

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

“WELCOME CHILDREN”



Bubup
Womindjeka

Family and Children's Centre



Our Centre Philosophy

Our philosophy is developed in collaboration with our children, educators, and families, which reflects and upholds our beliefs and values. It is our purpose to ensure that our curriculum, environments, and relationships enable children and educators to have equitable opportunities to grow and reach their potential.

We embed a safe, inclusive educational environment where everyone is valued and respected.

We advocate for the rights and voice of each child irrespective of ability, age, gender, race, language, culture or economic status.

We understand that families are the child's first and most influential teachers and are committed to working in partnership together to achieve best possible outcomes for their child.

We recognise that children develop dispositions for learning in the early years that are fundamental to the building blocks for lifelong success.

In relation to children, we:

- Acknowledge that children learn best through play and having meaningful opportunities to explore, discover, create, improvise, and imagine.
- Foster the agency and capabilities of each child by promoting a strength-based approach to learning and development.
- Guide children's development of social awareness, self-regulation and resilience building through relational pedagogies.
- Recognise that children have different learning styles, are competent contributors to their own learning and will be supported to make choices and decisions.
- Focus on child-led, developmental-appropriate experiences and rhythms that enrich their unique learning and growth.
- Interact with care and understanding of gender equity and respectful relationships, where imagination is unlimited, and children can be anything.
- Instil an appreciation for our environment and inspire ways in which we can care for the land through sustainable practices.

In relation to families and community, we:

- Value collaborative partnerships with families and draw on families' individual perspectives and expectations to guide our understanding of their child.
- Provide tailored information and resources based on their unique needs and circumstances in the best interests of their child's learning journey.
- Believe in a holistic approach by partnering with community services to ensure a harmonious delivery of care and support.
- Provide families with opportunities to contribute to the program and take part in centre decision making.
- Seek opportunities to be involved, share our knowledge, and engage with local and wider communities.

In relation to educators, we:

- Use critical reflection, ongoing professional learning, and research to broaden our knowledge and inform our teaching practices.
- Work as a team, guiding and assisting each other and demonstrating a commitment to continuous improvement.
- Balance intentional teaching with child-led learning to build a rich and purposeful curriculum.
- Build professional and collaborative relationships that are based on trust, respect and integrity.
- Respect and value the diverse cultures, beliefs, and unique strengths that each educator brings to our learning community, which enriches the educational environment and fosters a sense of belonging for all.

Our educational practices are guided by both the National and Victorian Early Years Curriculum Frameworks and the National Quality Standards.

Throughout our organisation we embed the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics.

Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre respectfully acknowledges the traditional owners of the Kulin Nation and we pay respect to Elders, both past and present and acknowledge their proud and resilient cultures, and ongoing connections to land, sea and sky.

Acknowledgement to Country in the Child's Voice:

(action: say together)
We thank the traditional owners
For letting us share their land.
We promise to look after it,
The animals, people and land.
Hello Land (action: hands on the ground)
Hello Sky (action: hands to the sky)
Hello Me (action: hug yourself)
Hello Friends (action: wave to friends)

Our Vision, Purpose and Values

We strive to deliver our shared vision and purpose based on the values of the centre and to guide our decision making and planning.

Our Vision

An inclusive community that supports the development of engaged, capable and confident young learners.

Our Purpose

To provide an integrated family focused community centre where all children and educators have equitable opportunities to reach their full potential.

Our Values

Integrity - We act with transparency, professionalism, and consistency. Our relationships are respectful and reciprocal and are built on trust, authenticity, and ethical interactions.

Inclusion - We acknowledge and respect that everyone has their own culture, beliefs, and strengths contributing to our rich and diverse community, creating a sense of belonging.

Collaboration - We work in partnership with all stakeholders to make decisions that are responsible and fair. We recognise and value the interconnectedness between our children, our families, our educators, and our integrated centre community.



Our Strategic Goals

Our Team

Retain and foster a skilled and diverse workforce who deliver responsive and innovative early childhood education and care.

- Workforce Strategy
 - Attract
 - Retain
- Professional Learning
- Skills development – qualification

Our Practice

Demonstrate exemplary practice in early childhood education and care, working in partnership with families and the wider community.

- Achieve Exceeding National Quality Standards in all areas
- Pro-actively supporting vulnerable families and children in the local community
- Promote innovative inclusive practice and uphold the rights of the child
- Enhance our professional collaborative relationships

Governance

Provide excellent governance for the organisation.

