EARLY LEARNING ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA

2026 ANNUAL REPORT

EARLY LEARNING ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Early Learning Association Australia (ELAA) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands across Australia. We pay our deepest respects to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise that we are all living, working and learning on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands. We are grateful for the generations of care, knowledge and culture that have shaped these places and continue to teach us today. At ELAA, we are committed to learning, listening and fostering respect for First Nations peoples, cultures and communities.

CHAIR AND CEO REPORT

A Year of Consolidation and Focus



Aileen Ashford



Dr Karina Davis

On behalf of the Board and Leadership Team, we are pleased to present ELAA's Annual Report for 2025-26.

This report highlights the stories behind our work and the impact we achieve together with our members. Throughout a year of ongoing reform and change, ELAA remained focused on supporting services, strengthening communities and advocating for a sustainable future for early childhood education and care.

We invested in the services and resources members rely on, strengthened our advocacy and policy capability, and continued to build our influence across the sector. At the same time, we maintained strong member retention and welcomed further growth in our Early Years Management (EYM) membership.

ELAA proudly represented close to **600 member organisations**, encompassing **nearly 1,400 services** and supporting **more than 100,000** children across Australia. In a year of continued reform and change, this strong membership reflects the value of belonging to a trusted, connected and member-driven peak organisation.

SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Supporting and championing our members remained at the heart of everything we do.

We supported members through key reforms, including the ongoing implementation of Best Start, Best Life and child safety regulatory changes, providing practical guidance to help services navigate change with confidence while continuing to deliver high-quality outcomes for children and families.

We successfully advocated for practical and sustainable outcomes for services and the workforce through the second year of VECTEA bargaining, working closely with government, unions and the Municipal Association of Victoria to ensure members' voices were heard.

DELIVERING PRACTICAL SUPPORT AND PROGRAMS

ELAA continued to deliver practical support that helps services navigate complexity and thrive. From supporting Committee of Management and Early Years Management organisations to celebrating the 15th year of our Starting Out Safely Road Safety Education Program, our team worked alongside services to deliver meaningful outcomes for children, educators and communities. We also launched ELAA's Communities of Practice with EYMs with a focus on People, Pedagogy and Finance.

RESOURCES, LEARNING AND GUIDANCE

We continued to invest in the resources and learning opportunities our members rely on every day. More than 50 PolicyWorks templates were reviewed and updated, including the introduction of a new CCTV policy in response to emerging sector needs.

Through webinars, virtual walk-in sessions and professional learning opportunities, we connected with members across Victoria and Australia, providing practical guidance and support on the issues that matter most.

ADVOCACY, POLICY AND SECTOR INFLUENCE

This year, ELAA strengthened its advocacy and policy capability, expanding engagement with state and federal governments, policymakers and sector stakeholders. Through participation in government consultations, engagement with key decision-makers and contributions to sector reform discussions, ELAA continued to ensure members' voices and experiences informed policy conversations affecting the sector.

BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

ELAA's new strategic direction, **2026-30**, has been developed with input from members and key stakeholders and is guided by three key priorities: **Build, Unify and Champion**. More than a statement of intent, it provides a clear focus for our work and the future direction of our organisation.

Our Board has worked closely with the Leadership Team to guide the development of the new strategic direction and strengthen governance practices, ensuring ELAA remains responsive, sustainable and well positioned to meet the needs of members and the broader sector.

We are proud of the ELAA team and what we have achieved together, and we thank our Board members for their contribution and commitment.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we look ahead, our focus remains on supporting members through the implementation of VECTEA, strengthening our advocacy and research capability, building strategic partnerships, and ensuring members' voices continue to be heard by government and decision-makers.

Guided by our commitment to Build, Unify and Champion, we look forward to continuing our work alongside members to help shape a strong and sustainable future for our early childhood sector.

