

Annual  
Report ||  
2023 – 2024



CARINYA

MOBILE

FAMILY DAY CARE

OOSH

*Learning Through Play*

# Learning Through Play

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## our vision

To live in a world where all children are nurtured, respected & encouraged to reach their potential.

## our mission

We build relationships & provide education & care in a way that nurtures the wellbeing of children & families in a safe, inclusive & respectful environment which lays the foundation for life-long learning. We advocate for & respond to the needs of children & families across the Lachlan region.

## core values

### passion

We are committed in heart & mind; we energize, engage & inspire others.

### diversity

We know that the inclusion of people with different ideas, strengths, interests & cultural backgrounds will help us succeed. We encourage healthy debate & difference of opinion.

### integrity

We are honest, open, ethical & fair. Our professionalism is embedded into the CECS community.

### leadership

We have courage to shape a better future. We are entrepreneurial, we take risks & strive for meaningful change.

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# CECS – Management Committee

Peter Launders – President

Karen Howarth – Vice President

Peter Launders – Treasurer

Samantha Hill - Secretary

Baden Dickson- Director

Mel Montgomery - Director

Samantha Hill - Director

Sarah Steele – Director

Jan Chivers – Director

Danielle Spence - Director

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# CECS – Management Team

Libby Ewing-Jarvie – General Manager

Jenna Woods – Carinya Director

Melissa Riches – Family Day Care Director

Diane Clark – OOSH Director

Penny Smith – Mobile LDC & Preschool Director

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# About CECS

CECS is managed by a voluntary Management Committee which supports the services' Management Team to delivery education and care services. CECS values their role within the community, supporting families and community and their involvement in our work.

Our services are licenced by the Department of Education and implement the National Quality Framework, which comprises of the;

- Education and Care National Regulations and Law
- National Quality Standards
- Early Years Learning Framework
- My time, our place learning Framework for School Age Care

Our holistic programs are also guided by current research and documents such as;

- The Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- The United Nations Rights of the Child
- Service Philosophies
- Service policies and procedures
- Early childhood theorists

We believe that children learn through play and everyday experiences and our programs are guided by the children's interests and capabilities.

Our educators maintain strong relationships and interact with the children to understand and respond to their capabilities, knowledge and the skills they possess. This is then used to implement intentional programs which enhance children's growth and learning.

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# President's Report

Undoubtedly the biggest news for CECS over the last financial year was the long awaited notification of our success in the grant application to fund a new preschool development at Short Street. This was a fantastic outcome after a huge amount of effort was put in to the grant application. But it now looks like the grant application may have been the easiest part! The process to tick all the boxes to keep various levels of government and other stakeholders happy has already proved to be very onerous. But at the time of writing this report, some major milestones have been met (including a unanimous and rapid DA approval by Cowra Council) and the way forward is looking more certain. Congratulations are again due to Libby Ewing-Jarvie for her dedication and persistence in this endeavour – it is staggering how many emails, phone calls, follow-ups and reminders (gentle and not-so-gentle) have been required!

Coming a close second in terms of great news stories was the rating outcome for our Mobile team – initially getting issued with a "Meeting" but then successfully appealing that to be awarded an "Exceeding" rating is a tremendous accolade for Penny, Brooke and the whole Mobile team. The rating process was incredibly arduous and taxing, involving visits to every single Mobile venue – in fact it was so arduous that following frank and honest feedback from the Mobile team, the government has accepted that future rating processes will be much more reasonable!

Other major achievements for CECS for the year include:

- Finalising the brand refresh and rolling out the new branding
- Promoting Jenna Woods to run the Carinya service
- Improvements in the enrolment process (especially re-enrolments)
- Conducting surveys of family and staff to help with planning
- Securing start up grants from Cowra Council for new Family Educators

Other important ongoing projects and challenges for CECS as an organisation include:

- Improvements in systems (Harmony; information technology generally; phone system)
- Making CECS an employer of choice and focusing on maximising the wellbeing of the CECS team so that we keep as many of our existing educators as possible and find more new educators
- Expanding our services so that we can help to fill the large (and growing) gap in child care availability in our region
- Making the best possible use of our limited floor space at Comerford Street and looking at options to find more space

Once again I would like to thank all the members of the Management Committee who voluntarily donate their precious time and expertise to help CECS. The legal responsibilities of being a member of the Management Committee can be quite daunting, even before the time commitment is considered. I am reminded of an old but very true saying – *"if you want something done, ask a busy person to do it"*. The members of the Management Committee are all volunteers who have day jobs and (many) other responsibilities and commitments. Despite this, they generously contribute their opinions and ideas during robust and interesting discussions at our monthly Management Committee meetings and on other occasions when required. Thank you on behalf of CECS for your dedication and generosity and for making a difference.

In my role as President and Treasurer, I am fortunate to spend time with the Management Team on a regular basis – it is truly inspiring to see people who display such passion and energy for their roles; who thrive on the challenges they face; and who care so deeply for their team members and the children in their care. They do all this while facing a never-ending and always-changing barrage of government legislation and regulations (it is truly head-spinning). And behind all of this they retain their focus on the underlying reason for being a member of the CECS team – to help the children of today to learn and to grow and to have fun while doing so.