- Support to Board Members
- Maximising board expertise and time
- Measure performance
- Strengthen external relationships

Business Development

Maintain the long-term viability of our integrated children and family service by being proactive and agile and in line with our Values

- Viability metrics
- Infrastructure investment
- Program delivery review



Governance Structure

The Membership of the Board for 2023

President:	Gilda Howard
Vice President:	Alexander Lord
Secretary:	Alisha Burns
Treasurer:	Rachel Haggett
Council Member:	CR Peter Martin*
General Members:	Troy Hoggan Jamie Grant Katrina Jojkity Jo Powell Damon Hauenstein

Sub Committees

Leadership Liaison Committee: Convenor – Gilda Howard
Finance Committee: Convenor – Rachel Haggett Members – Jamie Grant, Alexander Lord and Damon Hauenstein
Risk Committee: Convenor – Katrina Jojkity Members – Jamie Grant
People and Culture Committee: Convenor – Troy Hoggan Member – Peter Martin
Governance and Appointments Committee: Convenor – Gilda Howard Members – Jo Powell

*These roles were held within the 2024 period

Centre Leadership Team



Kellie Connor
Executive Officer



Lease Cowen*
Director of Education



Andrea Ng*
Director of Education



May Kanjanathamrongkul
Human Resources Coordinator



Sam Aloï-Carlus*
Enrolments Officer



Michelle Wilson*
Enrolments Officer



Tracey Young*
Enrolments Officer



Avinash Ramudu
Business Manager

Education Leadership Team



May Kanjanathamrongkul
Program Co-ordinator



Sam Aloï-Carlus*
Program Co-ordinator



Poornima Sangar
Program Co-ordinator



Michelle Wilson*
Program Coordinator



Jessie Clark*
Program Coordinator



President and Executive Officer's Report

We are pleased to report that BWFCC, has had a very successful year after a challenging few years marked by the impacts of the pandemic, severe workforce shortages and rising inflation.

This financial year we have maintained our focus on quality and access for children and providing value for families while ensuring the organisation's sustainable future.

Our service achieved an Exceeding rating under the National Quality Standards. The key to this outstanding achievement is undoubtedly our amazing people, who are the main ingredient in this success.

The Board, our EO and all the Team are making considered decisions about the decades ahead. We are ready to embrace the reforms underway at state and federal levels and we continue to meet the changing needs of children and families in our community.

During the year, the board led the organisation through a strategy planning process that has developed a pathway for the next three years. We remain focused on our commitment to our vision to positively influence the outcomes for children, families, educators and the community.

Our staff turnover rate remains low at 10.5% despite fierce competition for talent from our competitors. Our highly skilled and experienced staff have appreciated the support provided through the conditions available at BWFCC and committed to us. For this we are very grateful as it provides us an organisation that can develop long term relationships with our children and their families. Our staff are recruiting other professionals to our organisation by referring them for employment opportunities. Through the year we have had six successful referrals, with these staff still with us for longer than six months.

During the year we supported eight of our staff to study their Bachelor of Education and eleven staff to study their Diploma of Education. We are proud of this commitment to provide opportunities for our staff to learn and grow with us.

On a personal note, this year we farewell some board members, Alisha Burns our Company Secretary for the past three years, and Katrina Jojkity our convenor of the Risk Committee, thank you both for your commitment to BWFCC. Alex Lord also leaves the board who due to his outstanding contribution over the past six years has been awarded a Life Membership of our organisation. We welcome two new board members Carly Molloy & Billy Girdwood and look forward to their contributions to the director group.

Our thanks are extended to the City of Port Phillip who continue to support us and serve on our Board, providing invaluable advice and enriching this important stakeholder relationship - in particular Felicity Leahy, Wendy Morris Smith and Brittany Brimmer who we worked closely with during 2024.

Our thanks also go to our educators and support staff who make a difference for children every day, our Leadership Team, and Board colleagues, for your continued support and drive for excellence for all our children and families. It is the staff at BWFCC who continue to make Bubup the success it is.

We would like to acknowledge our integrated working partners – the Maternal and Child Health Nurses, Better Health Network and Playgroups. These services all contribute to the Bubup community and are an integral part of our service.

Thank you to all staff and the Board for working together to make this another successful year.



