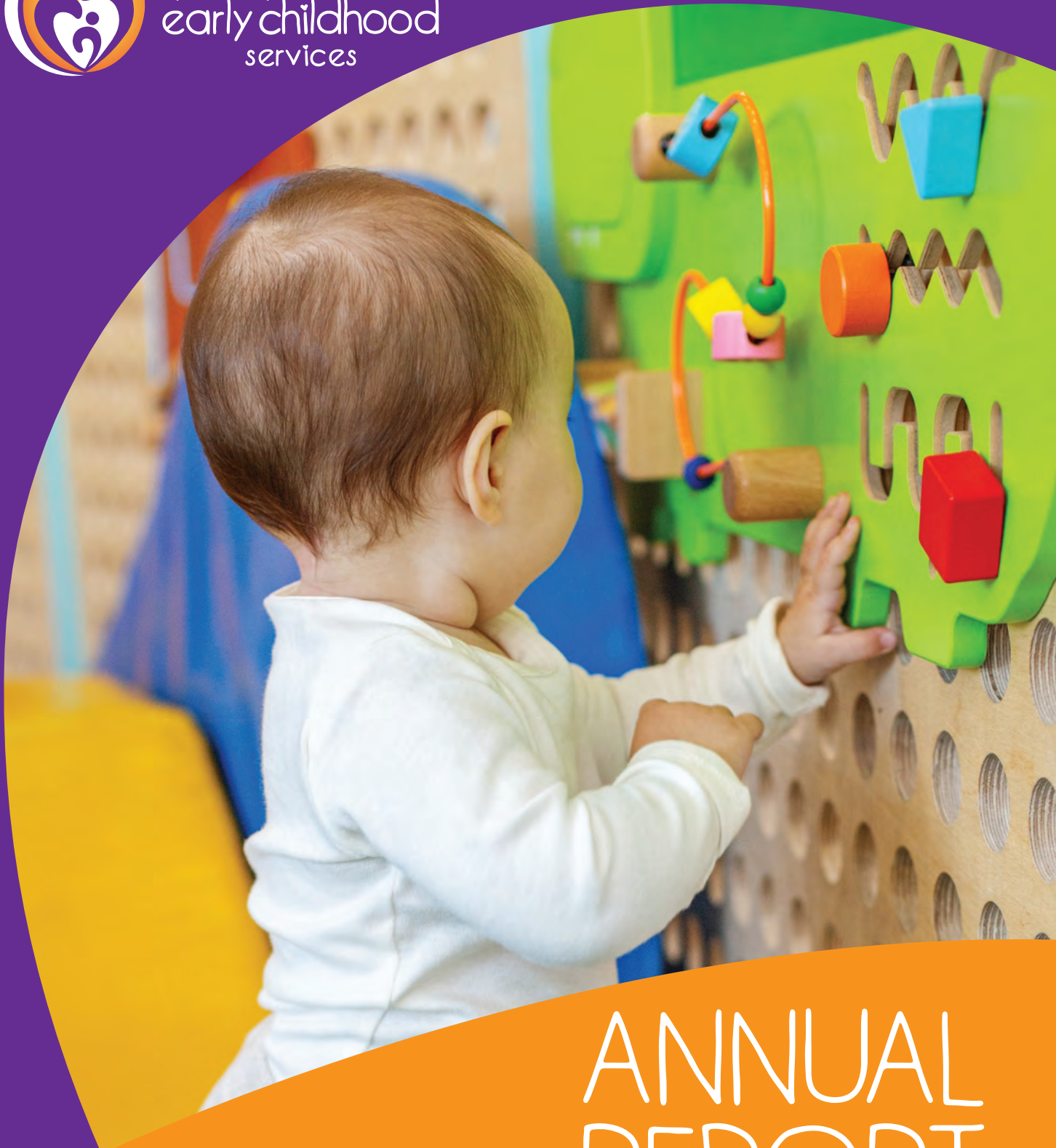




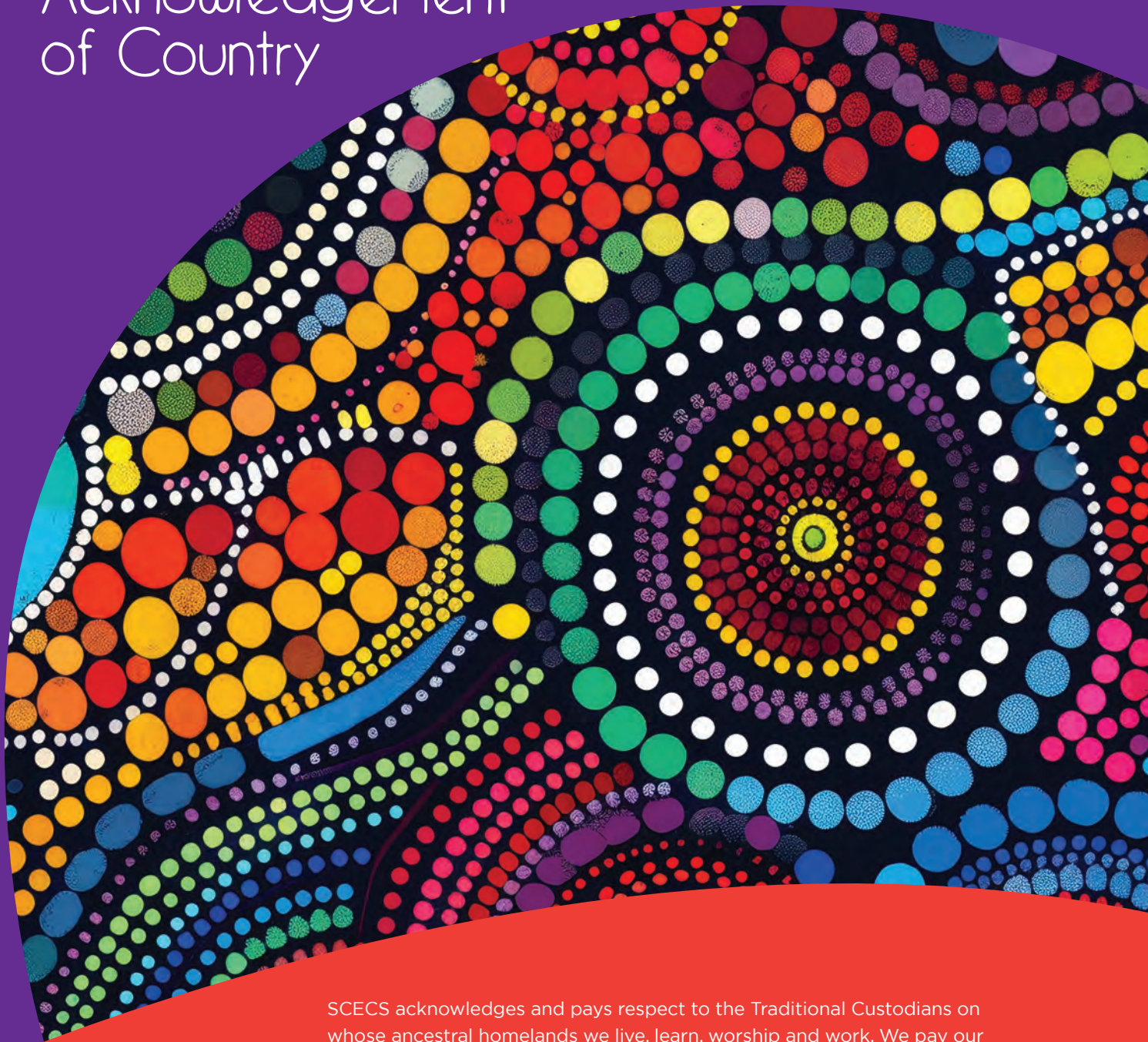
Sydney Catholic
early childhood
services



ANNUAL REPORT

2025

Acknowledgement of Country



SCECS acknowledges and pays respect to the Traditional Custodians on whose ancestral homelands we live, learn, worship and work. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We recognise that Aboriginal peoples have been nurturing and teaching children about this land for many thousands of years and we honour and acknowledge this important role.

We celebrate the ancestral knowledge of culture, traditions and spiritualities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and commit to empowering our young children and educators to be active and informed members of their communities by having the knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives.

SCECS acknowledges the important role of multiple cultural way of knowing, doing and being. It celebrates and teaches the benefits of mutual respect and shared responsibility to advance reconciliation.

