

# St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee Minutes

**24 May 2021**

## **Our Vision**

*A City which values its heritage, cultural diversity,  
sense of place and natural environment.*

*A progressive City which is prosperous, sustainable  
and socially cohesive, with a strong community spirit.*

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City of  
Norwood  
Payneham  
& St Peters

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**VENUE** Staff Room, St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-school

**HOUR** 5.30pm

**PRESENT**

**Committee Members** Cr Evonne Moore (Presiding Member)  
Cr Kester Moorhouse  
Ms Georgia Brodribb  
Ms Simone Munn  
Ms Christina Belperio

**Staff** Sharon Perkins (General Manager, Corporate Services)  
Alice Parsons (Director, St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School)

**APOLOGIES** Nil

**ABSENT** Nil

**TERMS OF REFERENCE:**

*The St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee is established to fulfil the following functions:*

- *to provide feedback on the St Peters Child Care & Pre-School Centre's Strategic Plan and Business Plan;*
- *to undertake general oversight of issues related to child welfare, programming and safety of the Centre; and*
- *to execute such powers as the Council may lawfully delegate to it.*

**1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ST PETERS CHILD CARE CENTRE & PRE-SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2021**

*Ms Christina Belperio moved that the minutes of the meeting of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee held on 22 February 2021 be taken as read and confirmed. Seconded by Ms Georgia Brodribb and carried unanimously.*

**2. PRESIDING MEMBER'S COMMUNICATION**

Nil

**3. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

Nil

**4. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE**

Nil

**5. WRITTEN NOTICES OF MOTION**

Nil

**6. STAFF REPORTS**

## 6.1 DIRECTORS QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT – MARCH 2021

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**REPORT AUTHOR:** Director, St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool  
**GENERAL MANAGER:** General Manager, Corporate Services  
**CONTACT NUMBER:** 8366 4585  
**FILE REFERENCE:** qA61019/A148524  
**ATTACHMENTS:** A

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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Quarterly Report is to provide information in respect to the following:

- Commentary on the Centre's Strategic Plan and Business Plan prepared by Centre Management for the Child Care Centre.
- Undertake, under the direction of Council and on behalf of Council, the general oversight of issues related to child welfare, programming and safety of the Centre.
- To execute such powers as the Council may lawfully delegate to it.
- To do anything necessary, expedient or incidental to performing or discharging the functions of the Committee as listed in the terms of Reference or to achieving its objectives.

This report provides the Committee with a status report on the activities of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool to 31 March 2021.

### BACKGROUND

The Centre has been in operation since 1977. The Centre is licenced to accommodate 105 children per day, however to ensure the high quality of care the Centre is known for is maintained, the number of available places has been capped at an average of 94 places per day. The Centre provides care for babies from six (6) weeks old through to children aged up to and including five (5) years of age.

The key activities completed during the Quarter ended March 2021, together with actions completed in previous Quarters, as required by the Centre's Strategic and Business Plans, are included in the Discussion Section of this report.

### RELEVANT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & POLICIES

This report informs the Council on the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool activities and supports Council attaining:

Outcome 1: Social Equity: An inclusive, connected, accessible and friendly community

Objective 1: Convenient and accessible services, information and facilities.

Strategy 1.2: *Maximise access to services, facilities, information and activities.*

Strategy 1.3: *Design and provide safe, high quality facilities and spaces for all people.*

Objective 4: A strong, healthy, resilient and inclusive community.

Strategy 4.2: *Encourage and provide opportunities for lifelong learning.*

Strategy 4.3: *Encourage the use of spaces and facilities for people to meet, share knowledge and connect with each other.*

The operations of Childcare Centres and Preschools are governed by the National Quality Framework. The Centre's policies and procedures are reviewed and updated over a twelve (12) month to two (2) year period, in line with National Quality Standards and the Centre's Continuous Review Policy.

### FINANCIAL AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable

## **EXTERNAL ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

Nil

## **SOCIAL ISSUES**

The Centre actively promotes inclusion for all children and their families.

