

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:	Centre Director

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

Cooke Court Uniting was selected by the Department of Education (VIC) as the site for replicating the Early Years Education Program (the model) as part of their safe haven budget initiative. The replication project is being undertaken in partnership with Parkville Institute, a not-for-profit organisation established to operationalise and evaluate the replication project. The Australian government and philanthropy are also funding the replication research project.

The results from the trial of the model were remarkable as children who participated in the intervention had significant improvement in their cognitive (IQ and language) and non-cognitive skills (resilience and social-emotional).

The original trial was initiated and substantially funded by the Children's Protection Society (now trading as Kids First). A multi-disciplinary research team from the University of Melbourne worked with the Children's Protection Society in the design and implementation of the model. The University of Melbourne research team undertook a rigorous evaluation of the model and have established Parkville Institute to continue the work (Research reports can be found at www.eyerp.org).

The objective of the Early Years Education Program model is that children living with significant adversity will experience a stable and enriching early learning and care program and enter school as

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confident and successful learners who are developmentally equal to their peers. The long-term objective of the model is that these children will enjoy the same life trajectories as their peers.

Replicating the model is the next phase of the research with the aim of determining whether children, recruited with the same eligibility criteria as those in the trial project, can achieve the same remarkable learning and development outcomes in three different sites (Richmond, Victoria, and two sites in South East Queensland). A critical aspect of the replication research project is ensuring the replication sites implement the model with fidelity.

2. Position purpose

As the pedagogical leader of this replication centre, you will have overall responsibility for leading the curriculum and pedagogical elements of implementation of the model, which is nested within the usual childcare legislative requirements and with a commitment to the mission and values of Uniting Tas/Vic and the Parkville Institute.

The Pedagogical leader has an influential role in inspiring, motivating, affirming, and also challenging and enriching the curriculum and pedagogy implemented by the teachers and educators. It is a collaborative endeavour, involving expertise, inquiry and critical reflection, which can significantly impact on the important work teachers and educators do with children and families.

The Pedagogical leader role is part of Quality Area 7 - Leadership and service Management in the National Quality Standard (NQS). Standard 7.1 in the NQS requires that effective leadership promotes a positive organisational culture and builds a professional learning community. Further to this, element 7.1.4 requires that provision is made to ensure a suitably qualified and experienced educator or director leads the development of the curriculum and ensures the establishment of clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning.

3. Scope

Budget:

Nil

People:

Nil

4. Relationships

Internal

- Executive Officer, Early Learning
- Area Manager
- Practice Manager
- Early Learning Program Manager
- Centre Director
- Teachers & Educators
- Infant mental health clinician
- Family service practitioner
- Uniting Support Services as required

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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

General pedagogical leadership responsibilities:

- Provide pedagogical coaching and mentoring to support teachers and educators with all aspects of program planning, implementation and assessment in accordance with the model, and approved learning frameworks and the service philosophy.
- Model and foster respectful relationships with 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.
- Promote reflection on methods of documenting the program which supports a consistent approach within an ongoing cycle of review (planning, implementing, documenting assessment and evaluation).
- Support teachers and educators in their 12 weekly goal setting meetings with families.
- Share high-level pedagogical knowledge and research evidence to support teachers and educators in achieving progress with program goals .
- Foster a culture of reflective practice within the teaching team as a key strategy for continuous improvement in quality in all aspects of education and care provision.
- Identify areas of improvement as part of regular feedback processes and support teachers and educators to set professional goals and how they might achieve them.
- Collaborate with the senior leadership team in ensuring program fidelity to the model and in the implementation of a trauma informed, attachment focused program for children (the model).
- Maintain and communicate clear expectations in relation to program and curriculum professional accountability and standards.
- Recognise, support, document and affirm quality practices through regular observation, feedback, facilitated reflective discussions, room and staff meetings .
- Lead and support teachers and educators in their professional responsibility to implement intentional teaching and learning strategies within a play-based approach.
- Support the primary educator model in collaboration with the Director.
- Collaborate with the senior leadership team and children's primary educator in planning and implementing safe and positive transitions into and from the centre and across the day
- Monitor and support teachers and educators' wellbeing in collaboration with the senior leadership team.
- Ensure that children's agency and influence are promoted, so that programs meet the interests, abilities and cultural back grounds of each child.
- Collaborate with the Director in the development and implementation of staff appraisal and feedback strategies to support individual professional capacity building and learning
- Work collaboratively with other early childhood professionals as required.
- Collaborate with the Director in planning and documenting professional development opportunities for teachers and educators.
- Support teachers and educators in building collaborative partnerships with families as an important element in the model.

