

City of Cockburn
**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
STRATEGY (SUMMARY)
2016 – 2021**



Message From The Mayor



The Children and Families Strategy 2016 – 2021 sets the City’s direction and lists what strategies we will use to achieve positive outcomes for children and families living in Cockburn. We have a vision that children and families in the City will enjoy safe and equitable access to places, activities and support that enable them to thrive.

To develop this strategy, we spoke with children, parents and caregivers who live in the City of Cockburn. We were pleased to hear that overall, children and families are positive about living in the City of Cockburn and they enjoy the activities, events, facilities, and programs that we provide for families. Children told us that they enjoy playing with their friends and that outdoor spaces and child-friendly facilities are important to them; they want them to be affordable, exciting and well maintained. Parents told us that safe, connected communities are important and that they want a stronger focus on local spaces, events and enhancing play-provision and amenities in our parks. We also know that families can become isolated and that we need to work in partnership with other services in the City to make sure that *all* children and families reach their full potential.

Information from our community, together with background research and a review of existing services was used to guide the development of the vision, outcomes and strategies for this strategy.

We look forward to working with our community over the next five years to ensure that children and families living in Cockburn access places, activities and support that enable them to flourish.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Logan K Howlett". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Logan K Howlett JP
Mayor



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

The City of Cockburn is recognised as a leading provider of services for children and families and well regarded for responding to community needs. The Children’s Services Strategic Plan that covered the past five years (2010 – 2015) had six outcomes and the City made significant progress toward achieving these outcomes over this period.

Key achievements included:

1. Building Bibra Lake Regional Playground
2. Providing the well-attended Froggy’s Fun on the Green initiative
3. Delivering activities and programs to support families of young children, such as My Time and the Family Dance
4. Coordinating a Children’s Reference Group to involve children in planning and decision-making
5. Developing an integrated service model at the Cockburn Health and Community facility
6. Investing in the new collective impact initiative – Connecting Community for Kids

The City’s achievements attracted key awards during this period:

2013 Children’s Environment and Health Local Government Report Card Project – Best in WA and winner of 4 category awards:

Childcare design and placement

Smoke-free environment

Prevention of disease

Child health and development

2014 Children’s Environment and Health Local Government Report Card Project – Won the Childcare Centre Design and Placement category and 3 commendable awards:

