



# Terms of Reference

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<b>Name</b>	Early Years Partnership Committee
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Policy Review Panel – 24 August 2020
<b>Approved by</b>	Council – 14 September 2020
<b>Next review</b>	February 2021

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## 1. PURPOSE

The Early Years Partnership Committee is responsible to provide advice to Council about presented strategic directions, policy and plans in relation to the support, learning, development, health and wellbeing of children aged 0-12 years in the City of Melton.

These Terms of Reference establish the composition and operating arrangements for the City of Melton Early Years Partnership Committee, including incorporation of the Best Start policy and guidelines as determined by the State Government Department of Education and Training.



## 2. DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representative	Specialist Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Organisation or service providers working with families and children who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.
Associates Member	Associates Members are encouraged to be involved in the Early Years Partnership Committee to provide expertise and support on specific topics. This level of membership receives minutes only and does not have decision making rights, but are encouraged to provide feedback and input into matters of interest. Associate Members may be self-nominating.
CALD sector	Organisations or service providers work with and for the Cultural and Linguistically Diverse families within the municipality.

<b>Word/Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Catholic education sector	Organisations or schools working within the catholic education system, such as a representative from the Catholic Education Office or School Principals.
Drug and Alcohol sector	Organisations or service providers working with and for families within the municipality seeking support for Drug and Alcohol problems.
Early Education and Care sector	Organisations or service providers that provide care and education to children, such as Kindergarten, Long Day Care and out of hours care.
Early intervention or disability sector	Organisations or service providers working with families of children with a disability, such as early intervention services or providers of the NDIS.
Facilitating Partner and funds holder	The Facilitating Partner and funds holder for the Early Years Partnership Committee is: Name: Melton City Council Contact: Manager, Families and Children Services. Email: csu@melton.vic.gov.au Phone: 9747 7200
Facilitator	The facilitation of the Early Years Partnership Committee is undertaken by the Coordinator, Early Years Partnerships.
Family Support sector	Organisations or service providers providing support to families experiencing difficulties that impact on their parenting and family life.
Government Primary Education sector	Representation from local government Primary Schools, such as School Principals.
Health sector	Organisations or service providers working with families and children in general or allied health, such as Community Health Organisations, General Practitioners or Hospitals.
Independent education sector	Organisations or schools working within the independent education system, such as a representative from Independent Schools Victoria or School Principals.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITY**

The Early Years Partnership Committee (“the Committee”) has been established to Work collaboratively to provide the best opportunity for children to reach their full potential in all aspects of their learning, development, health and wellbeing.

The Early Years Partnership Committee will do this by:

- providing strategic guidance, leadership and expert advice on current and emerging Early Years issues to be incorporated into plans, strategies and policies
- providing leadership and advice in the development and evaluation of strategic plans relating to the early years
- assisting in the development, implementation, monitoring and annual review of the Best Start logic model

- providing expert advice on early years issues and potential solutions, including monitoring Government policy directions
- championing the importance of the early years broadly, by raising matters for Melton City Council to consider in its advocacy role to ensure the capacity of the local service system meets the needs of families within the municipality.
- monitoring local initiatives and programs, identify opportunities for partnerships, networking and information sharing and review local data, such as Australian Early Development Census (AEDC)
- raising matters for Melton City Council to consider in its advocacy role to ensure the capacity of the local service system meets the needs of families within the municipality.

#### **4. FUNDING**

The Department of Education and Training (DET) has committed to recurrent funding for the purpose of the Best Start program in the City of Melton which includes the facilitation of the Committee.

#### **5. FACILITATING PARTNER AND FUNDS HOLDER**

The role of the Facilitating Partner and funds holder includes employment and day to day management of the Coordinator, Early Years Partnerships and responsibility for reports and funding acquittal to the Department of Education and Training and Melton City Council.