Contents

About SCECS	2
SCECS Philosophy	3
Our Vision, Our Values, Our Priorities	4
A Message from Our Chair	5
A Message from Our CEO	6-7
Board Members	8-9
Locations of ECS, OSHC and Vacation Care Services	10-11
Keeping Children Safe	12
SCECS Highlights	13
Faith Formation	14-17
Financial Performance	18-19
People and Culture	20-21
Property and Facilities Overview	
Completed Projects	22-23
Active Projects	24-25
Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Overview	
St Joseph's Oatley	28
Sacred Heart Mosman	29
St Luke's Revesby	30
St Joseph's Enfield	31
Our Lady of Rosary Fairfield	32-33
Early Learning Centres (ECS) Overview	
Our Lady of Fatima Carringbah	36
St Joseph's Rosebery	37
St John's Auburn	38-39
St Therese Sadlier Miller	40-41
St Brigid's Coogee	42

About SCECS

Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services (SCECS) was established at the request of His Grace, the Archbishop of Sydney, Anthony Fisher OP, to service the Parishes of the Sydney Archdiocese.

SCECS is a proudly Catholic, not for profit organisation providing high quality education and care to young children within the mission and ministry of the Church.

In partnership with both the Parish and the school, SCECS ensures that its services embody the core values and teachings of the gospels, with a special emphasis on acknowledging and nurturing the dignity, self esteem and integrity of each individual child within our care.

Dedicated to excellence in early childhood services, SCECS offers Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) to support children and families from our Catholic Parishes and, upon request, those from the surrounding local area. We also provide Preschool and Long Day Care for young families and carers with children aged six weeks to six years.

We provide high quality early childhood and school aged care that seamlessly integrates into the fabric of each local Catholic community.



SCECS Philosophy

We believe that we are founded on the person of Jesus Christ and enlivened by the gospel. Therefore, Gospel values and Catholic beliefs underpin the daily relationships and interactions between educators, children, and their families.

We believe we have a moral and legal responsibility to ensure that the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of the child are paramount in all decisions and actions. We are committed to providing child-safe environments.

We believe that each child, family, and educator is unique and valued individually. We value and honour diversity and accept and celebrate differences in other people. We believe each person and their family's values, culture, beliefs, abilities, and language should be acknowledged, and accepted and reflected in our service environment.

We believe children are capable, resourceful, and valued members of the community. We believe children should be encouraged, and supported to follow their learning interests. Activities in the program will be matched to children's interests, providing meaningful and engaging opportunities to create, explore and build knowledge and understanding.

We believe that educators play a significant role in children's lives and we are dedicated to engaging the most suitable people to work with children. We look for people who demonstrate the core organisational values of acting with kindness and integrity, being inspirational, intentional, child-centred and joy-filled in their work.

We believe that secure, respectful, and nurturing relationships are foundational to a child's sense of belonging and wellbeing. Our educators provide opportunities for children to develop a strong sense of wellbeing and social competence, where qualities of fairness, humour, empathy and understanding are developed.

We believe play is essential in children's lives. We believe play values the ideal of allowing children to "just be" as a right of all children. We believe play should be fun, exciting, spontaneous, hands-on, stimulating, relaxing, comforting and challenging. Indoor and outdoor play are part of the daily rhythm of the program.

We believe in supporting and developing a partnership with families to share in the nurturing and education of their children. We encourage each family to participate in the SCECS community and support and welcome their interest and involvement.

Our Vision

As partners in proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ, Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services promotes the pastoral outreach of Parish and School communities by supporting the needs of families with young children.

Our Purpose

Providing children with inspiring environments that nurture spirituality, a love of learning and promotes individual health, safety and wellbeing.



Our Values



Act with kindness



Act with integrity



Be inspirational



Be intentional



Be joy filled

Our Priorities



Being Catholic

SCECS environments are places where children, families and staff know God's love



Education

SCECS empowers all learners to flourish today and tomorrow for a hope filled future



Community

SCECS invests heavily in its children, staff and community, building authentic reciprocal relationships



Growth

SCECS cultivates a growth mindset, pursuing innovative practices and new possibilities



Stewardship

SCECS advocates responsible expenditure, intentional accountability and equitable management of resources.

A Message from Our Chair

It has been a productive and significant year for SCECS. I would like to begin by recognising the exceptional leadership of our CEO, Franceyn O'Connor, and her team, along with the commitment of all SCECS staff across our services – especially our operations managers and educators who work so diligently on the ground each day. Your professionalism, care, and dedication create environments where children feel safe, valued, and supported. They are the foundation of SCECS, enabling our continued growth with clarity, purpose, and a strong sense of mission.

As our organisation expands – through new services and the growth of our before and after school care programs – we remain conscious of the responsibilities this brings. We are attentive to the challenges of our times, particularly the ongoing financial pressures facing families, as well as the importance of maintaining the highest standards of child safety. In response, we continue to ensure our services are accessible, responsive, and of consistently high quality. The Board works closely with management to uphold strong governance, careful stewardship, and rigorous practices in both care and safety.

We have also continued to deepen the integration of faith formation within our services. This is central to who we are. Beyond providing quality care and education, we aim to support children and their families in growing in faith and in their connection to community.



I would especially like to thank the parents and guardians who entrust their children to SCECS. Your trust is greatly valued, and we are committed to supporting you in the important role you play in nurturing your children to be caring, compassionate, and grounded individuals.

We are grateful for the ongoing support and guidance of the Archdiocese of Sydney, and I thank my fellow Board members for their dedication and counsel.

Looking ahead, SCECS remains firmly committed to its core purpose: walking alongside families by providing high-quality care and education, grounded faith, and responsive to the needs and realities of today's world.

FATHER THOMAS STEVENS
Chair of the Board

A Message from Our CEO

The year 2025 marked the eighth year of operation for Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services (SCECS) and represented another period of stability and continued success. Building on the strong foundations of previous years, SCECS made significant progress across all strategic goal areas, remaining committed to its mission of providing high-quality, Catholic early education and care. Some of our highlights against key priority areas are included in this summary.



Being Catholic

Throughout 2025, SCECS focused on deepening the integration of Catholic identity and values within all services. Each service strove to ensure that Catholic faith was authentically embedded in daily practice. Staff and children engaged in learning experiences that strengthened their knowledge and understanding of the Catholic Faith, as reflected in the monthly teaching programs and documented responses across all centres. This commitment to faith formation continues to be central to the identity and purpose of SCECS.

Care

Safeguarding children remained our top priority. During 2025, SCECS undertook a comprehensive review of all child protection policies and procedures, investing significant time to strengthen awareness among all staff about their responsibilities in maintaining the safety and wellbeing of every child. Regular monitoring, reviews, and direct engagement with individual services ensured that child protection remained an active and ongoing focus throughout the year.

Education

Educational excellence was again a core area of focus, with all programs being guided by children's voices and enhanced through intentional teaching practices. Educational Leaders led projects inspired by children's input and shared these initiatives within professional learning networks.



A highlight of the year was the continuation of the Conversations and Continuity project – an ongoing collaboration between SCECS and Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS). This initiative brought together Directors and educators from early childhood services and Principals and Kindergarten teachers from neighbouring Catholic primary schools. Through mutual learning and co-design, the teams created tailored transition-to-school programs that supported children and families in thriving through this important stage.

Community

Engagement with families was recognised as a crucial driver in shaping effective programs. To strengthen this relationship, the Operations team established the SCECS Family Advisory Network, designed to provide ongoing feedback and insight into both OSHC (Out of School Hours Care) and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) programs. The network was launched in June 2025 and met a further two times within the year, offering valuable perspectives that informed service design and delivery. The Network will continue into 2026 and beyond.

Growth

SCECS staff achievements and innovation were recognised externally, reflecting the organisation's commitment to professional excellence.

The Director of the Sadlier Miller ECEC service, Anitha Arul, received the NSW Premier's Award Scholarship for Early Childhood Educators to study Forest Schools in Denmark, a testament to SCECS's culture of learning and leadership.

In other notable achievements, Auburn ECEC Service was awarded an Exceeding rating in the national Assessment and Rating process. A great outcome for a dedicated team of teachers and educators.

A successful joint initiative between SCS and SCECS led to the securing of a State Government grant to establish two new preschools on Catholic school sites – St Anthony's, Marsfield and St Christopher's,

Holsworthy. Each preschool will operate within a long day care centre offering education and care for babies and toddlers, with both centres scheduled to open in 2027.

