



Year in Review 2021–22

The past year has given us fresh insight into the remarkable strengths of our organisation.

We have seen the resilience and passion of staff as they continued to provide exceptional education and care for our children, families and adult learners. They navigated the disruption of lockdowns, changing restrictions, and the return to 'business as usual' with courage, professionalism and an unwavering commitment to our communities.

As a non-profit organisation, we are grateful for the financial assistance provided by government during COVID, which helped us to weather the unpredictability, ensured we retained our people, and allowed us to waive fees for families when needed. This enabled us to maintain high levels of enrolments at most services and has ensured a more stable outlook for the coming year.

Growth in our adult learning programs has been a key achievement, with several new substantial contracts and an expansion of our sector-leading coaching and mentoring framework. We are grateful to the Victorian Department of Education & Training for their support and were pleased to have welcomed the Early Childhood Minister Ingrid Stitt on several occasions as we launched new programs.

As a leader in the early childhood sector, we continued to play an active role in peak bodies, including ELACCA, ELAA and ECA, advocating for high quality services and for improved benefits and conditions for our team members.

We are optimistic about the future of our sector. Major reform announced by the Victorian Premier will give all four-year-olds across the state access to 30 hours of free 'pre-prep' from 2032. This reform acknowledges the critical importance of early education in the development and wellbeing of children.

At the heart of our success are our people and they have continued to embody the values of the organisation and strive for excellence in all that they do. We are immensely proud of our team and the incredible care and connection they nurture in our communities. We thank them all and we warmly thank our families and children, adult learners, board members and all our partners for their continued support.

Susan Anderson
CEO

Paul Geyer
Chair

During the year we:

SUPPORTED

1,429

families

EDUCATED

1,703

children

SUPPORTED

90

services through coaching and professional development

62%

were in regional Victoria

TRAINED

126

students



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I feel that Gowrie is a magical place. One of the best things about it is the educators who are highly skilled. They're dedicated, passionate and really caring. We feel so happy to leave the children here and very lucky that they've had the opportunity to start their education here.

We value the patience and care of the educators and the connection they have with the children. Everybody knows everyone here; the children and families are all known and the connections between the children are promoted on the basis that there's a space for everyone. It's a truly inclusive centre. We love the richness of the programs and the huge diversity of families and educators, which is so valuable because the children all learn so much from each other.

I found the process to full teacher registration quite daunting, but my Gowrie mentor supported me during the planning stages, during implementation and all the way up to my presentation. It meant that when challenges arose, it wasn't as hard or overwhelming because of that mentor.



We demonstrated and advocated for quality education

- We began the implementation of our Pedagogy Framework, with the aim of embedding consistent approaches to pedagogy and curriculum development. The framework provides a strong foundation for new teachers and educators, while nurturing innovative pedagogy
- We saw the successful implementation of three-year-old kindergarten across all our early learning services through a variety of models to suit the needs of each local community
- We undertook a review of child safety across the organisation and have incorporated the revised child safe standards into policies and practices

We partnered with families and communities

- We continued to deepen our reconciliation efforts with the development of our first Reconciliation Action Plan, Reflect. Our team maintain a strong commitment to growing their understanding and knowledge as they educate the next generation on First Nations perspectives and the hard truths about our past
- We successfully accessed DET's Koorie Preschool Assistant Program, which builds on our existing partnerships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through our Aboriginal Outreach worker role. This not only benefits our programs but also kindergarten programs across Hume/Moreland
- Children, educators and teachers were delighted to reconnect with local communities through activities such as On Country kinder programs, beach kinder, out and about programs, visits to museums, design hubs, etc. This is an integral part of our program and we look forward to re-establishing connections with aged care facilities and other community programs.
- We re-engaged with community partners, including early intervention and allied health services, Our Place, schools and family support services



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I love Gowrie because it's fun and because we get to play and do experiments. Bush Kinder is fun because we might see frogs, and we get to climb trees and make a fairy house out of sticks and wood and leaves.

I like coming here because I love to make colourings and I love playing and eating and I love when we get to go to the playground.

I get to learn new things and play with my friends when I'm at Gowrie.

I love the balance between practical knowledge and theoretical learning that a Gowrie traineeship provides. It's a very holistic program and it's so lovely to play a part in the nourishment of children and to see them thrive.

