



## Additional information for applicants Early childhood educators

### Professional development

In 2010, Council won a Kindergarten Cluster Management Best Practice Award for 'developing a culture of learning'.

### Children's services conferences

Council delivers two children's services conferences each year. All services operated by Council close for these days and educators from kindergartens, family day care, long day care and occasional care join together with and other early childhood professionals to participate in professional learning experiences.

- Participants gain skills and knowledge, develop partnerships with other professionals and feel valued.
- Educators expand their professional practice by experiencing different roles while in the safety of their team. This ensures that educators feel valued and that their abilities are recognised.
- Staff are empowered to take responsibility for the identification of their own professional development needs and are encouraged to support the development of their peers.

*I have been working for the Council as a Certificate III early childhood educator for the past twelve months. In that time I have been offered many enjoyable and rewarding opportunities to be able to learn and grow. One of these opportunities included being part of a conference, delivering a workshop with other Council children's services staff. I never imagined that I could do this and had never been to a conference before. To help organise such a big event was truly an honour, in doing this it gave me a lot of confidence in speaking to people and I was able to explore my own creativity. The process allowed me to gain further knowledge working with other professionals and gave me confidence in my everyday work.*

**Sam, Early Childhood Assistant**

### National Quality Framework

Council's early childhood services have been actively engaged in the preparation for and implementation of the National Quality Framework for many years. The first two services operated by Council to be assessed under the National Quality Framework received an 'exceeding the quality standard' rating.

### Victorian Early Learning and Development Framework and Early Years Learning Framework

Council are supporting educators to further develop and build on planning, assessment and implementation skills around the VEYLD and EYLF. Educators regularly attend formal training and are supported to engage in a lively culture of professional enquiry as part of their everyday work. Council provides opportunities for educators to collaborate with other professionals from across the organisation in an integrated approach to the delivery of services for children and families.

## Service integration

Golden Plains Shire Council is committed to improving service integration across early childhood services. In 2006, Council won an Early Years Award for the development of the Bannockburn Family Services Centre, which serves as a central hub for the provision of services in the district. The focus on service integration includes addressing early childhood infrastructure, workforce development and agency and community partnerships.

## Educator attributes and measuring performance

### Attributes of educators

- Early childhood educators at Golden Plains Shire Council must demonstrate a commitment to ongoing continuous improvement. This includes service development, professional development, team development and organisational development. Continuous improvement will be achieved through reflective practice and feedback.
- Reflective practice helps us understand the impact of our actions and improve our professional skills. It involves a conscious attempt to plan, describe, and reflect on the process and outcomes of the actions.
- Feedback on performance is essential for improving performance. Children's Services staff must be able to give and receive feedback. Feedback is a gift - always welcome it!
- Early childhood educators at Golden Plains Shire Council must demonstrate an ability to perform effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team in a challenging, fast-paced, rapidly changing environment. This includes the ability to form positive relationships with a large number of co-workers and supervisors with a broad range of values, skills, experience, qualifications and styles.

### How we will measure our success

Success will be measured by:

- How well the attributes described above are demonstrated. This includes how enthusiastically the attributes are embraced and how challenging situations are dealt with.
- Challenging situations may include:
  - Last-minute requests from families, team members and management.
  - Working with people (families and staff) who have a wide range of qualifications, skills, experience, opinions and values.
  - Dealing with unexpected situations.
- How well the responsibilities of the position are managed. This includes both the completion of tasks and the manner in which the team member responds when tasks are not able to be completed.
- How well team members perform the technical skills required of their position. This includes a demonstrated understanding of children's services regulations, National Quality Framework, Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework, child development, teamwork, and interactions with children and families.
- How effectively team members form positive relationships with co-workers, families and other stakeholders.