Building projects continued at St Francis Xavier parish, Lurnea and St Agnes parish, Matraville for two new Preschool and Long Day Care services. SCECS also negotiated a new lease for a pre-existing Long Day Care service at Camperdown. These 3 new ECEC services will open in 2026.

Stewardship

Operational performance remained strong throughout 2025. ECEC services successfully maintained a sustainable staffing-to-revenue ratio, while OSHC services collectively achieved a ratio not exceeding 52%. These results demonstrate prudent financial stewardship and highlight SCECS's ongoing commitment to sustainable service delivery, optimal enrolment levels, and workforce stability.

2025 has been another busy year for our team at SCECS as we continue to grow and support more families and children across the Archdiocese of Sydney. Thank you to all our stakeholders for their continued support and trust in the Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services.

FRANCEYN O'CONNOR
CEO

Board Members

Board Director Changes 2025

- ♥ Bishop Danny Meagher resigned as a Director and Chair on 21 July 2025
- ♥ Father Thomas Stevens was appointed as Chair on 21 July 2025
- ♥ Marco Blanco ceased to be a Director on 12 December 2025
- ♥ Jennifer Orre was appointed as a Director on 12 December 2025



FATHER THOMAS STEVENS Chair of the Board

Father Thomas is a Priest of the Sydney Archdiocese and former commercial lawyer. He is Parish Priest of St Patrick's, Mortlake as well as a Police Chaplain and Catholic Chaplain to the Australian Turf Club.



BISHOP TONY PERCY Non-Executive Director

Bishop Tony completed an honours degree in Finance at the University of New South Wales, before entering St. Patrick's College Manly, to study for the priesthood. He has completed a doctorate in sacred theology in Washington DC, specialising in the social teaching of the Church, focusing on the importance of private property and private initiative for the maintenance and promotion of the common good. In February 2025 he was named auxiliary Bishop of Sydney and titular Bishop of Appiaria and consecrated as a Bishop at St Mary's Cathedral in May 2025.



GREG GLEESON Non-Executive Director

Greg is a Childcare Development & Operations Specialist with over 30 years as an entrepreneur, marketing executive, real estate developer and childcare operator. Greg has built a variety of businesses including children's services. As a principal developer, he has delivered projects from \$5-20M. Greg currently advises a number of not-for-profit education providers in the childcare sector.



MARINA PAPIC Non-Executive Director

Marina Papic is Professor of Early Childhood Education and Mathematics Education at the Australian Catholic University. She has worked in the education sector for 40 years and has held various roles including: Head of School - Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University Sydney; Director of the Children and Families Research Centre, Macquarie University Sydney; Goodstart Early Learning NSW/ACT State Manager; Executive Officer Primary of an independent Pre K-12 College; and Manager of Children's Services, Blacktown City Council.

Marina has led large research projects focused on early childhood curriculum and practice, early numeracy, and professional development of teachers. She was a member of the ACECQA Ratings Review Panel for two terms and a member of the consortium of early childhood experts contracted to develop the first national Early Years Learning Framework. Marina sits on several NFP Boards and Advisory Committees including the NSW Department of Education, Early Childhood Education Advisory Group.



MARY DIGGES Non-Executive Director

Mary is an early childhood education consultant based in Sydney. She is the founder and director of MDR Education PL, a company specialising in educational projects, advisory, audit and registrations and developments for private and public sector clients. Mary joined the Board of SCECS in 2020. Mary is a qualified teacher, early childhood educator and manager, and has worked as a lecturer, trainer and assessor and consultant in Australia, China and Singapore serving on executive management teams while supporting and enhancing her global educational perspective. Mary has led early childhood study tours in Scandinavia, Canada, the US, and north Asia.



GLENN MCLACHLAN Non-Executive Director

Glenn is a Chartered Accountant and currently the Director of Finance and Property for Sydney Catholic Schools. As the Director of Finance and Property, Glenn is responsible for Property, Planning and Facilities, Capital Programs, and Finance for 152 Schools and Central Office within the Sydney Archdiocese. Glenn has been with Sydney Catholic Schools since January 2017 and previously, Glenn has held roles with BSA, Tyco, Deloitte and James Hardie Australia.



MARCO BLANCO Non-Executive Director

Marco Blanco is the Founder and CEO of Child Safeguard, where he brings over 20 years of expertise in law, education and child and human rights. He is a solicitor specialising in child protection and safeguarding. Marco collaborates with child related organisations to develop and enhance child protection strategies.



CATHY YOUNG Non-Executive Director

Cathy is an educator and has worked in Catholic Education for 40 years, the last 15 of those as a Primary School Principal in Sydney Catholic Schools. Cathy has previously also held roles as Head: Gifted Education K-12 and Project Officer: Religious Education in SCS.

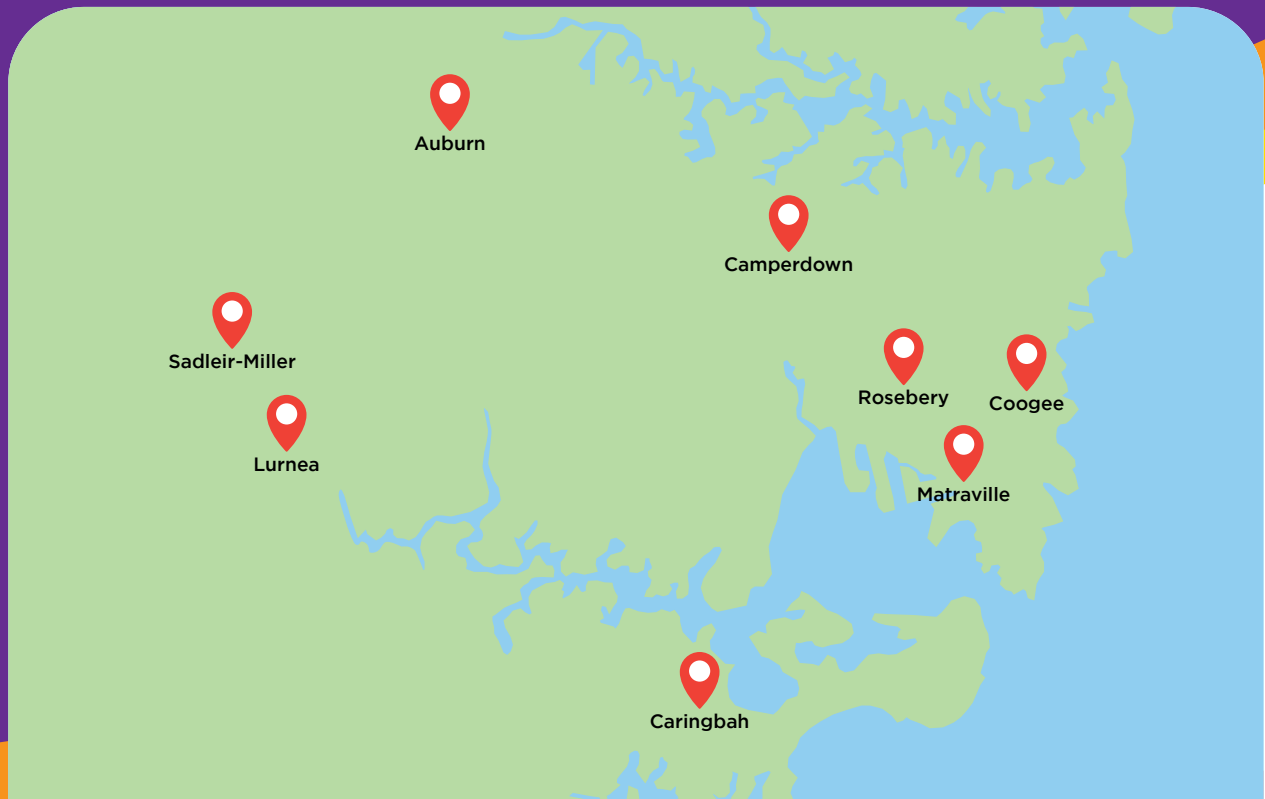
Cathy holds qualifications in primary education, religious education, leadership and gifted education. Her doctoral research focussed on the identification of gifted students in Catholic primary schools. Cathy has a particular interest in design principles for contemporary learning environments. Cathy currently sits as a Board member on the NSW ACU Chapter and is a member of the SCS Sports Council.