I still fondly recall, from my time as a CECS parent, seeing that same enthusiasm and motivation in the educators who looked after my children in the various services they attended. I am sure that today's CECS parents are just as grateful as I was that their children are in such good hands.

I encourage everyone at CECS to keep doing the great work that you are doing – you are making a hugely positive difference to the lives of so many little people in our community. I am pleased and honoured that I have the opportunity to help CECS in some small way.

Peter Launders

President

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# Treasurer's report

**Cash balance as at 01/07/23 was \$742,788**

**Income received during the period of 01/07/23 to 30/06/24 was \$3,893,179**

**Expenses paid during the period of 01/07/23 to 30/06/24 were \$3,811,984**

**Cash balance as at 30/06/24 was \$705,871**

Cowra Early Childhood Services Co-Operative Ltd (CECS) has again performed strongly, both operationally and financially, over the 2023-2024 financial year. The OOSH, Mobile Preschool and Admin business units all recorded profits for the financial year and performed better than budget expectations. Carinya, Mobile LDC and Family Day Care recorded losses for the financial year – Mobile LDC performed better than budget expectations while Family Day Care was amazingly close to budget. Carinya did a great job in addressing some budgetary issues in the second half of the financial year to minimise the financial loss experienced.

By far the biggest challenge and change from a financial viewpoint for CECS is the Short Street Preschool development for which CECS received a \$3.7 million state government grant. The preschool project represents a major opportunity for CECS to expand and provide essential child care services to more families in Cowra and surrounds. But like any big opportunity, it has taken (and will continue to take) a huge amount of effort to keep the project progressing on budget and on time.

Thankfully the balance sheet for CECS is very strong with a surplus of assets over liabilities (net equity) of around \$2.5 million. The financial returns from the managed funds investment have contributed to this strong financial position, having remained pleasingly positive over the past financial year. The increases in the balance of this investment will be crucial in allowing CECS to fund their contribution to the Short Street Preschool development – a contribution which has inevitably increased in size due to government delays in approving the grant application. CECS also managed to secure Australian Tax Office Deductible Gift Recipient status which allows tax-deductible donations to be made to help with the financing of the project.

CECS is a not-for-profit organisation but is still expected (by regulators and other stakeholders such as employees and parents) to operate with sound financial discipline and good governance. Since joining the CECS Management Committee 8 years ago, I remain confident that CECS continues to meet these important obligations. CECS has a comprehensive suite of policies and processes in the areas of accounting, budgeting, governance and human resources. Monthly finance meetings are held to review variations in income and expenditure against budget – these meetings involve the Nominated Supervisors of all services, along with the CECS General Manager and representatives from the CECS Admin team and Balance Accountants & Advisers. The budget process at the start of each financial year is comprehensive and detailed. This fiscal discipline helps CECS to maintain service sustainability while continuing to offer affordable quality child care in all services.

Every year (and in most monthly meetings!) I thank and congratulate the Management Team for their efforts on the financial side of things as comfort with financial reports and concepts is not a natural fit for a professional child care worker. However, the Management Team have all shown remarkable dedication in getting up to speed on the financial aspects of their role.

Thanks are again due to the team at Balance Accountants & Advisers for their ongoing advice and support across a range of areas. While CECS is a not-for-profit organisation, there are still a myriad of financial and accounting rules that apply to CECS and we are able to navigate these regulatory minefields much more confidently in the knowledge that Balance are there to guide us.

Peter Launders  
Treasurer

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# General Manager

It's with gratitude and a sense of accomplishment that I present this year's General Manager's report to you all, acknowledging the combined efforts of our teams and a future focused view for CECS that I hope will continue to enthuse everyone in our network.

I would firstly like to thank our Management Team and our Admin team, for their continued support of all aspects of our organisation, and I would like to acknowledge the volunteer efforts of our Management Committee who come together each month, as our Approved Provider, to contribute to the leadership, strategic direction and governance of CECS. Thank you so much for all that you do. This year we will say farewell to Baden Dickson as a member of the CECS Management Committee after 4 years of dedicated service for which we are grateful for.

Thank you to all 57 of our educators who are at the forefront of our organisation, delivering education and care to the children and families around the Cowra Shire, and beyond. Your efforts, propelled by your passion and relationships with children, produce great results that you can all be proud of. You are truly valued and appreciated.

Our FY24 financial results produced an overall surplus of \$81,195 for the year.

Most of this surplus comes to us by way of our Investment Portfolio with additional income from wage subsidies, and miscellaneous funds contributing to a healthy financial outcome. I would like to recognise the fruitful Treasury efforts of Peter Launders (President and Treasurer) who some years ago suggested to the CECS team that we reinvest any recognised annual surplus into a managed portfolio fund with Colonial First State. This allows us to create passive income that we can use to reinvest in our organisation, without placing too much strain on our fees to families.

It's always a great result to be able to bring in a surplus and whilst it's not always necessary, it ensures we can invest in our future strategic goals.

Dedicated efforts across teams, and at an individual level, contribute broadly to our ongoing success and sustainability. A summary of CECS accomplishments is noted below, in recognition of those efforts.