I'm so grateful to my Gowrie facilitator and my mentors, who have been so good to me. They always make time and have such patience in guiding me with my work. The support is wonderful, and I've found it a really rewarding program.

We extended our impact through greater reach

- We launched a new Early Childhood Traineeships Program supported by DET, which saw 29 trainees studying with Gowrie and working in services across the state
- We completed the implementation of the provisionally registered teacher mentoring program and agreed a new program with DET to support 150 PRTs in 2022/23
- We were awarded a new coaching program by DET to support teachers transitioning to early childhood or returning after a period of leave
- We continued to extend our coaching through DET's School Readiness Funding program and appointed several new experienced coaches and mentors based in Regional Victoria to enable this growth to continue

We continued to develop as a learning organisation with great people and a thriving culture

- A strong culture of coaching and mentoring, and commitment to our people was highlighted in the results of our culture survey, with engagement scores remaining high, in the top 25 per cent
- Our first staff conference in three years gave us the opportunity to connect and celebrate some of the extraordinary work
- We implemented our new coaching framework, focusing on training our leaders as coaches and training our accredited coaches who facilitate Coaching Communities of Practice across Gowrie
- During the year we introduced new benefits including paid pandemic leave, paid family and domestic violence leave, paid parental leave for all staff, a return-to-work bonus after parental leave and discounts for staff whose children are enrolled in our services
- We continued to encourage internal promotions and career opportunities. 22 individuals were promoted to a leadership position and 12 were promoted from educator to teacher. We supported nine educators to undertake accelerated ECT qualifications and a further 19 educators to study towards a Graduate Diploma, Bachelor or Masters teaching qualification

We invested in developing a sustainable and forward-looking organisation

- We consolidated our IT Strategic Roadmap focusing on addressing gaps that will help position Gowrie for future success. This included the development of a new intranet and knowledge hub and ongoing review of our privacy and cyber security
- Our work would not be possible without the support of our partners in local, state and federal government. Through over \$1.4m in grants, we have been able to improve our facilities and enhance our outdoor spaces, including a major redevelopment of the outdoor space at Clare Court and significant building improvements at Carlton North.

2021–22 Financials

Income Statement

	30 June 2022	30 June 2021
Revenues	20,275,376	21,720,516
Expenses		
Depreciation and amortisation expenses	707,592	659,398
Employee benefits expenses	18,291,446	17,106,169
Occupancy expenses	605,917	650,366
Advertising expenses	65,691	52,854
Finance costs	84,226	114,052
Administration expenses	212,882	198,872
Operational expenses	592,402	712,858
Organisational expenses	107,127	118,985
IT expenses	364,380	390,037
Other expenses	8,664	21,519
Total Income/(Loss)	(764,951)	1,695,406

Balance Sheet

	30 June 2022	30 June 2021
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	8,023,863	7,277,168
Receivables	602,498	669,403
Other assets	467,231	347,802
Total current assets	9,093,592	8,294,373
Non-current assets		
Lease assets	1,266,313	1,781,120
Property, plant and equipment	695,903	539,383
Other assets	143,588	85,512
Total non-current assets	2,105,804	2,406,015
Total assets	11,199,396	10,700,388
Current liabilities		
Payables	828,747	631,936
Lease liabilities	552,332	507,361
Provisions	1,719,971	1,579,978
Other liabilities	2,621,794	1,254,695
Total current liabilities	5,722,844	3,973,970
Non-current liabilities		
Lease liabilities	815,582	1,344,930
Provisions	289,326	244,893
Total non-current liabilities	1,104,908	1,589,823
Total liabilities	6,827,752	5,563,793
Net assets	4,371,644	5,136,595
Members funds		
Accumulated surplus	4,371,644	5,136,595
Total members funds	4,371,644	5,136,595

Board

Paul Geyer
Chair

Mia Bromley
Vice-Chair

Kim Rowe
Treasurer

Joel Cohen

Marija Maher

Hannah Hollingworth

Mark Burke

Sonia Sharp
(to November 2021)

Jessica Murphy
(from October 2021)

Sarah Young
(from December 2021)

Executive

Susan Anderson
CEO

Nicole Pilsworth
Early Learning

Glyn Williams
Adult Learning and Marketing

Sue Chamberlain-Ward
People and Culture

Paul Hodgson
Commercial

Life Members

Jenny Acton

Joan Waters

John Emmerson

Maureen Savage

Sue Harper

Gilda Howard

Heather Barnes