The information provided in the report has no direct social issues which need to be considered.

## **CULTURAL ISSUES**

Not Applicable.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Not Applicable.

## **RESOURCE ISSUES**

Not Applicable.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Not Applicable.

## **COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS**

In response to the easing of the COVID-19 restrictions, operations at the Centre are continually being reviewed to ensure that they are in-line with the latest health advice. To minimise the risk of COVID-19 and to ensure that staff and families are continuing to adhere to the public health advice, we are currently:

- requesting all families, both adults and children, undertake hand hygiene by either washing their hand or using hand sanitiser upon entry and exit of the Centre;
- maintaining physical distancing requirements of 1.5 metres;
- limiting the number parents and carers collecting children from their respective rooms for end of day pick up to two (2) parents at any one time;
- continuing the outside sleeping (weather permitting); and
- while not required as the Centre was not required to close, the Centre has prepared a COVID Safe Plan and have communicated this to the families and carers.

Morning drop offs at the Centre ceased on 20 December 2020, with families delivering children to their respective rooms. This is to re-build stronger family relationships, which were impacted during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **CONSULTATION**

- **Committee Members**  
Not Applicable
- **Community**  
Not Applicable
- **Staff**  
Not Applicable
- **Other Agencies**  
Not Applicable

## DISCUSSION

### Child Numbers

The Centre is licensed for a maximum of 105 children daily; however to ensure a high quality of care, the daily attendance numbers are capped at an average of 94 long day care places per day. Based on current staffing levels, the Centre has capacity for up to 28 under two (2) year old, up to 30 two (2) to three (3) year old and up to 36 over three (3) year old. The mix of the numbers per age group may change on as needs basis. The average number of children for which services were provided for the March 2021 quarter is detailed in Table 1 below.