Gilda Howard
President



Kellie Connor
Executive Officer





Director of Education Report

Assessment and Rating

I am pleased to report that our recent assessment and rating process has been a significant highlight for our service. We are proud to have received an overall Exceeding rating, which reflects the exceptional work of our educators, staff, and leadership in providing quality care and education. We have achieved an Exceeding rating in four of the Quality Areas – Quality Area 4 “Staffing Arrangements”, Quality Area 5 “Relationships with Children”, Quality Area 6 “Relationships with Families and the Community” and Quality Area 7 “Governance and Leadership”. This achievement is a direct result of the dedication and commitment shown by everyone involved in the service.

We celebrate the process of our assessment and rating by recognising the active involvement and collaborative effort of our educators and the leadership team in the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Through ongoing discussions and reflection, our educators contributed valuable insights that helped us identify both our strengths and areas for improvement. This collaborative approach allowed us to continually refine our practices to meet the needs of the children and families in our care.

While we celebrate our successes, we remain focused on ongoing improvement. This assessment and rating process has been a valuable tool for reflection and growth. We are excited to continue our journey of excellence and look forward to the opportunities ahead.

Education & Learning Initiatives

We have been reflecting on our educational program, and one of the key improvements we have made is incorporating floor books as a dynamic tool for documenting children’s learning. These books serve as more than just a collection of their work; they are a living record of their educational journey. By including children’s drawings, writings, and reflections, we give them the opportunity to take ownership of their learning and better understand their own growth over time.

The process of revisiting these floor books creates a space for reflection, allowing both children and educators to observe progress and recognise how learning evolves. This ongoing process encourages an iterative approach to planning, making the learning cycle visible and accessible. It also allows children to engage in self-assessment, revisiting past experiences, while educators use the books to reflect on children’s development and adjust the program to meet their individual needs and interests.

Additionally, floor books are a valuable communication tool with families, providing them with a transparent and comprehensive view of their child’s learning process. They reflect our educational philosophy by showing that learning is continuous—a cycle of exploration, reflection, and growth.

Educators are actively involved in documenting key learning moments, capturing observations, recording children’s voices, drawings, and engaging in teacher’s reflections. The children also contribute by sharing their thoughts, ideas and perspectives through their voices, drawings and writings. By regularly revisiting the books, we are able to identify emerging interests and adapt the program accordingly, keeping it responsive to the children’s evolving needs. The floor books also foster a strong home-school connection, giving our families an authentic insight into their child’s learning journey.

Celebrating Diversity through Inclusion

Our educational philosophy is deeply rooted in an inclusive approach that acknowledges and celebrates the diverse cultural backgrounds of our children, families, and educators. Inclusion pedagogy is central to our practices as we recognise that each child brings a unique perspective and set of experiences to the classroom. By embracing this diversity, we foster an environment where every child feels seen, heard, and valued.

Having said that, we have worked diligently to incorporate cultural celebrations and practices into our program, recognising the importance of these experiences in shaping children’s understanding of the world around them.

Exploring Nature and Connection to Place

It was a goal for the kindergarten programs to explore opportunities to be involved in additional outings and excursions in the local community. Each team considered which community outings would most benefit their learning program and engaged with local groups and services to identify appropriate and enriching experiences. From Term 3 of 2024, all kindergarten teams began regularly taking small groups of children (approximately 7-10 at a time) to local parks, bookshops, libraries, and on community walks. These excursions have strengthened our connections within the community, leading to reciprocal relationships. For example, our local library now informs us of upcoming events and invites us to participate, further embedding our service into the broader community.

Our Nursery and Early Years Program has continued to implement the Bubup Bush program, which enables small groups of children to visit the bush areas of Lagoon Reserve to explore and connect with the natural environment within our local Port Phillip community. The focus of Bubup Bush is to provide a fully child-led program, allowing children to facilitate their own learning, uninterrupted by the direction of others. Children attend in groups of 4-8, one room at a time, supervised by educators from their room, with a ratio of one educator to two children. The kinder children attend as a class. Visits, lasting 1-2 hours, are led by educators in each room and supported by a Program Coordinator.

These experiences provide opportunities for children to freely explore the landscape, crunch through dry leaves, climb over logs and trees, view wildlife, and enjoy the unique pleasure of being in an open and special place while learning to navigate it safely. By expanding our outdoor learning environments, we continue to offer diverse opportunities for children to engage with nature, fostering a deep sense of belonging to the world around them.