1. Exceeding result for Mobile through Assessment and Rating
2. Meeting result for Carinya through Assessment and Rating
3. \$34,000 raised through fundraising efforts including Easter, Raffles, Donations and Read-a-book.
4. \$4,106,108 received in grant funding for Preschool construction, FDC, OOSH, Disability Support and Professional Development/Paid Practicum
5. New Branding (released at our last AGM)
6. FDC Nomination for Service of the Year in the Excellence in Family Day Care Awards 2024
7. All of Company Professional Development with Seed Paediatrics to build our knowledge and skills in Trauma Informed Care
8. Working with, and alongside expert, Karen Trengrove at Carinya in the space of speech and language development.
9. Refining our knowledge of Exercise Physiology with Danielle Spence
10. Partnering with Cowra Council to increase our knowledge of sustainable practices through recycling, reusing and repurposing.
11. Increased use of the Scout Hall for vacation care excursions
12. Obtained Deductible Gift Recipient Status with the ATO so all donations to CECS are tax deductible
13. Pitching for and securing 10 x \$2000 FDC grants from Cowra Council, for new FDC educators
14. Significant gains in our strategic approach to our future commitments to Cowra and the community through planning, documenting, relationship building and being front and centre with stakeholders of influence.
15. Completion of studies for Alisha at Carinya and Chloe R at Mobile.
16. Community Engagement in various events and activities including Cowra Eisteddfod, Local district shows, Festival of International Understanding, time spent with our Grandfriends at Weerona, contributing to the new park at Koorwatha and Cowra Child and Family Network Events.
17. Time spent together in teams, as services, or as an organisation through events such as CECS Amazing Race, Educator's Day, the Comedy Festival, Educator meetings, Quiz nights and professional development. We have a fantastic Christmas event to look forward to soon too.

And we have much to look forward to as head into the coming 12 months.

A shared desire to connect all corners of CECS into our vision, values and mission will be a guiding light for efforts in the coming year, and beyond, and I look forward to leading us in that direction.

Thanks for a great year, everyone.  
Libby Ewing-Jarvie

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## MOBILE

I am pleased to present the Mobile Annual Report for 2023-24. First, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my team for their continued hard work and commitment over the past 12 months. Working in a mobile early childhood service presents unique challenges, and each team member's courage and tenacity have been key to our success. I am incredibly grateful for the personal and professional support I receive daily from this dedicated group.

This year, our service was recognised with the *Excellence in Community Award*, acknowledging the Mobile team's dedication to creating a positive, safe, and inclusive learning environment for children in our communities. The judges praised our educators for delivering authentic learning experiences, traveling long distances to bring "truck school" to families, and always welcoming each child with a smile. Additionally, six of our educators received individual nominations, highlighting the exceptional contributions across the team.

Staffing shortages continue to pose challenges, especially in relation to expansion plans. In response, we've implemented a new hiring approach centered on developing talent internally. As a result, we successfully onboarded two new trainees at the beginning of 2024. Our close relationship with the local TAFE has been key in supporting their development, ensuring they receive both the theoretical and practical training needed for success.

We refined our introductory JotForm, *Working in Partnerships & Building Relationships*, to connect with families at the start of the year. This short and simple form, shared via text messages and our private Facebook group, has proven effective in gathering feedback from families. The feedback we received through this process highlighted the strong partnerships we've built and reinforced the importance of creating safe, supportive learning environments.

We were rated *Exceeding National Quality Standard (E)*. After receiving our Assessment and Rating Draft Reports, we seized the opportunity to provide additional feedback, pushing Quality Areas 2-6 to "Exceeding" status through a detailed submission of 30,000 words.

This remarkable achievement is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our team. Special recognition goes to Brooke Smith for her passion and belief in our service, which was instrumental in this success. The outpouring of support from families, past educators, and colleagues after sharing our A&R results has been humbling.

This year, we re-launched the *Read-a-Book-a-Day* fundraiser, which saw incredible participation, including one family raising \$900! Fundraisers like this create a supportive network, engaging families in the program and fostering a love for learning among children.

Our team also participated in the CINC NAIDOC 2024 event, celebrating culture and community. We hosted a stall at the Family Fun Day, where natural materials and engaging experiences for families and children brought the community together. Participation in events like this strengthens our ties with local communities and demonstrates our commitment to cultural respect and unity.

As part of our curriculum, we prioritised Child Protection Week, integrating safety lessons into our programs to empower children with the knowledge to protect themselves. Educators facilitated the *Biggest Safety Lesson* from the Daniel Morcombe Foundation, providing children with vital tools for recognizing unsafe situations and seeking help from trusted adults.

Working in small rural villages, building relationships with local communities is a core part of our role. Adventures to local schools, post offices, and playgrounds have deepened children's understanding of their surroundings, fostering a sense of belonging. We also actively participated in local events, such as the Koorawatha Playground Redevelopment, Gooloogong Public School Easter Hat Parade and the Festival of International Understanding.

In closing, I extend my sincere gratitude to the Management Committee for their time, expertise, and steadfast support of Cowra Early Childhood Services. I also want to acknowledge Libby Ewing-Jarvie, Di Clark, Melissa Riches, and Jenna Woods for cultivating a culture of professional inquiry, growth, and constructive debate.

Thank you for another successful year, and I look forward to continuing our important work in the year ahead.

