



Department of
Education & Training

Co-location and other integration initiatives

Evaluation Framework





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Introduction

The Department of Education and Training (the Department) has developed and implemented a number of co-location and integration projects across Victoria. This has involved bringing together schools, early childhood services, vocational education and training services and providers and community facilities often on one site. There are four common outcomes that are commonly the intent of co-location and integration. These are:

- Minimising the financial burden of failing to, or delaying action to address developmental issues
- Children experiencing improved early cognitive and social development
- Greater aspiration amongst young people, families and the community
- More effective use of scarce community resources and infrastructure.

The Department conducted a strategic evaluation of six co-location and integration sites, including:

- **Broadmeadows School Regeneration Project**, with a focusing on the Town Park Campus
- **Doveton College**, which grew out of the Doveton Regeneration Project
- **Yuille Park P-8 Community College**, part of a broader neighbourhood renewal
- **Frankston North**, an extended school hubs pilot site, including Aldercourt Primary School (PS), Mahogany Rise PS and Monterey Secondary College (SC)
- **Sherbrooke Early Learning Centre**, an integrated children's centre funded through the Children's Facilities Capital Program (CFCP)
- **Moe PLACE**, incorporating an integrated children's centre, also funded through the CFCP.

A full evaluation report and summary report of the strategic evaluation is available on the DET website.

One of the key findings of the strategic evaluation highlighted the importance of local evaluation of benefits and impacts of co-location and integration. To assist current and future co-location and integration projects, the Department has developed a customised evaluation framework that looks at the four common outcomes of co-location and integration in three stages: short, medium and long-term.

The framework is designed so that projects can adapt elements to suit their own requirements. It recognises that co-location and integration projects, and their approach to evaluation, respond to local conditions and needs. Over time, it will enable projects to share their learnings about how well they are doing, and identify any areas of concern that may need to be resolved.

The framework can be used by projects at any stage of development. It can be applied to planning or some years after a project has been up and running. For early stage projects, using the indicators, measures and outcomes would have the benefit of tracking the project's success over the project's life.

Program logic model

To support planning and implementation of co-location and integration projects, and focus them on outcomes, a program logic model for these types of projects has been developed.

The program logic model (also known as an outcome model, outcome logic or logic model) sets out what a project will do and how it will do it.

Table 1 is an example of a program logic model for a co-location or integration project. It could be adapted for other projects with similar objectives and outcomes.

A program logic model represents a linear sequence of steps that need to occur for a project to meet its desired outcomes. This generally consists of identifying the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes over the short, medium and long-term. An important task of program logic is identifying the assumptions that link steps. Program logic models can be a useful tool to create a dialogue and shared understanding of a project between stakeholders.

The example in Table 1 covers a project from planning stage to some years after implementation when long-term outcomes may be achieved. The overall timeframe and the activities, inputs, outputs and outcomes associated with each stage are described in the table. The table uses the four outcomes for co-location and integration, but not all co-location or integration projects will aim to achieve all these outcomes.

The following section details an evaluation framework linked to the program logic model and based on the outcomes.



Table 1: Co-location and other integration initiatives – Program logic model

INPUTS	ACTIVITIES	OUTPUTS	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES 0-2 YEARS	MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES 2-3 YEARS	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES 3-5 YEARS
Financial investment in co-location and integration initiatives Other contributory sources of funding and resources Staffing contributions	Co-location of infrastructure Co-location of community facilities Integration of Early Childhood Education Centres (ECEC) and school	Spectrum of co-location and integration approaches e.g. vertical integration or service integration	S1. Children with developmental needs are identified earlier S2. Increased system capability to identify children with developmental needs	M1. The risk of adverse outcomes associated with developmental issues is reduced M2. Children with developmental needs (and their families) receive timely and appropriate support M3. Improved transition for children and young people at key transition points	L1. Minimise the financial burden of failing to, or delaying action to address developmental issues
	Integration of ECEC, school and community services Integration of primary and secondary schools Integration of secondary schools and higher education services		S3. Service access barriers are reduced and families and children experience seamless service delivery S4. Shared understandings of professional practice develop across ECEC and schools S5. High quality facilities support improved service and program delivery	M4. ECEC/schools deliver effective and coordinated services and programs M5. Children and families experience smoother transitions between ECEC/school settings M6. Increased participation by children and families in ECEC programs and services	
			S6. Increased pride in facilities and services S7. Increased engagement between communities and target cohorts, and the learning environment	M7. Improved pathways to further education and/or employment for students M8. Improved pathways into learning or employment for disengaged groups	L3. Greater aspiration among young people, families and the community
			S8. Overall use of specialised and shared-use facilities increases (e.g. sports, arts, theatre, libraries) S9. Reduced operating costs associated with facilities	M9. Increase in the total community and individual benefit accruing from activities enabled by use of specialised and shared use facilities	

Interview: Using data for monitoring and evaluation in Frankston North

'I believe that community change is possible but it's a hard task that requires continuous action if anything is to be achieved,' said John Culley Principal of Mahogany Rise, one of three schools in the Frankston North extended school service, a successful integration project.