Through ongoing critical reflection and what we have learned from our assessment and rating process, our educational program continues to evolve. We are guided by key reflective questions such as: “How do children assess their own learning, and how do we support and encourage them in this process?” “What big ideas are emerging from their curiosity, exploration, and play?” and “How can we better showcase and celebrate the children’s learning journey, ensuring that each step of their development is visible through thoughtful documentation?”

By prioritising the learning process rather than just outcomes, we provide children with opportunities to revisit their work and reflect on their growth. The concept of “spontaneous learning” remains at the heart of our practice and documentation, ensuring that we are responsive to the moment and to the children’s natural interests and inquiries. Through daily encounters, routines, and interactions, we create teachable moments that promote essential skills such as communication, problem-solving, empathy, and responsibility, all while reinforcing positive behaviours and values in an engaging, natural way.

Community Celebrations & Events

A strong sense of community has been fostered through various celebrations and events. Throughout 2024, we hosted a range of events, including our Welcome BBQ, Mother’s and Special Friends Day, Siblings Day, Father’s and Special Friends Day, Grandparents and Special Friends Day, Book Week, NAIDOC Week, and an End-of-Year Celebration.

Each event was designed with a child-centred approach, ensuring that celebrations were meaningful, respectful, and inclusive. These occasions provided opportunities for children to develop respect for diverse values and beliefs while reinforcing a strong sense of belonging within our community. By integrating these events into our curriculum, we ensure that collaborative partnerships with families remain a strong focus for the centre.



Andrea Ng
Director of Education



People and Culture Committee & Human Resources Report

As the People and Culture Committee of Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children’s Centre, we are dedicated to ensuring a positive and supportive environment for our staff, as they are central to delivering high-quality early learning and care. The following report highlights key insights into our workforce dynamics, focusing on employee tenure, engagement, and the strategies that have shaped our success in retention within a sector faced with significant turnover challenges. Our ongoing efforts to cultivate a diverse, skilled, and well-supported team are fundamental to achieving Bubup’s mission and maintaining our strong community relationships.

Employee Tenure and Strategic Insights (2024)

Our analysis of employee tenure offers valuable insights into the workforce dynamics at Bubup, revealing both strong engagement and areas for potential growth. Below is an overview of our employee tenure as of 2024:

- 9% for 8-10 years, and 1% have been with the company for over 10 years, including staff who have returned to Bubup after previous tenures.
- 11% have been with us for 6-8 years.
- 13% have been with us for 2-4 years, and 15% for 4-6 years.
- 51% of employees have been with us for 0-2 years, highlighting the success of our recruitment and onboarding processes.

The early childhood education sector continues to face significant turnover challenges in 2024. A survey by the United Workers Union revealed that 60% of educators plan to leave the sector within the next three years, citing factors such as low pay, emotional demands, burnout, and limited career progression. Additionally, 97% of early learning centres reported high staff turnover in the past 12 months, making our retention data particularly strong in comparison to industry averages. For instance, the 11% of staff with 6-8 years of tenure is a notable achievement, reflecting our ability to retain skilled employees in a high-turnover sector.

Strategic Alignment with Bubup’s Plan for Workforce Retention

Bubup is committed to fostering a skilled, diverse workforce that delivers innovative and responsive early childhood education and care. Our focus areas—attracting, retaining, and developing staff—are aligned with our strategic goals. Below are the key strategies to retain and nurture talent:

Inclusive Hiring Practices

We prioritise hiring diverse staff who reflect the community’s cultural diversity and are committed to our core values of inclusivity, respect for all individuals, and fostering a positive environment for families, children, staff, and stakeholders. Our employee referral program has been successful, as existing staff, who are happy with their experience at Bubup, refer acquaintances who they believe will fit well with our culture.

Collaborative and Supportive Work Environment

We place high value on creating a positive, collaborative work culture where staff feel supported and valued. Our HR practices encourage open communication, teamwork, and a strong sense of community among staff members. This collaborative approach is key to employee well-being and retention, as it fosters a workplace where employees feel they have the support and resources needed to thrive in their roles.

Employee Well-being

Employee well-being is fundamental to our retention strategy. We prioritise work-life balance and mental health support, fostering a healthy and sustainable work environment. This focus on well-being enhances job satisfaction, reduces burnout, and strengthens employee engagement. Key strategies include maintaining a higher staff-to-child ratio and offering access to the centre’s psychologist, and implementing an open-door policy.