PETER PANNOWITZ Non-Executive Director

Peter brings more than 40 years of experience in the Financial Services industry. He has held senior management roles in strategy, investment management, finance and risk management. He has worked for some of Australia's leading financial services organisations including AMP, AMP Bank, CBA and Colonial First State Investments, leading both large teams and specialist projects. Prior to joining the SCECS Board, Peter had spent a number of years on the Board Audit Committee for Sydney Catholic Schools, four as Chair. He also designed and developed the risk management strategy, framework, policies and processes now in place for the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney. He is currently the Chair of the SCECS Board Audit Committee.

Locations



EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES (ECS)



St Joseph's Preschool & Long Day Care Rosebery



St Brigid's Preschool & Long Day Care Coogee



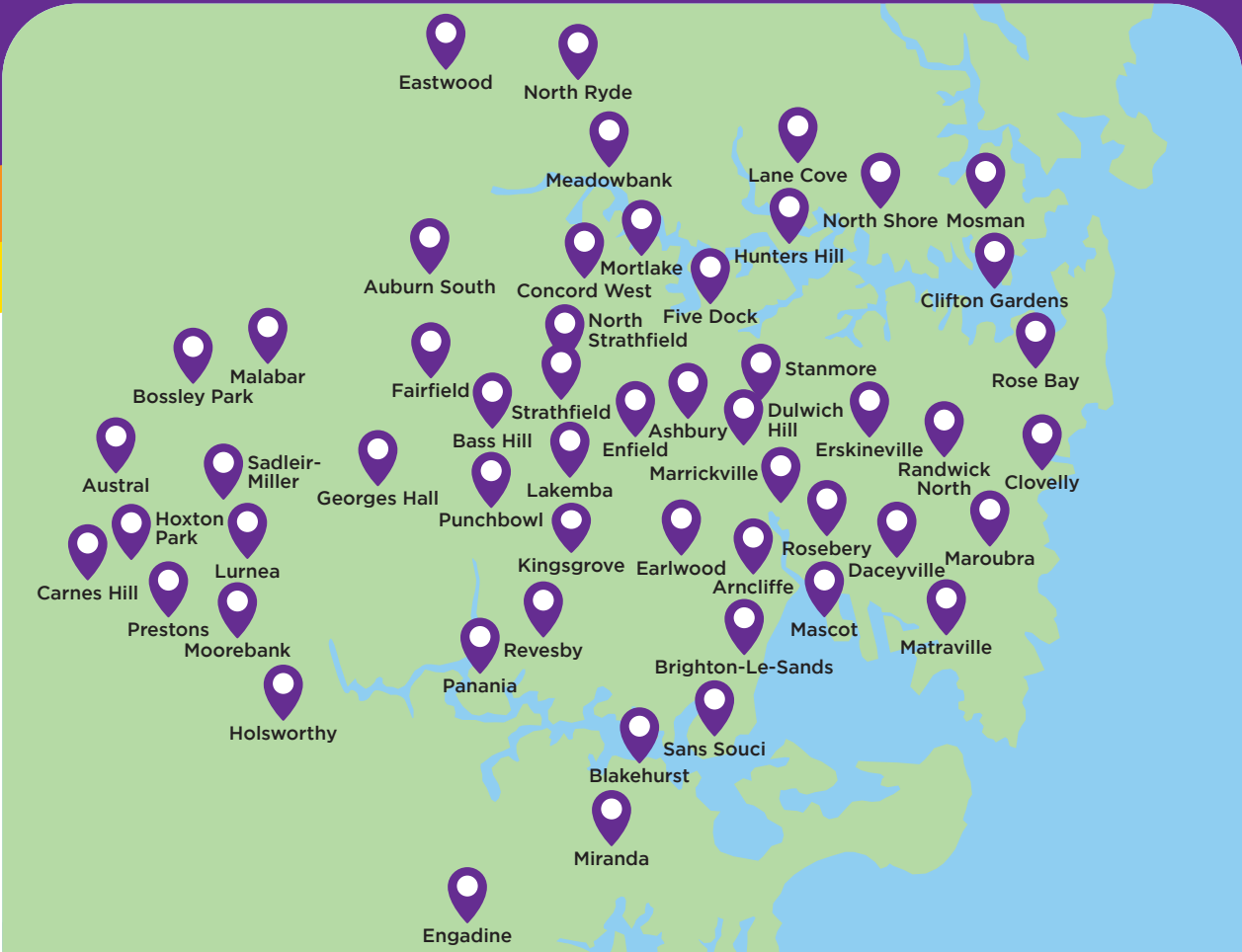
Our Lady of Fatima Preschool & Long Day Care Caringbah



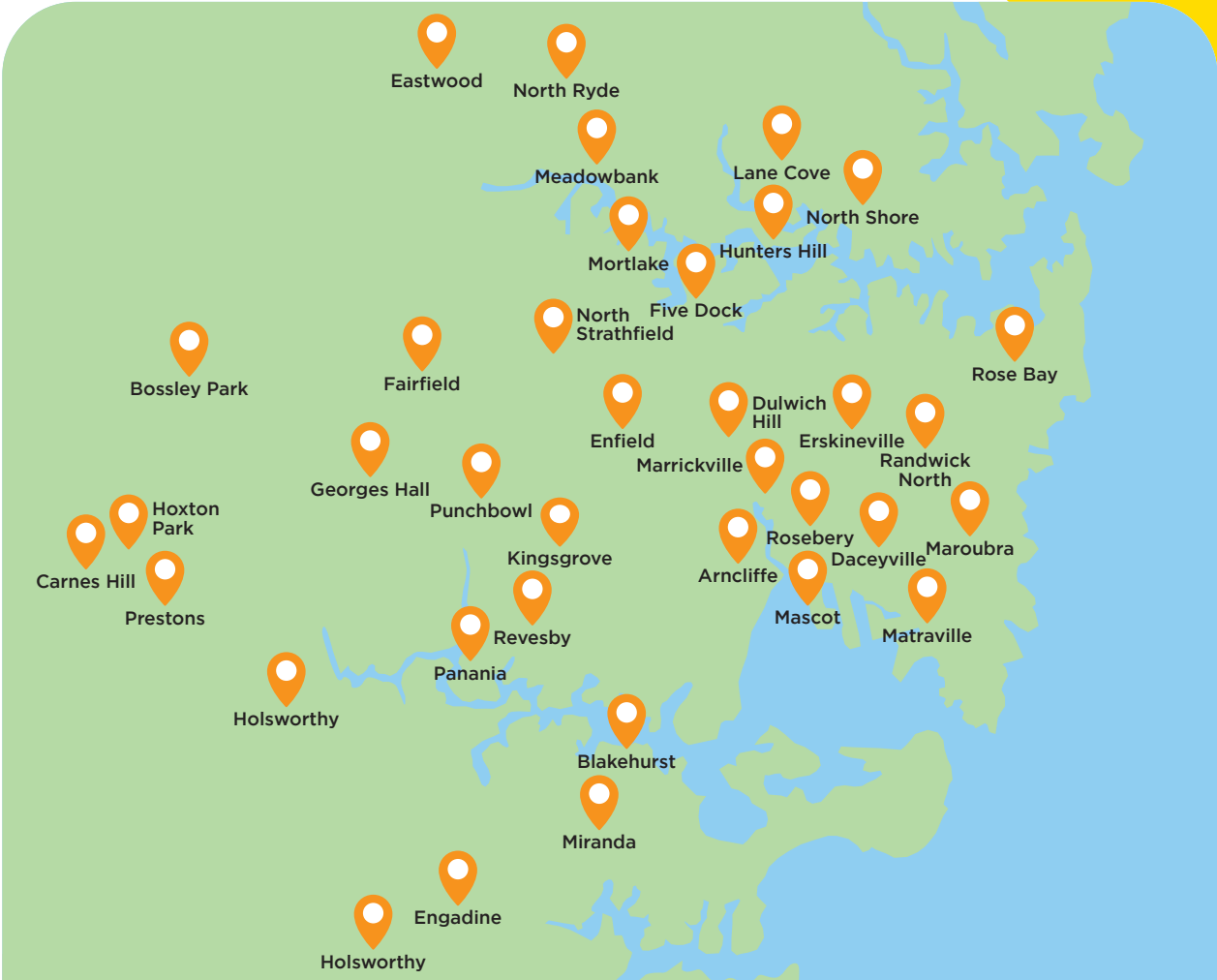
St John's Preschool & Long Day Care Auburn



St Therese Preschool & Long Day Care Sadleir



OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE (OSHC)



VACATION CARE



Keeping Children Safe

Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services (SCECS) is committed to being a child safe organisation and has developed strategies for embedding the child safe standards into our governance structures and practices at a service level.