#### **6. FACILITATOR**

This role takes overall responsibility for the administration of the Partnership and associated sub groups, including the organisation and facilitation of the meetings, supporting organisations to actively contribute to the Partnership, Early Years Planning and Best Start logic model.

#### **7. SIGNATORIES TO THE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

The Early Years Partnership Committee is represented by agencies/organisations committed to the learning, development, health and wellbeing of children aged 0-12 years. These agencies/organisations operate within the City of Melton and service families in the municipality. Community members who reside, work or spend a significant amount of time in the City of Melton are welcome as partners on the Early Years Partnership Committee.

The signatories to this Agreement (the Partners) are a senior officer from Melton City Council, senior members of agencies/networks or parties with an interest/expertise in the early years in the City of Melton. The signatories will make up the Early Years Partnership Committee. The Early Years Partnership Committee is a non-incorporated body and there is no membership joining fees associated with participation.

The Partners commit to a collaborative working relationship within the spirit and intent of this Agreement. Membership categories on the Early Years Partnership

Committee will be reviewed annually to ensure that it continues to reflect local commitment and strategic directions.

A copy of the Early Years Partnership Committee Membership Signatories forms are attached as appendices.

**8. COMPOSITION**

**8.1 Membership**

Members of the partnership are a commitment of the organisations that they represent

It is expected that members or their proxies will attend all bimonthly meetings and actively participate in relevant activities and projects.

The representatives of participating organisations will have delegated authority to make decisions on their organisation’s behalf. Similarly, proxies must be empowered to make decisions on their organisation’s behalf.

All appointed and elected members are equal with regard to decision making.

Should a member, or proxy, fail to attend 50 percent of meetings in a 12 month period, a meeting will be called with the Chairperson and Early Years Partnerships Coordinator to review membership of that partner.

A member can withdraw from the Early Years Partnership Committee prior to the tenure of their term and notification is requested in writing.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Type of Appointment</b>	<b>Term of Office</b>
Councillor	Elected	1 year
Councillor	Elected	1 year
Local Government	Appointed	2 years
Community	Appointed	3 years
Community	Appointed	3 years
Community	Appointed	2 years
Catholic education sector	Appointed	2 years
Independent education sector	Appointed	2 years
Government Primary Education sector	Appointed	3 years
Government Primary Education sector	Appointed	2 years
Early Education and Care sector	Appointed	3 years
Early Education and Care sector	Appointed	2 years
Early Education and Care sector	Appointed	2 years
Early Intervention or disability sector	Appointed	2 years
Early Intervention or disability sector	Appointed	2 years
Health sector	Appointed	3 years
Health sector	Appointed	2 years

<b>Name</b>	<b>Type of Appointment</b>	<b>Term of Office</b>
Family Support sector	Appointed	3 years
Drug and Alcohol sector	Appointed	2 years
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representative	Appointed	3 years
C.A.L.D sector	Appointed	2 years
Libraries	Appointed	3 years
Facilitating partner – Manager, Families and Children Melton City Council	Ex-officio	Ongoing
Facilitator – Coordinator, Early Years Partnerships Melton City Council	Ex-officio	Ongoing
Department of Education and Training	Observer	Ongoing
Department of Health and Human Services	Observer	Ongoing
Associate Members	Observer	Self-nominating

Where a sector is not represented, all efforts will be made to represent that perspective.

## **8.2 Terms and method of Nomination**

Nominations for applicant's appointment as Early Years Partnership Committee representative members shall be called by public expression of interest in local media, on Council's website and by formal notification to relevant local groups and agencies.

Current committee members will be eligible and invited to reapply.

### **8.2.1 Selection Process**

Appointments will be made by the Executive who will determine the most appropriate representative from the nominations received.

### **8.2.2 Vacated Position**

In the event that the member leaves their organisation during their term of office the position held will be open to their organisation to fill by the incumbent to the role or another suitable employee. Where there is not suitable employee, the membership position will be declared vacant, and reopened to the sector.

