



Merri-bek
City Council

Children, Young People and Families Plan 2021-25

Year 4 Review



Executive summary

The Children, Young People and Families Plan 2021-2025 Year 4 Review details the actions achieved during July 2024 to June 2025.

The key findings were:

- Over the life of the plan 57 out of 60 actions under the three outcome areas have been achieved.
- The MCH Breastfeeding Clinic was expanded to include more southern suburbs of Merri-bek.
- The Merri-bek Early Years and Youth Profile Data Summary was published providing up to date data to inform current and future program and service planning.
- The Children and Young People Engagement Framework and Corporate Training Package was developed and launched equipping council staff with best practice knowledge and skills when engaging with children and youth people.
- The inaugural Welcome Baby to Country is scheduled for 22 October 2025.
- Early years infrastructure projects continue to progress with key expansion projects at Oak Park Kindergarten and Derby Street Children's Centre completed which will enable an additional 120 children to access 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten programs.

The key emerging issues identified were:

- Families are increasingly seeking additional support such as material aid and food relief due to the cost of living.
- Children continue to experience long waiting times for early childhood allied health services.
- The uptake in sessional 3 and 4-year-old kindergarten has increased with many families opting for free kindergarten programs while demand for community run services has increased.
- Mental health continues to be a focus across programs and services.
- Children and young people show a strong interest in providing input into decision making, when they are afforded the opportunity.
- Participation in the Maternal Child Health service has increased, and flexible service delivery models are having an impact.

- Schools and students continue to face ongoing challenges with staff shortages and school refusal amongst students in primary and secondary schools.

Context

The Plan is a strategy for improving children, young people and families' health, wellbeing and educational outcomes through a whole of Council approach.

The Plan focuses on three outcome areas:

1. Inclusive City and Community
2. Improved Health and Wellbeing
3. Lifelong Learning and Participation.

The Plan's vision is that all children, young people and families live in a community where they are healthy, resilient, empowered, safe and belong.

Key achievements

The key achievements in each outcome area were as follows:

1. Inclusive City and Community:

- The wellbeing of children and families experiencing vulnerability was supported through the continued provision of the Enhanced Maternal Child Health home visiting program and Supported Playgroup program in a range of locations.
- Investigation is underway into the creation and staffing of free 'third spaces' for children, young people and families and options are being developed to achieve short- and longer-term outcomes.
- The positive uptake of the Youth Takeover sessions at Glenroy Library has led to the expansion of the Takeover sessions being delivered at Coburg and Brunswick Libraries.
- Youth Services is currently activating spaces across Coburg, Fawkner and Glenroy with the Glenroy Hub Youth Lounge being well utilised in a co-

located environment. In Fawkner, council are proposing further resourcing to enhance these spaces through public consultation and feedback from young people.

- Story time sessions in community languages including French, Greek, Italian, Spanish, Turkish and Woiwurrung; along with regular Rainbow Family Storytimes promoting early literacy skills.
- Provision of professional development opportunities and 'Acknowledgement of Country' signs for all early years services, MCH centres, sports pavilions and other council owned facilities, supported the delivery of inclusive, welcoming and accessible learning services and environments.
- Continued planning for the Brunswick Early Years Hub and co-investment in Derby Street Children's Centre and Oak Park Kindergarten upgrade and expansion project supported the needs of the growing population.

2. Improved Health and Wellbeing

- The INFANT program, Dads Group and expansion of the Breastfeeding Clinic were proactive preventative response programs supporting the health and wellbeing of infants and families.
- Development of the 'Youth Services for Families' booklet provided a comprehensive listing and description of key services and support options available to young people.
- Festivals in Fawkner, Coburg, Brunswick, and Glenroy included a range of activities and projects designed to engage with children, young people and families through creative and educational experiences.

3. Lifelong Learning and Participation

- Young people were consulted on Council strategies and programs, and supported to deliver youth-led projects through the continuation of the Youth Ambassador Program.

- Provided opportunities for children to be involved in decision making through the continuation of the Children's Reference Group where children were consulted in age-appropriate ways on Council's strategies and programs.
- Hosted the inaugural Merri-bek Children's Forum with the theme 'Children as Change Makers'. The forum empowered children by capturing their voices through graphic illustration, art and workshop activities to inform the new Children, Young People and Families Strategy and Libraries Strategy.
- Worked in partnership with Parentzone to deliver a range of information sessions for parents/caregivers.
- Supported young people to remain engaged in learning through partnership with Operation Newstart.
- Promoted the employability of young people through student placements and the delivery of training and employment programs such as the Pool Lifeguard Program, offering direct employment through local aquatic centres.

Further information

Contact Council's Early Years and Youth Branch on 9240 1111 or visit www.merri-bek.vic.gov.au

Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community



Merri-bek will be an inclusive and accessible city and community where children, young people and families engage in activities, programs and services. There will be respect, acknowledgement and celebration of diverse cultures and identities, recognising the benefits diversity brings to the community. Places and spaces will be accessible and meet the needs of children, young people and families.

Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Report
1.1 Develop inclusive and accessible activities, programs and services.	1.1.1 Ensure programs are welcoming and accessible.	Build capacity of early years services to provide inclusive services for diverse children and families.	School Holiday Program and Family Day Care continue to deliver inclusive early years programs that support children of all abilities. Early childhood educators engaged in several professional development sessions to further strengthen their ability to provide a high-quality service for children and their families.
		Explore improvements to childcare and kindergarten central registration system to ensure a streamlined registration process.	A review of the childcare and kindergarten central registration system was undertaken, and a new IT provider will be engaged to streamline the enrolment process for families and services.
		Expand kindergarten central enrolment to include three-year-old kindergarten.	Achieved in Year 1.
	1.1.2 Collaborate with service providers through a collective impact approach to meet the needs of children, young people and families.	Identify and utilise suitable spaces for young people in Merri-bek with a focus on the northern suburbs.	A councillor Notice of Motion for the creation of free third spaces for children, young people and families was supported unanimously and options to achieve short- and longer-term outcomes are being developed.
		Deliver Supported Playgroups with a focus on the northern suburbs.	10 Supported Playgroups were delivered weekly in Coburg, Fawkner, Glenroy and Pascoe Vale with high attendance at all groups.
		Engage children and young people to inform program planning, development and delivery of core activities at Glenroy Community Hub, Fawkner Library and other settings as appropriate.	Youth Services have delivered weekly programs and expanded the School Holiday activities with a variety of programs delivered across multiple indoor spaces including Oxygen Youth Space, Fawkner Community Sports Hall, Glenroy Community Hub and Coburg Basketball Stadium while also trialling the activation of open spaces.

Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community	Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community	Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community	Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community
			The success and positive uptake of the Youth Takeover sessions at Glenroy Library has led to increased sessions and an expansion to deliver Takeover sessions at Coburg and Brunswick Libraries.
	1.1.3 Ensure that services, programs and policies comply with the Council's requirements under the Gender Equity Act 2020.	Support staff to build capability to integrate Gender Impact Assessments in their planning for review or development of services, programs and policies with a direct and significant impact on the public.	The Gender Equity Impact Assessment process underwent review and the template has since been simplified with collaborations across teams strengthened.
1.2 Increase opportunities for social cohesion.	1.2.1 Increase opportunities for intergenerational activities and programs.	Explore, plan, design and deliver local intergenerational projects, place activations and activities.	Achieved in Year 2.
	1.2.2 Support Aboriginal community members to participate and feel included in services and programs.	Promote and provide 'Acknowledgement of Country' signs for all early years services and Council buildings.	Achieved in Year 3.
		Deliver a pilot 'Welcome Baby to Country' event.	A First Nations led working group has been convened to pilot a Welcome Baby to Country event on 22 October 2025.
		Embed Indigenous perspectives in early years programs.	Partnership with VAEAL to deliver professional development for early childhood educators on embedding indigenous perspectives in the early years.
	1.2.3 Ensure children, young people and families have access to a flexible and accessible community grants program.	Engage children, young people and families in the Community Grants Review.	Achieved in Year 1.
1.3 Progress the child-friendly cities and communities initiatives.	1.3.1 Improve the effectiveness of initiatives that support children to participate in civic life.	Promote and support organisations to adopt the Victorian Child Friendly Cities and Communities Charter.	Council continued representation on the Child Friendly Cities and Communities (CFCC) advisory board. The CFCC will hold a Forum elevating children's voice in decision making on 4 September, 2025.

Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Report
1.4 Develop and activate child, young people and family friendly spaces.		Explore the use of Child Impact Assessments in Council decision making.	Child Impact Assessments have been included in the Gender Equity Impact Assessment process.
	1.4.1 Create opportunities for families to connect and strengthen communities.	Identify and secure suitable and affordable facilities for the delivery of community playgroups.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Deliver an affordable, inclusive and safe school holiday program to primary school aged children and families.	Two school holiday programs were delivered to primary school aged children with 78 families participating.
		Deliver literacy programs that meet the needs of a culturally diverse community.	Fawkner Library delivered a free literacy program, 'Word Play' for families to learn English together and benefit from pre-school play. Early literacy story time sessions were delivered in English, French, Greek, Nepali Italian, Spanish, Turkish and Woï-wurrung. Regular Rainbow Family Storytimes were delivered. Literacy skills of Primary School children were supported through the Statewide Big Summer Read program, which was included in Merri-bek Library's Summer School Holiday Program – StoryFest.
	1.4.2 Involve children, young people and families in place making projects.	Engage children, young people and families in pre-project Place Making consultation.	Achieved in Year 2.
	1.4.3 Oxygen Youth Space will diversify community use.	Explore alternative use options including specialised private hire.	Achieved in Year 1.
	1.4.4 Ensure places and spaces are child, young people and family friendly.	Advocate for the creation of and access to new and existing youth spaces in Fawkner and Brunswick and other similar redevelopment projects.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Include children and families in the design stage of early years infrastructure projects.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Activate the youth space and maker space at Glenroy Community Hub.	Achieved in Year 2.

Outcome 1: Inclusive City and Community			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Report
1.5 Provide infrastructure which meets the needs of the growing population.	1.5.1 Invest in integrated facilities.	Explore opportunities for co-located hub models for integrated early years services, including childcare, kindergarten, maternal and child health and playgroup programs and youth spaces and programs.	Maternal Child Health have commenced consulting at Balam Balam Place, Brunswick and Wimbi Early Learning Centre, Fawkner. Youth Services continue to activate spaces across Coburg, Fawkner and Glenroy. The Glenroy Community Hub Youth Lounge has provided much needed and well utilised spaces for young people. Further resources to ensure Fawkner youth spaces are fit for purpose are being investigated to achieve community aspirations through consultation and feedback from young people. The Brunswick Early Years Hub will commence construction to provide a range of early years services, including long day care, kindergarten, maternal and child health services and community spaces for parent groups and playgroups.
	1.5.2 Invest in early years infrastructure to support the implementation of the three-year-old kindergarten from 2022.	Explore co-investment opportunities with DET to support three-year-old kindergarten and implementation of the Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan (KISP).	The Kindergarten Infrastructure and Services Plan has been reviewed in collaboration with the Department of Education and will be published in September 2025. The data will inform future early years infrastructure and workforce planning.
	1.5.3 Provide quality early years facilities including maternal and child health, parent groups, playgroups, childcare and kindergarten.	Develop and implement the Early Years Infrastructure Plan.	The Early Years Infrastructure Plan continues to be implemented through the delivery of expansion and refurbishment projects in kindergartens and early learning centres.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing



Merri-bek will have increased participation in health and wellbeing programs with a focus on early intervention and prevention. Children, young people and families will have increased knowledge of support services and how to access them. Partner organisations will be supported to strengthen referral pathways and collaborate to improve the health and wellbeing of children, young people and families. Merri-bek remains committed to the safety of children and young people.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 3 Reporting
2.1 Increase knowledge of support services and referral pathways.	2.1.1 Improve service awareness and collaboration between local agencies.	Convene service provider networks and facilitate information sharing.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Provide families with information about early years services.	Achieved in Year 2.
	2.1.2 Establish Merri-bek Youth Services as the first point of contact for young people and community.	Develop and implement the 'First Point of Contact' campaign across the community to raise and promote the profile of Youth Services and simplify access to information and services.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Deliver the Data and Information Project through the collection, updating, maintaining and sharing of information on services, programs and opportunities available to young people.	Youth Services has developed a 'Youth Services for Families' booklet that provides a comprehensive listing of key services and support options available to young people, including primary to secondary school transition, bullying, school refusal, mental health, finances, housing, gaming and on-line safety, as well as leadership and social connection opportunities.
	2.1.3 Provide assertive outreach and case management support to young people experiencing vulnerability.	Invest in the ongoing provision and expansion of the Youth Holistic Outreach Program (YHOP) in Merri-bek, a flexible outreach model offering support to vulnerable young people.	Council contributed a further resources to support the continuation of the YHOP program. During this period, the program successfully engaged more than 45 young people, providing support and referral to services to address challenges such as family conflict, low self-esteem and mental health, housing and financial stress.
	2.1.4 Increase knowledge of renting in Merri-bek and capacity of renters.	Promote the new Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 with young people and families to increase knowledge of rights and responsibilities.	Achieved in Year 2.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Reporting
2.2 Increase engagement and participation in preventative health and wellbeing programs.	2.2.1 Raise awareness and support wellbeing, positive social movements and campaigns which impact children, young people and families.	Produce an annual calendar of events and coordinate resources to promote and implement key events for children, young people and families.	Achieved in Year 3
	2.2.2 Increase immunisation rates above the Victorian state average.	Develop communications plan to deliver a Council awareness raising campaign on the importance of immunisations.	Achieved in Year 3
		Deliver outreach immunisation sessions.	Achieved in Year 1.
	2.2.3 Develop pilot parenting groups for families with diverse needs.	Explore options to develop parenting groups for families with multiple children.	Achieved in Year 3.
	2.2.4 Establish and deliver an Early Years Outreach Bus model.	Explore funding opportunities to transform a bus to deliver outreach early years services.	Not achieved due to lack of funding.
	2.2.5 Provide support for families in pre-natal stage of pregnancy.	Explore funding opportunities to provide pre-natal parenting and coaching programs for families.	Targeted social media campaign is being developed for families in the prenatal stage of pregnancy with the aim of normalising and raising awareness of early breastfeeding supports.
	2.2.6 Support fathers in their parenting role.	Assist to recruit new dads to Dads Groups	Achieved in Year 1.
		Promote, collaborate and continue Dads Group partnership.	Partnership with Dads Group continues, providing consistent couple and father focused support.
		Plan and deliver the 'Dads with a Pram' community event.	The Man with a Pram event is now an established annual event run by Dads Group.
	2.2.7 Increase knowledge and participation of children and families in early years services.	Deliver a targeted outreach approach to increase access and participation in early years services such as maternal child health, childcare, kindergarten and playgroups.	118 children were supported to enrol in kindergarten programs through the Kindergarten Outreach Officer program, working with families from diverse language and cultural backgrounds.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Reporting
	2.2.8 Increase breastfeeding rates.	Expand the Infant Feeding support program to Southern Merri-bek.	Breastfeeding Clinics have been expanded to the southern suburbs, with a new clinic established in Brunswick.
	2.2.9 Implement the INFANT nutrition program.	Deliver the INFANT program within MCH new parent groups.	Delivery of INFANT (Infant Feeding, Active play and Nutrition) group sessions when babies are 3, 6, 9 and 12 months. The sessions are supported by a free app, 'My Baby Now' and promote healthy eating, active play and reduced screen time from the start of the baby's life.
	2.2.10 Implement the Sleep and Settling Program.	Deliver 'Sleep and Settling' community sessions with families.	This program has ceased due to withdrawal of funding.
	2.2.11 Ensure data and research is accessible to partner organisations.	Refresh the Early Years and Youth Data Profile.	The 2024 Early Years and Youth Data summary profile has been finalised and published.
	2.2.12 Ensure data required for service planning is accurate and reflects local understanding.	Review data discrepancies between the reported number of births and fertility rate at local (council), state and federal government levels, and their implications for population forecasts and service planning.	Achieved in Year 1.
2.3 Advocate for increased services to support mental health and resilience.	2.3.1 Young people are connected with organisations that provide support.	Provide information and referral to young people.	Achieved in Year 2.
	2.3.2 Identify and advocate for service gaps.	Respond to the emerging needs of children, young people and families with a focus on COVID-19 recovery.	Achieved in Year 2.
	2.3.3 Continued growth in partnerships with community organisations.	Strengthen partnerships and promotion of specialised services, programs and activities and support co-location of services.	Achieved in Year 2.
2.4 Provide opportunities for participation in physical and creative activities.	2.4.1 Children, young people and families will have access to accessible aquatic and leisure facilities and services.	Engage children, young people and families in the development of the new 'Leisure and Aquatics Strategy'.	Achieved in Year 2.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 3 Reporting
	2.4.2 Improve access to inclusive sports and physical activity across Merri-bek and its facilities.	Engage children, young people and families in the review of the 'Sports Grounds Allocation Policy'.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Engage children, young people and families in Sports and Recreation pre-project infrastructure design and consultation.	Children and young people were consulted to understand the experiences of women, girls and gender diverse residents accessing sport and recreation opportunities. A custom survey/activity book was developed for children and delivered to the children's reference group.
	2.4.3 Engage children and young people in active travel and adopt sustainable transport modes.	Develop and roll-out the Ride and Stride active transport program to primary school students.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Encourage primary and secondary schools to host event days such as Ride2School Day, Walk Safely to School Day and 'Walktober' to encourage students to regularly use physically active travel options to get to school.	16 schools are involved in the Ride and Stride program, with many participating in regular Open Street events and other active travel initiatives. The Biketober program was launched with 12 primary schools and 2 secondary schools participating.
	2.4.4 Increase opportunities for children, young people and families to participate in arts and culture.	Deliver family-friendly exhibitions and public programs to increase the participation of families and children in arts and culture.	The Counihan Gallery exhibition Marvellous Mythical Mates by Vipoo Srivilasa (Aug-Oct 2024) was developed for children and families and featured the Gallery's first School Holiday Arts Program with artist-led workshops. The Holiday Program continued in March/April 2025, offering drop-in sessions with different art activities. 4 exhibitions included interactive elements for children and families, including a karaoke stage in Put Your Head on My Shoulder. The Gallery also partnered with Brunswick Library to present quarterly children's story times, held within the exhibition spaces and aligned with exhibition themes. All festivals in Fawkner, Coburg, Brunswick, and Glenroy included a range of activities and projects designed to engage with young people and their families in creative and educational experiences.