In late 2025, SCECS Management considered the organisation's approach to children's safety in the digital domain. It was determined that from 2026 onwards SCECS will no longer use images of children's faces in the documentation of the educational program or in promotional activity.

All child-safe practices were reviewed during the year from recruitment, staffing arrangements, supervision techniques, access to devices, restricted duties for agency staff, head count procedures and staff induction documents to name a few.

SCECS is poised to implement the many child safety reforms rolling out in the early childhood education and care sector that were announced by various levels of government.

SCECS Highlights

SCECS returned a revenue of \$4m back to Parishes

We are pleased to announce that due to Parishes trust and support, SCECS returned a revenue of \$4M back to Parishes across the Archdiocese in 2025.

We extend our gratitude to the Parish Priests of the Sydney Archdiocese for their continued support and strong partnership with SCECS Outside School Hours Care and Early Learning Centres. Together, we are nurturing environments where children, families and educators come to know and grow in love for Christ.

Continued and Sustainable Growth

Throughout 2025, SCECS opened another 8 OSHC services to support families at local Catholic schools, totaling 62 OSHC services across the Sydney Archdiocese. Our 5 open ECS services continued to deliver 85% utilisation

SCECS Community Feedback

Established the SCECS Family Advisory Network, a group of parents whose children attend either our OSHC or ECS services. The group meet with SCECS management quarterly to provide ongoing feedback and insight into both OSHC and ECS programs.

NSW Premier's Award Scholarship for Early Childhood Educators

In recognition of SCECS leadership and learning, Anitha Arul, the Centre Director at St Therese Preschool & Long Day Care Sadlier Miller received the above award scholarship to visit the Forest Schools in Denmark and study their educational programs and pedagogical approach.

Two Preschool Grants secured

A successful joint initiative between SCS and SCECS secured the State Government grant to establish two new preschools on Catholic School sites; St Anthony Marsfield and St Christopher Holsworthy. Each preschool will operate within a long day care centre, offering education and care for babies and toddlers.



Faith formation continued to grow across all services. Each service appointed a Faith Formation Champion and was supported by the Faith Formation team. As a result, more services embedded regular faith-based experiences, increasing both staff confidence and child engagement.

Parish and community connections also strengthened. Many services celebrated parish priests' ordination anniversaries, with morning or afternoon tea. Priests also contributed to staff formation and celebrated key milestones, including preschool graduations. Services further engaged families through liturgical celebrations, social justice initiatives, and intergenerational experiences, fostering a strong sense of belonging and community.





Children explored faith through a variety of creative, play-based experiences that brought scripture and Catholic traditions to life. These included prayer gardens, often named in honour of Mary, Mother of God, St Mary MacKillop, or each service's patron saint. Some services deepened engagement through visits to the parish church for prayer and Gospel reflection, while others participated in initiatives such as the Christmas Nativity competition, enabling children to creatively retell the story of Jesus' birth.

Staff formation remained a priority, with both service and office staff participating in a range of opportunities. These included a formation day on Aboriginal spirituality at the Reconciliation Church in La Perouse, a social outreach experience at the St Vincent de Paul distribution centre in Auburn, pilgrimages during the Year of Hope, and a visit to St Mary's Cathedral.

Overall, 2025 demonstrated strong growth in the visibility and integration of faith across SCECS, reflecting a shared commitment to nurturing a vibrant, authentically Catholic community, where children, staff, and families are invited to know Christ and grow in their relationship with Him.



Financial Performance

As a proudly Catholic and not-for-profit organisation, SCECS financial priority to deliver high- quality education and care for young children and whilst operating within a long term financially sustainable framework.

The strong 2025 financial performance is attributable to our families, staff, Sydney Catholic Schools and Archdiocese of Sydney who have supported SCECS as we opened eight new OSHC services and supported the strong performance of five Long Day Care centres in 2025.

SCECS focus on the child is made possible by the enthusiasm, innovation and tireless contributions of our professional educators. SCECS qualified staff are paid above award wages and our junior staff (18-20 year olds) are paid adult wages to acknowledge their commitment to the sector and the valuable work that they undertake. In addition, SCECS is a participant in the government's Worker Retention Program, which during funded an initial 10% wage increase in December 2024 and further 5% in December 2025 for early childhood education and care sector employees.

In addition to Child Care Subsidy and Parent Fee income, SCECS also receives funding from the NSW Start Strong for Long Day Care Program to deliver three-year-old and tailored Preschool Programs and for eligible families SCECS receives State Government Fee Relief helping to reduce fees for 3 and 4 years olds attending long day care programs.

SCECS continues its investment in the sector, with a pipeline of five construction projects and seven new or transferred early childhood services in the next three years.

SCECS acknowledges the financial support of the Archdiocese and Catholic Development Fund enabling it to continue its growth and capital investment in the early childhood education and care sector.

Financial Reports

The following consolidated financial statements are an extract from our audited accounts, providing a high-level summary of our financial performance and position. The full consolidated financial statements will be available on the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission's website.

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 31 December 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue and other income	47,979,010	36,699,817
TOTAL REVENUE	47,979,010	36,699,817
Employee related expenses	32,819,323	25,413,405
Resources and equipment	3,650,043	2,747,027
Professional fees	147,186	498,791
Licence fees and rent	3,176,664	2,584,636
Property expenses	718,693	748,437
Other expenses	909,655	656,663
Finance costs	1,453,656	1,165,594
Depreciation	1,708,712	1,761,015
Total Operating Expenses	44,583,932	35,575,569
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR	3,395,078	1,124,248
Other Comprehensive Income	0	0
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE PROFIT FOR THE YEAR	3,395,078	1,124,248

Statement of Financial Position

For the year ended 31 December 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	3,726,650	1,336,656
Trade and other receivables	552,752	466,286
Other current assets	2,204,684	316,287
Total Current Assets	6,484,086	2,119,229
Property, plant and equipment	33,896,942	26,475,220
Intangibles	71,889	4,600
Total Non-Current Assets	33,968,831	26,479,820
TOTAL ASSETS	40,452,917	28,599,049
Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	1,507,352	1,312,982
Short term borrowings	0	470,589
Lease liability	659,293	774,996
Provisions for employee benefits	1,041,220	587,700
Total Current Liabilities	3,207,865	3,146,267
Long term borrowings	15,598,635	10,713,236
Lease liability	9,248,641	5,782,049
Provisions for employee benefits	374,300	296,100
Total Non-Current Liabilities	25,221,576	16,791,385
TOTAL LIABILITIES	28,429,441	19,937,652
NET ASSETS	12,023,476	8,661,398
Equity		
Contributed equity	10,000,000	10,000,000
Retained earnings	2,023,476	(1,338,602)
TOTAL EQUITY	12,023,476	8,661,398

Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ended 31 December 2025

	Contributed Equity \$	Retained Earnings \$	Total Equity \$
Balance as at 1 January 2024	10,000,000	(2,058,157)	7,941,843
Application of AASB 16	0	(404,693)	(404,693)
Total comprehensive Profit	0	1,124,248	1,124,248
BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2024	10,000,000	(1,338,602)	8,661,398
Balance as at 1 January 2025	10,000,000	(1,338,602)	8,661,398
Application of AASB 16	0	(33,000)	(33,000)
Total comprehensive Profit	0	3,395,078	3,395,078
BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2025	10,000,000	2,023,476	12,023,476

People and Culture

2025 has been a year of continued progress and transformation for the People and Culture team, building on strong foundations to further enhance the employee experience across SCECS.

A key milestone this year has been the continued implementation of the SCECS People Hub, powered by ELMO. This new HRIS is bringing together multiple systems into a single, streamlined platform, improving data integrity, compliance, and accessibility for our people. As we move towards full implementation, this will provide a more connected and user-friendly experience for staff across all services.

We have continued to strengthen our understanding of employee experience through engagement and consultation. Building on our initial survey insights, we have focused on improving communication, leadership capability, and wellbeing support, ensuring our people feel heard, valued, and supported in their roles.

Our commitment to wellbeing remains strong. Our partnership with AccessEAP continues to provide confidential and professional support to employees and their families, reinforcing a culture where mental health and wellbeing are prioritised. This year, we also introduced additional wellbeing initiatives, including dedicated wellbeing days and a paid birthday leave day, recognising the importance of rest, balance, and celebrating our people.



