

Annual Report 2017

Eureka Community Kindergarten Association Inc.
ecka.org.au



ECKA acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the Land on which our services are located and pay respect to Elders past and present.

ECKA Vision, Mission & Values

OUR VISION: Every child has the opportunity to explore and realise their potential through access and engagement in quality early education.

OUR MISSION: To deliver leading early childhood educational programs that supports every child and their family and encourages a life-long love of learning.

OUR VALUES:

Children:

We value the education and care of children above all else.

Community:

We encourage community participation and support families to contribute to their child's early years experiences.

Excellence:

We value excellence in everything we do.

Leadership:

We achieve the highest standards and deliver the best services to our community.

Collaboration:

We value equally all people who contribute to ECKA achieving its shared goals.

Diversity:

We believe in a culture based on acceptance, understanding and inclusiveness.

All the teachers are amazing and genuinely caring for our children and our family as a whole, they go above and beyond to make everything exceptional.

2017 Parent Woody Yaloak

Just would like to say how warm, welcoming and super caring all the staff members are. Lovely to have such nice people looking after our youngsters! Thank you .

2017 Parent Daylesford

Fantastic teachers that all our kids love. We feel very lucky and fortunate that our kids have such dedicated teachers at the start of their education

2017 Parent Delacombe



Our Story

We are the Eureka Community Kindergarten Association (ECKA), a not-for-profit, Early Years Manager (EYM), recognised as a leader in community based Early Years Management services for Kindergartens, Long Day Care and Occasional Care services in Ballarat and surrounding districts.

We strive to achieve the Victorian Government's vision: *EYM is the leading platform to achieve improved outcomes for all young children, through the delivery of world class, accessible early childhood education and care services.* (EYM Policy Framework-DET 2016). As an EYM we work within a four-way partnership; families, local government, Victorian Department of Education and Training (DET), and EYM (ECKA). *Each partner has a unique role in directly or indirectly supporting learning and development of children, and in improving educational outcomes for children.* (EYM Policy Framework-DET 2016).

As an EYM we focus on the provision of high quality and inclusive services, while parents can focus on involvement in their child's early education journey free from the burdens of management of the service. Educators benefit from the structures and support that ECKA provide to allow them to focus on providing high quality engaging and effective early childhood education and care programs.

Strategic Intent 2017-2020– REALISING OUR VISION

ECKA's strategic plan, refreshed in 2017, is divided into 3 stages and defines three key priority areas, each with short-long term actions and long term aspirations.

Planning has commenced to ensure our existing services are sustainable and responsive. We will extend our current service offerings to maximise access and participation in our programs and to meet the needs of families accessing our services. Investment in leadership and practice to promote continuous quality improvement and excellence in teaching and learning has commenced.

We will extend our reach by responding to family and community needs and government directions. We will build an early childhood education and care management service which benefits all those looking for support, while ensuring that access, equity, quality and sustainability are our key areas of focus.

In our second stage we will utilise current research and evidence to explore new ideas and develop new initiatives. We will invest in innovation and quality, to build on our capacity and broaden our service offerings. The final stage of our plan will be a time to reflect on our achievements and plan for our future beyond 2020.



Priority one: Access and Partnership

We ensure equitable access for all children, encourage community participation and support families to contribute to their child's early years experiences.

We will drive high levels of participation for all children, in particular for those who are experiencing the highest levels of vulnerability and disadvantage through:

- targeted engagement with families, communities, agencies and government,
- development and delivery of services which meet the needs of families and children.

We will collaborate with parents/carers, DET, local government, community organisations, schools and other early childhood education and care stakeholders to lead the development and coordination of quality services that enhance educational outcomes for children.

Enrolment in our programs in 2017 have remained strong

	2016	2017
4 year old funded program	895	902
No of Early Start Kinder* <small>* Eligible 3yo children attending 4 yo program</small>	39	49
3 year old program	456	453

Child & Family Services Ballarat

In 2017 we continued our partnership with Ballarat Child and Family Services (CAFS) to deliver the Access to Early Learning program to some of our most vulnerable children.

These children are supported both in the kindergarten and the home, and the evaluation of the program is showing strong evidence of the difference being made.