Aileen Ashford
Chair

Dr Karina Davis
Chief Executive Officer

THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

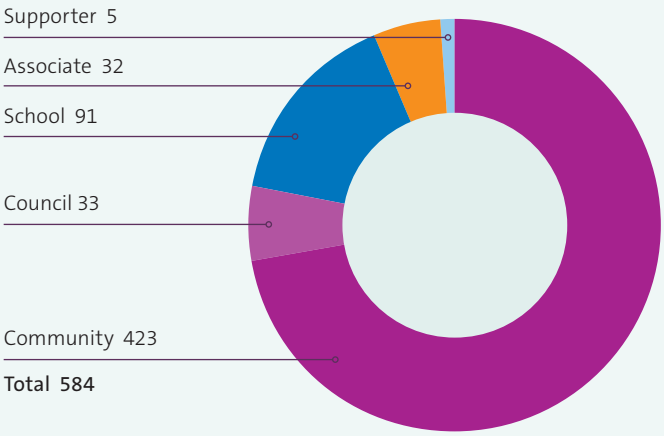
During 2025-26, ELAA continued to support members across the early childhood sector. From expert advice and policy resources to training, advocacy and road safety education, the following snapshot highlights the reach and impact of ELAA's work over the year.

MEMBERSHIP

ELAA continued to support a strong and engaged membership base, helping services navigate reform, strengthen governance and deliver high-quality early childhood education and care.



FY 2025-26 MEMBERS



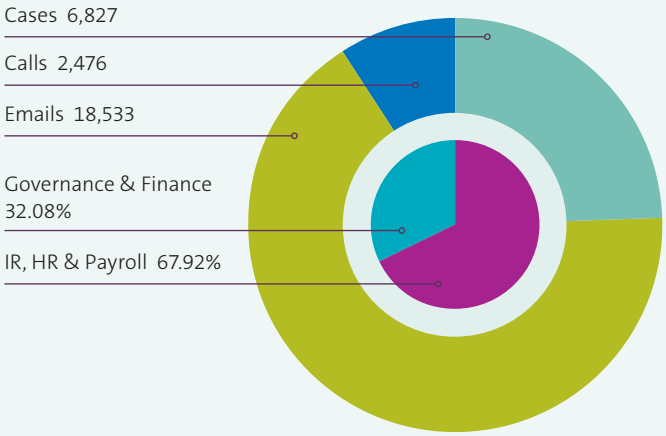
POLICYWORKS

PolicyWorks is ELAA's online policy and procedure platform, providing members with sector-specific templates, guidance and updates to support compliance and best practice.



ADVISORY SERVICE

ELAA's Advisory Service provides trusted expert guidance on employment, governance, industrial relations, payroll and operational matters, helping services make informed decisions and meet their obligations.



TRAINING AND INFORMATION SESSION

ELAA's training and information sessions helped services stay informed about legislative and regulatory changes while strengthening leadership, governance and practice.

Most popular training and information sessions

Webinars, drop-in sessions, training and information sessions	Registrations
Child Safety Webinar #1 Meet the Regulator	261
Child Safety Webinar # 2 Myth Busters	228
Rapid Child Safety Review: Understanding the Recommendations	203
VECTEA Information Session	199
ELAA Policy Works Catalogue Forum Member Q&A	172

STARTING OUT SAFELY ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

For 15 years, Starting Out Safely has helped educators, families and communities build children's road safety knowledge and develop lifelong safe travel behaviours.

47 professional development sessions

560 ThingleToodle sessions

26 Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) sessions

1,100+ educators engaged

VECTEA 2026

ELAA continued to represent members throughout negotiations for the Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Educators Agreement (VECTEA), one of Australia's largest multi-employer enterprise agreements, advocating for fair and sustainable outcomes for the sector.

Through ongoing consultation with members and engagement across the sector, ELAA helped ensure providers' experiences, challenges and priorities were reflected throughout negotiations. Throughout the process, we kept members informed with advice, resources and regular updates, while championing key workforce priorities including salaries, workload and professional recognition.

ELAA also advocated strongly for funding to support the broader costs of implementation, including operational, implementation and compliance requirements. This advocacy contributed to a significant milestone in May 2026, when the Victorian Government announced funding to support the proposed agreement.



CHILD SAFETY

Child safety remains a key advocacy priority for ELAA and our members. Throughout the year, ELAA worked closely with state and federal governments to help inform the development and implementation of child safety reforms, ensuring members' insights and on-the-ground experience contributed to stronger policies, regulations and practices that enhance children's safety in early learning environments.

Guided by member feedback, ELAA provided submissions to a number of significant inquiries, including

- the Senate Inquiry into Quality and Safety in Early Childhood Education and Care;
- the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Early Childhood Education and Care Sector.

In February, CEO Dr Karina Davis and Director of Advocacy Sally Maddison appeared before the Senate Education and Employment References Committee's public hearing in Melbourne, ensuring the perspectives and experiences of community-based and not-for-profit services were represented at the highest levels of decision-making.