## **8.3 Chairperson**

### **8.3.1 Duties**

The Chairperson is responsible for the proper conduct of all meetings of the Early Years Partnership Committee and will officially represent the Early Years Partnership Committee. All media communications will be through the Manager Families and Children Services, Melton City Council.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the Member Representative of the Executive will chair the meeting.

### **8.3.2 Term of Office**

The tenure of the Chairperson will be one year.

### **8.3.3 Method of Appointment**

The Chairperson will be appointed from the Appointed membership of the Committee.

## **8.4 The Executive**

A three person Executive will be formed comprising:

- Chairperson
- Manager Families and Children Services, Melton City Council (Fund Holder and Facilitating Partner)
- one other Appointed member representative.

### **8.4.1 Duties**

The purpose of the Executive is to provide a mechanism for planning and monitoring the strategic direction of the Partnership, attending to urgent matters outside the timetable of regular scheduled Early Years Partnership Committee meetings and provide support to the facilitator as required.

### **8.4.2 Term of Office**

The tenure of the Executive will be one year.

### **8.4.3 Method of Appointment**

The Appointed representative of the Executive will be appointed from the Appointed membership of the Committee.

## **9. OPERATING PROCEDURES**

### **9.1 Quorum**

A minimum of 5 members will form a quorum for each meeting.

### **9.2 Decision Making**

The Early Years Partnership Committee will operate on a consensus basis. Where there are issues to be resolved, the Early Years Partnership Committee may elect to defer a decision until further information is provided to assist members to reach a consensus. Where issues remain unresolved and a solution cannot be reached, and the matter is viewed as significant to the successful operation of the Committee, the Chair can appoint an independent mediator to assist to resolve the issue to assist the parties/group to reach consensus.

### **9.3 Dispute Resolution**

In the event of a grievance or dispute between members of the Early Years Partnership Committee, any members may approach the Chair to discuss the matter. The Chair will evaluate the dispute and explore options for resolution.

The person making the complaint will be informed of their right to lodge a formal complaint if not satisfied with the outcome of the informal process.

All formal complaints are to be communicated in writing to the Chair of the Early Years Partnership Committee within 14 business days. If required, Council's Complaints Management Policy may be utilised to assist with achieving a resolution. Every effort will be made to resolve disputes amicably and in a timely manner.

## **9.4 Meetings**

### **9.4.1 Frequency of Meetings**

The Committee will meet for 2 hours six times per calendar year, with additional sub-group meetings as agreed by members.

### **9.4.2 Location of Meetings**

Meetings will be held within the City of Melton Local Government area. This arrangement will be scheduled on an annual basis.

### **9.4.3 Agenda for Meetings**

Where practicable, the agenda together with reports and documents that relate to the Committee will be forwarded to members in sufficient time to enable consideration prior to meetings.

### **9.4.4 Minutes of Meetings**

Accurate minutes will be kept of each meeting of the Committee. The minutes of a meeting shall be submitted to committee members by the Facilitator (Coordinator, Early Years Partnerships Melton City Council) for the review of committee members within seven days of the committee meeting.

Any corrections to minutes are to be advised to the Facilitator within seven days. Minutes of the committee are presented at a subsequent Council meeting.

## **9.5 Expectations/ Requirements of Members**

Members are expected to:

- Declare any interest, pecuniary interest or conflict of interest
- Keep informed of current developments, issues and concerns in the local community.
- Have an understanding of and/or experience in the principles of community development.
- Prepare for and actively participate in meetings.
- Act in a courteous manner, respecting others views and opinions. All members should respect the decision of the consensus view as adjudicated by the Chair.
- Treat information with sensitivity.

## 9.6 Governing Principles

### 9.6.1 Equity

All members will be given equal opportunity to participate in meetings.

### 9.6.2 Honest and Open Communication

All members will be able to raise any issues and problems and have them dealt with in an honest and open manner.

### 9.6.3 Empathy, Respect and Mutual Support

It is understood that the needs and expectations of each member are unique with respect to their roles and responsibilities.