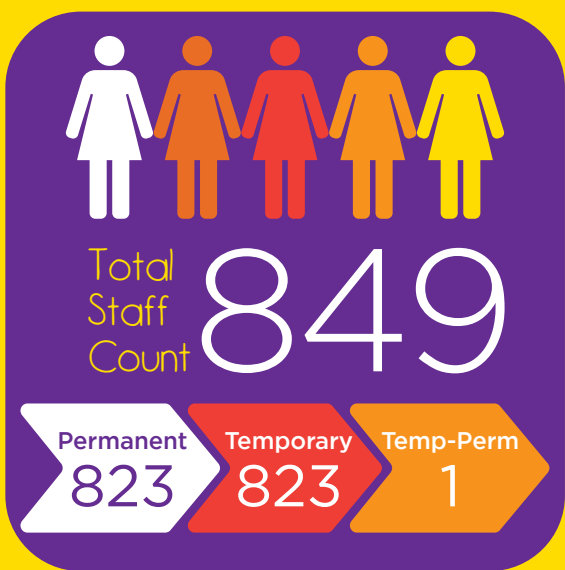
20



Total Number of staff with verified teacher registration

Total Number of staff with Certificate III, Certificate IV and Diploma in related field

185



Top Roles employed

Casual Educator	591
ECS Educator	63
OSHC Coordinator	62
OSHC Educator	23
OSHC Assistant Coordinator	22
ECS Teacher	14



In a significant enhancement to our employee value proposition, we introduced a new Paid Parental Leave policy, providing 14 weeks of paid leave for all permanent staff. This reflects our commitment to supporting employees at important life stages and promoting equity and inclusion across our workforce.

Professional development has remained a central focus, with ongoing Director and Coordinator Development Days supporting capability uplift, peer connection, and consistency across our services. These forums continue to play an important role in strengthening leadership and fostering collaboration across our network.

In 2025, we also strengthened our focus on compliance, governance, and child safety. This includes the rollout of foundational Child Safety Training and the continued embedding of child safe practices across all areas of the organisation, ensuring we meet our obligations as a child safe organisation.

We are proud to have completed our Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) reporting, with results reflecting a negative gender pay gap. This outcome highlights our commitment to equitable pay practices and reinforces our position as a fair and inclusive employer.

Guided by our Catholic values and the belief that our people are central to our mission, we are proud of the progress made in 2025. We look forward to continuing this momentum as we support our workforce and deliver high-quality care and education to the children and families we serve.

Completed Projects



Matraville

SCECS worked collaboratively with Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS) to complete the detailed design and delivery of the new Matraville centre. The project was successfully completed in 2025. The centre features an integrated space within the existing Catholic school, including a simulated outdoor environment – an SCECS first.



Lurnea

Construction progressed throughout 2025, with SCECS working closely with the NSW Department of Education to secure a significant grant contribution toward the project. The centre is anticipated to open in Q1 2026 and will play a vital role in supporting the growing needs of families in the Lurnea area.

Camperdown

SCECS Camperdown was a unique project in the organisation's history, involving the acquisition of an existing centre that required a significant fit-out and upgrade. Unlike typical SCECS developments, the centre is not located on a school site, but is positioned to serve the local community as well as the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital precinct.

SCECS Property undertook extensive forward planning and worked closely with trusted contractors and consultants over the holiday period to ensure existing operations were not disrupted. This collaborative approach has enabled the centre to be on track for opening in January 2026

Active Projects



Austral

SCECS successfully completed the tender process and appointed a head contractor for its largest project in the growing South-West Sydney region. SCECS worked closely with the NSW Department of Education to secure a significant grant contribution toward the project.





Holsworthy and Marsfield

SCECS successfully completed the tender process and appointed a head contractor for the works. SCECS worked closely with Sydney Catholic Schools to secure a successful grant application under the New and Upgraded Preschools (NUP) program, supporting the preschool component of the project.



Outside School Hours Care (OSHC)

Sydney Catholic Early Childhood Services (SCECS) offers before school care, after school care and vacation care. At the commencement of 2024, SCECS operated 54 OSHC services across the Archdiocese of Sydney and added a further 9 OSHC locations throughout the year. All OSHC services are in schools operated by Sydney Catholic Schools.

Key Statistics for 2025:

- ♥ Before School Care Attendances: 182,528 (14% increase on 2024)
- ♥ After School Care Attendances: 601,556 (20% increase on 2024)
- ♥ Vacation Care Attendances: 54,082 (35% increase on 2024)
- ♥ The quality service delivered to the children and their families is a result of the hard work of the SCECS OSHC service teams and the operations team that supports them. They are committed to providing an education rich and child led recreational program.
- ♥ In 2026, the growth strategy will continue with a further 5 OSHC services slated to open. SCECS will continue its commitment to providing quality education and care services to the families in our Catholic communities.



Discovery Soccer at SCECS @SHC St Joseph's @atley

Last year, our service was fortunate to host a Soccer Incursion led by one of our St Joseph's families. Jacob Farrar, a parent within our community, generously volunteered his time to run an energetic and engaging coaching session for the children. His warm, approachable style immediately captured their attention, and he introduced them to a range of practical soccer skills including dribbling, toetouchers, and shooting under pressure. The children were highly motivated, eager to participate, and showed determination as they practised each new technique. As described in our learning story, "Jacob captured the children's attention with his approachable coaching style and clear demonstrations" and the children responded with focus, enthusiasm, and confidence.

This experience strongly reflected our service philosophy, where sport, movement, and physical activity play a central role in our daily program. The session supported children's physical development, coordination, and overall wellbeing, while also strengthening teamwork, resilience, and social connection. The final friendly game brought the group together in a joyful display of collaboration, cheering, and shared success. This incursion not only celebrated the strengths and passions of our children but also highlighted the value of family partnerships and community involvement within our service.



Mary's Garden at SCECS OSHC Sacred Heart Mosman

SCECS OSHC Sacred Heart Mosman has created a meaningful and peaceful space through Mary's Garden, an indoor terrarium project that has grown into a cherished part of the service. With a beautiful statue of Mary and plants generously donated by families, the garden reflects a strong sense of community, with each contribution adding to its story and significance.

Children and educators work together to care for the garden, taking responsibility for watering, maintaining, and nurturing the space. This ongoing project supports children's sense of stewardship, encourages mindfulness, and fosters respect for both nature and their shared environment.

A special highlight was Fr Matthew's visit to bless the garden, creating a memorable moment of connection with the parish. This experience enriched the spiritual life of the service and strengthened the sense of belonging, with Mary's Garden continuing to flourish as a symbol of care, faith, and community.





Millie and Bambi, Revesby's beloved Bunnies!

SC ECS at St Luke's Revesby has recently welcomed two adorable bunnies, Millie and Bambi, into its program, creating a meaningful impact on the service community. The addition of these gentle companions has enhanced the children's well-being by providing comfort, encouraging responsibility, and fostering inclusive interactions among students of all ages and abilities. The children have formed strong bonds with Bambi and Millie, often requesting time with them and sharing joyful, calming moments that support emotional development. Students are also developing a strong sense of responsibility as they