ELAA also supported members through a three-part webinar series on child safety reforms, helping services understand upcoming changes and continue to provide safe, high-quality environments that promote the safety and wellbeing of children.

BEST START, BEST LIFE

In partnership with the Department of Education, ELAA continued to play a key role in supporting members with the implementation of the Victorian Government's Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) reforms.

Throughout the year, ELAA provided practical support through member outreach, service visits, reference group participation, information and briefing sessions, and targeted advisory services to help members navigate significant sector change. ELAA also developed a range of implementation and change management resources and enhanced its ModelWorks and BudgetWorks tools to support planning and decision-making.

Through a series of Organisation Spotlights, ELAA showcased member experiences and shared practical examples of how services were implementing reform initiatives within their communities, fostering collaboration and peer learning across the sector.

Through this work, ELAA helped ensure members remained informed, connected and supported as the reforms continued to roll out across Victoria.

MEMBER SOLUTIONS

The Member Solutions team is often the first place members turn when they need guidance, reassurance or a practical solution. We asked Katrina, General Manager Member Solutions, to reflect on the year and share some of the stories, challenges and achievements that defined it.



In Conversation with Katrina Nightingale, General Manager Member Solutions

What was FY2025-26 like for Member Solutions?

It was a significant year for the early childhood sector, with organisations navigating workforce shortages, strengthened child safety requirements, regulatory change in an evolving industrial relations landscape. Supporting members through the VECTEA 2026 bargaining process was a major focus for our team, with extensive consultation and engagement ensuring members' perspectives were represented.

We also supported members to respond to strengthened child safety requirements, providing practical workplace relations, HR, governance and operational guidance to help services navigate change and maintain safe, high-quality environments for children, families and staff.

Tell us about a moment when Member Solutions made a real difference to a service.

Acacia Kindergarten immediately comes to mind. As a volunteer committee, the team was navigating complex responsibilities and decisions. The story on the next page highlights the difference trusted guidance and ongoing support can make for community-based services.

What keeps you and the team motivated?

Our team is made up of dedicated professionals who are deeply committed to supporting early childhood services and the children and families they work with. We know that the guidance and support we provide can make a real difference when members are facing challenges or important decisions. Helping services succeed is what drives the work we do every day.

Looking ahead, what opportunities or priorities do you see for Member Solutions in the year to come?

Supporting members with the implementation of VECTEA 2026 will be a key priority. We will continue to develop practical resources, tools and guidance to help services understand and apply the new agreement.

At the same time, we will remain focused on delivering high-quality guidance across workplace relations, HR and operational matters, ensuring members have access to the expertise and assistance they need to navigate an increasingly complex operating environment.

A MEMBER'S STORY

Acacia Avenue Preschool

CONFIDENCE TO LEAD THROUGH EVERY CHALLENGE

When Jenn's daughter started at Acacia Avenue Preschool, she never expected her family's kindergarten journey would lead to her becoming President of the Committee of Management. Like many community-based kindergartens, Acacia Avenue Preschool is run by volunteers, with committee members taking on governance and employment responsibilities.

"There's a lot of responsibility and a lot to learn very quickly" Jenn said.

While she was able to draw on skills from her own professional career, many of the decisions she faced as President related to an early childhood education setting – an area she had not previously worked in – highlighting the importance of having access to trusted guidance and support.

To help build the committee's capability, Acacia participated in one of ELAA's support programs. Through regular check-ins, expert guidance and personalised support, the committee gained a deeper understanding of governance, compliance and their responsibilities as an employer.

"Going through that process showed us how much knowledge and information ELAA has," Jenn said. *"They've been a real sounding board for us."*

That support proved particularly valuable when the committee was faced with a number of complex employment matters, including a WorkCover claim, establishing a new kindergarten program, and completing teacher Capability Assessments. ELAA helped the committee understand its obligations, navigate the relevant processes and make informed decisions during challenging situations.

For Jenn, what stands out most is knowing there is always someone to call who understands the sector and the unique challenges faced by community-managed services.

Reflecting on ELAA's impact, her assessment was simple:

"Volunteer-run community kindergartens wouldn't be able to do their job without ELAA."

Jenn Hallson
President, Acacia Avenue Preschool



Acacia Avenue Preschool President Jenn Hallson

ADVOCACY AND POLICY

Advocacy and policy are at the heart of ELAA's work to strengthen early childhood education and care. We asked Sally, Director of Advocacy, to reflect on the year's advocacy priorities, achievements and the impact this work has had across the sector.



In Conversation with Sally Maddison, Director of Advocacy

What were the key advocacy priorities for ELAA in FY2025-26?

This year, our focus was on listening to and advocating for members through significant sector reforms, inclusion and support for children with additional needs, workforce challenges, service viability, and ensuring community-managed services had a strong voice in government decision-making.

How does ELAA ensure member voices are heard?

Our advocacy starts with our members. Through surveys, consultations, working groups, service visits and direct engagement, we listen to what's happening on the ground and translate those experiences into practical policy advice, submissions and advocacy with government. The more we hear from members, the more powerful our advocacy is.

What stands out to you about ELAA's advocacy work this year?

What stands out is the strong connection between member experience and policy influence. Members continue to generously share their insights, challenges and expertise, giving ELAA a powerful evidence base for our advocacy. That has enabled us to be a trusted voice with government and stakeholders, ensuring member services are well represented in decisions that affect the sector.

Looking ahead, what opportunities or priorities do you see for ELAA's advocacy in the year to come?

The year ahead will bring significant opportunities as reforms continue to roll out across the sector. Our priorities will be advocating for a more inclusive, equitable and sustainable ECEC system, addressing workforce challenges, and ensuring not-for-profit and community-managed services remain viable and well supported.

We will continue to partner with sector organisations and stakeholders to strengthen collective advocacy on issues that matter most to members, while ensuring their voices always remain at the centre of policy and reform discussions.

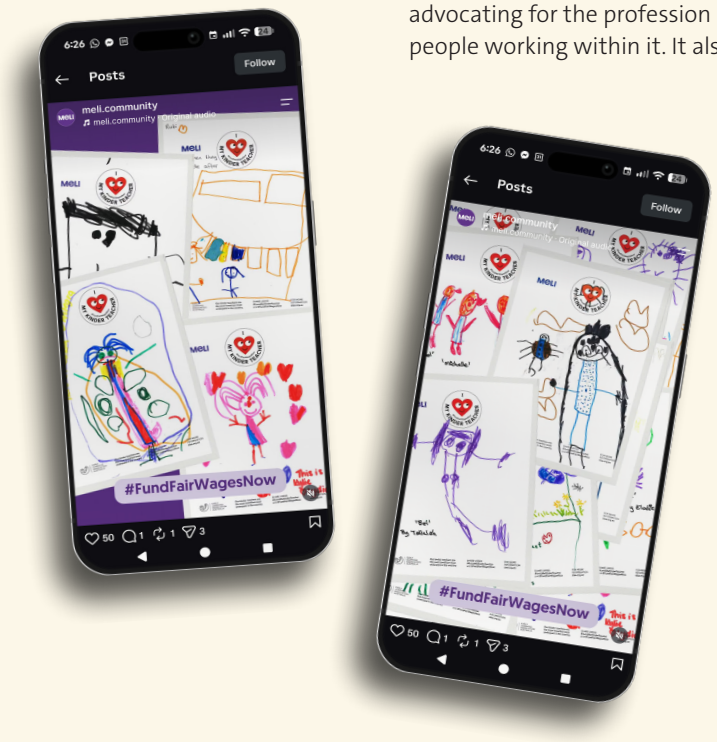
A MEMBER'S STORY

Meli

STANDING BEHIND EDUCATORS THROUGH ADVOCACY

When ELAA launched the I ♥ My Kinder Teacher campaign, Meli Kindergartens embraced the opportunity to show its support for the early childhood workforce.

As an active and engaged ELAA member, Meli regularly participates in ELAA advocacy, professional learning and sector initiatives. The campaign came at a significant time for the sector, as educators and teachers were advocating for fairer pay and conditions through the VECTEA negotiations. Recognising the importance of this work, Meli encouraged its services, families and children to get involved.



Children created drawings and messages for their teachers, while families joined in showing appreciation for the educators who support children's learning and development every day. The campaign created a powerful sense of connection between educators and the communities they serve.

"We recognised the merit of what the campaign was trying to achieve and wanted to support it as much as possible. It gave us a tangible way to show our staff that we were behind them," Bernadette says.

For Bernadette, one of the campaign's strengths was that it provided a visible and meaningful way for services to demonstrate their commitment to advocating for the profession and the people working within it. It also helped communicate a message that can sometimes be difficult for educators to hear: that services support better pay and conditions, but cannot simply increase wages without the funding in place. The campaign offered a tangible way to demonstrate that support and stand alongside educators in calling for change.