Outcome 2: Improved Health and Wellbeing			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Reporting
2.5 Collaborate with partner organisations to increase safety in the community and home.	2.5.1 Advocate for the Kidsafe program to be funded for Merri-bek families.	Explore costing of the Kidsafe program and trial the program for 12 months free of charge to families.	Not Achieved.
	2.5.2 Collaborate with primary schools and kindergartens to increase road safety.	Deliver the road crossing safety program to primary schools.	The program has been promoted regularly and was delivered to 9 schools; 2 further schools are due to have the program delivered in 2025.
		Pilot the road crossing safety program with kindergartens on school sites.	This program is delivered on demand; no services have accessed this program during the reporting period.
	2.5.3 Collaborate with early years services to increase gender equity.	Provide training in challenging and dispelling gender norms in the early years.	Achieved in Year 1.
		Promote and support programs which increase gender equity in the early years.	Achieved in Year 2.
	2.5.4 Collaborate with family violence services to promote children's safety and wellbeing.	Continue to convene the Merri-bek Family Violence Network and share information about support programs for children, young people and families.	Council continues to convene the Merri-bek Family Violence Network collaboratively raising awareness and advocating for improved service pathways.

Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation

Merri-bek will have high quality learning opportunities from birth to adulthood. This will include children learning through play in the early years and progressing to formal schooling and beyond. Children, young people and families will be supported when transitioning between education settings, such as starting primary school and moving to secondary school. There will be opportunities for young people to engage in further training and pathways to employment. Children and young people will be involved in decisions that impact them. They will be consulted in age-appropriate ways and their opinions will be valued.



Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Reporting
3.1 Involve children, young people and families in decision making on matters that impact them.	3.1.1 Children and young people are engaged when decisions are made that affect them across Council and community.	Facilitate the Youth Ambassadors (YA) program and support young people to participate in civic life and Council decision making.	The former Youth Ambassadors completed 20 consultations to December 2024. A new group of 12 Youth Ambassadors have been selected and have been consulted on 3 different Council actions since March 2025.
		Develop an organisational framework that provides children and young people the opportunity to be involved in the development and review of Council strategies, plans and projects.	The Children and Young People Engagement Framework was developed and launched, equipping staff with best practice knowledge and skills when engaging with children and youth people.
		Create opportunities for children to be involved in decision making.	The Children's Reference Group is in its third year of operation, with 14 members from 7 primary schools. The children were consulted on the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Fair access to sporting grounds and facilities, Children's Forum, and Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing priorities.
		Explore the delivery of a Merri-bek Children's Summit.	76 children, aged 10-12 years attended the Merri-bek Children's Forum on 1 August 2025, with the theme Children as Change Makers which aimed to empower children by capturing their voices through graphic illustration, art and workshop activities to inform the new Children, Young People and Families Strategy and Libraries Strategy.
	3.1.2 Develop opportunities for children and young people to learn more about Council and civic participation.	Include information about Council in school engagement presentations.	Achieved in Year 2.

Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Reporting
		Include child-friendly information about Council on website which aligns with primary school curriculum on civics and citizenship.	Not achieved.
	3.1.3 Empower children and young people to co-design and deliver projects that matter to them.	Explore and support opportunities for child and youth-led projects.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Deliver the Merri-bek Freeza program.	Achieved in Year 2.
	3.1.4 Empower Merri-bek's young people to take action on climate change.	Support and resource the Merri-bek Student Climate Network.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Facilitate and support the implementation of an annual youth focused Climate Initiative.	Achieved in Year 2.
		Partner in the delivery of the North West Communities School Summit.	Achieved in Year 1.
3.2 Increase participation in learning and education from birth to adulthood.	3.2.1 Support the role of parents as educators and provide them with the tools, resources and information to raise their children.	Promote and deliver community Parent Information Sessions.	Parent information sessions were delivered in partnership with Parentzone on a range of relevant topics.
		Increase the delivery of evidence-based parenting group programs such as Circle of Security and Solihull.	Achieved in Year 2.
	3.2.2 Support children's transition to primary and secondary school.	Promote and facilitate the Merri-bek Transition Network with early years services and primary schools.	Merri-bek Transition Network meetings were held on a quarterly basis at local schools and kindergartens.
		Develop and pilot activities to support the transition from primary school to secondary school.	Achieved in Year 1.
	3.2.3 Support children and young people with homework programs.	Partner with organisations to deliver and expand community based homework programs.	Achieved in Year 2.

Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation			
Objective	Action	Activities	Year 4 Reporting
	3.2.4 Support young people to remain engaged in learning.	Support the delivery of the Operation Newstart program.	Operation New Start was delivered in 2025, engaging 8 young people from local secondary schools. Funding for a new group of young people has been committed for 2026.
3.3 Collaborate with education providers to support quality settings.	3.3.1 Build stronger partnerships with primary and secondary schools across Merri-bek.	Deliver an annual Merri-bek Principals' Forum with primary and secondary schools.	The Principals' Forum had representatives from primary and secondary schools, and focused on behaviour guidance strategies and programs.
		Deliver in-school presentations and activities to build relationships with students and teachers to raise awareness of Council services.	59 sessions were delivered across 11 primary and secondary schools; these sessions were delivered on-site in Council buildings and at the local schools.
	3.3.2 Build high quality early years education and care services.	Plan and deliver early years professional development and training.	The Merri-bek Early Years Conference attracted 170 attendees and had a focus on sustainability in the early years. The professional development calendar provides a range of sessions relevant to the sector.
		Facilitate opportunities for information sharing and peer support through convening early years networks.	The Connected Leadership Community of Practice has been developed in consultation with the early childhood sector and aims to increase quality outcomes. Opportunities for information sharing have been supported through the implementation of the Educational Leader Program.
	3.3.3 Enable teachers to meet, share and collaborate on sustainability initiatives.	Deliver a professional development and networking event with teachers and early years educators focused on sustainability.	Achieved in Year 3
3.4 Increase opportunities for training and employment pathways.	3.4.1 Young people will be offered employment pathway programs in partnership with industry-based training providers.	Partner with organisations to deliver training and employment programs that explore career planning and lead to employment outcomes.	The Pool Lifeguard program was delivered in partnership with Life Saving Victoria and the YMCA. 70 young people applied for the program, with 20 successfully completing the course. 60% of participants were from diverse backgrounds. 12 candidates (60%) have expressed interest in receiving further assistance with resume writing and interview strategies.
	3.4.2 Young people will have opportunities to gain work experience across Council.	Review Council's current experience, volunteer and apprenticeship / traineeship approach and identify opportunities for improvement.	The Work Experience policy was updated and focuses on supporting Year 10 students for work Experience and Year 11 and 12 students for Student Placement. Council is piloting a partnership with INLLEN to facilitate work experience

Outcome 3: Lifelong Learning and Participation			
Objective	Action	Activity	Year 4 Reporting
		Develop a proposal to implement the opportunities identified as part of the review and implement agreed changes.	opportunities via a central noticeboard targeting young people from Merri-bek, Yarra and Darebin. Apprenticeships and traineeships are not within scope of the policy at this stage.
		Collaborate with local secondary schools and tertiary institutions to provide placement opportunities.	72 students were provided work experience and student placement opportunities across the Early Years and Youth Branch.
	3.4.3 Support the New Graduates Program in Maternal and Child Health.	Provide mentoring and regular meetings to debrief and support new Maternal and Child Health graduates.	Achieved in Year 2.
	3.4.4 Young people will be connected to local entry level employment opportunities.	Explore the development and implementation of a "Jobs Fair" with partners.	Achieved in Year 2.
	3.4.5 Provide suitably skilled young people one-off paid work opportunities where possible and appropriate.	Engage young people as contractors across Council and community.	Achieved in Year 2.
	3.4.6 Youth Businesses will be targeted to register on Council's Local Supplier Database and promoted across Council to improve their procurement opportunities.	Engage youth businesses and educate Council staff in the 'Social and Local Procurement Project' or successor project.	Achieved in Year 2.
	3.4.7 Collaborate with stakeholders across the region to improve employment outcomes for young people.	Participate and support the Inner Northern Youth Employment Taskforce and Jobs for Youth campaign.	Achieved in Year 2.
	3.4.8 Deliver the Jobs Victoria Advocates program.	Support young people to assist them finding training and employment opportunities.	Achieved in Year 1.