



Sandhurst
Catholic Early
Childhood Education
& Care Ltd
Peace & Goodness

Sandhurst Catholic Education Childhood Education and Care Limited
(SCECE&C Ltd)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
2022 - 2023

REPORT

11 September 2023

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Introduction

The 2022 – 2023 has been an important period for SCECE&C as the Board has continued to lay strong foundations for strengthening and growing the provision of early childhood education and care within the Diocese of Sandhurst. The ongoing rigor to policy development and approval as outlined within this report is ensuring that our current services are compliant with the National Quality Framework and our new services are supported at a high standard to implement policy and procedures at time of opening.

SCECE&C Vision is to create high quality environments, where each child and family is accompanied on their journey of development, supported by the pastoral ministry of our Church as embodied in our Sandhurst communities.

The authentically Catholic nature of Diocesan early childhood education and care, where young children will experience being part of God’s family, combined with the awe – inspiring mystery and wonder of creation, will nurture and influence significantly a holistic approach for the development of each child.

At the heart of this vision is our commitment to the ongoing duty of care that we have for the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children, a pursuit of excellence in learning and creating communities of welcome, hospitality and inclusion within the Catholic tradition.

The Vision for SCECE&C Ltd underpins the development of our new services, the MacKillop Early Learning Centre at Nagambie and a Community Hub in Echuca.



(Opening 2024)

Governance

The SCECE&C Ltd Board has met from October 2022 through to August 2023, with 7 meetings and 2 extra ordinary meetings conducted during this period. Mr Paul Desmond, the Chief Executive Officer provides the senior leadership, through the staff team for the management and organisation of the Company.

Board Formation

The Board engaged in formation in the early stages of 2023 with the Australian Institute of Company Directors completing the Sharpen Your Skills Short course. The program provided included:

- Module 1: Duties and Responsibilities of the Not- for- Profit Director (February 14th 2023)
- Module 2: Strategy and Risk for the Not- for- Profit Director (February 14th, 2023)
- Module 3: Finance for the Not – for- Profit Director (March 21st, 2023)

Board Membership



Committees

The Executive Committee oversees the effective operation of Board meetings, including setting the agenda, prioritizing items and topics for discussion. The Committee functions as a steering committee, prioritizing issues for the SCECE&C Board to address. The functions of the Committee are provided within the Terms of Reference which are reviewed every two years.

The Child Safety, Audit and Risk Committee is a committee of the SCECE&C Limited Board. The Child Safety, Audit and Risk Committee provides strategic advice, monitors compliance with policies and makes recommendations to the Board about issues relevant to governance, ensuring that SCECE&C Ltd operates effectively, efficiently, ethically, prudently, and legally. The work of the Committee over the past 12-month period has included:

- 1) Review of annual budgets, quarterly finance reports and the Auditors report
- 2) Review of Business Plan
- 3) Review of Capital Projects
- 4) Review of Frameworks, Policies and Documents
- 5) Review of Child Safety reports
- 6) Review of Occupational health & Safety Reports

Governance Frameworks, Policies and Documents

The Board approved the following new Frameworks during the past 12-month period:

- Delegations Framework
- Shared Mission Framework
- Child Safety Framework

The Risk Register and Appetite Statement is currently being developed and reviewed by the Child Safety, Audit and Risk Committee in preparation for recommendation to the Board.

The Naming of Buildings, Rooms, Facilities and Programs Policy was approved by the Board and then implemented for the naming of the new service at Nagambie.

The Terms of Reference Child Safety, Audit and Risk Committee and the Conflict-of-Interest Policy have been reviewed with noted amendments approved by the Board.

Growth Strategy

The Board has continued to monitor and update the Growth Strategy, highlighting opportunities to explore potential new services for the organization. Applications to the Victorian School Building Authority are continually being lodged, monitored, and updated as new information and data becomes available. We anticipate at least 1 – 2 applications for additional services being successful in the next 12 months.

Business Plan

The SCECE&C Business Plan has been reviewed and updated to include the ongoing finances for the existing services and the projected finances for the new Projects at Nagambie and Echuca. A consolidated financial forecasting for SCECE&C has been monitored and updated periodically during the past 12-month period.

2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan

The inaugural Strategic Plan for SCECE&C Ltd was launched by Bishop Shane Mackinlay in March 2023 at the Diocesan Leadership Gathering. The Strategic plan provides direction and sets priorities for the next five-year period with the children at the heart of our efforts to be an authentic Catholic community, with quality teaching practice, focusing of a culture of care by nurturing a healthy, safe learning environment.



The Board has developed a 2023 – 2024 Strategic Priority Plan with strategic goals for the 2023 – 2024 period. The Plan provides actions and goals for the Board under each of the five strategic community areas. The Strategic Plan and Priority Plan is available on the Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education & Care website.



Regulatory Information

The National Quality Framework (NQF) provides a national approach to regulation, assessment and quality improvement for early childhood education and care across Australia including SCECE&C Ltd and the services under our governance. The NQF encompasses the Education and Care Services National Law, Education and Care Services National Regulations, the National Quality Standards (NQS) and the Approved Learning Frameworks. Our services are monitored for compliance and assessed and rated by the state regulatory authority which the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) have delegated to the Department of Education (DE) Quality and Regulatory Division (QARD) in Victoria.