Penny Smith  
Mobile LDC & Preschool

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## CARINYA

Whilst this time of year can become very fast paced, it's also a time for us to slow the pace and to take time to reflect. When preparing this report, I felt I needed to share the voices of our team. I asked our team to share with me what they felt were their successes and their challenges so far this year.

When reflecting on our successes, we identified that we have developed and maintained three strong teams. At the beginning of the year, we saw significant change across our team structures and each team has worked really hard on their communication, interactions and teamwork with one another. We've had 7 new educators join our team throughout the year all bringing a wide range of knowledge and experience. Hayley graduated from university with a bachelor's degree in early childhood and primary school teaching and Alisha completed her Certificate 3 in Early Childhood Education and Care.

We have provided a high-quality curriculum across all three rooms, allowing our children to grow, learn and thrive. Our children were provided with many wonderful opportunities, some of which included...

- Sammy Sculthorpe, a parent of ours, and a local business owner, provided our Preschoolers with a week's worth of CPR and first aid lessons.
- Movement sessions, facilitated by Danielle Spence, our local exercise physiologist and committee member.
- Reigniting our special connection with our grand friends from Weeroona via many small group excursions to share celebrations such as Easter, Mother's Day, and Anzac Day.
- Hosting a visit from local author, Lusi Austin, who read her story – and patiently answered a hundred different questions.
- Bravely performing our percussion items at the eisteddfod scoring a first place and a highly commended.
- Going on excursions to the local library and to explore our local surrounds.
- And of course I can't forget our special visit from Mr Whippy, following on from the children's strong interest in all things ice-cream.

Some may say I'm crazy, but I believe we were fortunate to have our assessment and rating visit this year. This was an opportunity for us to not stress and to rather showcase our best practices and to receive constructive feedback. Our service was rated overall as meeting. This now gives us the drive to continue to be our very best and to be creative in our decisions as we move forward. Now for the challenges. I feel it is important that we acknowledge the challenges as it's within a challenge where we grow, learn and change. Some of our challenges have included...

- Supporting children with additional needs, including behavioural challenges, across all cohorts. We feel that we are seeing more and more children present each year with diverse needs and it is our challenge and commitment to find strategies and practices to be able to support all children's learning and development within the one space.
- This year we navigated our way through several different outbreaks of illnesses that saw many of our children and educators become quite unwell. These periods of time are concerning for all involved and often require higher levels of strength, flexibility, and empathy.
- Another challenge I will touch on tonight, is the challenge of finding an achievable balance between the physical demand of educating and caring for children alongside the administrative demand of ensuring our practices are documented and updated frequently. It can be a complex dual role that I'm sure many of us can relate to.
- It's also been a challenge to look after this grand building of ours, making repairs here and there and finding ways to utilise the spaces to their best capacity. At one stage, Libby and I had our very own waterfall flowing in from the ceiling and unfortunately, it wasn't resort style.

As we head into a new year, we plan to continue to give time and thought to our successes and challenges, identifying new possibilities and actions for improvement.

By now, most of my crew would be aware that I love a good shout-out, we do them at every educator meeting. Tonight, however, I'm choosing not to do any shout-outs as there are too many of you that need to be acknowledged, and I would prefer to acknowledge you in a more individual and personal manner. So tonight, I'd like to say a big thank you to you all for walking alongside me as I navigate my new role as Director. I have appreciated and continue to appreciate the ongoing support and encouragement that has been shared with me. One of the many things that I love about this role is that there is always something different happening, I don't think I have ever had a moment of boredom.

So, here's to another year of fun, play and learning and

Thank you.  
Jenna Woods

# Learning Through Play

OOSH has this year successfully achieved its goal of providing high quality affordable and equitable care to families within Cowra and surrounding districts.

Occupancy for afterschool care was steady between 95 to 100% for July till December 2023. We started 2024 with 100% occupancy and a waiting list on all days. We have maintained this 100% occupancy throughout the first 2 3/4 terms of 2024. Within the last few weeks we have had several families reduce days and have not been able to full all of these positions so currently sit at 92%. OOSH will start our 2025 enrolment process at the beginning of November with a re-enrolment period for current families which will offer the days they have currently and opportunity to request extra days. As with other CECS services current enrolments and siblings will have priority over new families. I do anticipate we will have a number of positions for new children/families as we have a few older children who may not require ASC in 2025. We currently have 56 enrolled children who regularly use our service 37 have permanent ASC positions the remaining attend most vacation care programs.

Over the past 12 months the average occupancy for vacation care is 94.4%.

- Di Clark 4.5/5 days per week throughout 2023-2024 as OOSH Director, Educational Leader and Team Leader.
- Connor Munroe engaged Feb 2023, permanent casual educator for ASC, 3 days a week, and VC up to 20 hours per week.
- Dodee Ryan engaged as team leader on a casual basis, Dodee has been able to take on the responsible person role in OOSH when needed.
- Jess Graham 2 days ASC permanent casual, extra hours - January 2024 till May 2024 leaving OOSH due to change of career path.
- Demi Beer commenced with OOSH in June 2024, in a permanent casual role of 11 hours a week ASC, including time for programming and cleaning. Demi has recently completed her first aid and Identify and Report Children and Young People at Risk of Harm qualifications and will now be able to step into the responsible person role.
- Lilly Smith, Rhys Hughes, Nat Clarke Savannah Morgan, Jane Dolan, and other Carinya, and Mobile educators have assisted in OOSH when required.