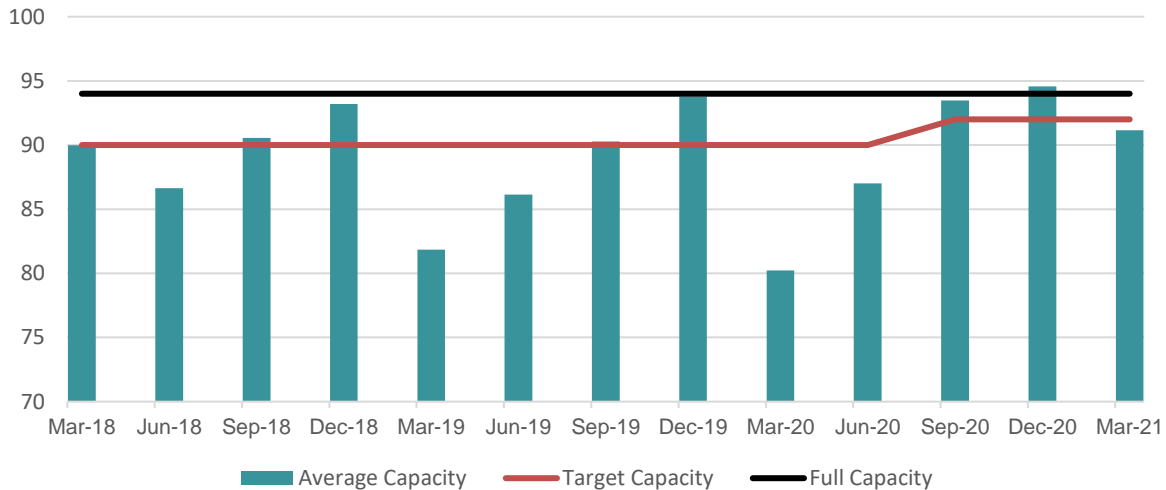
**TABLE 1: CHILD NUMBERS**

Age of Child	Staffing Ratio	Number Allowed at the Centre (maximum)	Number of Children Average for the Quarter	
			This Year	Last Year
<b>Under Twos (2)</b> (6 weeks - 24 months)				
Emerald Room	1:4	12	9.55	9.18
Ruby Room	1:4	16	16.26	14.79
<b>Over Twos (2)</b> (2 years to 3 years)				
Aquamarine Room	1:5	15	15.22	12.85
Diamond Room	1:5	15	15.09	12.20
<b>Over Threes (3)</b>				
Amethyst Room (3 years to 4 years)	1:10	18	18.09	14.98
Preschool (4 years to 5 years)	1:10	18	16.93	16.22
<b>Total</b>		94	91.14	80.22
<b>Budget</b>		-	<b>93.00</b>	<b>90.00</b>
<b>Number of sessions where 90 children attended for the quarter, 2020</b>			<b>20 days out of a total of 62 days</b>	
<b>Number of sessions where 93 children attended for the quarter, 2021</b>			<b>26 days out of a total of 63 days</b>	
<b>Average attendance – Year to Date</b>				<b>91.14</b>

As detailed in Table 1 above, for the March 2021 Quarter the Centre is almost at capacity. This is above the Centres traditional capacity for the March Quarter. Given the higher than usual capacity for this time of year, it is anticipated that the Centre will be at full capacity early into the June Quarter.

As detailed in Figure 1 below, the March and June Quarters traditionally have low attendance numbers, however, the 2021 March Quarter is showing a higher than normal occupancy, while the attendance numbers for the September and December Quarters have exceeded budgeted attendances. For the 2020-2021 Financial year, the target capacity has been set at an average of 93 daily attendances places.

**FIGURE 1: CHILD NUMBERS**



### Educator to Child Ratios

The Centre is required by the National Quality Standards to maintain a minimum Educator to Child Ratio at all times. Educator to Child Ratios are calculated across the whole service, not by individual rooms. This provides flexibility to respond to attendance numbers to ensure Educators are allocated appropriately based on the age and needs of children in the service.

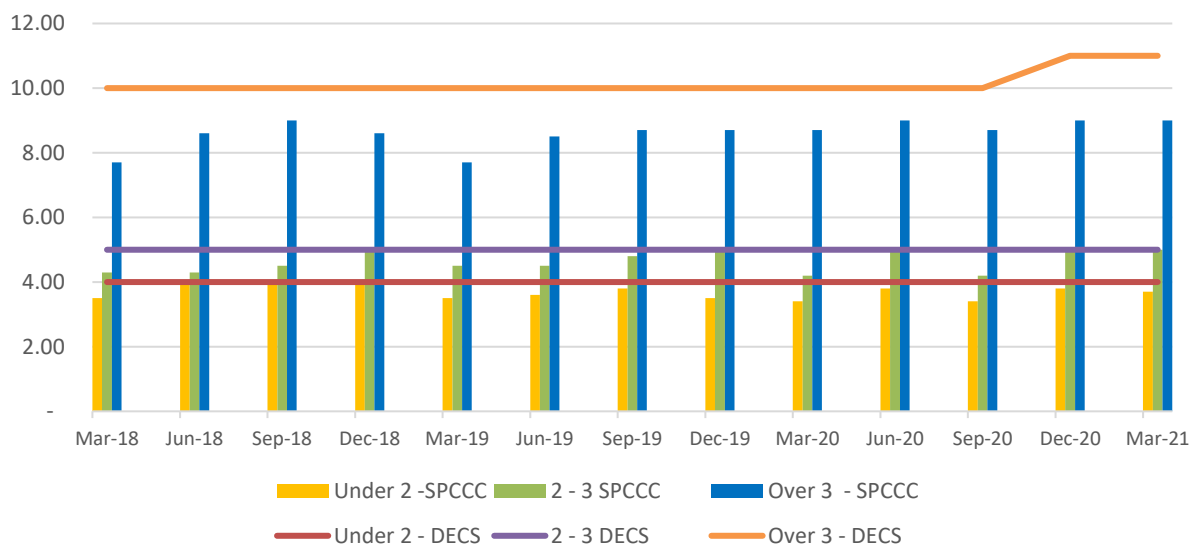
The minimum Educator to Child ratios are detailed in Table 2.