Services are assessed and rated by their regulatory authority against the NQS and given a rating for each of the seven quality areas and an overall rating based on these results. St Mel’s Kindergarten and Assisi Kindergarten are both currently rated as services that exceeds the National Quality Standards.

Services

St Mel’s Kindergarten Shepparton

Kindergarten Director	Miriam Stewart
Staff Employed	12 Staff (FTE 4.79)
Enrolments	
4-year-old program	48 children
3-year-old program	40 children



Assisi Kindergarten Strathfieldsaye

Director	Alison Knowles
Staff employed	17 staff (FTE 8.39)
2023 Enrolments	
4-year-old program	88 children
3-year-old program	66 children



MacKillop Early Learning Centre Nagambie

Opening January 2024

Director	To be Appointed.
Staff	FTE 1.89 (To be Appointed)
Enrolments	22 (to be confirmed)



Capital Grants and Projects

The following projects have been supported with grants allocated by the Victorian School Building Authority.

Project	Grants	Date
Echuca Early Childhood Centre	4,909,000.00	November 2024
St Mel's Kindergarten Expansion	372,133.00	To be completed
St Mel's Bathroom	71,781.33	To be completed
St Mel's Director's Office	37,770.78	To be completed
St Mel's Ambulant, Store and Staff DA	52,334.92	To be completed
St Mel's Deck & Shade Sails	39,93.80	Completed
Assisi Inclusive Play Structure	170,000	Completed
Assisi Internal Renovations	40,924.00	Completed
MacKillop Nagambie	1,800,000.00	December 2023

Assisi Kindergarten contributed \$27,857.85 to the Inclusive Play Structure and St Mel's Kindergarten contributed \$1,200.00 to the Deck and Shade Sails. SCECE&C Ltd has an approved loan with the Diocesan Development Fund for \$2,000,000 for the Echuca Early Childhood Centre.

Policy

The Board has a Document Register outlining Core Documents, Frameworks, Policies and Protocols that have been developed, endorsed, noting date for review.

The National Regulations requires the Approved Provider of a service to have in place prescribed policies and procedures. The following Policies have been reviewed and approved by the Board to ensure each of the services have the appropriate policies in place.

- Nutrition
- Oral Health and Active Play
- Food Safety
- Sun Protection
- Water Safety
- Administration of First Aid
- Sleep and Rest
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases

- Dealing with Medical Conditions
- Administration of Medication
- Anaphylaxis
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Epilepsy
- Emergency and Evacuation
- Delivery and Collection of Children

The Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education & Care in the Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst was reviewed, with noted updates approved by the Board.

Finances

- A bank loan of \$495,000 was approved by the Diocesan Development Fund in December 2022 to pay St Therese's Parish Kennington for the outstanding capital contribution for Assisi Kindergarten. The loan was drawn down on May 4, 2023 and payment made to the St Therese's Parish.
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd, the Parent Company, is contributing financial support to SCECE&C Ltd by covering payroll costs for the Chief Early Childhood Officer and the Finance/Administration Officer for the period 2023 and 2024. The Catholic Diocese of Sandhurst has maintained the current Peppercorn arrangements within the Right of Use Agreements for St Mel's and St Therese's Parishes for 2023 – 2024.
- A bank loan of \$2,000,000 was approved by the Diocesan Development Fund in December 2022 for the Echuca Project. At this stage the funds have not been accessed.
- Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd is the appointed Auditors for SCECE&C Ltd annual financial statements. This has been completed for the 2022 financial year with the auditor's report endorsed by SCECE&C Ltd Board. It was submitted to ACNC as required by June 30th of 2023. The Auditors Report and the Directors Report are provided for the Annual General Meeting and are also available on the ANCN website.

Concluding Comments

Thank you to the Board Directors and Committee members for their diligence and commitment, particularly as we have navigated our way through the challenges and opportunities presented with the Echuca Project. The Board acknowledges the ongoing support of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd as the parent Company and looks forward to continuing to strengthen this relationship in providing early childhood education for families within Catholic Education.

The work of the Board has been supported by our Chief Executive Officer Mr Paul Desmond. Paul's leadership and oversight has been critical during the initial 3-year period of SCECE&C Ltd. His capacity to have strong leadership of the management and operations of the organisation have been invaluable and will be part of the legacy that Paul leaves upon his pending retirement. Paul has been most generous with his time, expertise and support as the Company has built the solid foundations to ensure the ongoing and future provision of early childhood education within the Diocese of Sandhurst.

The ongoing work of Ms Carla Jeffrey Chief Early Childhood is to be commended. Of note is her capacity to build sound working relationships with agencies and government bodies who are pivotal to the future growth and development of SCECE&C Ltd. Carla's professional approach to communication with the Board has ensured that effective decisions are made in the best interests of the organisation. Her oversight of staff within the Unit and our current services continues to provide a high level of early childhood education and care for our children and their families.



JULIE COBBLEDICK

CHAIR OF SCECE&C LTD BOARD