2 OOSH Educators attended the full day CECS Trauma Informed Practices professional development. The OOSH service was closed on the day to allow educators to attend. Di attended the annual Network of Community Activities OOSH conference which provides opportunities for a full day of professional development and networking with other OOSH service directors and educators.

The CCCF round 3 sustainability grant final payment was received in January 2024. We applied for the CCCF round 4 grant and received a smaller grant amount which will be paid bi-annually for the term of the grant, This is the only source of federal government funding OOSH receives. Cowra OOSH currently receives no State funding or grants. Government CCS (Child Care Subsidy) payments are received weekly, this is the subsidy that families receive on their OOSH fees and is paid directly to the service. Coles Cowra donates a \$50.00 Gift card to OOSH each week to assist with the shopping for afternoon tea provisions. Our local businesses/families continued support of our OOSH service is greatly appreciated. it assists us to continue providing high quality affordable and equitable care in middle childhood to families within Cowra and surrounding districts OOSH has not completed any individual fundraising although educators and children have assisted/participated in all CECS fundraising ventures including easter egg hunt, and raffle.

Billy Goat Hill, the Scout Hall, Netball Courts, Skate Park, Town Library, Civic Centre movies and River Park are all venues that we have visited for vacation care excursions throughout the last 12 months.

Walking or travelling on the town bus and participating in these excursions has provided opportunities for the OOSH children and educators to engage within the community.

Learning Through Play

# OOSH

CECS Educational leaders and management team made the decision to participate in the Cowra Festival of International Understanding by entering the window display competition. All services including OOSH participated by researching and developing craft icons related to Italy for the display. CECS used the "Shoes 4 You" window for our display, we thank Peggy Beer for enabling us to use her shop window. The CECS window display received first prize.

Arts and crafts produced by the children were entered in the local agriculture shows including, Woodstock, Morongla and Cowra.

In November 2023 changes were made to the Vacation Care cancellation policy in relation to the notice that needs to be given to cancel vacation care positions to avoid being charged for the day. This was previously 24 hours' notice, it is now 7 days (1 week) notice. General feedback from families regarding this policy change has been positive and understanding of the reasons for the change.

We are still searching for the ideal venue for OOSH to make their own. We have used the Scout Hall as a excursion venue for vacation care days and this provides large indoor and outdoor spaces that could be developed into permanent OOSH if permission was granted.

We had some discussions with Cowra Public School to investigate opportunities to operate our service from the school. After some consideration the rooms that were offered to us were not suitable.

I would like to thank OOSH educators for their dedication and flexibility to OOSH over the past year.

To the directors/co-ordinators of the other CECS services and administration staff who have assisted me in my position and continue to assist me to run the OOSH service effectively I thank you and appreciate your help.

Thank you to the CECS management committee members and other stakeholders for their work to ensure that CECS OOSH operates as a high quality, affordable, family friendly service.

Di Clark

OOSH Co-ordinator

Cowra Early Childhood Services

October 2024

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## FAMILY DAY CARE

Over the last year, Cowra Early Childhood Services Family Day Care (CECS FDC) has continued to provide high quality, affordable early & middle childhood education and care which meets the individual needs of our client families. Approximately 150 children have participated in our child-centred, play-based programs, building strong, ongoing relationships with their educators, and thriving in the small-group, homely environments which characterise our unique model of early childhood care and education.

In July CECS FDC was approved for a further two years of grant funding from the Federal government's Community Child Care Fund. This, in addition to educator and parent levies goes towards the everyday operations of the service.

Occupancy has remained at between 99% and 100% and our waiting list for care has continued to grow, so recruitment and retention of educators has remained a strong focus. Four additional educators were registered in the 23-24 FY. These educators support families in Blayney, Millthorpe, Cowra, Young and now Gooloogong. Our efforts to extend our services into more outlying communities and towns within 100 kilometres of Cowra continue; however, the loss of three long-term educators in Cowra has compelled us to prioritise Cowra & district in our ongoing recruitment efforts.

To that end, this year CECS FDC was fortunate to collaborate with Cowra Shire Council to obtain five \$2000 Start Up grants for new educators, to assist with the initial cost associated with starting a small business. It was gratifying to have the value and importance of Family Day Care acknowledged and supported by our Council in response to the innovative grant proposal made by our Educational Leader, Keira Wills. Thank you to the councillors, especially those who spoke so eloquently in our favour.

The first grant recipient will commence providing care by the end of 2024 and is extremely grateful for the assistance. A further two educators are also undergoing the registration and onboarding process for a 2025 start.

Over the year, CECS FDC maintained and strengthened collaborative relationships with other community organisations such as CINC, DCJ, Cowra Health Services, Service NSW, Cowra Child & Family Network (CCFN), Tresillian, Mission Australia, TAFE, local primary schools and so on. These relationships allow us to assist and refer families whose children need additional supports, and to ensure children's transition to school is facilitated successfully.

We have developed new professional partnerships with BeYou and Positive Living Skills, both government funded programs which are run to promote mental health and wellbeing from early childhood.