'We use a data-based approach, based on work which has been undertaken in disadvantaged communities in other parts of the world.

'The approach has helped make advances towards changing the outcomes for Frankston North's children and families. The school and its committees research ideas and apply what they think is likely to work with their community.

'It's probably been at the forefront in the early identification of early development issues. For community development, it's been really useful because we're able to pick up the trends and use the data to create the discussion as educationalists about what should be done to meet these trending needs.

'Sometimes schools get data and do not act on it or use it until there is a review. With extended school services, every piece of information is important. It helps sharpen the focus. We can ask - what are we doing about transition? What are we doing about what's happening in the early learning centres?

'There's a network and a driving force. We look at how can we establish new programs based on data, or drive change. This process is part of the Extended School Services 'job'.



Evaluation framework

To support current and future co-location and integration projects, an evaluation framework has been developed.

It is based on an evaluation model that covers inputs, activities and outputs, and looks at outcomes in three stages: short, medium and long-term over five years.

It identifies indicators, measures and outcomes that are particularly relevant to co-location and integration.

The framework is designed so that projects can adapt elements to match their own requirements. It recognises that co-location and integration projects, and their approach to evaluation, are shaped by local conditions and needs.

Over time, it will enable projects to share their learnings about how well they are doing, and identify any areas of concern that may need to be resolved.

The framework can be used by projects at any stage of development. It can be applied to planning or some years after a project has been up and running. For early stage projects, using the indicators, measures and outcomes would have the benefit of tracking the project's success over the project's life.

This framework builds on the evaluation approaches used at case study sites, and combines them with other best-practice evaluation approaches. While it is based on a range of authoritative sources, it is certainly not exhaustive and individual co-location and integration projects may have their own measures and indicators of success.

How to use the framework

The evaluation framework includes indicators and measures for monitoring, process and impact (whether a project is achieving its outcomes).

Process indicators

Process indicators allow project leaders and participants to monitor and review progress in achieving agreed milestones and quality standards to improve quality and efficiency.

Some key questions that may help you develop these indicators include:

- What have we achieved so far?
- How can we improve?
- Is the project being implemented as intended?

In applying the framework to your project, you may find that only some of the indicators are relevant and you may need to develop others or adapt the indicators in Table 2.



Short, medium and long-term indicators

Indicators have been developed for evaluating a project's effectiveness over the short, medium and long-term.

Short-term indicators (0-2 years)

Short-term indicators cover how effective the project is, based on its immediate impacts, reach and costs. Some key questions which may help you develop these indicators are:

- How is the project working?
- To what extent is it reaching the target population?
- To what extent are goals and objectives being achieved?
- What outcomes have been achieved?
- What are the costs of the project?



Medium-term indicators (2-3 years)

Medium-term indicators cover the effectiveness of the project and its costs. Some key questions which may help you develop these indicators are:

- How were the outcomes achieved?
- What are the benefits?
- Which groups or settings have shown the most benefits?

Long-term indicators (3-5 years)

Long-term indicators cover the effectiveness of a project, its costs and impact. Some key questions which may help you develop these indicators are:

- To what extent are long-term outcomes being achieved?
- How were these outcomes achieved?
- Which groups or settings have shown the most benefits?
- What are the costs?
- Has the project been a success and has it been seen to be a success?
- Can the project be transferred to another setting or population and achieve similar outcomes?

Measures

Measures have been developed for each long-term outcome in the evaluation framework. The measures are usually quantitative and are linked to short, medium and long-term indicators. Measures are related to a number, proportion, frequency or an increase/decrease. For example, for the long-term outcome of effectively identifying and addressing developmental issues, the measures include the number of cross referrals in service, the proportion of children or families accessing multiple services, the reported frequency of inter- service communication and improvement in achievement results over time.

For all outcomes, the following measure is also included: key informants attribute change to co-location or integration. This measure will provide information about the extent to which co-location and integration are perceived to have been responsible for change.

Table 2: Co-location and other integration initiatives – Evaluation framework



Outcome 1
Effectively identify and address developmental issues

Process Indicators	Short-term indicators	Medium-term indicators	Long-term indicators
<p>Appropriate screening, referral and assessment processes in place</p> <p>Services deliver timely and appropriate support</p> <p>Services provide person centered practice</p>	<p>Increase in early identification shown through screening, referral or assessment data</p> <p>Increased capability to respond to developmental issues</p> <p>Improved understanding of professional practice across sectors</p> <p>Improved understanding or practice of working as a co-located or integrated service</p>	<p>Reported improvements in identification of client needs, referrals, transfer of information</p> <p>Decrease in risk of adverse outcomes associated with developmental issues</p> <p>Improvement in students who are represented in the top two bands for literacy and numeracy</p>	<p>Long-term improvements in achievement and wellbeing of students and families with developmental issues</p> <p>Cost savings due to identifying and addressing development issues early</p>

Measures

- Number of cross referrals in services
- Proportion of children/families accessing multiple services
- Number of shared professional development sessions
- Proportion of staff reporting a positive opinion of professional interaction
- Proportion of children at lower NAPLAN bands experiencing improvements
- Growth in students achievement and engagement outcomes
- Key informants attribute change to co-location or integration initiative
- Proportion of children requiring support have the right support they need when commencing Prep



Outcome 2

Improve early cognitive and social development

Process Indicators	Short-term indicators	Medium-term indicators	Long-term indicators
<p>Services and/or programs are accessible, and families and children experience seamless service delivery</p> <p>Services are undertaking joint planning/activities</p>	<p>Increased uptake in service and/or program use</p> <p>Increase in the number of children in early childhood services</p> <p>Improvement in organisational capability/capacity</p>	<p>Improvement in cognitive ability at the end of kindergarten</p> <p>Improvements in staff, student and parent opinion survey data</p> <p>Children have a positive transition into primary school</p>	<p>Improvement in child social and cognitive development outcomes</p> <p>Positive transition experiences between services and sectors at key transition points</p> <p>Children develop holistically through attention to identity, wellbeing, community, communication and learning including literacy and numeracy</p>

Measures

- Number of shared professional development sessions
- Proportion of staff reporting a positive opinion of professional interaction
- Number of cross-referrals
- Proportion of children/families accessing multiple services
- Reported frequency of inter-service communication
- Number of programs operating at a service
- Number of families accessing services by SES
- Mean growth in AusVELS level per year by domain
- Proportion of children who make a successful transition to Prep
- Proportion of children starting secondary school with a completed transition statement
- Proportion of children who make a successful transition to secondary school
- Proportion of eligible children enrolled in a funded four-year old kindergarten program
- Proportion of children accessing programs
- Reported effectiveness of programs
- Mean student absence days per year
- Proportion of parents who believe that early years education is very important
- Mean staff absence days per year
- Proportion of students reporting a positive opinion of school morale, and who feel connected to their school
- Proportion of children meeting national minimum standards in literacy at Year 3
- Proportion of children in Prep developmentally on track in the five domains of the AEDC
- Proportion of children attending key ages and stages visits by visit numbers



Outcome 3

Greater aspirations among young people, families and the community

Process Indicators	Short-term indicators	Medium-term indicators	Long-term indicators
<p>Children, young people and adult learners receive a high quality learning experience</p> <p>Families and communities have confidence in services</p> <p>Services have community engagement plans in place</p>	<p>Change in community views of services before and after initiative</p> <p>Site-level evidence of engagement with clients and client feedback</p> <p>Increase in enrolment in VET programs</p> <p>Improvement in staff, student and parent opinion survey data</p> <p>Attendance and retention rates among school-aged children improve</p> <p>Rates of enrolment in early childhood education and with maternal and child health services increase</p>	<p>Increase in proportion of students completing year 12</p> <p>Reported increase in participation activities that improve career planning</p> <p>Improvement in aspirations of school leavers</p> <p>VET graduates go on to further study</p>	<p>Long-term improvements in rates of transition to further study, VET or employment</p> <p>Increase in progression to further education</p> <p>Improvement in indicators such as involvement in crime and health outcomes</p>

Measures

- Proportion of students, parents and staff reporting positive opinion of services/school
- Number of cross-referrals
- Proportion of school leavers undertaking further education, training or employment
- Proportion of students leaving school going to further education or training
- Proportion of families accessing services
- Proportion of students completing Year 12
- Proportion of parents in employment, education or training
- Proportion of students reporting a positive opinion of student motivation
- Proportion of staff reporting a positive opinion of student expectations



Outcome 4 Effectively use community resources and infrastructure

Process Indicators	Short-term indicators	Medium-term indicators	Long-term indicators
Education and early childhood activities and services are more accessible to the community Efficiencies are achieved through additional use of facilities Low-cost rates are charged by the services for use of the facilities by external users	Increase in usage rates of services Increased service accessibility reported by families and community Increased engagement between communities and the services Increased efficiency experienced by families	Reduction in per-student costs associated with operational expenditures Extent of change in use rates and patterns, and relative change in use	Improvements in the life-cycle ROI on assets

Measures

- Number of hours facilities are rented or shared by community groups
- Revenue raised from shared use
- Utilities costs, before and after
- Maintenance costs
- Service costs
- Number of hours facilities are used by services (and changes over time)

Published by Department of
Education and Training

Melbourne
July 2015

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and Training) 2015

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