By sharing children's drawings and messages of support, the campaign highlighted the value families place on early childhood educators and reinforced the sector-wide call for better pay and conditions.

"It sent a really strong and clear message to our employees, but also to families and the broader community, that we were deeply supportive of better pay and conditions for our workforce."

Reflecting on the campaign, Bernadette says its impact was simple but significant.

"It showed our kindergarten workforce that the organisation was behind them."



Bernadette McCartney
Executive Director, Community Services
Meli

ROAD SAFETY EDUCATION

For 15 years, ELAA has delivered Starting out Safely, Victoria's Road Safety Education program, on behalf of Transport Accident Commission (TAC). The program helps children, educators and families build the knowledge, skills and habits needed to stay safe on and around roads. We asked Zora, Manager Road Safety Education, to reflect on the year's achievements and share how the program continues to make a difference in early childhood services and communities across Victoria.



In Conversation with Zora Marko, Manager Road Safety Education

What was FY2025-26 like for Road Safety Education?

It was another rewarding year for the program. Working with children, families, educators and communities across Victoria, we continued to promote road safety through meaningful learning experiences that help build lifelong habits. It's a privilege to do work that makes a genuine difference to children's safety and participation in their communities.

How does Road Safety Education support children's safety and participation?

We see road safety education as much more than teaching road safety rules. It's about giving children the tools to navigate the world safely so they can actively participate in their communities.

We support educators, families and communities to understand their influence as positive role models. By working together, we help children develop lifelong road safety habits that support their participation, independence and wellbeing.

Can you share an example of the impact Road Safety Education can have?

Each year, we deliver the Road Safety Inquiry Project, working with services to investigate and address a local road safety issue. The outcomes are always inspiring, with children taking an active role in finding solutions and creating positive change. Ada Mary A'Beckett Kindergarten is a wonderful example of this. Their story demonstrates how children's ideas and voices can help improve road safety outcomes in their local community. Read more on the next page.

What keeps you motivated in this work?

Knowing that the work we do makes a genuine difference to children, families, educators and communities is incredibly rewarding.

I've also been fortunate to learn from some of Australia's leading early childhood experts over many years. What I love most, however, is the diversity of people and organisations we work with. From families and educators to councils, schools, police, hospitals and community groups, road safety touches so many aspects of community life. Being part of those connections is incredibly meaningful.

A MEMBER'S STORY

Ada Mary A'Beckett Children's Centre

FROM INQUIRY TO ACTION

It began with a simple question. As part of ELAA's Starting Out Safely program, preschool children at Ada Mary A'Beckett Children's Centre asked: *"How can we help our children and families become safer pedestrians?"*

What followed was a journey that would extend well beyond the centre gates. The children, who proudly named themselves the "Super Safe Superheroes", observed their local environment, identified road safety concerns and explored ways to make their community safer for children and families. Through conversations, drawings, mapping and investigation, they documented their ideas and began advocating for change.

Their findings were shared with the City of Port Phillip, where council officers listened to the children's concerns and recognised the value of their insights. What began as a classroom inquiry soon grew into an ongoing partnership between Ada Mary A'Beckett Children's Centre and the Council.

Over the following two years, the children's advocacy helped inform conversations about safer pedestrian crossings, improved parking arrangements, car park upgrades and initiatives encouraging families to walk and ride to the service. Their artwork was displayed at Council offices and their ideas continued to shape discussions about road safety in the local area.

"A Question Emerges and the children turned themselves into the Ada Mary "Super Safe Superheroes"

The biggest milestone came in 2026 when the City of Port Phillip formally acknowledged Ada Mary's advocacy and proposed four raised pedestrian crossings along The Boulevard, directly addressing one of the key concerns identified by the children and educators.

While many of the children who started the project have now moved on to school, their impact remains. This project demonstrates the power of children's voices and the importance of creating opportunities for children to actively participate in their communities. What started as a road safety inquiry became a powerful example of children influencing real-world change.

Jessica Comensoli
Educational Leader, Ada Mary A'Beckett Children's Centre



Educational Leaders Jessica Comensoli and Brodie Gabriel crossing the future pedestrian crossing.



The children's artwork was displayed as a road safety mural within Council offices, demonstrating that their contributions were being heard and valued.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Alongside workplace safety inspections, tailored training and advisory services, ELAA delivered the WorkSafe-funded OHS Champions Project in FY2025-26. We asked Zora to reflect on the year's key priorities and achievements.