Highlights of our community engagement included representing CECS by hosting a stall with Mobile at the CINC sponsored NAIDOC celebration, collaborating with the Cowra Child & Family Network (CCFN) to host a stall at the Cowra Festival, participation with CCFN at the "Super Sports Day" in April, and again recently at the "Family Fun Day". In addition to this, FDC educators successfully entered some amazing creative pieces into Cowra's annual Recycled Art competition and the Young Show.

Learning Through Play

## FAMILY DAY CARE

As a scheme, CECS FDC once again promoted and participated in Early Childhood Educator Day, National Simultaneous Story Time, Book Week, National Recycling Week and NAIDOC Week. We were also represented at the CECS "Amazing Race", Early Childhood Educator Day Quiz Night and Steptember!

CECS FDC is committed to continual improvement and lifelong learning and each educator and staff member completed at least four professional development sessions across the year. At a CECS level, FDC was also represented at the "Trauma Informed Care" professional development day and Allan Parker's "Brain Reset" tour.

We are so grateful for the opportunity to access such rich, valuable learning experiences.

At a sector level, CECS FDC continued to develop networking relationships with the NSW/ ACT Inclusion Support Service, which supports the scheme in developing and implementing our Strategic Inclusion Plan (SIP). Through this relationship, CECS FDC has been able to build relationships with other FDC schemes, engage with indigenous educators and directors, and build our capacity to ensure all children have access to the same opportunities, in culturally safe spaces.

Following an in depth review of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (the EYLF) a new version-EYLF V2.0 was released and implementation mandated from February 2024. CECS FDC has spent significant time preparing for these changes and ensuring educators are up to date with requirements.

A "spot check" visit by authorised officers from the Department of Education in April was a great opportunity to showcase two of our educator's services, as well as the Coordination Unit. We were compliant in all areas checked.

CECS FDC has also worked collaboratively with the other CECS' services to plan strategically for the future of our organisation to ensure we can continue to meet the present and emerging needs of our communities.

Heartfelt thanks go our committed and passionate educators, for your flexibility, willingness to go above and beyond, and the genuine care you show your client families. Also, to our Educational Leaders, Natalie, and Keira, for all their hard work, positive attitudes, and innovative approaches to their roles. Their professionalism and vision is balanced with humour and practicality, which are assets to our scheme.

Thanks must also go to our General Manager, Libby, the Management Team: Di, Penny, and Jenna, and the Administration Team: Nicky, Ros, and Emily, for their unending support, encouragement, and perseverance in the face of challenges and change.

Thank you also to the Management Committee for their dedication and commitment to Cowra Early Childhood Services.

Melissa Riches  
Director/ Nominated Supervisor  
Cowra Early Childhood Services Family Day Care

# Learning Through Play

# Wellness & wellbeing within CECS

## **CECS aims to -**

- To support and promote the wellness and wellbeing of all employees through workplace practices.
- To build and maintain a workplace environment and culture which supports overall health and wellbeing and prevents discrimination (including bullying and harassment).
- To increase employee knowledge and awareness of issues around mental health.
- To reduce stigma around mental illness in the workplace.
- To encourage employees' active participation in initiatives which support wellness and wellbeing.
- To encourage and support employees to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
- For employees to be advocates in promoting wellness and wellbeing to children, families and the community.

## **Across 2023 – 2024 CECS:**

- Celebrated Educators day with a special dinner and quiz night which was hosted at Mobile HQ
- Conducted regular meetings as teams in various formats including in-person and online
- Engaged in professional development to engage and uplift staff members
- 40 educators and plus ones came along to the Comedy Festival at Cowra Civic Centre for a second year
- Maintained and extended gym membership through a partnership with locals RAD Gym
- Took part in CECS version of Steptember
- Weekly stretch classes were run in-house with the help of a qualified educator
- We maintained an EAP program that is accessible to all staff and their immediate families .

Learning Through Play



# Financial Report

## Statement of Financial Position

COWRA EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LTD

As at 30 June 2024

	NOTES	30 JUNE 2024	30 JUNE 2023
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash & Cash Equivalents	2	705,871	742,788
Receivables	4	6,286	11,981
Investments	5	1,759,948	1,529,409
Prepaid Expenses		53,639	-
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>2,525,744</b>	<b>2,284,179</b>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Property, Plant & Equipment	6	792,379	725,089
<b>Total Non-Current Assets</b>		<b>792,379</b>	<b>725,089</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b>3,318,122</b>	<b>3,009,268</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Payables	7	161,010	89,882
Current Provisions	8	528,850	418,108
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>			
Rounding		-	-
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>689,860</b>	<b>507,991</b>
<b>Non-Current Liabilities</b>			
<b>Non-Current Provisions</b>			
Provision LSL		147,833	102,042
<b>Total Non-Current Provisions</b>		<b>147,833</b>	<b>102,042</b>
<b>Total Non-Current Liabilities</b>		<b>147,833</b>	<b>102,042</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<b>837,693</b>	<b>610,033</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>2,480,430</b>	<b>2,399,235</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
<b>Undistributed Income</b>			
Current Year Earnings		81,195	208,900
Retained Earnings		2,369,069	2,160,169
<b>Total Undistributed Income</b>		<b>2,450,264</b>	<b>2,369,069</b>
<b>Reserves</b>			
Asset Revaluation Reserve		22,882	22,882
Pre incorporation Reserve		7,284	7,284
<b>Total Reserves</b>		<b>30,166</b>	<b>30,166</b>
<b>Total Equity</b>		<b>2,480,430</b>	<b>2,399,235</b>