Respectful and Ethical Leadership

Leadership at Bubup upholds respect for diversity and ethical practices. Our leaders are approachable, empathetic, and committed to the well-being of both staff and children. We have an open-door policy and empower staff through collaborative leadership, allowing them to contribute to decision-making processes and fostering a culture of ownership and pride in their work.

Clear Expectations for Values-Aligned Behaviour

Our HR policies ensure that Bubup’s values, including respect, integrity, and cultural awareness, are consistently upheld. These values guide how staff interact with one another and with children, helping maintain a cohesive and supportive workplace culture.

Professional Learning and Skills Development

We recognise the importance of continuous professional development in retaining a skilled workforce. By providing training opportunities, mentorship, and career development, we empower staff to build their skills and advance in their careers. This support not only encourages personal growth but also contributes to the high-quality education and care we provide to children.

As we continue to grow, we will strengthen our professional development programs in 2025 to support staff at all stages of their career. This includes expanding mentorship, training, and career development opportunities to ensure our workforce remains skilled and motivated. We will also maximise the use of our HRIS system, Employment Hero, to enhance staff professional development, performance management, and staff engagement. By utilising these tools, we can streamline and improve our processes for tracking employee growth, setting performance goals, and fostering ongoing engagement across all levels.

By further enhancing these processes, we will ensure that Bubup remains a great place to work, offering our staff the resources, support, a respectful work culture, and opportunities they need to deliver high-quality early childhood education and care.

Looking ahead, Bubup remains committed to building on the solid foundation we have established in 2024. By continuing to prioritise employee well-being, professional development, and inclusive hiring practices, we will ensure our workforce remains engaged, motivated, and aligned with our values. As we refine our retention strategies and invest in our people, we are confident that Bubup will continue to be a rewarding and fulfilling workplace for our dedicated staff, ensuring the best outcomes for the children and families we serve.



Troy Hoggan
People and Culture
Committee Convenor



May Kanjanathamrongkul
Human Resources
Coordinator





The Kindergarten Program Report

Koonwarra Aged Care Home

To continue focusing on our connection with our community, the Koonwarra children participated in small group visits to our local aged care home, South Port Residential Home. Throughout terms 2, 3 and 4, a group of 8-10 children visited, each child attending for one whole term. Attending 10 weeks in a row allowed the children an opportunity to grow in confidence and build relationships with the residents at the aged care home. Each week they would participate in different activities together such as painting, story time, playdough, song and dance. We saw joy grow in both the children and residents as the weeks went on. With the success of this program in 2024, we hope to continue our relationship with South Port Residential Home and keep the excursions going in future years. *(VEYLDF Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world)*

Bubup Kinder Olympics

The whole world paused in awe as we watched the 2024 Paris Olympics in July this year. The kinder children took a strong interest in the Olympics and this world event influenced our kindergarten program, bringing curiosity and wonder at the elite athletes into Bubup. Through language building discussions, the children designed their own flag, planned and participated in their own opening ceremony and practiced and performed in their own sporting event. This collaborative inquiry project spanned across both the Tiddlik and Bouddi kinder programs and lasted almost a month, culminating in inviting family and friends into Bubup to cheer the children on and participate in the Bubup Olympics. *(VEYLDF Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity)*

Dentist Visit

With the kinder children's independence growing throughout their 4YO kinder year, we take a large focus on children's agency surrounding physical health and well-being. With this in mind, we were excited to invite a dental hygienist from Better Health Network (Formerly known as Star Health), in partnership with Stonington Council, to our Bouddi kindergarten program. First, the dental team held an Oral Health Information and Q&A Session for the children and educators to explain why oral hygiene is important for young children's teeth and how to best take care of them.

Following the Q&A session, the dental hygienist conducted a dental screening, just a quick look inside each child's mouth, to identify any dental concerns and pass them on to their family. The children approached the session with curiosity and bravely participated in the dental screening. This visit inspired a dental provocation play space in all our kinder programs and a second dentist visit to the Tiddlik group as the children learned about oral health and hygiene and how to take care of their teeth. *(VEYLDF Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of well-being)*

Reflective Practice – Partnerships with Professionals

This year we focused on reflective practice through partnerships with professionals. We did this through termly mentor meetings with each educator or teacher and the Kindergarten Program Coordinator. In these one-on-one sessions, we discussed and expanded upon each educator's observations of the children and how to effectively implement the children's ideas into the learning program. We also prioritised fortnightly team meetings where these ideas could be unpacked together. This ensured the whole team understood the educational program and the observations that were behind what is happening each day to support children's outcomes.