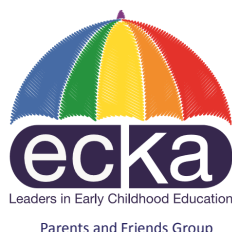


Over the period of sending both of my children to Fidelity Kinder I have seen my children grow and develop becoming very independent, confident children. I recommend 3 and 4 year old kinder to get the best possible start in life.

2017 Parent Fidelity

Local and State Government

Partnerships with local and state government are critical to ensure all eligible children are identified and supported to access early education services. Collaboration includes central enrolment, M&CH services, planning and delivery of new buildings/alterations to existing buildings, municipal early years plans and other identified join projects.



Priority one: Access and Partnership

We ensure equitable access for all children, encourage community participation and support families to contribute to their child's early years experiences.

The Indigenous Preschool Advancement (IPAS) project is achieving great outcomes for indigenous children across the 81 participating services in the Grampians Region. The number of children participating in kindergarten programs continues to rise and attendance rates remain high.

Attendance Rates of Indigenous Children

2016- 94.4% overall attendance **2017-** 94.5% overall attendance

Indigenous Children Enrolment Numbers	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
4-5yo funded program	44	45	46	51	79	57	61	83	80
Early Start (3yo in funded program)		11	9	13	5	13	31	37	35
3yo	15	3	10	16	17	12	11	9	16
Totals	59	59	65	80	101	82	103	129	131
	SRA (Previous funded program)						IPAS (current project)		



Partnerships—Parents

Our partnership with parents continues to strengthen. All parent groups/committees are supported by the ECKA staff to undertake their role in a way that allows them to participate in their child's year/s at kinder in an enjoyable and meaningful way.

"The friendly staff are always bright and engaging, ready to help with any questions nothing is too much trouble. As a Parents and Friends member their support makes fundraising and community events possible."

2017 Parent Clunes

Partnerships—Schools

Partnerships with schools are critical to facilitate quality transitions for children. One aspect of this is written Transitions Reports. In 2017 all ECKA teachers attended a **Transition: A positive Start to School Workshop** (a collaboration between DET and Deakin University). Two ECKA teachers were contracted by Deakin University to assist in the delivery of these workshops state-wide.

2017 ECKA Transition Report data:-

Number of Transitions Reports Written: 821

Number of Schools children transitioned to: 75

Hours Taken to complete reports: 887

Evidence

- ♦ Research demonstrates that parental engagement in ECEC services enhances children's achievements and adaption
- ♦ Likewise, if the connection between schools and communities is strong, it is easier for children to develop the skills they need to be successful—socially, emotionally, physically and academically

(Early Years Management Policy Framework DET 2016)



Priority two: Quality and Workforce

We achieve the highest standards and deliver the best services to our community.

We will implement contemporary, evidence-based improvements in teaching and learning, and share knowledge and experience within our services and the broader sector.

We will build capability of our leaders and foster excellence in performance of our staff.

We will recruit, retain and invest in a highly-skilled, collaborative workforce.

Investment in a quality workforce in 2017

- 2 Teachers were supported to undertake a Masters,
- 2 staff members supported to undertake a Bachelor
- 5 staff members supported in Diploma traineeships.

Total Number of Permanent Teachers and Educators in 2017 =102

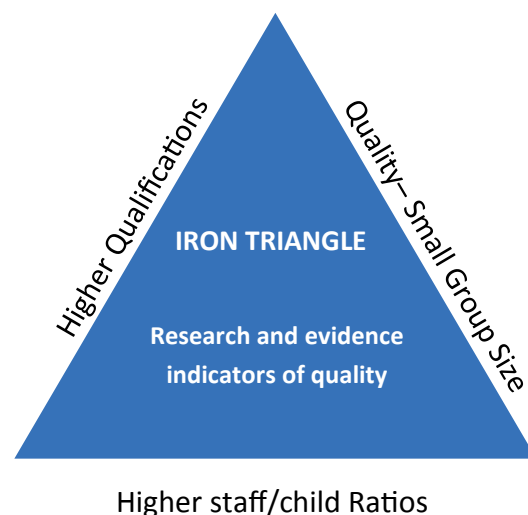
Bachelor Qualified Staff: 43 Diploma Qualified Staff:43

Certificate III Qualified staff:16 Management & Admin Staff: 12

Of the 49 positions which could be filled by a Cert 3 trained

Educator, 29 were filled with a more highly qualified

Diploma trained Educator.