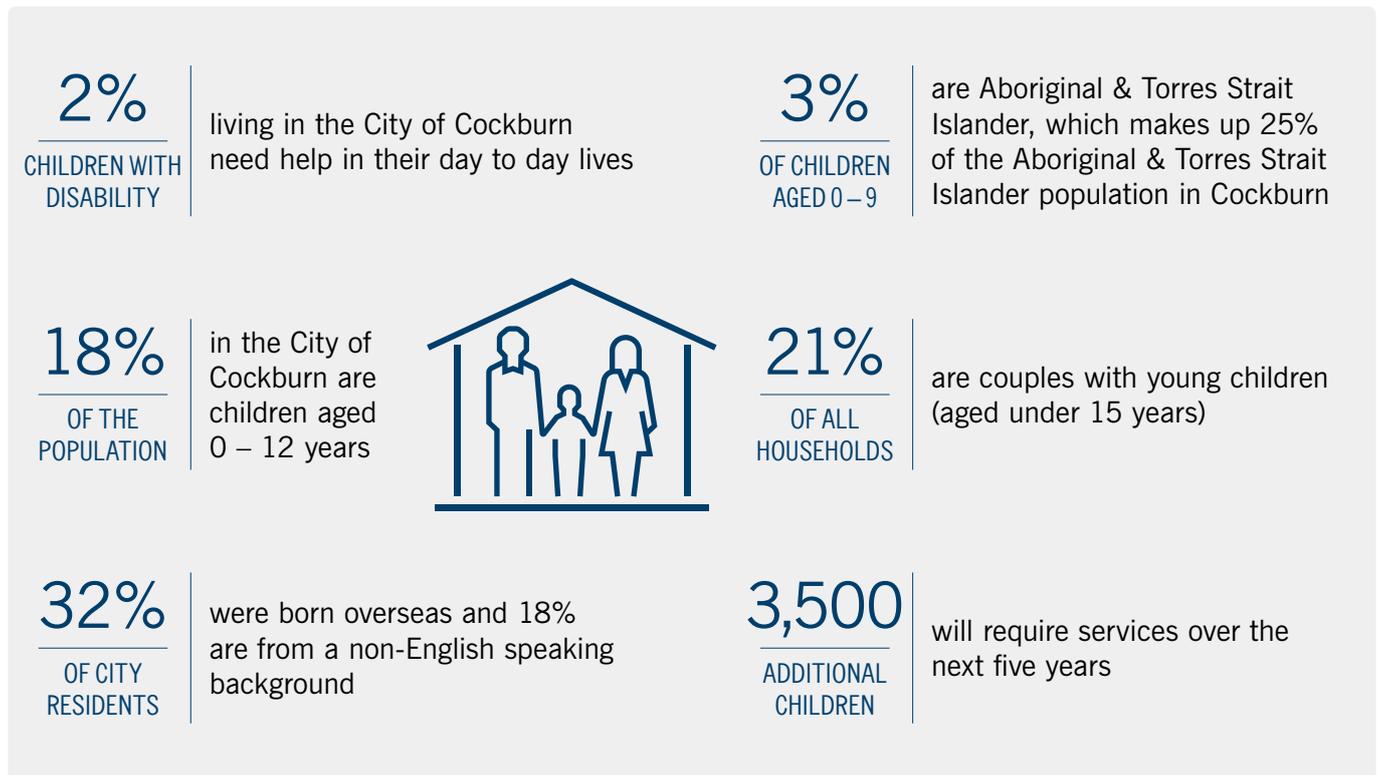
Aboriginal Child Health

Healthy Eating

Shade in Public Spaces

WHO LIVES IN COCKBURN

The information below gives a snapshot of children and families living in the City of Cockburn (based on most recent Census 2011 data).



AUSTRALIAN EARLY DEVELOPMENT CENSUS (AEDC) (NATIONWIDE MEASURE, 2015)

- » The majority of children starting school in the City of Cockburn are doing well, however one in five are considered developmentally vulnerable
- » The language and cognitive skills of children starting school in the City of Cockburn has significantly improved over the last six years, however their social competence has significantly decreased over the same period
- » A third of children living in Coolbellup and more than a quarter of children living in Hamilton Hill, Munster, Spearwood, and Success are developmentally vulnerable when they start school
- » South Lake has significantly fewer children developmentally vulnerable when starting school, compared with three years ago

WHO WAS CONSULTED

Over the last two years we spoke with and listened to children, parents/caregivers, community groups, and City staff, including:



WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

Children

Children told us what they like doing in the City of Cockburn and what they thought was important

They told us that:

They enjoy being with their friends and playing

They like being outdoors and their favourite activities are physical and active

Outdoor parks and playgrounds are important - they like water and adventure elements, and being able to manipulate their environment, for example build cubbies

Fun and exciting venues and facilities are important - especially theme parks, skate parks, recreation facilities, also outdoor movies.

The cost of entry to facilities is important and they want things to be free or cheaper

They want the City to look appealing – to be bright, clean and cared for

Safety is important and they want good security, well maintained spaces, and no bullying

They are interested in fun shops that cater to their needs and interests

They recognise the importance of school, but are unenthusiastic about time spent at school and homework

They are concerned for those less fortunate

The environment is important and they worry most about pollution and wildlife

Technology is very important, and they did not want to imagine a world without it

Parents/caregivers

Overall, parents/caregivers were positive about living in the City of Cockburn and the activities, events, facilities, and programs provided for families.

Parents/caregivers told us that they want:

Parks, playgrounds and outdoor spaces to be clean and well maintained with good amenities

More playgrounds to be fenced, have adequate shade, and include natural elements

Café facilities at playgrounds and more child-friendly cafés and businesses

Access to community gardens and more greening/ verge development in the City

A reduction in petty crime and an increase in security in the City

Improved traffic flow

Options for pre-school aged children during school holidays

Activities for younger children during the school holidays

Accessible and affordable activities for children with disabilities or additional needs

Access to affordable, quality child care, including occasional care

More local high schools

A greater focus on local places, events and community building, including local/pocket parks

To develop communities where neighbours know each other and contribute to local projects

Community groups

Community groups told us that isolation was a big issue for parents who found it difficult to access transport or who were facing other challenges.

They highlighted particular children and families in the community who may need specific attention or support.



OUR VISION, OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIES

The Children and Families Strategy 2016 – 2021 was guided and informed by current research about the wellbeing of children and families, demographic trends across Cockburn, existing services, activities and facilities currently provided by the City, consultation with the community and identification of trends.

The table below is the City of Cockburn’s Children and Families Strategy 2016 – 2021.

| Outcome | Strategies |
|--|--|
| Outcome 1 | |
| The City of Cockburn has family-friendly facilities and environments which support healthy child development and family/community connectivity | 1.1 Create and maintain family-friendly parks and playgrounds using best practice research and a collaborative community approach |
| | 1.2 Support the planning, development, and promotion of accessible and affordable family-friendly facilities |
| | 1.3 Advocate for neighbourhood policies and planning that build family-friendly communities, support safety and remove barriers to outdoor play and recreation |
| Outcome 2 | |
| Children and families have access to services, programs, activities, and events that support their health, wellbeing, and quality family time | 2.1 Provide and promote a variety of accessible recreation activities, programs, and events for children aged 0 to 12 |
| | 2.2 Develop events and activities that provide opportunities for families to spend time together |
| | 2.3 Value and support the role of parents and caregivers by building their knowledge, capacity, and confidence |
| | 2.4 Work collaboratively with all stakeholders to develop the provision of quality child care that meets the needs of parents/caregivers in the City of Cockburn |
| | 2.5 Target services and programs to improve the health and wellbeing of vulnerable children and families |
| | 2.6 Utilise the AEDC data to work collaboratively to improve the outcomes of children living in the City of Cockburn |



Vision

Children and families in the City of Cockburn enjoy safe and equitable access to places, activities and support that enable them to thrive.

| Outcome | Strategies |
|--|--|
| Outcome 3 | |
| Children and families in Cockburn are well-informed, valued, and involved in decision-making | <p>3.1 Continue to develop and implement mechanisms that enable children to be informed and authentically involved in planning and decision-making by the City</p> <hr/> <p>3.2 Celebrate and promote the contribution that children make to the City</p> <hr/> <p>3.3 Develop mechanisms that facilitate the provision of accessible information to children and families, with particular attention to hard-to-reach groups</p> <hr/> <p>3.4 Build and support the capacity of parents/caregivers to develop connections and champion initiatives in their local communities</p> <hr/> <p>3.5 Promote City projects, plans, programs, and services that are innovative or achieve excellence in improving outcomes for children and families</p> |
| Outcome 4 | |
| The City of Cockburn is informed of current and best practice research and collaborates effectively to identify and respond to the emerging needs of children and families | <p>4.1 Build and maintain strong connections with key organisations, institutions, and research bodies that can provide information around current and best practice research related to the wellbeing of children and families</p> <hr/> <p>4.2 Develop partnerships which strengthen the City’s ability to respond to the needs of children and families</p> |

ACTIONS

A full implementation plan has been developed to achieve the four outcomes in the strategy.

Included in this plan are eight priority actions:

| Eight priority actions for the Children and Families Strategy 2016 – 2021 | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| 1.1.6 | Investigate the development of a City-wide play space plan | 2017/18 for Play space plan (consultant) 2018/19 for development | \$5,000 |
| 2.1.2 | Continue provision of existing services for families including Children’s Development, Early Years, Child Care, Cockburn Support, Financial Counselling and Library services | 2016/17 and ongoing | Existing resources including grant funds |
| 2.1.7 | Review the options for pre-school aged children during the school holidays and either develop a City-run program and/or promote other options to families | 2018/19 and ongoing | Existing resources |
| 2.2.1 | Investigate providing small, family-friendly music and other pop up events, using local talent across the City. | 2017/18 for investigation Ongoing (if feasible) | Existing resources |
| 2.5.7 | Advocate for a Multicultural Officer position at the City to adequately assess and address the unique need of these families | 2017/18 | New fulltime position Workforce Plan (2016-21) |
| 2.6.2 | Develop a whole of community action plan to work in partnership with key stakeholders to improve AEDC results in targeted suburbs | 2017/18 for plan development 2017/18 and ongoing | Existing resources \$5,000 |
| 3.1.6 | Advocate for a whole of City approach to consulting with children including the Children’s Reference Group (CRG), when planning and developing events, programs, services and facilities that affect children | 2017/18 and ongoing | Existing resources |
| 3.1.7 | Involve Children’s Development and/or consult with children in the development of all new playgrounds and play spaces | Ongoing | Existing resources |



REVIEW PROCESS

Community members are invited to provide feedback at any time on the Children and Families Strategy 2016 - 2021 via Comment on Cockburn comment.cockburn.wa.gov.au or phone 9411 3444, Children's Development.

An annual review of the plan will be undertaken with a written update available to the community via the website.

A comprehensive review of all components of the Children and Families Strategy will be undertaken in 2021.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Copies of the Children and Families Strategy can be downloaded from the City of Cockburn website cockburn.wa.gov.au or in hard copy from the City of Cockburn.



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