Not only did we partner with professionals within our setting, but we also drew upon the knowledge and experience of those from our local community run childcare and kindergartens. Our Kindergarten Program Coordinator along with the other program coordinators at Bubup connected with other local educational leaders with termly educational leader network meetings. This year, the educational leaders unpacked the EYLF changes together and shared how they supported their team of teachers and educators to understand the changes and put them into practice within the educational programs. There was also a big focus on our connection to First Nations Perspectives, an area that our kindergarten hopes to continue to grow in 2025. *(VEYLDF Practice Principle: Equity and Diversity and Partnerships with Professionals)*



Michelle Wilson
Program Coordinator





Treasurer's Report

During 2024 our centre has had a continuing focus of ensuring we provide the best environment for our educators to support the children in the centre's care, this has been at the heart of all the financial decisions we have taken. BW FCC was awarded an Exceeding rating by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) in 2024. Following this recognition, the centre and staff have remained dedicated to continuing to uphold and exceed this rating each day.

Our occupancy and attendance at the centre has continued to be very strong throughout 2024 at 98.95% throughout the calendar year to 31 December 2024. BW FCC recorded a financial surplus of \$89,777 for the year ended 31 December 2024. We continue to focus on investing in the future of our service, meeting community expectations and ensuring we remain viable in the longer term.

During 2024, BW FCC spent the majority of our expenses on staff which are the most important part of our service and over \$54,000 in upgrading our program resources and children's books. We continued to budget \$1,000 in hardship payments to support vulnerable families, however this resource was not required in 2024

Our Team

Firstly, I would like to thank our Business Manager Avinash Ramudu who has worked diligently throughout the year, whilst balancing his dual roles as Business Manager and Head Chef of our kitchen. Avinash can be relied upon to provide timely and accurate monthly financial information to the Board enabling us to make informed strategic decisions in the best interest of the centre.

A big thank you to Kellie Connor, our Executive Officer, who has again led a strong team and effectively implemented the strategic recommendations of the Board during the year. This has been my first year as the Treasurer of the Centre and it has been a pleasure to work with Kellie.

We had strong continuity on the finance committee in 2024 with Jamie Grant continuing to offer valuable support. I would also like to thank the previous treasurer Alex Lord for remaining on the finance committee to provide a smooth transition. His advice and guidance have been invaluable. Finally, we welcomed Damon Hauenstein to the committee whose fresh eyes help ensure that we do not allow familiarity to cloud our roles.

Our EYP

Our Early Years Program (EYP) continues to provide education and care for children from 3 months to 5 years and is at the core of the service we provide. The EYP continued to be well attended during the year. We are again proud to be one of the most affordable centres in the City of Port Philip community in our annual benchmarking of fees. We increased our fees from 1 January 2025 by \$6 or a little under 4.2% from \$144 per day to \$150 a day. This is at a rate lower than our increasing costs, and only slightly above a CPI increase of 3.6% over the last 12 months.

The centre continues to take pride in the fact that it runs above minimum ratios in all rooms

- In our 0–3 years programs, we provide a 1:3 staff: child ratio ahead of the regulation ratio which is 1:4
- In our 3+ years program, we provide a 1:6 staff: child ratio ahead of the regulation ratio which is 1:11

These initiatives cost an additional circa \$600,000 per annum to implement. We consider this an important part of the support and care we aim to show our staff and children in making the centre a wonderful place to work and thrive

Our sessional kinder

Our 3-year-old kinder and 4-year-old kinder programs continued throughout the year to 31 December 2024 and are highly regarded in the local community. We offer 56 places for 4-year-old kinder and 28 places for 3-year-old kinder. We continue to offer a before and after kinder care program which supports working parents and allows our community to access our kinder programme in a way that aligns with the EYP hours.

Looking to the future

In 2025 we will continue to invest in the care we provide through our most important asset, our staff. We will continue our focus on ensuring our financial stability continues in 2025 and we continue to support parents placing their trust in our centre's care of their children. Our mission is well supported by fellow Board members and the strong leadership and dedication of our centre President Gilda Howard.



Rachel Haggett
Treasurer





Governance and Appointments Committee Report

During the year the committee has had two board members, Jo Powell and Gilda Howard drive the work of recruiting and supporting board members and ensuring the board have the required processes to guide their governance practices.

