

Position Description

Title:	Pedagogical Leader, Safe Haven Initiative
Business unit:	Early Learning
Location:	22 Church Street, Richmond VIC 3121
Employment type:	Full-time, maximum-term to December 2025
Reports to:	Senior Manager Early Learning Operations

About Uniting

Uniting Vic.Tas is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church. We've been supporting people and families for over 100 years. We work alongside people of all ages in local communities in Victoria and Tasmania. Our services reach to Albury-Wodonga in the north, Mallacoota in East Gippsland, the Wimmera region in the west, and across Tasmania.

We empower children, young people and families to learn and thrive. We're there for people experiencing homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction or mental illness. We support people with disability to live the life they choose. We assist older people to maintain their independence and enjoy life. We provide opportunities to access training and meaningful employment. We're proud to welcome and support asylum seekers to our community. We work to empower people with the information, skills and tools they need to live a healthy, happy life.

As an organisation, we work in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia's First Peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of this land.

We celebrate diversity and value the lived experience of people of every ethnicity, faith, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity, sex and sexual orientation. We welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse and non-binary, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) people at our services. We pledge to provide inclusive and non-discriminatory services.

Our purpose: To inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice

Our values: We are imaginative, respectful, compassionate and bold

1. About the program

Uniting is partnering with Parkville Institute (PI) and the Victorian State government to implement and evaluate the replication of the Early Years Education Program (EYEP), an intensive, high-quality early childhood education and care (ECEC) program that achieved remarkable learning and developmental outcomes for children in the original trial. EYEP was initiated by Kids First, previously the Children's Protection Society (CPS), an independent not-for-profit child and family services organisation based in the northeast of Melbourne which was founded in 1896. The program was designed and implemented by CPS in collaboration with Associate Professor Brigid Jordan AM and Dr Anne Kennedy.

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2. Position purpose

A key element in the EYEP model is the appointment of a full time pedagogical / educational leader who is supported to inspire, lead and monitor high quality curriculum and pedagogy in the centre.

Support systems for the pedagogical leader in this unique model include:

- Working as a full-time member of a senior leadership team comprising of a full-time Centre Coordinator, and a part-time Family Practice Consultant and Infant Mental Health Consultant.
- Regular multidisciplinary workshops supported by Parkville Institute.
- Pedagogical mentorship and coaching provided by a Parkville Institute Senior Advisor.
- Access to ongoing training in the EYEP model by Parkville Institute.
- Regular reflective supervision with a Parkville Institute Senior Advisor.
- No formal requirement to work as part of the child-staff ratios.

The SEED in Richmond Centre provides the EYEP program for children under 3 years of age who are living with significant family disadvantage and social stress. The pedagogical leader provides oversight of all the programs in the centre with a particular focus on the EYEP model's implementation with fidelity.

The results from the original trial found that children who participated in the early years education program had significant improvement in their cognitive (IQ and language) and non-cognitive skills (resilience and social-emotional).

The evaluation of the outcomes for the children and families who participate in the replication research project is being conducted by Melbourne Institute: Applied Economic & Social Research, University of Melbourne.

- The Pedagogical Leader has overall responsibility for inspiring, leading, supporting and monitoring evidence-based curriculum and pedagogy, with the goal of improving and sustaining children's learning outcomes so that every child enters school as a confident learner with a strong and positive sense of their identity.
 - The Pedagogical Leader enacts the mission and values of Uniting Vic Tas.
 - The Pedagogical Leader works as a key member of the leadership team where research and multi-disciplinary practices and principles are valued and inform decision making across all aspects of the programs and the partnerships with families or carers. Accountability for complex decision-making is shared with the Centre Manager & Senior Manager.
 - The Pedagogical Leader works collaboratively with the Centre Manager in the development of the Centre philosophy and its enactment especially through the maintenance and relevance of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
 - The Pedagogical Leader collaborates with the senior leadership team in ensuring program fidelity including the enactment of relational pedagogy informed by early childhood education theories, infant mental health and trauma informed theories and practice.
 - The Pedagogical Leader builds the capacity of room teams and individual Early Childhood teachers and educators to plan, implement and assess children's learning at an exceeding quality standard (NQS) through mentoring, coaching and other support systems or strategies.
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3. Scope

Budget:

Nil

People:

Service Administrator, Teachers, Educators, Infant Mental Health Consultant, Family Service Practitioners

4. Relationships

Internal

- Senior Manager Early Learning Operations
- Program Manager
- Centre staff
- Safe Haven SEED leadership team
- Uniting support services as required.