**TABLE 2: MINIMUM EDUCATOR TO CHILD RATIOS**

Age Grouping	Educator to Child Ratio
0 to 24 months	1:4
Over 24 months to less than 36 months	1:5
36 months to School age	1:11

As illustrated in Figure 2 below, the Centre has exceeded the minimum child to staff ratios for the March 2021 Quarter, with the exception of the 2-3 year age group.

**FIGURE 2: STAFF TO CHILD RATIO**



## Staffing

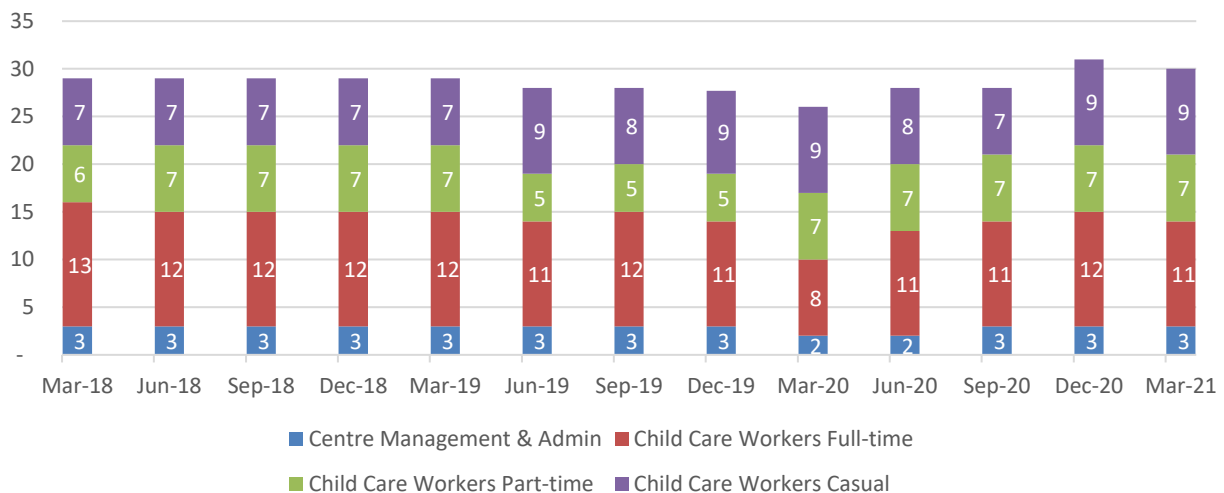
To ensure that the Centre meets the required staff to child ratios, the Full-time Equivalent Educator positions required are:

- Under 2's 5.00 FTE
- 2 -3 years 5.00 FTE
- Over 3's 4.00 FTE

To ensure the ongoing continuity of care, during periods of staff absences, permanent staff are supported by a pool of Casual Educators who back fill planned and unplanned absences, vacancies and short shift cover for lunch breaks and Centre open and closes. Not only does this ensure that children are cared for by familiar Educators when their primary care givers are absent from the Centre, it ensures that operational costs are maintained, as there is less reliance on engaging temporary contract staff through temporary contract labour hire agencies to cover absences.

Based on the Centres capacity of 94 children per day, 13 Full-time Educators, seven (7) Part-time Educators and the equivalent of 10 Casual Educators are budgeted for. As shown in Figure 3 below, the Centre has two (2) Full-time Educator vacancies, with both arising from long term leave. A recruitment process is currently being undertaken to increase the number of Educators within the casual pool.

**FIGURE 3: STAFF NUMBERS BY EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY**



## Universal Access to Early Childhood Education

Funding can be claimed for every four (4) year old child who remains at the Centre in the twelve (12) months prior to full-time schooling and has access to fifteen (15) hours of preschool services, providing the child is not accessing a preschool service from another external service, such as a Department of Education Preschool or Kindergarten.

For the year-to-date period to March 2020, the Centre has received \$11,075 under the Universal Access Scheme for the children utilising the Centre for the pre-school service. Pleasingly, the number of families that have been utilising the service for pre-school services is seven (7). The funding has been used to offset the salary costs of the Early Childhood Teachers.

## National Quality Standard

Staff practices, policies and procedures are continually reviewed in line with the new National Quality Standards and a Quality Improvement Plan has been completed. The Centre has undergone a round of Rating and Assessment. The Centre received an overall rating of 'Meeting' under the revised framework.

The seven (7) areas identified under the National Quality Standard are:

- Educational program and practice
- Children's health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing arrangements (including the number of staff looking after children)
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership and service management

The Centre has been rated as 'Meeting' the standards set under the revised The National Quality Framework which came into effect on 1 February 2018, having met all of the forty (40) of the elements.

While under the National Quality Standards, the Centre is to be regularly assessed, the details of the timing of the next review are unknown.

## Strategic Plan

The Centre's Strategic and Business Plans have been approved by the Committee and the Council. The Centre's Business Plan established Key Result Areas/Targets. The achievement of the outcomes up to March 2021, are contained in **Attachment A**.

## OPTIONS

Not Applicable.

## CONCLUSION

The St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-school is recognised as a leader in the provision of high quality child care. It is expected that this will continue, with the coming year looking promising with occupancy and educational experiences. The Centre on average for the March 2021 Quarter had 91 children accessing the service on a daily basis, with an expectation that this will be maintained throughout the year.

## COMMENTS

Nil

## RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and noted.

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*Cr Moorhouse moved:*

*That the report be received and noted.*

*Seconded by Ms Christina Belperio and carried unanimously.*

## 6.2 ESTABLISHING A PLAYGROUP

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<b>REPORT AUTHOR:</b>	<b>Director, St Peters Childcare Centre and Preschool</b>
<b>GENERAL MANAGER:</b>	General Manager, Corporate Services
<b>CONTACT NUMBER:</b>	8362 1843
<b>FILE REFERENCE:</b>	qA69762/A159139
<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b>	Nil

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### PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek the endorsement of the Committee to introduce a playgroup at the St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School.

### BACKGROUND

Playgroup is a group of mums, dads, grandparents and caregivers who meet together each week with their babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers for interaction and fun.

Parents and caregivers work together to provide their babies and young children with opportunities to learn through play. Each parent or carer is responsible for their child's behaviour at playgroup and this helps to ensure close supervision of all children.

Playgroup incorporates low or no cost activities. Playgroups often provide a large range of toys and activities often not available at home.

The benefits of playgroup are to share experiences that may be messy or challenging, social interactions with other families, which focus on day to day family challenges or celebrations, while their children learn to build relationships with other children.

### RELEVANT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & POLICIES

This report informs the Council on the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool activities and supports Council attaining:

Outcome 1: Social Equity: An inclusive, connected, accessible and friendly community

Objective 1.1: Convenient and accessible services, information and facilities.

Strategy 1.1.2: *Maximise access to services, facilities, information and activities.*

Objective 1.3: An engaged and participating community

Strategy 1.3.2: *Provide opportunity for community involvement in decision-making and program development*

Objective 1.4: A strong, healthy, resilient and inclusive community.

Strategy 1.4.2: *Encourage and provide opportunities for lifelong learning.*

Strategy 1.4.3: *Encourage the use of spaces and facilities for people to meet, share knowledge and connect with each other.*

### FINANCIAL AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

The Centre will register with Playgroup SA to connect new families in the area to the Centre's Playgroup. Playgroup SA promote to "mothers/parent" groups and the likes of Children and Families Services (CAFS). The small registration fee of \$90 dollars is required which is spent on the promotion of the Playgroup and the provision of resources which will assist in planning themes for each week of the year. There will be no cost to the local families.

### EXTERNAL ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

Not Applicable.

## **SOCIAL ISSUES**

Playgroups provide families the opportunity to interact with people of similar interest who may be wanting to continue their connection beyond the Playgroup environment and or become a part of the Childcare Centre. The provision of a Playgroup is supported by the National Quality Standards (NQS) through Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities.

## **CULTURAL ISSUES**

Not Applicable.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Not Applicable.

## **RESOURCE ISSUES**

The playgroup will be facilitated by the Director and the Team Leader of the Emerald Room. Each session will include a 10 minute group time and it is proposed that each Educator in the Centre would have a turn at hosting group time, as part of their own professional development.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Not Applicable.

## **COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS**

The participants of the Playgroup would be required to comply with the physical distancing and hygiene practices that the Centre has in place.

## **CONSULTATION**

- **Committee Members**  
Not Applicable.
- **Community**  
Not Applicable.
- **Staff**  
General Manager, Corporate Services  
Team Leader, Emerald Room
- **Other Agencies**  
Not Applicable.

## **DISCUSSION**

Parents using a childcare centre for the first time can be unsettled and fearful when having to trust other adults with their children. Child Care is often the first time parents are away from their child for an extended period of time. The Centre reflected on how it could assist new parents using childcare for the first time become more settled and secure in their decision and build trust and strengthen the Centres connections in the community. Following consideration of a number of options, it was considered that the provision of a weekly Playgroup within the childcare environment, would address these issues.

By providing a playgroup at the Centre, parents will be provided with the opportunity to come to a designated space with their child to enjoy experiences for 90 minutes each week and build connections with other families and the Centre.

A playgroup operating from within the Centre will allow parents to see how a childcare operates and provide the opportunity to introduce the child and families to the childcare environment, Educators and experiences which will building familiarity and trust, helping to bridge gaps of uncertainty, when families are considering childcare.

Including the playgroup as part of the service offered by the Centre, will not only help families with feeling secure in future childcare usage, but will strengthen the Centres ability to demonstrate how it meets Quality Area 6 of the NQS, *Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities*. Element 6.1: *Respectful relationships with families* are developed and maintained by families being supported in their parenting role. Element 6.2: *Collaborative partnerships* is focussed on enhancing children's inclusion, learning and well-being, families being supported, transitions and community engagement, all elements which a playgroup offer.

Ideas from Playgroup SA will be accessed as well as ideas which are generated from Educators within the Centre. A playgroup is traditionally organised by a parent volunteer, however given that it is proposed that the Playgroup be held in a play space within the Emerald Room, the Centres' Director in conjunction with the Team Leader of the Emerald Room (baby age range) will facilitate the weekly playgroup sessions, utilise Centre resources, thus making it easier and stress free for families who wish to attend.

While the objective of the Playgroup is to provide connections to the community, incorporating the playgroup at the Centre provides a further pathway to promote the Centre to guarantee new enrolments. The playgroup will be resourced within existing staffing and rosters, therefore other than the minor registration fee with Playgroup SA, there will be no additional cost incurred.

## **OPTIONS**

The Committee can chose not to endorse the establishment of a Playgroup, however there is no reasons outlined in this report for the Committee to make that recommendation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Commencing childcare is a stressful time for a first time parent. The provision of a Playgroup within the Childcare environment, such as the St Peters Child Care Centre provides an opportunity once a week for parents to be part of the environment as they consider their future childcare needs.

## **COMMENTS**

If Committee Members have any questions or require clarification in relation to any issues raised in this report, do not hesitate to contact the Director, St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool, Alice Parsons on 8362 1843 or [aparsons@npsp.sa.gov.au](mailto:aparsons@npsp.sa.gov.au), prior to the meeting.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee endorses and recommends to the Council that a Playgroup to be hosted at the St Peters Childcare Centre.

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*Ms Simone Munn moved:*

*That the Committee endorses and recommends to the Council that a Playgroup to be hosted at the St Peters Childcare Centre.*

*Seconded by Ms Georgia Brodribb and carried unanimously.*

**7. OTHER BUSINESS**

Nil

**8. NEXT MEETING**

Monday 26 July 2021

**9. CLOSURE**

There being no further business the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 6.11pm.

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**Cr Evonne Moore**  
**PRESIDING MEMBER**

**Minutes Confirmed on** \_\_\_\_\_  
(date)