Governance topics covered this year include:

- Purpose, vision & strategy
- Board composition & effectiveness
- Board self-assessment

Some highlights of the committee work during the year.

Strategic Planning

G&A developed the process for the Board and staff to engage in and develop the new Strategic direction for the organisation.

Constitution review

In line with changes announced by Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV), the committee conducted a review of the current constitution and developed recommendations for improvements.

Board policy review

A review was conducted of current policies and procedures and recommendations were developed.

Board performance review

The committee developed a self-assessment survey for individual board members to assess their performance and that of the board. Recommendations for improvements have been identified, and work is underway to implement improvements.

Board member training opportunities

Evidence from a skill analysis and feedback from board members identified several areas for training for the board. Several sessions have been set up to enhance board skills, including:

- Financial literacy (Completed October 2024)
- Understanding Early Childhood Education: policy translated to local priorities (Scheduled for 2025)
- Legal compliance (Scheduled for 2025)

Board recruitment and succession planning

We have had a very successful year in recruiting and appointing several new board members.

We have welcomed Jo Powell and Damon Hauenstein to our group and they have committed their expertise and time to the board and on committees this year.

In anticipation of some change to board positions post the AGM in March 2025, several candidates are being considered for board roles.

The G&A Committee will continue its work next year with key priorities including Sustainability and policy review.



Gilda Howard
Governance and
Appointments Committee



Jo Powell
Governance and
Appointments Committee





The Risk Committee Report

The 2024 Risk Committee Report highlights another year of significant activity and achievement for the BWFCC Risk Committee. Under the leadership of Board members Gilda Howard, Katrina Jojkity, and Jamie Grant, along with the Executive Officer and Director of Education, the committee has played a crucial role in navigating a complex operational landscape while supporting the Board and Management.

The committee's proactive approach to risk management and governance was exemplified by the formal adoption of its terms of reference at the November board meeting. Throughout the year, the committee engaged in various strategic initiatives, including collaboration with the Council on major works in Lagoon Reserve. In response to evolving digital threats, the committee developed a critical incident response plan for cybersecurity breaches and revised relevant policies, including crisis response and cybersecurity.

Executive Officer Kellie Connor implemented a comprehensive soil management plan, which included daily checks to prevent soil exposure and maintain the integrity of the soil base barrier. The committee also closely monitored the transition to a new central enrolment system, ensuring full occupancy in the rooms.

These actions demonstrate the Risk Committee's unwavering commitment to effective risk management practices for the centre. By proactively identifying and addressing potential risks, the committee has successfully balanced the achievement of strategic objectives with the prioritisation of safety and well-being for BWFCC families and the broader community. Dr. Katrina Jojkity, speaking on behalf of the Risk Committee, extends heartfelt gratitude to the Board members and the entire BWFCC team for their dedication to safeguarding the community's well-being.



Dr Katrina Jojkity
Risk Committee Convenor

Life Member - Alex Lord



During the year the Board acknowledged the commitment and work of Alex Lord a long standing board member who will retire at the AGM in March 2025.

Since joining the board, Alex has made significant improvements in the processes and procedures of the finance department. This has led to a highly functioning finance team within the organisation and an informed board whose members have benefited from detailed and precise records and reports.

His leadership in finance has assisted the organisation to navigate through challenging times, including the pandemic. He has always been enthusiastic, considered and committed to the many roles he has filled since joining the Board. He is always positive and shows passion for the successful operation of the organisation.

In response to being awarded this honour Alex said...

'When I joined six years ago, as part of the BWFCC board, my goal was to leave BWFCC and the Board which governs it better than when I joined, and I'm certainly proud that this is the case. I can still remember sitting at the end of the table and explaining my motivation, how I could contribute and what I understood of the role and organisation.

It is wholly satisfying to do things that are unpaid, and for a not for profit, and when they make such an impact to the children and community that sense is heightened.

I'm always proud when I run into friends and parents and could count a dozen times recently when I was either at either Port Melbourne Bunnings, tennis club or the MSAC pool and I was able to share how great BWFCC is and my involvement. I have enjoyed my time as both a father of children at the centre and as a board member without children at the centre and it widened my sense of focus and perspective.

It has been thoroughly enriching to work alongside all the board members present and past, always to hear Kellie and Avi's update and that of the centre leadership team and many staff who are still at the centre years later. The thing that reflects most positively on a culture is the loyalty of staff and the fact that many people have stayed on or come back to the organisation, for which I would be more than happy to do in the future should the time arise.'

Gilda Howard
President



Playgroup Report

We had a total of 13 Playgroups in 2024 with around 185 families attending over the weeks.

We purchased some great new resources for the outdoor area to continue supporting children’s development and gross motor skills.

Community Connections

I attended one Network meeting for Playgroups and Toy libraries, this was a great opportunity to share any achievements, and any challenges groups were facing. It was also a nice way to meet other members of the City of Port Phillip community and to be able to network with similar services.

I also attended the Playgroup Conference, which was great to bring back ideas to our Playgroups.

We continued working alongside the Maternal and Child Health Nurses by organising a talk at the end of each New Parent Group. This then provided the opportunity for each new parent group to start a playgroup, where the group could continue meeting up in a safe and supportive environment.

We offered fruit platters for our Playgroup for families to help celebrate Mother, Father’s and special friends’ day, which was received well and the Playgroups enjoyed this.

Families gave great feedback in regard to the Welcome BBQ and End of the Year Celebration at Edwards Park and said they had lots of fun and really enjoyed it.

Cultural and Language Playgroups

This year Dutch Playgroup continued to use a double timeslot, which worked well for them, they will continue to use a double timeslot in 2025.

Japanese Playgroup used a double timeslot this year to support children’s interest in their program and to have more learning time for the children and families to connect, this went really well, and they will continue using double timeslots in 2025.

Sustainability in Playgroups

We continued being committed to our sustainability practices throughout the year, by using loose part materials in play during Playgroup sessions.

Recommencing in 2025

We have nine playgroups returning in 2025, with two Playgroups merging in with other Playgroups similar in age and we have one new playgroup starting.



Jessica Fielder
Playgroup Coordinator





The MCH team continue to run many other programs such as Sleep and Settling groups and outreach, Breastfeeding support service and Food talks. The nurses also co-facilitate groups that incorporate nature play and supported playgroups for more vulnerable families.

For any information on these programs, please refer to the City of Port Phillip website on the Maternal and Child Health page.

Our team of MCH nurses are so fortunate to work together with the wonderful staff at Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre. The MCH nurses at Bubup Womindjeka are looking forward to 2025, continuing to support the families in our local area and working collaboratively with BWFCC team.

Alex Davey

Maternal and Child Health Team Leader – City of Port Phillip

Maternal and Child Health Service Report

In 2024, the City of Port Phillip Maternal and Child Health Service continued to deliver the 10 Key Age and Stage visits to all families of Port Melbourne. We have slowly seen an increase in our enrolment numbers since the covid years with over 1000 new enrolments into the municipality. Bubup Womindjeka had a total of 162 new babies born in 2024.

With changes to the requirements of the service, staff movement has taken place. Bubup Womindjeka welcomes Jaclyn and Rachel who are 2 highly skilled MCH nurses who cover all days of the week. This ensures excellent appointment availability and continuity of care. If you are after an appointment with one of the MCH nurses, please call the administration line on 9209 6766.

The MCH team announced the commencement of the MCH Outreach pilot program towards the end of 2024. The team is trialling an MCH nurse coming out to all council and community run childcare centres to complete children's Key Age and Stage visits. This means parents do not need to come to the centre if it is more convenient for the child be seen in the familiar space of the childcare setting. The pilot will run until April, with hopes it will be permanently embedded into the MCH service. The pilot focuses mainly on 3.5-to-4-year checks but is flexible. Please see Kellie for more details.

New parent groups continued to run regularly in 2024. This allowed families to connect & share experiences in early parenthood. Often these groups continue in the form of a playgroup, occupying the beautiful space at BWFCC. We are so fortunate to have the BWFCC staff on site to assist in the prompt organisation & facilitating these playgroups into action. The MCH service also started a Growing Families Parents Group which allows families with more than one child to attend. This has been very popular and will also continue into 2025.





Bubup Womindjeka

Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre is a community run, not-for-profit organisation providing integrated early learning and care services to the community.

Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre is committed to promoting a safe, equitable environment that supports a sense of belonging and respect. We advocate for the rights and participation of each child, throughout our organisation we embed the Child Safe Standards.

Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Yalukut Weellam of the Boon Wurrung people and pay our respects to their elders of past, present and future.

Bubup Womindjeka Family and Children's Centre

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