed “street play” frameworks within Australia is the 1000 Play Street movement promoted through Play Australia. Their Play Street concept is where local streets are temporarily closed to through traffic to facilitate play, parties or neighbourhood gatherings. As this aligns well with Council policy to increase the use of local streets for physical and social activity, Council sought grant funding through Play Australia to facilitate this movement locally. In 2022, Council was successful in partnering with Play Australia for grant funding to assist with roll out of Street Play initiatives.</p> <p>Council launched its 1000 Play Street service in April 2022, this enables residents to close local streets at no cost for smaller play events. Council provides traffic management equipment and training, as well as some chalk and play equipment for use.</p>
2.4 Support preventative health initiatives and education for children and families in nutrition and healthy eating; dental health and hygiene; adequate sleep and exercise; and self-care and resilience	Develop nutrition and healthy eating resources to support preventative health initiatives	●	The New Directions Project delivered preventative health activities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. Resources developed included a Health and Wellbeing Calendar, Cooking for Bubup Videos and Recipe Book, Deadly Healthy Eating Poster, Oral health education packs and yarning circle health packs.
	Partner with external agencies to promote preventative health programs and education	●	Through the VicHealth Local Government Partnership Program alliances with external agencies such as Monash Health, EnLiven and Bicycle Victoria were established to support children and young people in three key health domains; increasing physical activity, encouraging healthy eating and improving mental health.

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
2.4 Support preventative health initiatives and education for children and families in nutrition and healthy eating; dental health and hygiene; adequate sleep and exercise; and self-care and resilience (<i>continued</i>)	Promote sleep and settling programs to new parents	●	All parents that identify a concern related to sleep and settling, during their Key Ages and Stages (KAS) visit were offered support through the sleep and settling program. Sleep and Settling Sessions and Sleep and Settling Outreach was provided in client's homes. 65 Sleep and Settling Sessions were conducted this year. 34 hours of Sleep and Settling Outreach provided to clients homes.
	Promote Smiles for miles van consultation with early childhood services and schools	●	The Smile for Mile Van staff and Monash Health continue to support and promote the program in Greater Dandenong. Face to face delivery was delayed due to COVID-19.
2.5 Increase awareness of mental health and supports available for children and families	Promotion of mental health week (MCH)	●	All Maternal and Child Health Centres offered clients information related to Mental Health Week and referred to the Mental Health Victoria website for resources and activities. Nurses continued to promote resources for those clients needing Mental Health support.
	Strengthen partnerships with external providers to support mental health of children and families	●	Councils Child and Family Partnership continued to support the State Government's Orange Door Program, inviting them to present at a partnership meeting to discuss their programs and referral pathways for families. The Refugee Health Nurse also presented at the partnership group, highlighting the issues affecting mental health on newly arrived client's children and their families navigating the service system.
2.6 Support initiatives to reduce the adverse effects of alcohol and drug use impacting children and their families	Promotion of community partners who provide support services to support children impacted by drug and alcohol use	●	Referrals were provided to community partners from families experiencing drug and alcohol use from 20 supported playgroups and the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Kindergarten Project Worker.

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
2.7 Support opportunities for children and families to build social connections	Deliver First Time Parent Groups to families	●	<p>All first-time parents were invited to attend a parent group by the time their infant was 12 weeks of age. Groups were offered online and face to face.</p> <p><u>First time parent groups (FTPG)</u></p> <p>49 groups comprising of 6 sessions each group, total of 294 sessions</p> <p><u>Sleep & Settling groups</u></p> <p>6x Sleep & settling sessions for under 6 month old children</p> <p>8x Sleep & Settling sessions for 6-12 month old children</p> <p>6x Sleep & Settling sessions for toddlers 18-24 month old children</p> <p><u>Number of participants in FTPG =361</u></p> <p><u>Number of participants in Sleep & Settling group =106</u></p>
	Deliver Storytime, Baby Bounce and Toddler Time in Springvale and Dandenong libraries	●	<p>Early Years programming in the library saw attendance return to pre-COVID-19 numbers once restrictions were lifted, showing the value the community places on early years literacy and support networks.</p> <p>Overall Baby Bounce – 69 sessions, 2,433 participants</p> <p>Overall Toddler Time – 48 sessions, 831 participants</p> <p>Overall Storytime – 55 sessions, 970 participants</p>