External

- Families, caregivers and children
 - Parkville Institute
 - Department of Education and Training
 - Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
 - Department of Health and Human Services
 - Referring Agencies
 - Local government authorities
 - Peak bodies
 - Other community service organisations as required.
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5. Key responsibility areas

Curriculum and pedagogy:

- Provide pedagogical coaching and mentoring to support EC teachers and educators to implement all aspects of the program in accordance with the model, the VEYLDF / EYLF, Early Years Education program model and the service philosophy.
- Foster a culture of reflective practice within the staff team as a key strategy for continuous improvement in quality across all aspects of education and care provision.
- Provide guidance on program documentation which supports a consistent, high-quality approach that utilises an ongoing cycle of planning, implementing, reviewing and evaluation.
- Support and monitor Early Childhood Teachers and Educators with 12-weekly goal-setting meetings with families or carers.
- Share pedagogical and curriculum research evidence to support building Early Childhood Teachers and Educators' professional knowledge and skills.
- Foster a culture of pedagogical enquiry with the staff team in order to build professional confidence and practice knowledge.
- Maintain, model and communicate clear expectations in relation to professional accountability and ethical standards.
- Recognise, support, document and affirm quality practices through regular observation, feedback, facilitated reflective discussions, and room and staff meetings.

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- Lead and support Early Childhood Teachers and Educators in their professional responsibility to implement intentional teaching and learning strategies within a play-based approach.
- Collaborate with the senior leadership team and children's primary educators in planning and implementing safe and positive transitions into and from the centre and across the day.
- Monitor and support Early Childhood Teachers' and Educators' wellbeing in collaboration with the senior leadership team.
- Work collaboratively with other early childhood professionals as required.

Families / carers and children:

- Model and foster respectful relationships with families / carers and children that reflect the principles of high expectations and inclusion.
- Enact leadership in pedagogy and curriculum provision that responds in meaningful ways to local community contexts, family aspirations and traditions.
- Build and nurture respectful relationships with families / carers and actively contribute to creating a warm, welcoming space for families.
- Maintain confidentiality of information concerning families / carers and children.
- Support the primary educator model in collaboration with the Centre Manager.
- Support Early Childhood Teachers and Educators in building inclusive, collaborative partnerships with families or carers as an important element of the program.
- Ensure that children's agency and influence are promoted, so that programs meet the needs, interests, abilities and cultural backgrounds of each child.

Professional development:

- Identify areas of improvement as part of regular feedback processes and support Early Childhood Teachers and Educators to set, monitor and implement their professional goals.
- Collaborate with the Centre Coordinator in the development and implementation of staff appraisal and feedback strategies to support individual professional capacity building and learning.
- Continue to develop your professional knowledge and skills and commit to sharing your knowledge with other staff members.
- Identify and participate in personal professional development related to the implementation of high-quality education and care programs that support children's learning outcomes.

People and teams:

- Lead, build and maintain a teamwork approach across the rooms so that there is consistency of quality provision in the centre in alignment with the Uniting Vic.Tas values, expectations and the Children's Services Practice Guide.
- Collaborate with Parkville Institute Senior Advisors and Uniting Vic.Tas staff in new staff induction and orientation processes into the centre and the program.
- Collaborate with the senior leadership team in reflection and discussion relating to the inclusion of all children within the program, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability and other children experiencing social disadvantage, trauma and in out-of-home care.
- Collaborate with staff from Parkville Institute to review and evaluate the overall quality of the pedagogy and curriculum and its fidelity with the replication of the EYEP model.
- Recognise, respect and affirm the contribution of colleagues and actively support the professional growth of the staff within the program.
- Collaborate with the senior leadership team in the scheduling and focus for monthly staff meetings and support the documentation of these meetings.
- Role model best practice and maintain a cooperative and flexible attitude towards the development of a motivated and professional team.
- Provide fortnightly reflective supervision to allocated supervisees.
- Undertake regular supervision with Parkville Institute Senior Advisor (Curriculum & Pedagogy).
- Undertake performance review with the Senior Manager and provide feedback to promote collaborative working relationships.

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Quality and risk management:

- Collaborate with the Centre Coordinator to ensure Early Childhood Teachers and Educators have sound knowledge of the National Quality Framework and can meet the requirements to a high standard in their practice.
- Collaborate with the Centre Manager to ensure documentation of children's learning is professionally presented and is an authentic, accurate representation of children's learning and development over time.
- Identify and assist in the solution to any observed communication and workflow problems by suggesting improvements and enhancements to existing systems and processes in accordance with Uniting Vic.Tas' policies and procedures.
- Lead and work collaboratively with Teachers and Educators in identifying, documenting and reviewing strengths and continuous improvement goals in the QIP.
- Collaborate with the Centre Manager in ensuring that all environments in the centre are safe for children and adults and meet all the legal requirements and quality standards.
- Document your work with Teachers and Educators as evidence of the discussion, challenges and decision making involved in establishing, maintaining and supporting quality in all aspects of education and care.

Personal accountability:

- Compliance with Uniting's values, code of conduct, policies and procedures and relevant government legislation and standards where relevant.
- Cooperate with strategies to actively ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children who come into association with us.
- Ensure appropriate use of resources.
- Work collaboratively with Uniting (Victoria Tasmania) employees and external stakeholders in accordance with Uniting's values and professional standards of behaviour.
- Actively participate in initiatives to maintain, build upon and promote a positive and collaborative workplace.
- Identify opportunities to integrate and work collaboratively across teams.
- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety, and health and safety of others (to the extent required).
- Promote a positive safety culture by contributing to health and safety consultation and communication.
- Promptly respond to and report health and safety hazards, incidents and near misses to line management
- Attend mandatory training sessions (i.e. equal employment opportunity, health, and safety) and mandatory training specific to position.
- Declare anything that you become aware of through the course of your engagement which may impede your suitability to work with children and/or young people.
- Declare any potential or actual conflict of interest that you become aware of through the course of your engagement:
 - based on a relationship with a current member of Uniting's workforce; or
 - based on my ongoing work with another organisation.

6. Person specification

Qualifications

- Minimum bachelor's degree in early childhood (or equivalent as approved by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority).
- Registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).
- Current First Aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis certification.
- Current Victorian driver licence.

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Experience

- Significant experience in early childhood education and care services or programs and specific experience as a Pedagogical / Educational Leader.
- Comprehensive knowledge of theory relating to early childhood education and care, professional standards and approved learning frameworks, and contemporary understanding of evidence based best practice approaches to teaching and learning Have a sound knowledge and understanding of contemporary early childhood learning and development theories and learning styles.
- Knowledge of leadership theory, the use of a range of leaderships styles and the ability to research and disseminate information to others in a manner that is easily understood.
- A robust understanding of the quality areas under the National Quality Standard.
- Thorough understanding of Early Childhood Australia's (ECA) Code of Ethics, Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Code of Conduct and the service's Code of Conduct and be able to support other staff in their understanding of these Codes.
- Ability to coach and mentor Early Childhood Teachers and Educators in the development of an evidence informed educational program.
- Ability to facilitate professional discussions and lead and support critical reflection in all aspects of program delivery across the service in consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- The ability to plan, work and manage time effectively with minimal supervision.
- Ability to challenge and support Early Childhood Teachers and Educators to improve their professional knowledge and skills as teachers and educators.
- Well-developed leadership and self-motivation skills.
- Ability to identify and utilise people's strengths and build relationships.