Assessment and Rating 2017

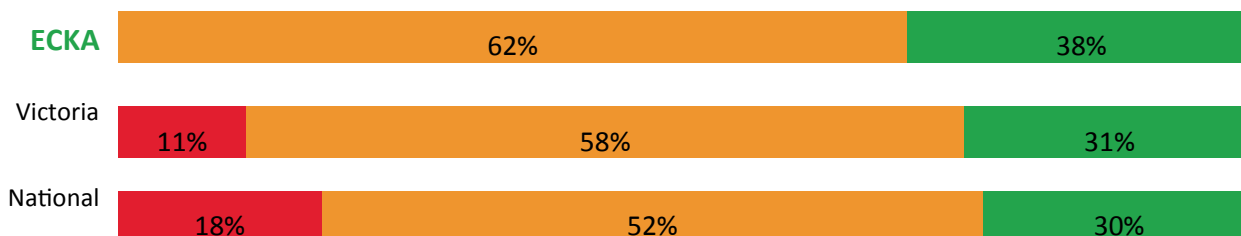
Five services underwent their second assessment and rating in 2017 which resulted in three moving from meeting to exceeding and two remaining at meeting ratings. ECKA management prepared for the changes in National Quality Standards (effective 1st February 2018) and the ECKA on-line Quality Improvement Plan Template was updated to reflect these changes from the start of Term 1 2018.

We are proud of the achievement that in 2017 all ECKA services are meeting the NQS in all 7 areas, and are above the average for Exceeding in 4 of the 7 Quality areas.

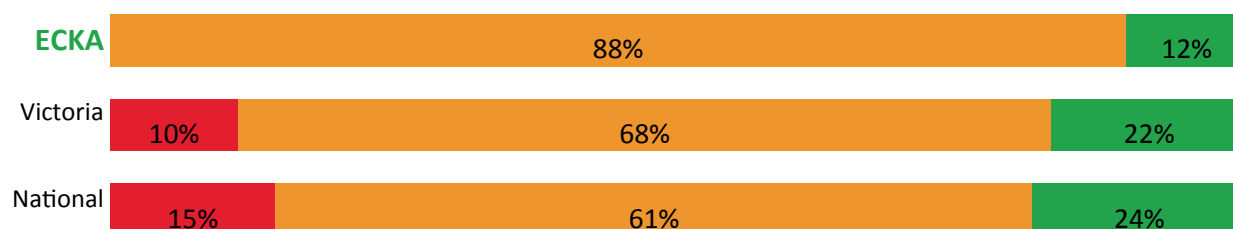
Figure : Indicates the % results for ECKA, State and National services in the seven quality areas of the NQS.

■ % Working Towards NQS ■ % Meeting NQS ■ % Exceeding NQS

Quality Area 1 – Educational program and practice



Quality Area 2 – Children's health and safety



Priority two: Quality and Workforce

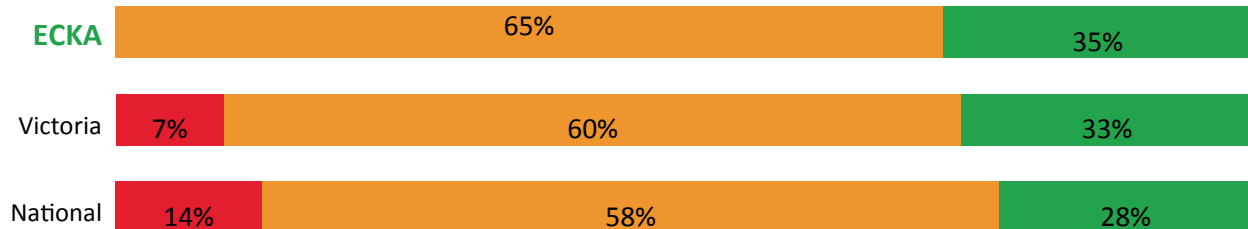
We achieve the highest standards and deliver the best services to our community.

■ % Working Towards NQS

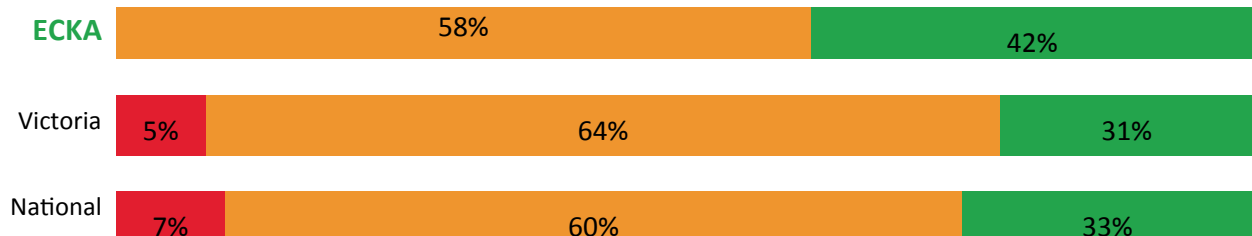
■ % Meeting NQS

■ % Exceeding NQS

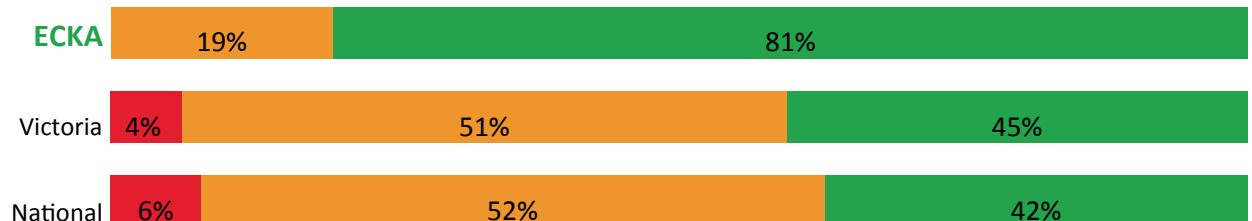
Quality Area 3 – Physical environment



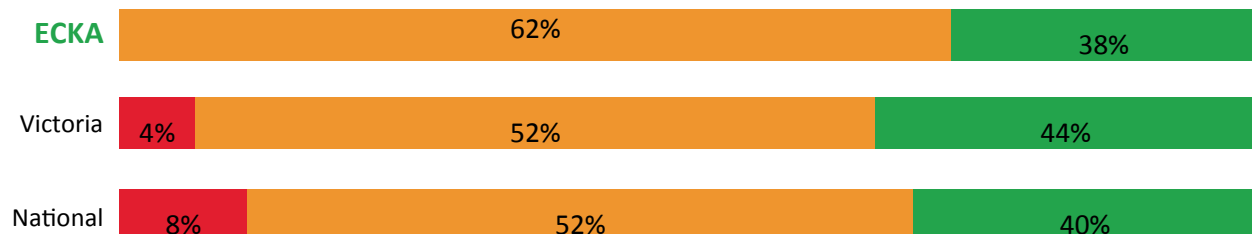
Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements



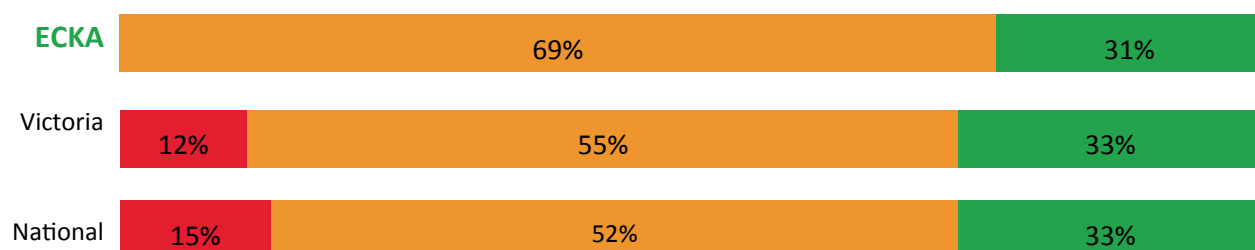
Quality Area 5 – Relationship with children



Quality Area 6 – Collaborative partnerships with families and communities



Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership



Priority two: Quality and Workforce

We achieve the highest standards and deliver the best services to our community.