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
2.7 Support opportunities for children and families to build social connections <i>(continued)</i>	Facilitate Children's Advisory Group	●	The Children's Advisory group consisted of 34 students from 17 schools. They contributed to several consultations including the Dandenong Community Hub, the redevelopment of the Dandenong Oasis, Communities for Children Strategic Plan, Kids Co design Consultation, Make Your Move Community Ambassador Program, Forever Fest, waste minimisation, recycling, litter prevention and the importance of being a Child Friendly City.
	Facilitate supported and community playgroups	●	20 Supported playgroups engaged with 760 families. 50 Community playgroups have been supported to re-engage families post COVID-19 conditions.
2.8 Develop partnerships with key health and wellbeing agencies to deliver activities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families	Deliver primary health and wellbeing activities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families	●	The Indigenous Health Care Program – New Directions Project team continued to deliver preventative health activities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families. Some activities included the Carrum Carrum to Corhanwarrabul 'Once As It Was Map' for sourcing indigenous health food sources and connection to country; Maternal and Child Health checklist and services access card; Deadly Immunisation checklist; Healthy Deadly Tucker health promotion poster; Health and Wellbeing Calendar; Active Education swimming sessions with Health Yarners; Tackling Indigenous Smoking Video and Cooking for Bubup Videos and a Recipe Book.

● 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	Promotion of kindergarten enrolments at supported and community playgroup	●	<p>Promotion on Council’s social media pages, a feature article in Council News and online bilingual meetings with families supported 349 vulnerable children to attend Early Start Kindergarten in 2021.</p> <p>In partnership with Dandenong West Primary and Springvale Rise Primary School Hub seven information sessions were delivered online in Dari, Hazaragi, Pashtu, Vietnamese, Rohingya, Khmer and Punjabi. Interpreters were also present at the sessions. The sessions provided families with information on Council’s kindergarten enrolment program, Early Start Kindergarten (ESK) and refugee visa eligibility criteria.</p>
	Promotion of the benefits of kindergarten for both three- and four-year-olds	●	<p>349 children enrolled into three and four-year-old kindergarten, as part of the culturally and linguistically diverse kindergarten project. Seven Information Sessions were delivered online and completed in languages of Dari, Hazaragi, Pashtu, Vietnamese, Rohingya, Khmer and Punjabi to inform participants of the kindergarten enrolment process.</p>

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete



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 <i>(continued)</i>	Support children with additional needs inclusion into kindergarten	●	<p>The Preschool Field Officer (PSFO) Program received 281 new referrals for inclusion of children into three and four-year-old kindergarten.</p> <p>During the pandemic lockdowns a limited number of children attended kindergarten services. Children had limited access to social engagements with friends, family, community and social outings which impacted their ongoing development needs. The PSFO program supported educators to provide home learning packs, face-time story telling, newsletters, tip sheets, activities and resources.</p>
3.2 Strengthen the capacity of parents and carers to support children's learning and development	Deliver family literacy project through reading buddies and reading programs in schools and early childhood services	●	Closures due to COVID-19 limited program delivery. Reading Buddies in Schools, Literacy Intensives in Schools and the Family Literacy Project resumed regular programming when schools allowed programs to return to onsite delivery.
	Support external agencies to deliver programs to strengthen parental capacity in children's learning	●	The Child and Family Partnership membership provided referrals to partner agencies to strengthen the parental capacity in children's learning through transition to school programs, referrals to supported playgroups, kindergartens, and community hub activities on school sites.
3.3 Support initiatives and activities for successful transition of children through key educational milestones of kindergarten, school, and special education	Support school readiness programs with local kindergartens and schools	●	The Preschool Field Officer Program and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Kindergarten Project supported 281 children transitioning to school. This was achieved through collaborative meetings with primary school coordinators, teaching staff and student liaison officers writing transition statements, meeting with the Koorie Transition to school network, collaborating with Monash Allied Health Services and the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and facilitating meetings with kindergarten staff and families in choosing a primary school.