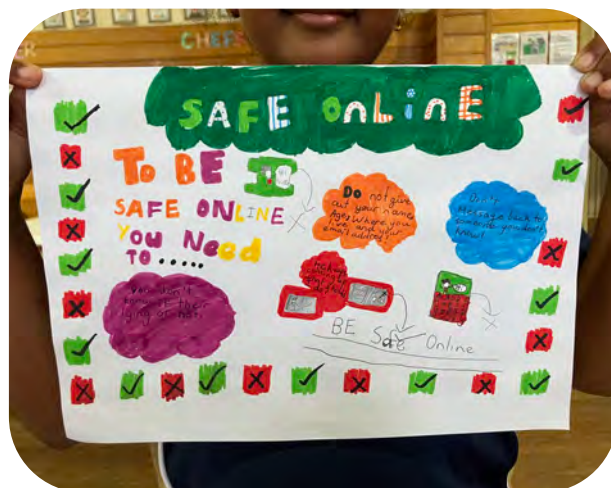
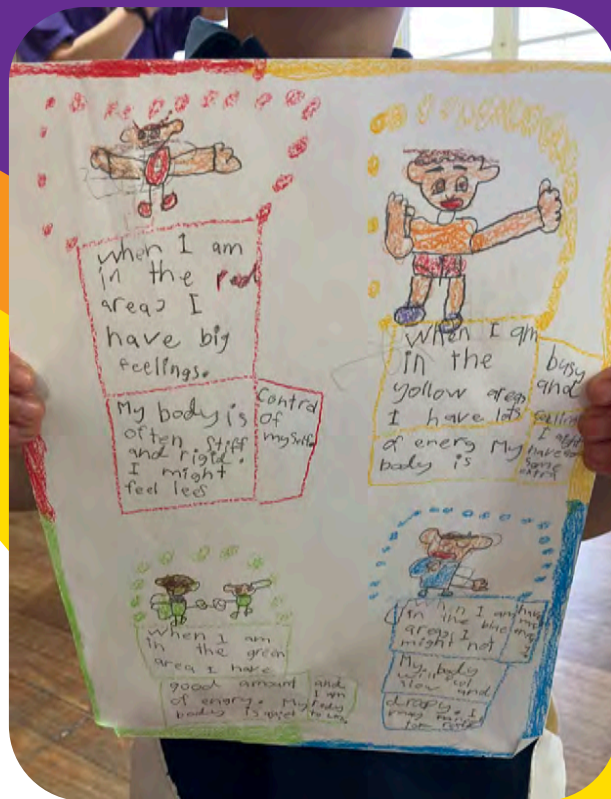
help care for the bunnies, ensuring their enclosure is safe, clean, and comfortable, while learning about respect and animal care. The initiative has further strengthened family engagement, as families are invited to take the bunnies home during weekends or vacation care periods, creating unique opportunities for connection and shared experiences. These special moments are frequently brought back to the service through stories and photos, deepening relationships between educators, children, and parents, and enriching the overall sense of community.

SCECS OSHC St Joseph's Enfield

SCECS OSHC St Joseph's Enfield places child safety at the centre of everything we do. We are committed to supporting children to feel secure, informed, and empowered in their environment. Through engaging discussions and age-appropriate activities, children learn about the NSW Child Safe Standards, along with practical safety skills such as sun safety, road safety, digital safety, and understanding personal boundaries.

We reinforce these principles every day by modelling safe practices within our program. This includes active supervision, respectful interactions, safe use of technology, and consistent, structured routines. By embedding these practices into daily experiences, children are able to see how safety supports their overall learning and development.

Through experiencing safety in action, children build confidence to recognise risks, make safe choices, and speak up when needed. This approach fosters a supportive and inclusive environment where every child feels valued and can thrive.



SCECS OSHC Our Lady of the Rosary Fairfield

SCECS OSHC Our Lady of the Rosary Fairfield is proud to showcase a strong commitment to quality, continuous improvement, and meaningful engagement across all areas of practice.

During the recent Assessment and Rating process, the service achieved the rating *“Meeting” National Quality Standards*, with Exceeding themes identified in Quality Area 1 (Educational Program and Practice) and Quality Area 5 (Relationships with Children). This was a significant achievement, particularly as the coordinator was newly transitioned into the OSHC environment and had only five months’ experience as a Nominated Supervisor. With a clear passion for meaningful planning and programming, the service demonstrated a strong focus on enhancing children’s learning outcomes and fostering respectful, equitable relationships with every child.

A key area of growth for the SCECS OSHC Fairfield has been the transformation of the learning environment. Through critical reflection, the team identified a need to create a more intentional, inclusive, and engaging space that better reflected the diverse interests and needs of the children. With the support of the Inclusion Support Officer and a strong culture of team reflection, these changes led to increased engagement, improved interactions, and supported the development of important skills such as emotional regulation and inquiry-based learning.

Family engagement and community outreach are also central to the service philosophy. SCECS OSHC Fairfield actively creates opportunities to build strong connections with families through events such as family afternoon teas and special celebrations like Father’s Day. Weekly nature park excursions promote sustainability and care for the environment, while community-focused initiatives, including visits to Vinnies for donations and creating Christmas cards for an aged care service, encourage children to develop a sense of empathy and social responsibility. These experiences culminated in a highly successful and well-attended family Christmas celebration, complete with a photobooth, bringing our community together in a joyful way.



Faith formation is thoughtfully embedded within the program, supporting children's spiritual development in engaging and meaningful ways. SCECS OSHC Fairfield maintains strong connections with the parish through involvement in significant liturgical events such as Holy Week, participation in chapel visits, and opportunities for reflection. Children engage in a variety of faith-based experiences throughout the year, including creative activities and interactive games such as Christian music-based activities, making faith learning both enjoyable and accessible.

Overall, SCECS OSHC Our Lady of the Rosary Fairfield continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to providing a high-quality, inclusive, and reflective environment that supports the holistic development of every child while fostering a connected and engaged community.



Early Childhood Services (ECS)

In 2025 SCECS operated 5 preschool and long day care sites. The property team is managing the pipeline of new sites that are being developed, with the aim to open a further 11 early childhood services in the coming 5 years. Three new early childhood services are slated to open in 2026, two of which are new builds.

The following are key developments for 2025:

- ♥ Launched a Community of Practice project where an educator from each early childhood service participated in order to explore Inclusive Practices.
- ♥ A Family Advisory Network was established where a family member representative from each service participated in a termly meeting. The role of the network is to provide meaningful contributions to organisational and service decisions and share in decision-making about children's learning, development and wellbeing.
- ♥ The implementation of the Religious Education Framework was expanded in 2025 beyond the pilot site into all early childhood services.
- ♥ The Operations team was strengthened with the addition of another Regional Operations Officer in preparation for the new early childhood services commencing in early 2026.
- ♥ A collaboration project was finalised with Sydney Catholic Schools called Conversations in Continuity. The project explored the preschool and classroom environments to support children as they transition to school.



Our Lady of Fatima Carringbah

On the feast of Our Lady of Fatima on May 13 the children and staff journeyed together as we learned of our patron saint and why we celebrate and honour this feast day. It was a wonderful occasion to discover that Our lady of Fatima performed numerous visitations to three shepherd children Lucia and her cousins Francisco and Jacinta. The date first being on the 13th May and this continued on the 13th of each month until her last visitation where she performed a miracle for the whole village to witness. This being the miracle of the sun so the villagers and the church would believe the children saw the blessed Mary in visions and would say the prayers of the holy rosary for peace on earth.

This was highlighted for the children through the program by sharing the story of Our Lady of Fatima, making of sun catchers, making flowers to place by the statue of our lady on our prayer table

and praying the Hail Mary together. The children in P2 Whale Fatima Playroom joined the kindergarten school children from our sister school to visit the church and honour Mary through prayer and reflection.

The SCECS and pedagogical team came together for a professional development evening with celebratory dinner and engagement in learning about the feast of Fatima and Reggio Emilia. The evening consisted of making rosaries and building a deeper connection with our understanding of our patron saint thanks to Bernadette. Then later Amie shared her experience around the Reggio Emilia approach and how we could explore this with the children through art, creativity and how this can be embedded in our faith experience too.



St Joseph's Rosebery

In alignment with the Child Safe Standards and our commitment to viewing children as active citizens, in St. Joseph's, we established a Children's Council. This initiative was implemented to ensure that children's voices are not only heard but also actively shape decisions within the service.

The Children's Council provides a consistent and meaningful platform for children to express their ideas, preferences, and concerns on matters that affect them. Through ongoing small-group meetings, children in each room of the service have contributed to discussions around the environments, routines, and shared experiences within the service. Educators intentionally scaffold these discussions using open-ended questioning, visual supports, and flexible communication strategies to ensure all children can participate in ways that are meaningful to them regardless of age / stage of development.

The impact of establishing the Children's Council has been significant. Children have demonstrated an increased sense of agency, confidence, and belonging, and their ideas are valued and implemented within the service. For example, when children suggested changes to aspects of the outdoor environment, management brought these ideas to our facilities team for implementation, reinforcing that their contributions lead to real outcomes.

Theorist Loris Malaguzzi believed that "Children have the right to be listened to and taken seriously" and that "The child has a hundred languages, a hundred hands, a hundred thoughts, a hundred ways of thinking, of playing, of speaking".

Further supported by the UNCRC, Rights of the child "Children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them", and "Children have the right to express themselves in a variety of ways, including speaking, drawing, writing, or other forms of expression".

This contributes to a culture of safety. The establishment of the Children's Council has strengthened our commitment to children's rights and active citizenship. It ensures that children are positioned as capable contributors within our community and that their voices remain central to our ongoing reflective practice and decision-making.