### 9.6.4 Confidentiality

The members will respect the confidentiality needs of others and behave with goodwill and respect towards others.

### 9.6.5 Media

All media communication relating to the Early Years Partnership Committee requires approval through the Manager, Families and Early Years, Melton City Council, in consultation with the Melton City Council Engagement and Advocacy team.

## 9.7 Evaluation and Review

The Early Years Partnership Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Committee's Executive annually. Endorsement of the final Terms of Reference will be provided by Council, in accordance with its policy on policy development and review.

## 10. RELATED MATERIAL

Name	Location	Document Type
City of Melton Early Years Partnership Committee Membership Signatories – Community Members	Appendix 1	Form
City of Melton Early Years Partnership Committee Membership Signatories - Organisations	Appendix 2	Form
City of Melton Early Years Partnership Committee Membership Signatories – Associate Members	Appendix 3	Form
Department of Education and Training Best Start Program Information	<a href="https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/beststart.aspx">https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/beststart.aspx</a>	Website
Collaborate For Children portal for login point for facilitators and other partners	<a href="https://www.collaborate.edu.au/Home/Login">https://www.collaborate.edu.au/Home/Login</a>	Website portal





**City of Melton Early Years Partnership Committee**

**Statement of Commitment for Community Membership Positions**

I, ..... commit to being an active community member of the Melton Early Years Partnership Committee for the period of the ..... day of ..... 20..... to the ..... day of ..... 20.....

I agree and am committed to:

- attend Early Years Partnership Committee meetings regularly
- participate actively in the discussions at the Early Years Partnership Committee meetings
- allocate "in-kind" resources to the development, planning and implementation of any agreed actions
- collaborate with all partners to achieve agreed outcomes
- adhere to the Terms of Reference, including declaration of any conflicts of interest.

**Signature** .....

**Address** .....

**Telephone** ..... **Mobile** .....

**Email** .....

**Dated** the ..... day of ..... 20.....



City of Melton Early Years Partnership Committee  
**Statement of Commitment for Appointed Membership Positions**

I, ..... am authorised to commit  
Insert name  
..... to being an active member of  
Insert organisation  
the Melton Early Years Partnership Committee as a representative of the  
.....sector and to represent  
Insert category  
this sector as a valued member of the Early Years Partnership Committee for the  
period of the ..... day of ..... 20..... to the  
..... day of ..... 20.....

I attest to the organisations commitment to:

- ensure consistent attendance at Early Years Partnership Committee meetings by a representative with authority to act on behalf of the organisation
- participate actively in the discussions at the Early Years Partnership Committee meetings
- allocate “in-kind” resources to the development, planning and implementation of any agreed actions
- collaborate with all partners to achieve agreed outcomes
- comply with the Child Safe Standards, part of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 and to the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- adhere to the Terms of Reference, including declaration of any conflicts of interest.

**Signature** .....

**Address** .....

**Telephone** ..... **Mobile** .....

**Email** .....

**Dated** the ..... day of ..... 20.....



**City of Melton Early Years Partnership Committee  
Statement of Commitment for Associate Membership Positions**

I, ..... on behalf of  
Insert name

..... commit to being an active associate  
Insert organisation  
member of the Melton Early Years Partnership Committee for the period of the  
..... day of ..... 20..... to the  
..... day of ..... 20.....

I attest to the organisations commitment to:

- attend Early Years Partnership Committee meetings regularly
- participate actively in the discussions at the Early Years Partnership Committee meetings
- allocate “in-kind” resources to the development, planning and implementation of any agreed actions
- collaborate with all partners to achieve agreed outcomes
- comply with the Child Safe Standards, part of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 and to the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005
- adhere to the Terms of Reference, including declaration of any conflicts of interest.

**Signature** .....

**Address** .....  
.....

**Telephone** ..... **Mobile** .....

**Email** .....

**Dated** the ..... day of ..... 20.....