

OCTOBER 2025

Universal Access to Early Learning

Communique #4

Universal Access to Early Learning Advisory Group

The Universal Access to Early Learning Advisory Group met for the third time on 12 September 2025. The Advisory Group will meet quarterly throughout 2025 with the next meeting scheduled for 3 December 2025.

EL3 Trial Site Update

A fourth service commenced in August on Cape Barren Island as part of the EL3 initiative. This service adds to the current trials in East Devonport, Fingal and on Bruny Island, providing opportunities for local children to participate in quality early learning.

All four services have been well supported by children and families with a high proportion of utilisation across the trial sites.

- **Truwana/Cape Barren Island – Outreach Model** – DECYP has partnered with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC) who will deliver programs and support tailored to community need for two days each fortnight. Staff have undertaken ASQ-TRAK screening, observing and discussing support for developmental progress, cultural playgroups, opportunities for learning together, a little readers shared library, and a community BBQ to encourage local families to come and yarn about building on the strengths of children and families on the island.
- **East Devonport – Hub Model** – As part of the Hub Model in East Devonport, Early Childhood Inclusion Service and Working Together staff have extended their support to the EL3 trial, this collaboration was also complemented by a shared professional learning session at the CFLC on the AEDC to deepen understanding of early childhood development in the community. Additional work planning for upgrades to the identified and vacant Drew Street building is in the process of obtaining a schedule of works, with capital works to bring the building in line with national regulations projected to be complete in late 2026.
- **Break O’Day/Fingal – Regional Model** – the Fingal service is at capacity continuing to provide early learning access to children across the community. Recruitment for a Community Inclusion Worker has progressed with the role continuing to support

children and families to connect with services across the region. Five students working towards their Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care continue to have study supports at the CFLC, with future supports transitioning to relevant stakeholders in 2026.

- **Bruny Island** – *CFLC Outreach Model* – continues to have strong support and utilisation of early years supports by families, offered at the Bruny Island District School. The Community Inclusion Worker has assisted families to access early years support services including transporting and accompanying families to visit the Saltbush Child and Family Learning Centre (CFLC) in Kingston.

DECYP is working with the following communities and the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) sector to continue engagement and scoping with the following trial sites:

- **West Coast** – *Co-location Model* – Capital upgrades to the Zeehan Primary School Launching into Learning building are set to begin in 2026 to allow for the EL3 trial to commence in mid-2026. A Request for Tender to deliver the trial site service will be released in November 2025.
- **Flinders Island** – *Partnership* – Engagement is continuing with the existing ECEC and school on Flinders Island to build on the existing partnership approach and to investigate opportunities to support increased access to early learning on the island.

EL3 Trial Site Evaluation

Independent consultants, Deloitte Access Economics, have commenced consultations on the EL3 Trial Site Evaluation. This evaluation is an opportunity to assess the implementation and impact of the EL3 trial sites, unpacking ‘what works’ and ‘why it works’.

The evaluation will involve consultation with Local Enabling Groups (LEGs), trial site service providers, children and families, relevant community organisations, DECYP and the Universal Access to Early Learning Advisory Group. Consultations commenced in August 2025 and the evaluation will conclude in October 2026.

Once the evaluation is complete, the evaluation report will be shared publicly and inform future policy development towards universal access to early learning for three year olds.

Working Group: Education and Care, Schools and Child and Family Learning Centres – Together, acting for children and young people

Public release of the new and updated partnership resources occurred in September via the new Partnerships webpage (below):

Partnerships between Education and Care providers and DECYP:
www.decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/for-service-providers/co-located-partnerships/

This work was done collaboratively with the Working Group and had broad representation across education and care providers, DECYP business units, principals and school business managers.

The results of this work are:

- an updated Co-located Partnerships Policy and Procedure
- updates to existing resources
- new Partnerships Framework
- designated relationship management team when issues can't be resolved on the local level between EC provides and schools/services
- new, easier to navigate website
- new resources that include tools for supporting formal meetings
- clear roles and responsibilities
- key principles of effective collaboration
- agreed ways of working in partnership template
- communication flowchart

The work emphasises the Partnership of all three (Education and Care (EC) Providers, DECYP, children and families) as the foundation on which effective collaboration is built – that working in partnership can achieve ongoing positive outcomes for all.

The next step is to get feedback from EC providers, schools and services on the resources, website etc. This is currently scheduled for Term 1 2026.

The Working Group's collective knowledge, expertise, and commitment have been instrumental in the success of this review and reflect a shared dedication to meaningfully support children and families.

DECYP Access to Government Land for ECEC

An Expression of Interest (EOI) process, to determine the interest of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) providers in utilising available and suitable land on government school sites for the development of new ECEC facilities, closed on 20 June 2025.

Responses to the EOI from ECEC providers were received from a mix of for-profit, not-for-profit, and local government providers. ECEC providers indicated which government school sites were of most interest and also provided feedback on the proposed conditions for land use and process for engaging providers.

DECYP will communicate back to ECEC providers and services on the timeline for next steps, including land opportunities and the process for partnering with DECYP, when these have been determined.

Any queries may be sent through to landaccess@decyp.tas.gov.au

Australian Government's Building Early Education Fund

The Building Early Education Fund (the Building Fund) is an Australian Government initiative to provide capital funding to build new and expand existing ECEC services in areas of need, including the outer suburbs and regional Australia. The Building Fund comprises a number of different funding streams, including:

- Capital funding to states and territories to build or expand ECEC services on or near school sites, and
- ECEC sector grants to build or expand ECEC services in areas of need including:
 - a large-scale grant round for large not-for-profit providers
 - a grant round for smaller providers and in-venue Family Day Care (FDC) providers.

The Tasmanian Government is engaging with the Australian Government on implementation of the Building Fund in Tasmania, including federal election commitments for new ECEC facilities in Huonville and on the Westbury Primary School site.

For more information visit: <https://www.education.gov.au/early-childhood/about/building-early-education-fund>

Have a question or comment?

Further information including previous Communiques can be found at: www.decyp.tas.gov.au/about-us/community-and-engagement/early-learning-for-three-year-olds/

If you have any questions, please contact: el3@decyp.tas.gov.au