In Conversation with Zora Marko, Manager – OHS

What were the key priorities for the OHS Program in FY2025-26?

A major focus this year was the WorkSafe-funded OHS Champions Action Research Project that worked with early childhood services to explore how effective consultation can improve occupational health and safety outcomes, strengthening physical and psychological safety, and support and foster a positive workplace culture. We also supported the sector prepare for and respond to Victoria's new Psychological Health Regulations. Educators and leaders are experiencing increasing workplace pressures and we've been working closely with services to develop practical resources and guidance that support psychologically safe workplaces.

What are some of the most common workplace health and safety challenges early childhood services face?

One of the challenges is helping educators recognise that their own health and safety is just as important as the safety of the children in their care. Educators are deeply committed to children and families, the same level of attention and care needs to extend to their own health, safety and wellbeing. When services create safe workplaces, provide good working conditions and support psychological wellbeing, the benefits flow throughout the organisation and this contributes to better outcomes for children, families and the broader service community. Supporting staff wellbeing is critical to creating positive outcomes across the whole service community.

Can you share an example of how the OHS Program has helped a service improve workplace safety?

A great example is Little World Academy. They contacted us to see whether we could develop a tailored training session focused on health and safety. We were able to deliver practical, relevant training that reflected the unique environment educators work in and supported staff to strengthen their understanding of workplace safety.

A MEMBER'S STORY

Little World Academy

BUILDING A CULTURE OF SAFETY

When Lynsey Leong established Little World Academy, she wanted workplace health and safety to be more than a compliance requirement.

As an employer of more than 30 staff, Lynsey was looking for practical ways to support her team and create a safer workplace. She approached ELAA's OHS team to deliver a tailored training session focused specifically on the realities of working in an early childhood setting.

Lynsey really wanted to work with Zora because she's one of the leading experts in the sector. She has been working with early childhood services for so long and has seen so many different workplaces and challenges. That experience was incredibly valuable.

Working closely with the service, ELAA developed a customised session using photographs of Little World Academy's own environments and shared spaces. This practical approach encouraged staff to identify risks, discuss safe work practices and consider how they could support one another to maintain a safe workplace.









Zora visited Little World Academy beforehand and took photographs of the centre's actual environments and workspaces.

"It was quite eye-opening for staff," Lynsey said. *"They could see their own work environments and talk about real situations. It reinforced that occupational health and safety is everyone's responsibility."*

The training sparked broader conversations across the service and led to improvements in shared workspaces, storage areas and workplace organisation. It also encouraged staff to take a more proactive approach to identifying and addressing potential hazards.

For Lynsey, one of the greatest benefits was the opportunity to move beyond short-term fixes and focus on creating a sustainable culture of safety.

"Being able to see these practical lived situations and talk them through gives a much more long-term view rather than just little band-aid fixes," she said.

Little World Academy has also participated in ELAA's Safety, Not Just Child's Play training and continues to use PolicyWorks to support occupational health and safety, governance and compliance.

"It's wonderful to have the opportunity to really talk through what works for your service," Lynsey said. *"Having access to that expertise is incredibly valuable."*

Lynsey Leong
Owner/Director, Little World Academy

STRATEGY – BUILD, UNIFY AND CHAMPION

Strategic Direction 2026-30

In last year's Annual Report, we outlined our commitment to developing a new strategic direction to guide ELAA's future and strengthen our impact across the early childhood education and care sector. This year, we delivered on that commitment through the finalisation of ELAA's Strategic Direction 2026-30.

Developed in consultation with our Board, staff, members and stakeholders, the strategy provides a clear roadmap for how ELAA will support members, influence change and respond to the opportunities and challenges facing the sector over the coming years.

OUR PURPOSE

ELAA exists to ensure that children thrive through access to high-quality early learning, delivered by capable, confident providers, supported by a well-designed and well-functioning system.



At its core, the strategy reflects ELAA's commitment to:

01 BUILD capacity
We educate and empower

02 UNIFY the sector
We collaborate and mobilise

03 CHAMPION the sector
We advocate and influence

These efforts are focused on five strategic pillars:

Sustainable Workforce Capability	Effective Operations & Governance	Enhanced Compliance & Safety	High-Quality Pedagogy	Advancing Equity & Inclusion
We provide guidance and support that builds workforce sustainability and enhances capability.	We help members improve decision-making, financial literacy, risk management and governance through targeted support.	We promote tools and supports that drive enhanced compliance, innovation and safety.	We support services with proven pedagogical approaches that deliver consistent, high-quality outcomes.	We support services to advance equity, inclusion and culturally responsive practice.

OUR VALUES

Excellence

Equity

Collaboration

Empowerment

Innovation

Together, these priorities will help ensure ELAA remains a strong, influential and trusted peak body that supports members to deliver high-quality outcomes for children and families, helps dedicated professionals grow and thrive in their roles, and builds strong organisations.

ELAA's Strategic Plan 2026-30 marks an important milestone for ELAA and lays the foundation for the organisation's work in the years ahead.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT
for the year ended 30 June 2026

The Summarised Income and Expenditure Statement and the Statement of Financial Position are summarised from the audited financial statements. Complete copies of the audited financial statements are available on request.

	2026	2025
INCOME	$	$
Revenue from operating activities	3,295,425	3,467,719
EXPENDITURE		
Employee benefits expense	(1,884,742)	(2,344,780)
Depreciation and amortisation expense	(18,274)	(117,044)
Professional fees	(232,875)	(161,445)
Conference and training costs	(303,237)	(290,224)
Office expenses	(243,425)	(394,446)
Marketing and advertising costs	(23,910)	(22,289)
Lease interest	-	(4,606)
Program consulting costs	(321,401)	(186,181)
Other expenses	(24,948)	(36,570)
Total expenses	(3,052,812)	(3,557,585)
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	242,613	(89,866)
Other comprehensive income for the year	-	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss) for the year	242,613	(89,866)

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
as at 30 June 2026

	2026	2025
ASSETS	$	$
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	3,182,622	2,525,319
Trade and other receivables	241,777	354,899
Other assets	101,903	54,925
Total current assets	3,526,302	2,935,144
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	4,786	21,630
Total non-current assets	4,786	21,630
Total assets	3,531,088	2,956,774
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	387,958	326,174
Employee benefits	183,346	246,480
Contract liabilities	1,814,637	1,472,790
Total current liabilities	2,385,941	2,045,444
Non-current liabilities		
Employee benefits	11,401	20,197
Total non-current liabilities	11,401	20,197
Total liabilities	2,397,342	2,065,641
Net assets	1,133,746	891,133
MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Retained surpluses	1,133,746	891,133
Total members' funds	1,133,746	891,133

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Report of the Independent Auditor on the Summarised Financial Statements to the Members of Early Learning Association Australia

Opinion

The summarised financial statements, which comprise the summarised statement of financial position as at 30 June 2026 and the summarised income and expenditure statement for the year then ended are derived from the audited financial report of Early Learning Association Australia for the year ended 30 June 2026.

In our opinion, the accompanying summarised financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with (or a fair summary of) the audited financial report, on the basis described in Note 1 to the audited financial report of Early Learning Association Australia for the year ended 30 June 2026.

Summarised Financial Statements

The summarised financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by the Australian Accounting Standards. Reading the summarised financial statements and the auditor's report thereon, therefore, is not a substitute for reading the audited financial report and the auditor's report thereon. The summarised financial statements and the audited financial report do not reflect the effects of events that occurred subsequent to the date of our report on the audited financial report.

The Audited Financial Report and Our Report Thereon

We expressed an unmodified audit opinion on the audited financial report in our report dated 12 October 2026.

Board of Management's Responsibility for the Summarised Financial Statements

The Board of Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the summary financial statements.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on whether the summarised financial statements are consistent, in all material respects, with (or are a fair summary of) the audited financial report based on our procedures, which were conducted in accordance with Auditing Standard ASA 810 Engagements to Report on Summary Financial Statements.

Nexia

Nexia Melbourne Audit Pty Ltd
Melbourne

Chapman Wan
Director

Dated this 12th day of October 2026

Advisory. Tax. Audit.

Registered Audit Company 291969

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LOOKING AHEAD

Over the coming year, ELAA is excited to build on the foundations we have laid to strengthen our contribution to the sector and expand our reach.

We have built stronger relationships with all levels of government and we will continue to build on these relationships. In Victoria, a state election will provide an important opportunity to unpack the policy positions of key political parties. Towards the end of 2026 and in the lead-up to the election, we will provide members with opportunities to engage with these positions and the conversations shaping the future of the sector.