Core selection criteria

Values alignment:

- Ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values of respect for the uniqueness and value of every individual.
- Establish and maintain ethical relationships that enable people to be influential in their own support arrangement and ensure they are treated with dignity and respect.
- Build on strengths and abilities of all.
- Demonstrate transparency and accountability.

Communication:

- Strong and clear communication skills with the ability to build positive professional relationships with families, children, teachers, educators and other professionals.
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- The ability to develop and model open channels of communication with all staff and families, particularly in complex and sensitive contexts.
- Pedagogical and curriculum knowledge and skills.
- Strong grasp of theories of teaching and learning, child development theories and the ability to articulate the rationale for pedagogical decisions and practices.
- Demonstrated ability to lead the development of a curriculum and pedagogy which enacts the centre's philosophy and the EYEP model.
- Ability to research and disseminate information to others in a manner that is easily understood.
- Highly developed written and verbal communication skills including the ability to prepare clear, concise reports and documentation.
- Ability to consistently communicate and model the organisational values of leadership, loyalty, outcomes, and excellence.

Leadership:

- Strong leadership skills and knowledge in leading education focused teams.
- Ability to support and lead program planning in collaboration with the Centre Manager and ensure the achievement of goals.

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- Ability to build strong, high functioning teams and align teams with the organisational values and goals, particularly those related to consumer-centricity.
- Role modelling expected behaviour.
- Strong ability to establish credibility with staff and inspire a shared vision.
- Well-developed leadership and self-motivation skills.
- Effectively utilise resources - personnel, equipment and materials.
- Ability to work independently and within a team environment.
- Ability to support the professional development requirements of team members and provide opportunities for these to be achieved.
- Ability to foster and model a strong commitment to collaboration and excellence within teams.
- Ability to lead and facilitate professional discussions and critical reflection on all aspects of program implementation in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Child safety:

- Demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and understand requirements to protect them from abuse and neglect.

Multidisciplinary teamwork:

- Experience and skills in working collaboratively with other professionals in pursuit of team goals and informed decision making and a willingness to actively support others and contribute to the continuous improvement of an ethical collaborative and effective workplace environment.

Quality assurance:

- Ability and experience to support the development, implementation and evaluation of high-quality education and care programs for children from birth to five years of age.
- Committed to continuing individual learning and development and an ability to operate in an inclusive and supportive learning environment.
- Thorough knowledge of the National Quality Framework, including the National Children's Services Regulations 2012, the National Quality Standard and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework.
- Thorough understanding of and commitment to Early Childhood Australia's (ECA) Code of Ethics, (2016), Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) and Uniting's Code of Conduct and an ability to support staff in their understanding of and commitment to these Codes.
- Demonstrated knowledge of child development, learning theories, relational pedagogy, innovative program planning and issues affecting families in contemporary society.
- Understanding of and experience working with families and children experiencing vulnerability and disadvantage.

Research:

- Understand the importance of research in early education and the implications for evidence informed practice.
- Be committed to supporting the research component of the Early Years Education Program model and to supporting fidelity to the model in partnership with the Parkville Institute, DET and Uniting Vic.Tas
- An interest in and capacity to support the replication research being undertaken by PI and the University of Melbourne.
- Ability to operate a standard suite of Windows based applications and databases relevant to the Early Learning Services administration.

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7. We are a child safe organisation

Uniting is a child safe organisation and is committed in everyday practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children, at all times. As a child safe organisation, employment with Uniting is subject to a satisfactory national (and international where relevant) police check and relevant Working With Children Check (and NDIS Worker Screening Check where relevant) to your State prior to commencement of any paid or unpaid work and/or participation in any service or undertaking.

This position description is subject to review and may change in accordance with Uniting's operational, service and consumer requirements.

8. Acknowledgement

I have read, understood, and accepted the above Position Description

Employee

Name:

Signature:

Date: