**Out-of-Home Care Program Support Group (PSG) Meeting Guidance**

Research shows that two years of play-based learning has a powerful impact on children's overall life trajectory. The benefits of starting kindergarten at age three are even greater for children living in vulnerable circumstances (Department of Education, 2023[[1]](#endnote-2)). [The Early Childhood Agreement for Children in Out-of-Home Care](https://www.vic.gov.au/early-childhood-agreement-children-out-home-care) and [LOOKOUT Education Support Centres](https://www.vic.gov.au/lookout-education-support-centres) recommend children living in out-of-home care (OoHC) are prioritised to access two years of quality, funded kindergarten. During this time, teachers are required to assess and document children's learning and development, through a trauma lens, and regularly discuss children’s progress with their carer in accordance with the *Children Services Act 1996* and the *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*. Best practice would also involve sharing this information with the team around the child.

[OoHC Program Support Group (PSG) meetings](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwittajQ95j9AhWkJrcAHcpvAlUQFnoECBAQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fout-home-care-oohc-program-support-group-meetings&usg=AOvVaw3qXgAvJlSUE91k-4ZVKQ_x) are an effective tool to maintain educational collaboration between partners and are recommended on a minimum termly basis.

**OoHC PSG meeting purpose**

The PSG meeting is a platform for the Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) service to share information regarding enablers and barriers to a child’s learning, access, inclusion, engagement, and participation. It also provides an opportunity for the teacher, the carer and the team around the child to identify focus areas for the [Individual Learning Plans (ILP)](https://www.vic.gov.au/individual-learning-plans-children-out-home-care), to plan for upcoming transitions, and to identify any additional needs or complexities that may require additional support.

**Facilitation of OoHC PSG meetings**

The PSG meeting is organised and facilitated by the ECEC service. An agenda should be organised ensuring every member can contribute items. This agenda should be sent out to all members prior to the meeting, and minutes that clearly identify actions should be taken and distributed following the meeting.

**OoHC PSG meeting attendance**

Members may include:

* carer, and in some situations, the parent/s
* case manager
* kindergarten teacher and other relevant education staff
	+ If the child attends long day care and a sessional kindergarten, invite relevant educators
* other professionals such as the Pre-School Field Officer, allied health staff and NDIS Early Childhood Intervention Key Workers
* a parent/carer advocate if requested (e.g., Koorie Engagement Support Officer or translator).

If the child is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or Cultural and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), it is recommended cultural voice is integral to the meeting.

**OoHC PSG meeting agenda and documentation template**

A sample meeting template is provided on the pages that follow, to guide agenda development, discussion, and documentation. This editable resource is designed for adjustment based on specific meeting requirements as you progress through the cycle of learning for the child. It is important to ensure there are always trauma-informed individual learning goals in place. These, along with the action register (page 6), should be reviewed and adapted on a regular basis.

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| **Early Childhood OoHC PSG Meeting Agenda and Documentation Template** |
| **Date of meeting:** | **Venue / meeting link:** |
| **Child’s name:** | **Date of birth:** |
| **Cultural background:** | **Languages spoken:** |
| **Court order:**[ ]  Interim Accommodation Order to Out of Home Care or Suitable Person[ ]  Family Reunification Order[ ]  Care By Secretary Order[ ]  Long Term Care Order[ ]  Permanent Care Order (first 12 months only) |
| **Apologies:** |
| **PSG meeting attendees** |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Name** | **Email** | **Present Y/N** |
| DFFH Case Manager/ Contracted Case Manager |  |  |  |
| Parent/s |  |  |  |
| Carer/s |  |  |  |
| Kindergarten Teacher |  |  |  |
| Educators  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Pre-School Field Officer  |  |  |  |
| LOOKOUT ECLA (where required) |  |  |  |
| KESO (where required) |  |  |  |
| Other (add lines as needed) |  |  |  |
| **Acknowledgment of Country:** Chair to Acknowledge Country using their own wording or the wording below.We acknowledge the traditional custodians on whose land we are meeting today (*insert name of the Country that you are located upon*), honoring their continued connection to country. We pay respects to Elders and Ancestors both past and present and celebrate their role in passing down sacred cultural, spiritual, and educational practice. We extend this acknowledgment to any First Nations people joining us today. |
| **Attendance**  | **Detail**  |
| Attendance at Kindergarten  | [ ]  Early Start Kindergarten (3-year-old kindergarten)[ ]  Year Before School kindergarten (4-year-old kindergarten) |
| Attendance at Long Day Care  | [ ]  Attends LDC at same service as kindergarten.[ ]  Attends LDC at a service separate to where they are enrolled for kindergarten. ☐ ACCS is applied to the LDC enrolment. |
| Days absent this term:  |
| Factors influencing attendance: |
| Supports required to promote attendance**:**  |

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| **GATHERING INFORMATION & PROVIDING UPDATES** |
| **Child perspectives**Prior to the meeting, parent/carer and teacher may spend time with the child, gathering the child’s views, to be shared with the team around the child. Prompting questions may include:* *What do you like about coming to kinder?*
* *What are you good at? What are your favourite things to do at home and at kinder?*
* *What do you like to do with friends? What do they like about you?*
* *What makes you laugh?*
 |
| **Child’s strengths and interests** At the PSG meeting, the team around the child can discuss and record the child’s strengths and interests.Prompting questions to support discussion may include:* *What are some of the things that the child does well?*
* *What do you see as their greatest skills?*
* *What are the activities that excites the child?*
 |
| **Enabling factors**Prompting questions to support discussion may include:* *What types of things help the child to soothe?*
* *What strategies are currently being used to connect the child to family and culture, and support belonging at kindergarten?*
* *What helps the child to feel safe at home, at kinder, and in the community? When they are feeling unsafe, what helps them to feel better? What does feeling safe/unsafe look like?*
* *What works well at home and at kinder to help the child regulate?*
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| **EDUCATIONAL NEEDS DISCUSSION** |
| **Developmental summary:** If there are developmental needs or areas requiring follow up or extension, encourage the team around the child to identify these. Use the following headings to generate discussion and identify skills requiring further support. |
| **Physical development** *Fine Motor, gross motor, coordination, sensory*  |  |
| **Self-help skills and independence***Toileting, nose blowing, opening containers, putting on socks and shoes, packing/unpacking own bag* |  |
| **Social development** *Connections, relationships, play skills, sharing/turn-taking, cooperation, games with rules, self-regulation*  |  |
| **Emotional development** *Understanding of own emotions and those of others, empathy, management of separation, humour, resilience* |  |
| **Language development** *Expressive/receptive language, articulation, sentence structure, asking/answering questions, telling stories, conversational turn-taking, pragmatic- social language, following instructions* |  |
| **Cognitive development** *Attention/concentration span, recalling events, story recount, early and literacy skills, uses objects to build and construct* |  |
| **Review previous assessments and recommendations:*** Consider current plans and strategies identified within these. This may include NDIS plans, Cultural Plans, Inclusion Support Plans and Care Plans.
* Reflect on recommendations identified through assessment, or those made by medical and allied health practitioners involved in supporting the child, and consider the support needs in the context of the ECEC setting.
* Seek updates regarding therapeutic interventions.
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| **INDIVIDUAL LEARNING PLAN PREPARATION/REVIEW** |
| **Key areas of focus:** Based upon the PSG discussion, what are the key areas of focus that the team around would like the ILP to focus on? Consider culture, trauma-sensitive practice and other recommendations when identifying these. ILPs should be reviewed as the child progresses and adapted as part of the continuous planning cycle.Please refer to the Department of Education [Individual Learning Plans for Children in OoHC Guidance](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/professionals/health/OOHC-Individual-Learning-Plan_FINAL.pdf) to support your planning.  |
| **Culture**: **Safety**: **Connection**: **Regulation**: **Other**: |
| **Individual Learning Plan: Trauma sensitive goals and strategies** |
| **Goals:***What would you like the child to learn or work towards?* **Support strategies and intentional teaching practices:***How do we go about this? What strategies and intentional teaching practices will be implemented?* **Modifications and adjustments**:*What modifications or adjustments will be made to the program, activities, environment, and routines to support this?***Implementation ideas:***Activities, experiences, resources* |
| **Next PSG Meeting and ILP Review Date:** |

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| **ACTION REGISTER***Where actions arise from the PSG meeting, please use this table for documentation, follow up and subsequent meeting review.* |
| Action | Description | Who is responsible | By when | Progress/update |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |

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1. Department of Education (2023) Best Start Best Life. Give your child the best start. Retrieved March 14, 2023 from [www.vic.gov.au/give-your-child-the-best-start-in-life](https://www.vic.gov.au/give-your-child-the-best-start-in-life) [↑](#endnote-ref-2)