# Financial Report

## Consolidated Profit & Loss Statement

COWRA EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LTD

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
Income		
Total Income	3,893,179	3,629,859
Total Expenses	3,811,984	3,420,959
Net Profit /(Loss)	81,195	208,900

Complete Financial Statements available on request email || [admin@cecs.com.au](mailto:admin@cecs.com.au)

Learning Through Play

# Financial Report

## Statement of Changes in Equity

COWRA EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LTD

For the year ended 30 June 2024

2024

### Changes in Equity

#### Retained Profits

Balance at 1 July 2021	2,124,650
Profit for year	35,519
Balance at 30 June 2022	2,160,169
Profit for year	208,900
Balance at 30 June 2023	2,369,069
Profit for the year	81,195
Retained Profits Balance at 30 June 2024	2,450,264

#### General Reserves

Balance at 1 July 2021	30,166
Movement for year	-
Balance at 30 June 2022	30,166
Movement for year	-
Balance at 30 June 2023	30,166
Movement for year	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	30,166

Total Equity

2,480,430

Learning Through Play

# Financial Report

## Statement of Cash Flows

COWRA EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES CO-OPERATIVE LTD

For the year ended 30 June 2024

	2024	2023
<b>Cash Flows</b>		
<b>Cash flows from Operating Activities (Note 3)</b>		
Receipts from members and customers	4,078,391	4,284,545
Payments to suppliers and employees	(3,969,615)	(4,031,575)
<b>Total Cash flows from Operating Activities (Note 3)</b>	<b>108,776</b>	<b>252,970</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>		
(Purchase)/Sale of Property, Plant & Equipment	(105,693)	(63,090)
<b>Total Cash Flows from Investing Activities</b>	<b>(105,693)</b>	<b>(63,090)</b>
<b>Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>		
Proceeds/(Payment) of Investments	(40,000)	51,000
<b>Total Cash Flows from Financing Activities</b>	<b>(40,000)</b>	<b>51,000</b>
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash held	(36,917)	240,880
<b>Cash at beginning of financial year</b>		
Cash at beginning of financial year	742,788	501,908
<b>Total Cash at beginning of financial year</b>	<b>742,788</b>	<b>501,908</b>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year (Note 2)	705,871	742,788

Complete Financial Statements available on request email || [admin@cecs.com.au](mailto:admin@cecs.com.au)

Learning Through Play

Cowra  
Preschool



**Cowra Early Childhood Services**





- ALL TREES SHOWN ARE EXISTING TO REMAIN
- ALL BUILDINGS TO BE SINGLE LEVEL AND ODA ACCESSIBLE

**PHASE B**  
 OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS FOR 30 PRIMARY SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN  
 ROOM 1 30 CHILDREN 5 + YEARS  
 CRAFT AREA  
 OUTDOOR PLAY AREA  
 DIRECTORS OFFICE  
 BATHROOMS  
 KITCHENETTE  
 STORAGE

**PHASE E**  
 66 PLACE CENTRE BASED LONG DAY CARE CENTRE  
 ROOM 1 18 CHILDREN 0-2 YEARS,  
 ROOM 2 18 CHILDREN 2-3 YEARS,  
 ROOM 3 20 CHILDREN 3-4 YEARS,  
 ROOM 4 10 CHILDREN 3-4 YEARS  
 OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE,  
 KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM IN EACH ROOM,  
 MEETING ROOM SPACE FOR 6 PEOPLE,  
 OFFICE SPACE WITH 3 WORKSTATIONS  
 DIRECTORS OFFICE,  
 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OFFICE  
 EDUCATIONAL LEADER OFFICE  
 STAFF ROOM  
 BATHROOMS  
 STORAGE  
 LAUNDRY