Investment directed towards a multi-component professional learning program (training, coaching, educational leadership) supports the educators' implementation and alignment of evidence-based teaching strategies within ECEC daily programs, and is effective in improving children's outcomes (E4Kids Study—University of Melbourne)

Professional Development 2017

All ECKA kindergarten services closed for a Professional Development day, providing all educators the opportunity to network together, share ideas and experiences, and attend targeted Professional Development relevant to their service and individual needs.

The 2017 ECKA Professional Development Day was designed to encourage and promote learning during play, which is closely associated with children's cognitive and academic growth.

Leading Australian experts delivered workshops focusing on developing high quality services that benefit all children and families.

Topics covered: Documentation – How do we ensure that the children's voices are included into our documentation and planning in an authentic way * Playing with Technology Behaviour guidance * 'Let's work together for a win win' * Creating scientists * Time Management/Looking after ourselves * Maths + design = play * Inclusive Practice * The Benefits of Risk * Pedagogical Leadership * Music/Storytelling/Dance

In addition to the ECKA Professional Development day, ECKA Educators spent in excess of 1,450 hours undertaking Professional development and training during 2017.



Brilliant kindergarten with dedicated teachers.

Am very grateful for the quality of education my children have been able to receive here.

2017 Parent Mt Clear

Teachers are exemplary. Very impressed with both. Have been wonderful with my child.

2017 Parent Ballarat Nth



Amazing outdoor environment for the children to explore & learn respect for the environment. Educators have advanced knowledge & skills in play & facilitating play experiences. Recommended highly to others.

2017 Parent Bakery Hill

Priority three: Sustainability and Innovation

We are responsive and flexible with the capacity to meet future challenges and change.

We will ensure service provision is sustainable, viable & responsive to children, families & communities. We will ensure our strategies are underpinned by strong & effective governance & partnership arrangements.

We will explore & invest in new opportunities that help us to achieve our vision.

Parent Surveys 2017

1000 families enrolled to attend in 2018 were surveyed and as a result of the feedback new models of service delivery were developed for implementation in 2018. Parents see location and times of sessions as important, as well as the unique programs offered. In response to this feedback:

- ◆ Bush kinder programs will be extended to 2 more services
- ◆ Intergenerational programs will continue in partnership with local aged care.
- ◆ Long day kindergarten programs will be delivered at 6 services
- ◆ After Kinder Care programs will be delivered at 3 services



Pilot Program

In response to the needs of the community, and based on our learnings in 2017 Mt Pleasant kindergarten has been chosen for a pilot in 2018 which will provide some of our most vulnerable children with a higher ratio of staff and higher qualifications. Two Bachelor trained teachers and two Diploma trained Educators will collaborate in 2018 in a new model designed to improve outcomes for all children enrolled in the service. This model is in line with the Iron Triangle for quality education. (as shown on page 6)

Priority three: Sustainability and Innovation

We are responsive and flexible with the capacity to meet future challenges and change.

Grants Received 2017

A number of Grants were successfully obtained to support services and assist in the implementation of new initiatives:-

- ♦ IT Grants: \$14,416.00 for new computers and IT equipment
- ♦ Stronger Communities Programme \$11, 225.00 to construct shade structures and install blinds at 3 services
- ♦ Warrawong PD grant: \$9,000.00 towards our 2018 PD day
- ♦ Landcare: \$1,000.00 to build a vegetable garden at Mt Clear Kindergarten
- ♦ ACCONIA: \$750 to buy sustainable education equipment such as recycle games.

**Total Grants Received
\$36,391.00**

Practice Model

To promote excellence in teaching and learning we have commenced planning to implement a new Communities of Practice model to promote collaborative practices and quality teaching in 2018

The aim of each community of practice is to learn from each other's experience, learn through putting ideas into practice, learn through developing a strong sense of belonging to the community, and becoming through having a strong sense of identity within the community of practice.

Community Events 2017

ECKA continue to participate in community events such as Ballarat's Biggest Play Group and Ballarat Begonia Festival, where we have hosted the *Super Sandpit* for the last 8 years. ECKA staff volunteer their time to supervise the sandpit for the full 3 days of the festival, which has proven to be the one of the most popular activities for children at the festival. Additionally, many ECKA services have participated in the Begonia Parade.