We are also excited about the enhanced funding we have secured through Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) to deliver a research project. This work will help us better understand how the reforms are landing with members and the sector at a local level. Through this project, we can bring both members' voices and on-the-ground evidence to highlight the opportunities, achievements and ongoing challenges that come with such significant reform.

We will also continue our work on the Early Years Management Maturity Model project in collaboration with Victoria's Department of Education. This first-of-its-kind project presents an exciting opportunity to work with EYM members to explore what developing, emerging and mature practice looks like across business and operational functions. As we continue to build, test and refine the model, we are laying the foundations for a future sector benchmark that will support excellence in practice across the early childhood sector. This is an exciting opportunity for both the sector and ELAA. We are grateful for the confidence placed in us to develop such an important model.

We will launch a new member engagement approach that will ensure members have opportunities to engage with and hear from us through open, two-way communication across a variety of planned activities and responsive opportunities as issues emerge throughout the year. We will also strengthen and streamline our communications, ensuring members know what is coming and what changes may impact them as early as possible.

We will establish a range of advisory groups so we can draw on the expertise of our members and the broader sector around the key issues emerging across the sector and those that require a stronger collective voice.

The year ahead is full of opportunity. As the sector continues to evolve, we will celebrate its strengths, support innovation and reform, and champion the community-based provision that is so deeply valued by children, families and communities. We are excited to work alongside our members as we navigate the opportunities and challenges ahead together.

OUR PEOPLE

THE BOARD

ELAA benefits from the leadership of an experienced and committed Board. Through their expertise, strategic guidance and sector knowledge, Board members help shape the organisation's direction and ensure we remain responsive, accountable and member focused.

Their dedication to excellence and equity in early childhood education and care strengthens ELAA's impact and helps advance our vision for the sector.



Aileen Ashford – *Chair*
Appointed: 2020



Stuart Travis – *Interim Treasurer*
Appointed: 2024



Tracey McKay
Appointed: 2018



Hugh Bastiaan
Appointed: 2024



Samantha Kolasa – *Deputy Chair*
Appointed: 2019



Grant Boyd
Appointed: 2018



Leanne Bilinski
Appointed: 2023



Kieren Kearney
Appointed: 2025

OUR PEOPLE

THE TEAM

We are proud of the talented and dedicated team behind ELAA's work. Bringing expertise across policy, advocacy, membership, operations and communications, our people work collaboratively to support members, influence positive change and strengthen the early childhood education and care sector. Their passion, professionalism and commitment help ensure ELAA remains a trusted voice for the sector and a valued source of support for members.

LEADERSHIP	*Chief Executive Officer:* Dr Karina Davis	*Executive Coordinator:* Taylor Burge	*Director – Advocacy:* Sally Maddison	*General Manager – Member Solutions:* Katrina Nightingale
ENGAGEMENT & OPERATIONS	*Business Analyst:* Johanna Morcom			
MEMBER SOLUTIONS	*Manager – Member Solutions:* Corinne Leita	*Advisor – Member Solutions:* Erin Taylor	*Advisor – Member Solutions:* Georgina Delbridge	
RSE & OHS	*Manager – Road Safety Education:* Zora Marko	*Specialist – Road Safety Education Project Administrator:* Anita Valenzisi	*Administration Specialist – Road Safety Education Project Support:* Christina Martono	

OUR LIFE MEMBERS

We're proud to recognise the following people for their contribution to ELAA and its predecessor, Kindergarten Parents Victoria, and their service to the ECEC sector as life members:

Carol Allen
Pat Brown
Lee Cath
Jo Geurts
David Haesler
David Layton
Gerard Mansour
Karalynn McDonnell
Patrick Moriarty
Annette Mutimer
Pauline Ogden
Danny Pearson
Nicole Pilsworth
Charles Power
Krishnan Rangaswamy
Marg Stephens
Kathy Townley
Karen Weston
Carlene Wilson



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

None of what we achieve would be possible without the people and organisations who support ELAA's work. We thank our members, partners, government stakeholders, sector colleagues and supporters for their ongoing collaboration, insights and commitment to quality outcomes for children and families.

We are also grateful to our Board and staff. Their passion, expertise and dedication drive our work every day and help strengthen ELAA's impact across the early childhood education and care sector.

OUR PARTNERS

ANZUK EDUCATION –
Early Childhood Education and Care sector workforce recruitment services

OFFICEWORKS –
business equipment, technology, office, and art supplies

TERMINA –
energy management software





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