St John's Auburn

Exceeding Rating Achievement

In August 2025, St John's Preschool and Long Day Care in Auburn was awarded an **Exceeding** rating across all seven Quality Areas during the Assessment and Rating process. This outstanding achievement reflects the dedication and professionalism of the Auburn team, who are deeply committed to delivering high-quality education and care while continuously striving for excellence.

The service is now preparing to apply for the **Excellence** rating in 2026, further demonstrating its commitment to continuous improvement and sector leadership.

Community Engagement

St John's Preschool has actively engaged with the wider community by facilitating regular excursions and service visits throughout the year. These experiences have included visits to the parish, local primary school, Auburn Library, and Auburn Botanical Gardens. In addition, the preschool established a meaningful connection with another

early learning service through a year-long pen pal program, fostering communication, social development, and a sense of belonging within the broader community.

Street Library Initiative

St John's Preschool has strengthened its connection with the local community through the creation of a street library. This project was led by the Director, Daisy, whose ongoing commitment to fostering a love of learning has already resulted in the establishment of a children's library and a parent library within the service.

The street library was constructed by Michael and his team from the Granville Men's Shed and beautifully painted by Aboriginal artist Beverly Garces. The artwork thoughtfully incorporates the service's logo colours, as well as symbols representing unity, community, and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The installation was completed by a parent from the service, ensuring the library was safely secured near the entrance gate for easy community access.

Fundraising and Community Support

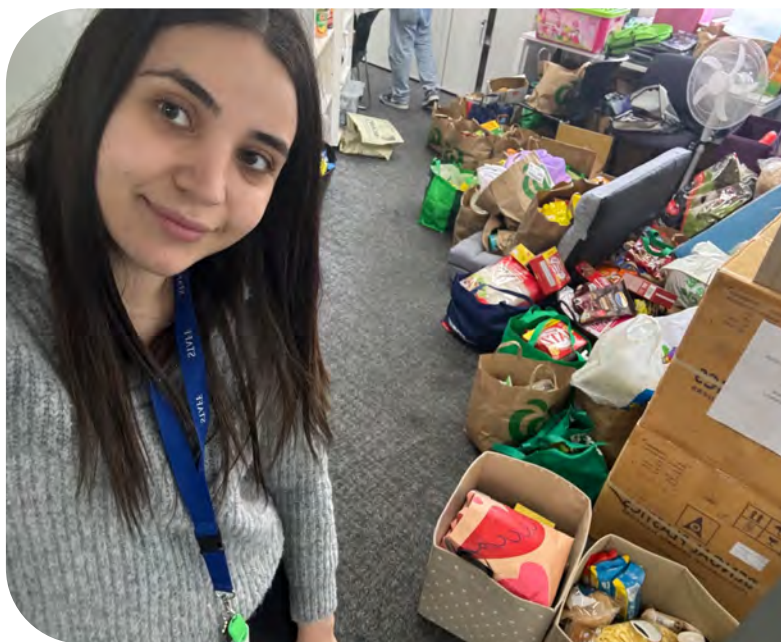
Throughout 2025, St John's Preschool actively participated in a range of initiatives to support vulnerable communities and promote social responsibility. These included:

- ♥ Raising \$400 during "Wear It Yellow Day" through a cupcake sale to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- ♥ Collecting donations for the St Vincent de Paul Society (Vinnies) Winter Appeal to assist families in need
- ♥ Volunteering at the Vinnies Distribution Centre, with Director Daisy and Cassandra joining other SCECS directors and Faith Formation Officers
- ♥ Participating in Clean Up Australia Day, encouraging children to develop a sense of responsibility for their environment
- ♥ Raising \$291 for National Pyjama Day in support of children in foster care
- ♥ Collecting donations for Gunawirra to support Aboriginal communities in rural areas
- ♥ Donating pre-loved toys to the Toys for Joys initiative at Big W, supporting recycling efforts and sustainability practices

Action Research Project: Documentation Practices

The Director and educators have undertaken an action research project focused on improving documentation practices. Through critical reflection, the team identified that previous documentation methods were impacting educator workload and limiting meaningful interactions with children. By reframing their approach, the team has implemented more purposeful and effective documentation strategies. This shift has enabled educators to strengthen relationships with children and families, prioritise active listening, and more authentically share each child's learning and wellbeing journey.

This new method of documentation brought by the action research has allowed the service to become closely aligned with the principles of slow pedagogy and the Reggio Emilia approach.



St Therese Sadlier Miller

Responsible Pet Education Program

Our preschool welcomed a visit from the Responsible Pet Education Program, where children engaged in a hands-on learning experience with Pepsi the dog and a professional trainer. This session provided valuable insights into safe and respectful interactions with animals, helping children recognise dog behaviours such as happiness, fear, and aggression. Through guided practice, children learned simple yet essential safety strategies including remaining still, keeping hands down, and using the “stop, ask, smell, and pet” approach. The experience fostered confidence, empathy, and responsible attitudes toward animals, equipping children with practical skills to stay safe while building positive relationships with pets.



Royal Life Saving Water Safety Incursion

As part of our commitment to child safety and wellbeing, we hosted an engaging water safety incursion delivered by Royal Life Saving NSW. Through interactive songs, storytelling, and movement-based activities, children were introduced to essential water safety concepts in an age-appropriate and memorable way. Participation in the Waddle Program enabled children to identify potential hazards across various environments such as beaches, pools, rivers, and ponds. This experience significantly enhanced children’s awareness of water-related risks and empowered them with foundational knowledge to respond safely, reinforcing the importance of early education in drowning prevention.





NSW Health Dental Incursion:

The children at St. Therese Preschool enjoyed a fun and engaging dental incursion with a friendly dental nurse from NSW Health. During the visit, the children learned about the importance of keeping their teeth healthy by brushing twice a day and making good food choices, such as eating fruits and vegetables. They participated in an exciting role-play where the nurse dressed as a dentist and some children acted as patients, helping them feel more comfortable about visiting the dentist. The nurse also demonstrated the correct brushing technique using gentle circular motions and explained how to clean all areas of the mouth, including the back teeth. To conclude the session, the children listened to a story about going to the dentist and had the chance to practice brushing on large model teeth with a giant toothbrush, making the experience both educational and enjoyable.

Police Community Engagement Visit

Our local police visit provided a meaningful opportunity for children to connect with community helpers and develop an understanding of safety within their environment. Through interactive discussions, children explored important topics such as road safety and personal responsibility, actively contributing their ideas and prior knowledge. This engagement not only strengthened children's awareness of community roles but also fostered a sense of trust and belonging. The experience supported social development by encouraging respectful communication and helping children recognise the importance of working together to maintain a safe community.



Fire Brigade Incursion

The visit from our local fire brigade was an exciting and highly educational experience that reinforced essential emergency safety practices. Children learned about the role of firefighters and the importance of responding calmly and safely in emergency situations. Through demonstrations and discussions, they gained knowledge about calling emergency services, recognising the number "000," and practising evacuation procedures such as crawling low to avoid smoke and assembling at a designated safe area. The opportunity to explore a fire truck, hear the siren, and handle equipment further enriched their understanding. This incursion strengthened children's confidence, awareness, and preparedness, highlighting the vital role of community partnerships in promoting safety education.





St Brigid's Coogee

2025 was a wonderful year for St. Brigid's Preschool and Long Day Care Coogee. We began the year by strengthening our connection within the community and with our families. This was reflected through our many excursions, charity events and as well as inviting families to be actively involved in our day-to-day routines and children's learning experiences.

A significant milestone this year was undergoing our Assessment and Rating process. The team came together with dedication and professionalism and we were proud to receive a rating of Meeting, which was a great achievement for our service.

Throughout the year, our educators also engaged in ongoing professional development throughout the Nursery Gowrie project. This provided valuable opportunities for reflection, collaboration and growth in our practice. Educators deepened their understanding of the early childhood pedagogy, strengthened their approaches to intentional teaching, and continued to build responsive and meaningful learning environments for the children in our care.

We have continued to build and nurture a relationship with our parish community and we feel incredibly fortunate to share our space and environment with them. This partnership remains an important part of our centre's values. We look forward to see where our journey will head in 2026.







38 Renwick Street, Leichhardt NSW 2040

02 9568 8628

scecs@syd.catholic.edu.au

www.scecs.nsw.edu.au

Learning and Growing Together