Priority three: Sustainability and Innovation

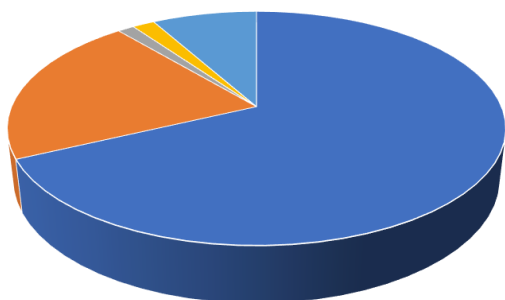
We are responsive and flexible with the capacity to meet future challenges and change.

Finances 2017

Total liabilities of ECKA at the end of 31st December 2017 are \$1,991,175 which is 37.36% of total assets, resulting in the association being in a good position to meet all of its current obligations. As at 31st December 2016 total liabilities were \$2,090,621 being 44.07% of total assets. Consequently our overall position has improved during the current year. Operating Profit for the year was \$335,593 (4.80%) in comparison to the previous six months period operating loss of \$116,811.

Financial Highlights

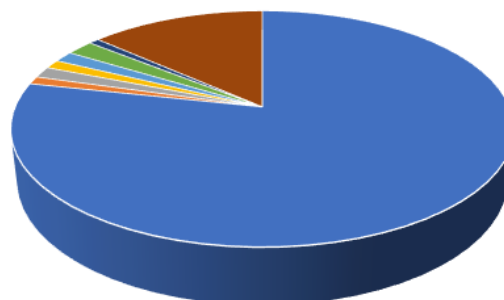
Total Income



- Government Funding: \$4,745,116.75
- Parent Fees: \$1,463,040.37
- Fundraising Profit: \$89,634.45
- IPAS Funding: \$120,000.00
- Other: \$566,473.52

Total Income: \$6,984,265.09

Total Expenditure



- Wages & Superannuation \$5,211,718.93
- Equipment Purchases \$71,521.49
- Property Maintenance \$102,265.81
- Printing & Photocopiers \$80,100.02
- Kindergarten Consumables \$100,098.41
- Utilities & Phones \$137,475.56
- Cleaning \$51,901.41
- Other: \$893,590.39

Total Expenditure \$6,648,672.02

Full report available separately



ECKA Board Members 2017:

Name	Board Member since
Derek Wolstenholme	November 2008
Sandy Facey	November 2012
Paul Ryan (Chairman)	November 2013
Katherine Cape	November 2015
Lisa (West) Pickering (Vice-chair)	November 2015
Geoff Manton (Treasurer)	November 2016
Chris Hannah	November 2016
Joanne Geurts (CEO) (Secretary)	-

Our Services 2017

	No. 3yo's	No. 4yo's	NQS Rating
Bakery Hill Kindergarten	27	43	Meeting
Ballarat North Kindergarten	18	28	Meeting
Ballarat Fidelity Club ELC	26	-	Meeting
Ballarat Fidelity Club	-	46	Meeting
Brown Hill Kindergarten	40	66	Exceeding
Clunes and District Preschool	4	19	Exceeding
Creswick and District Preschool	20	41	Meeting
Delacombe Community Kindergarten	28	58	Meeting
Daylesford Preschool	10	30	Exceeding
Beaufort Early Childhood Centre	16	38	Meeting
Haddon Community Childcare	38	21	Meeting
Haddon Preschool Centre	-	44	Meeting
Hepburn Kindergarten	9	18	Exceeding
Iris Ramsay Kindergarten	25	45	Meeting
Linda Brown Preschool	28	65	Exceeding
Midlands Kindergarten	36	52	Meeting
Mt Clear Community Kindergarten	26	63	Exceeding
Mt Pleasant Kindergarten	7	30	Meeting
Phoenix Kindergarten	-	51	Exceeding
Rowan View Preschool	13	30	Meeting
Sebastopol South Kindergarten	-	43	Meeting
Sebastopol West Kindergarten	26	32	Meeting
Trentham Kindergarten	12	16	Meeting
Wallace & District Kindergarten	8	22	Exceeding
Waubra Preschool	8	7	Meeting
Woody Yaloak Kindergarten	12	18	Meeting