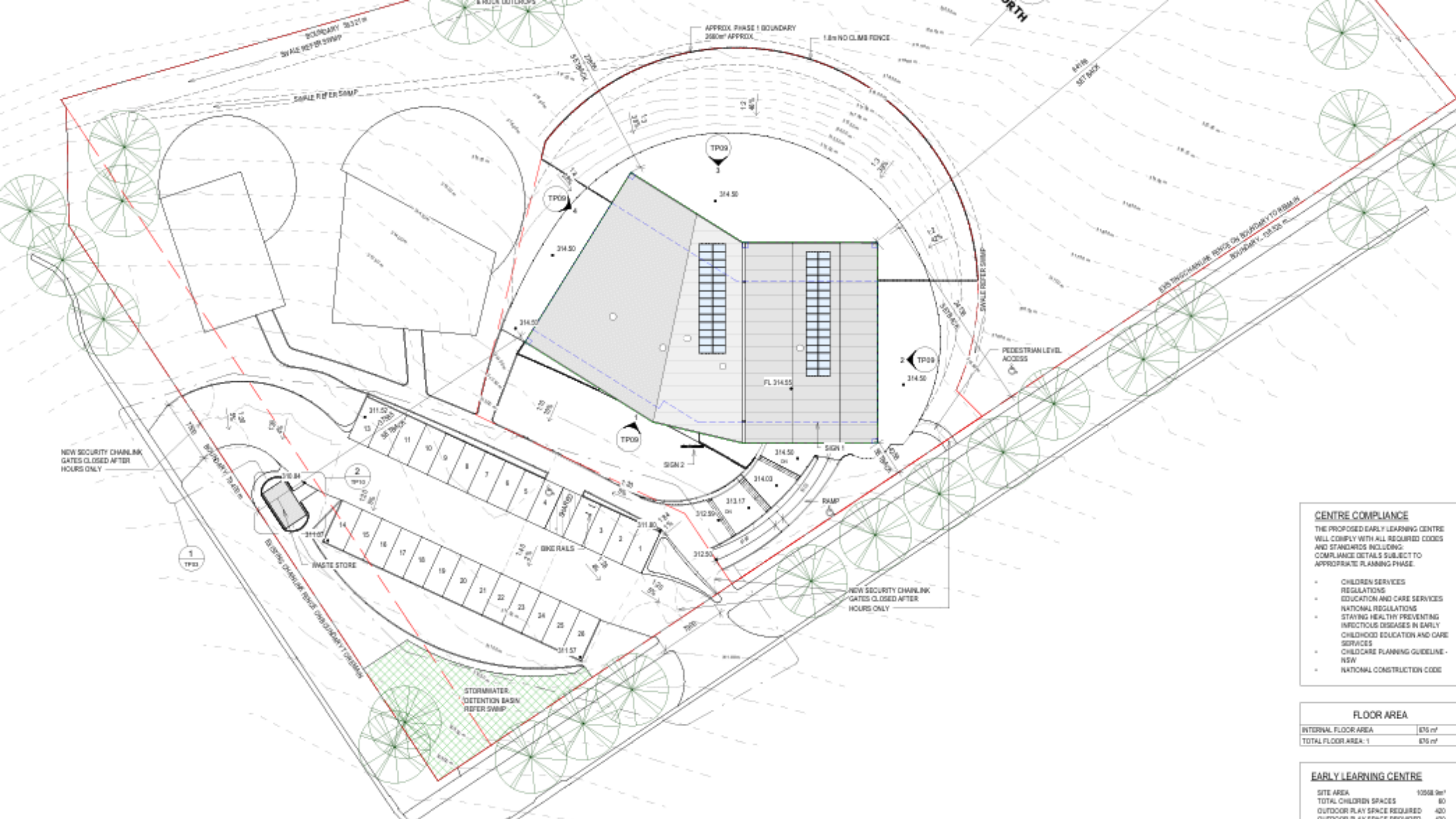
**SITE CALCULATIONS**

SITE AREA	9903m²
SITE COVER	1800' 18% APPROX.
LANDSCAPING	5400' 54% APPROX.
HARDSTAND	2700' 27% APPROX.

**MAIN STREET**

INFORMAL ACCESS FOR MAINTENANCE





**CENTRE COMPLIANCE**  
 THE PROPOSED EARLY LEARNING CENTRE WILL COMPLY WITH ALL REQUIRED CODES AND STANDARDS INCLUDING COMPLIANCE DETAILS SUBJECT TO APPROPRIATE PLANNING PHASE.

- CHILDREN SERVICES REGULATIONS
- EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS
- STAYING HEALTHY PREVENTING INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES
- CHILD CARE PLANNING GUIDELINE - NSW
- NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CODE

**FLOOR AREA**

INTERNAL FLOOR AREA	876 m <sup>2</sup>
TOTAL FLOOR AREA - 1	876 m <sup>2</sup>

**EARLY LEARNING CENTRE**

SITE AREA	1058 9m <sup>2</sup>
TOTAL CHILDREN SPACES	80
OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE REQUIRED	420
OUTDOOR PLAY SPACE PROVIDED	420





CECS

CECS

FR



CECS

CECS

FR



















314.50

317.00 m

316.50 m

319.00 m

318.50 m

318.00 m

317.50 m

1-2 YEARS  
231 SQM  
UNENCUMBERED PLAY

2-5 YEARS  
788 SQM  
UNENCUMBERED PLAY

2

7

5

17

3

3

8

9

17

15

2

1

7

10

16

11

12

13

14

4



Log play fort



Raised sandstone and log garden bed



Herb garden



Outdoor Kitchen



Raised concrete planter



Music Play Panel



Water pump and creek bed



Play Cubby





01



02



03



## SHRUBS & ACCENTS



05



05

## GRASSES



08



09



10



11

## GROUND COVERS



- 01. EUCALYPTUS SALIGNA
- 02. MAGNOLIA GRANDIFLORA
- 03. TRISTANIOPSIS LAURINA
- 04. EUCALYPTUS PANICULATA
- 05. ACMENA SMITHII VAR MINOR
- 06. CORREA ALBA
- 07. PENNISETUM ALOPECUROIDESA
- 08. DIANELLA CAERULLEA 'LITTLE JESS'
- 09. DIETES BI-COLOUR
- 10. LOMANDRA LONGIFOLIA TANIKA
- 11. LIRIOPE MUSCARI
- 12. VIOLA HEDERACEA
- 13. CASUARINA GLAUCA 'COUSIN IT'

# Key Dates