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
3.4 Develop pathways for newly arrived and refugee families to access English language education to support children's literacy and learning	Deliver Family Literacy project	●	<p>COVID-19 restrictions limited the delivery of the Family Literacy Project. Staff however delivered four online Reading Buddies sessions with 36 participants and an online school tour and information session with 23 students and 3 adults.</p> <p>Once restrictions eased, programs resumed:</p> <p>Reading Buddies in Schools – 58 sessions with 972 participants</p> <p>Reading Buddies in Springvale Library – 18 sessions with 67 participants</p> <p>Reading Buddies in Dandenong Library – 17 sessions with 168 participants</p> <p>Literacy Intensive in Schools - 93 sessions with 722 participants</p>
	Deliver weekly Conversation Circle sessions	●	<p>Delivery and attendance at the Conversation Circles was impacted by closures and decreased opening hours due to COVID-19 restrictions, as well as low attendance numbers.</p> <p>Overall number of sessions: 15</p> <p>Overall attendance: 33</p>
	Promotion of referral pathways to Library and Community Hubs English language programs	●	<p>Referrals from Supported Playgroups, Family Day Care, Central kindergarten enrolment and Maternal and Child Health increased in May and June, linking newly arrived Ukrainian families to literacy support services.</p>

● 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	Promotion of external partner agencies supporting families experiencing family violence	●	Council support of the Red Cross' Forced Marriage Project concluded. Videos about family violence and sources of assistance continue to be aired on the Council screens, while information about the nature of family violence and sources of assistance was regularly updated on the Council website.
	Promotion of White Ribbon Day and child protection week	●	Council's White Ribbon Day online event was promoted in November 2021.
4.2 Support positive parenting programs to build the capacity of parents and carers	Deliver supported playgroups, new parent groups and outreach services to support parental capacity	●	760 families were enrolled across 20 Supported Playgroups. COVID-19 conditions presented some challenges with face-to-face playgroup delivery and home coaching. The online delivery and phone calls supported families to stay engaged and reconnect with each other as conditions eased during the return to COVID normal.

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
4.3 Promote activities that encourage gender, race and disability equity for children	Deliver family story time for families with children with a disability	●	During the COVID-19 restrictions, libraries were not getting referrals from playgroups and kinders for children to attend the sessions. Regular storytime sessions were still delivered.
	Promotion of LGBTQIA+ networks and events	●	<p>Greater Dandenong Council celebrated a number of days of significance for LGBTQIA+ communities in the past 12 months. IDAHOBIT Day (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia), Wear It Purple Day and St Kilda Pride March were all celebrated by the organisation.</p> <p>Council celebrated Wear it Purple Day on Friday 27 August 2021, for a second year in a row. To mark the celebrations the Drum Theatre was illuminated in rainbow pride colours, and the Pride Flag was raised at Harmony Square. Internally, staff came together for an online Rainbow Network lunch, where staff were also consulted about the Gender Equity Survey.</p> <p>Community Advocacy Officers engaged with the Enliven LGBTQIA+ Reference Group, to investigate further ways that Council may engage with the rainbow community.</p>



● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

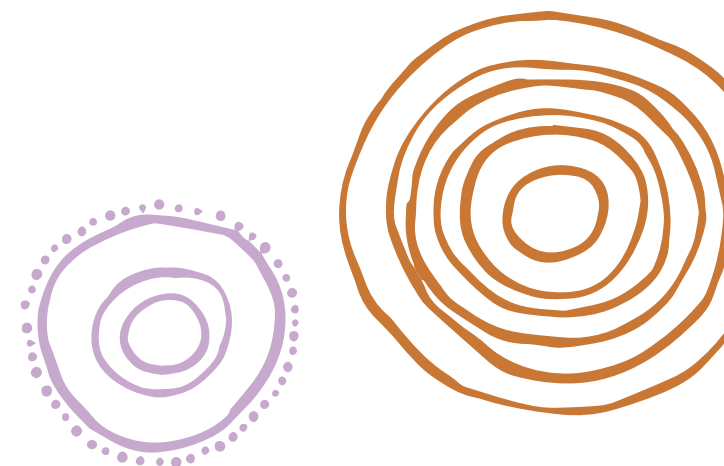
Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
4.3 Promote activities that encourage gender, race and disability equity for children <i>(continued)</i>	Support access and inclusion programs	●	<p>COVID-19 lockdowns prevented face to face programs from running for a large part of the year. The Access & Inclusion team continued to focus on accessibility, inclusion and safety for people with disability. The team promoted events, forums, consultations and continued community engagement work. Support access and inclusion programs included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils Disability Advisory Committee meet quarterly and is an avenue to support access and inclusion programs and promote future activities. • Quarterly Disability inclusion eNewsletters were developed. The newsletter were distributed to 300 recipients. The newsletters promoted events, consultation/feedback opportunities, programs and news. • In partnership with Casey and Cardinia councils City of Greater Dandenong developed the Southern Region Disability Alliance (SRDA). The SRDA network has an online TEAMS channel of 143 participants and meet bi-monthly for face to face meetings. This forum is where the community share & discuss information. • There is a facilitated monthly walking group for carers of people with disability, in partnership with Pathway for Carers at Burden Park Springvale South Carers Walking Group Greater Dandenong Council • The Noble Park All Ability Playground was opened in 2021. This is a very popular play space for the community and we promote it's accessibility via the eNewlsetter, DAC, SRDA, Noble Park Community Centre.

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
4.4 Provide welcoming, safe, inclusive and culturally responsive services	Early years services supporting the Reconciliation Action Plan	●	Children's Services continued to support early years services and primary schools to connect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early years service providers, the Narragunnawali Platform and the Gathering Places to support the development of Reconciliation Action Plans.
	Provide welcoming Maternal and Child Health supporting the Reconciliation Action Plan	●	The Outreach Nurse continued to support the Yarning Group and Antenatal Group. Welcoming Plaques are now located in all Maternal and Child Health Centres. Maternal and Child Health nurses attended Cultural Training and reviewed their partnerships with Indigenous Services to support the reconciliation action plan. Resources such as dolls, flags and other culturally appropriate items are on display at Maternal and Child Health Centres.
	Support early years providers to create inclusive services	●	The Preschool Field Officer Program supported 57 kindergarten and childcare services using a mix of face to face and online media platforms to develop strategies for learning environments that foster inclusion for all children's abilities and interests and support in transition to primary schools for 2022. Educators were encouraged and supported to provide home learning packs to families to assist their children's ongoing learning.
4.5 Activate safe and accessible public spaces and amenities for children	Deliver Children's Festival and Little Day Out	●	<p>The 10th Greater Dandenong Children's Festival was delivered entirely online in 2021, in response to the COVID-19 lockdown. A total of 31 live workshops and performances were delivered by a mix of Council departments and external organisations.</p> <p>The 10th annual Little Day Out was delivered successfully online, with an estimated 300 people watching the event live. The audience satisfaction rate for this event was 89 per cent.</p>

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
4.5 Activate safe and accessible public spaces and amenities for children (<i>continued</i>)	Deliver student co-designed public art projects	●	<p>In late 2020 Council sought feedback from locals near Hemmings Street, Dandenong on their preferences for a public art delivery. The community asked for a co-developed art and integration project that included gardens. Council engaged Artist and Illustrator Beci Orpin to work directly with Dandenong West Primary school, whose grounds are adjacent to the Hemmings Street shopping strip. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, art supplies and an activity booklet were sent directly to student's homes so they could participate. The ten students involved developed their own miniature artworks from home and sent photos to Beci to develop. Beci incorporated the student's creations into an interactive and integrated public art design that extend along the streetscape. It includes a brightly coloured mural, kinetic totems and surprise elements.</p>



● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

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
5.1 Support children to actively participate in planning of the natural, built, environmental and economic processes of Council that impact their daily living	Facilitate consultation with children around masterplans, parks, new facilities and redevelopment	●	300 children participated in planning for the JB Sheen Reserve and Sandra Reserve playground upgrade; children were also consulted on the draft concept designs for the Dandenong Community Hub; Oasis redevelopment; Kids Co Design Consultation, Communities for Children Annual Strategic Plan, Make Your Move Community Ambassador Program, Forever Fest (Sustainability Festival); and Springvale Community Hub Action Plan.
	Facilitate the Annual Children's Forum	●	140 students in grades four to six, from 15 primary schools, attended the Children's Forum. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the forum was held online. The forum provided children with a platform to engage with Council in a consultative and creative way to express their opinions about the city in which they live in. Six teams from across Council delivered interactive workshops, engaging students to help inform future projects.
5.2 Provide opportunities for children to be involved in civic engagement and leadership	Facilitate the Children's Advisory Group	●	The Children's Advisory group provided an opportunity for students to develop their leadership skills through interactive activities and progressing their confidence to share their ideas, thoughts and opinions.
	Facilitate the Junior Mayor program	●	14 students nominated to be the Junior Mayor and were asked to give a short speech on "Why is it important for Council to have a Junior Mayor?" Members of the advisory group who were in attendance at the first meeting voted for their favourite speech.

● Completed ● Partially ● Incomplete

Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
5.2 Provide opportunities for children to be involved in civic engagement and leadership (continued)	Facilitate the Junior school children's advisory group	●	The Junior Children's Advisory group involved students from foundation to grade four from Minaret College, Silverton Primary and St Joseph's Primary. The students were asked to share their feedback for the Springvale Community Hub Action Plan consultation.
	Launch library guide program at Springvale Community Hub	●	<p>The library guide program includes a map of Springvale Community Hub, with tours operating both through the library and include areas of community and civic engagement that happen across the hub.</p> <p>Local primary/secondary schools toured through the space, specifically grades 3 & 4 where there is specific curriculum around community services and people who help us learn.</p> <p>Local primary schools were involved in the Action Plan consultation, whereby school leaders toured the building and took information back to their school population for consideration.</p>
5.3 Support initiatives that promote a positive sense of pride in culture, identity and belonging for children	Facilitate arts engagement opportunities with primary schools	●	23 students from Emerson School participated in a two day workshop with artist Renee Broders to create collaged self-portraits to promote a positive sense of self. These were then displayed at Walker Street Gallery during the SEEN Portrait exhibition. The initiative provided a way for young people to remain connected with their community and to have a creative expression in a public space at a time when COVID-19 restrictions prevented young people attending school in person and finding creative and social expression in a classroom environment.
	Facilitate consultation with family and children in the development of public art for the Keysborough South Community Hub	●	Due to construction delays and staff vacancies this project has been delayed. The project is planned for initiation in late 2022.

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Priority	Action Name	Status	Progress summary
5.3 Support initiatives that promote a positive sense of pride in culture, identity and belonging for children (<i>continued</i>)	Facilitate the Children's Festival and support the facilitation of cultural festivals	●	The 10th annual Greater Dandenong Children's Festival was delivered online. The festival included numerous opportunities for children to participate and achieve a sense of belonging, identity and local pride.
5.4 Celebrate the contributions of children as active citizens	Acknowledgement of Children's Advisory Group members at the Children's Forum	●	Children's Advisory group members had various roles throughout the Children's Forum and were recognised for their contributions at the Children's Forum held in October 2021, including their part in planning the forum.
	Participate in the Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities Network and Advisory Group	●	Staff attended nine Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities Network and Advisory Group meetings over the year. This provides Council with an opportunity to network with over 20 other organisations discussing ethical and meaningful engagement with children.
	Promotion of Junior Mayor, Children's Advisory Group and Children's Forum	●	The Junior Mayor Program, Children's Advisory Group and Children's Forum were all promoted on Council's social media platforms, articles in the City News Magazine and local media feature articles. All primary schools in the City of Greater Dandenong were also provided information on the programs.
5.5 Support children to participate in climate change and sustainability measures impacting community life	Deliver waste management programs in schools	●	The 'Voices for Children' campaign commenced, with short videos of waste, recycling and litter prevention messaging being a key focus using the voices of children in Greater Dandenong. Face to face engagement at schools, early learning centres and kindergartens continued.
	Promotion of Sustainability Awards	●	Children and schools were actively targeted for participation in the 2022 Sustainability Awards. This opportunity was promoted at the School Environment Leader Summit in April 2022. Officers continued to promote the Awards to children and families through ongoing engagement with the Junior Mayor and participation in the Children's Festival in the second half of 2022.

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