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Quality and managing risk:

- Collaborate with the Director to ensure teachers and educators have sound knowledge of the National Quality Framework including the National Regulations, the National Quality Standard and can meet the requirements to a high standard in their practice.
- Collaborate with the Director 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 policies and procedures.
- Identify and participate in personal professional development that supports the implementation of high-quality education and care programs.
- Work collaboratively with teachers and educators in identifying, documenting and achieving of QIP goals.
- Collaborate with the Director 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 in accordance with the model.

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 Uniting's values and purpose.
- Collaborate with Parkville Institute staff and the senior leadership team in the induction into the model process for staff and their orientation into the centre.
- 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 alignment with the early years' education program model.
- Recognise, respect and affirm the contribution of colleagues and actively support the 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.
- Undertake regular supervision with Parkville Institute senior advisor (pedagogy) and performance review with designated line manager and provide feedback to promote collaborative working relationships.

Personal accountability:

- Team members are required to read, understand and comply with all the Uniting Early Learning policies, procedures and reasonable direction, whilst demonstrating professional workplace behaviours in accordance with the Uniting's Code of Conduct.
- 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).

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- 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.
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6. Person specification

Qualifications

- Minimum Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood (or equivalent as approved by Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority).
- Registration with the Victorian Institute of Teachers (VIT).
- Written acceptance of role of Pedagogical Leader under the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010, and Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.
- Current First Aid, CPR, Anaphylaxis, and Asthma certificates.
- National Police Criminal History Check.

Experience

- Have at least five years' experience in an educational leadership role within an early childhood education and care setting.
- Have a sound knowledge and understanding of contemporary early childhood theories and evidence.
- Have a strong understanding of contemporary curriculum approaches, specifically a thorough knowledge of the approved learning frameworks and relevant research.
- Ability to research and disseminate information to others in a manner that is easily understood.
- Have a sound knowledge of legislation governing the operation of children's services, as well as a solid understanding of the quality areas under the National Quality Standard.
- Have a thorough understanding of Early Childhood Australia's (ECA) Code of Ethics, (2016), Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Code of Conduct and Uniting'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 education and care program.
- Ability to lead and facilitate professional discussions and critical reflection on all aspects of program implementation 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 approach to teaching and learning with children.
- Well-developed leadership and self-motivation skills.
- Ability to identify and utilise people's strengths and build relationships within a team and with individuals.

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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.
 - **Child safety:** demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and young people and protect them from abuse and neglect.
 - **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; high level written and verbal communication skills.
 - **Teamwork:** Experience and skills in working collaboratively with others in pursuit of team goals; collaborates and shares information; shows consideration, concern and respect for others feelings and ideas; accommodates and works well with the different working styles of others; encourages resolution of conflict within a staff team; willingness to actively support others; contributes to the continuous improvement of an ethical collaborative and effective work environment.
 - **Quality assurance:** Ability and experience to support the development and implementation of a high-quality education and care program for children; committed to continuing individual learning and development and working with a multidisciplinary team; an ability to operate in an inclusive and supportive learning environment.
 - **Problem solving:** Demonstrates creativity and innovation; can be flexible and resilient and quickly adapt to changes in the work environment; be aware of and work with, the different strengths of and abilities of each child; have developed skills in engaging children and families in different ways.
 - **Leadership:** Strong leadership skills and knowledge; ability to lead program planning and implementation and ensure the achievement of goals; ability to contribute to the building of a strong, high functioning team 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 for pedagogy and curriculum.
 - **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 Parkville Institute, DET and Uniting (Victoria/Tasmania).
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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: