Planning for Social Inclusion in Playspaces: An evaluation of Livivi’s Place, Port Macquaire.

Report No. 109
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Executive summary

This study sought to assess whether or not Livvi’s Place, a playspace in Port Macquarie, was meeting its goal of social inclusion. Opened in 2014, Livvi’s Place was planned and designed as an inclusive, all abilities playspace by Touched by Olivia and Port Macquarie Hastings Council. In 2016 online and face to face structured questionnaire surveys were completed with park users to gauge their perceptions of the inclusivity of Livvi’s Place.

Australia’s early childhood learning framework - Belonging, Being & Becoming (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2009) was used as the framework to analyze the data. The current user group is mainly families with children under 13 years and predominantly preschoolers aged 3-5 years. The findings demonstrate that Livvi’s Place is popular with families of children with disabilities. Evidence was found that Livvi’s Place promotes a sense of social inclusion as users expressed feelings of safety, welcome and of belonging at the playspace. There were indications that Livvi’s Place encourages its users to be themselves, live in the moment and enjoy themselves. The friendships formed, conversations started and playful interactions experienced at Livvi’s Place demonstrated how it facilitated people connecting and becoming members of the local community. The findings also revealed that people recognised creative learning took place through play at Livvi’s Place. Together with the relationships forged at the playground this suggests it is a space where people can become included as part of the local community. The study found that Livvi’s Place is achieving its goal of social inclusion, however areas for improvement were identified by some respondents that, if implemented, may enhance inclusive play and improve the safety aspects of Livvi’s Place.
Introduction

This document reports on the findings of the Livvi’s Place Project, Port Macquarie, commissioned in 2016 by the national charity, Touched By Olivia. The study sought to assess whether or not Livvi’s Place, a playspace in Port Macquarie, was meeting its goal of social inclusion. The report begins by introducing Touched By Olivia and why the goal of social inclusion is important to the organization. To establish the contextual background of the study our report considers the concept of social inclusion in relation to Australia’s National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and more broadly in international conventions such as the United Nations’ Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities. The report then turns to the study itself, outlining the methodological approach adopted. Findings are followed by a discussion and recommendations.

Touched By Olivia

The Touched By Olivia Foundation was established in 2006 by John and Justine Perkins following the loss of their baby daughter, Olivia, to a rare illness. The Perkins family hoped that their daughter’s legacy would be to enhance the lives of children and their families through opportunities to play (Touched By Olivia, n.d.-c). Touched By Olivia (TBO)’s key focus centres on creating inclusive playspaces across Australia. TBO links their focus on inclusive play to the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations, 1989) and a commitment to a child’s right to enjoy play and leisure. In a recent research report called The State of Play 2016 TBO was described as:

- a not-for-profit organisation which aims to directly relieve the disability, helplessness and misfortune experienced by many Australians through, among other things, developing and implementing inclusive play spaces and to thereby:
  - give every Australian the right to play, side by side, without discrimination or prejudice; and
  - facilitate social and community inclusion for people with disability as well as their families and carers (Touched By Olivia, 2016b, p. 4).

TBO’s playspace model emerged from a collaboration in 2012 with leading academics, practitioners, not for profit and NGO’s to develop best practice guidelines to assist decision makers, advocates and designers looking to create an inclusive playspace (Touched By Olivia, n.d.-c). The design of each Livvi’s Place is based on Universal Design principles (The Center for Universal Design, 1997), to assist communities to create special places that encourage social inclusion through play. TBO’s playspace model brings together local communities, government and corporate Australia in a partnership to meet local needs. More than being about installing an accessible swing or ramp up to a slide, each Livvi’s Place has an inclusive design that embraces a broader perspective and is custom-made to suit the needs of each community in which it is located. The design takes into account accessible and intergenerational play equipment and amenities, incorporating accessible pathways, passive areas, sensory and tactile play and artworks, graduated challenges, points of recognition and visual cues, fencing, accessible parking and bus drop off zones, appropriate to the location of each specific playspace (Touched By Olivia, 2016b, p. 10). Each Livvi’s Place is created in partnership with TBO and the local community with the aim to provide a unique
environment in which children of all ages and all abilities can play side by side. The six principles of inclusive play underpinning each Livvi’s Place are:

1. Everyone can play
2. Access to nature
3. Total experience
4. A connection to community
5. Play independence
6. Friendship  (Touched By Olivia, n.d.-c)

At the time of writing this report TBO had twenty (20) inclusive playspaces open for play or under development across Australia (Touched By Olivia, 2016b). TBO’s mission to realise the right of every Australian to play, without discrimination or prejudice and to facilitate social and community inclusion for people with disability as well as their families and carers (Touched By Olivia, n.d.-b) is aligned with Australia’s National Disability Strategy and also the UN’s Convention of the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities. The relevance of these national and international documents to this study is discussed below

Figure 1 Livvi’s Place, Westport Park (Port Macquarie-Hastings Council (PMHC), n.d.-a)
National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

In 2010, for the first time in Australia’s history, all state and territory governments committed to a unified, national approach to improving the lives of people with disability, their families and carers, and to providing leadership for a community-wide shift in attitudes through the implementation of a National Disability Strategy (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2011). The National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 is a ten year national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers. It drew upon the findings of the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council’s Shut Out report, which called for a more inclusive Australia (National People With Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009).

The National Disability Strategy covers six key policy areas.

1. Inclusive and accessible communities—the physical environment including public transport; parks, buildings and housing; digital information and communications technologies; civic life including social, sporting, recreational and cultural life.
2. Rights protection, justice and legislation—statutory protections such as anti-discrimination measures, complaints mechanisms, advocacy, the electoral and justice systems.
3. Economic security—jobs, business opportunities, financial independence, adequate income support for those not able to work, and housing.
4. Personal and community support—inclusion and participation in the community, person-centred care and support provided by specialist disability services and mainstream services; informal care and support.
5. Learning and skills—early childhood education and care, schools, further education, vocational education; transitions from education to employment; life-long learning.
6. Health and wellbeing—health services, health promotion and the interaction between health and disability systems; wellbeing and enjoyment of life.\(^1\)

(Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2011, p. 10)

Pertinent to this report is Key Policy Area #1 of the National Disability Strategy 2010-2020 regarding inclusive and accessible parks and recreational and cultural life. The literature shows that children with disability are frequently excluded from local kindergartens and schools and everyday social interactions (National People With Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009, p. vi). People who use wheelchairs are very often not able to access the public facilities, such as playgrounds, taken for granted by others in the community (National People With Disabilities and Carer Council, 2009). In line with a number of studies including the National Disability Strategy, NSW 2021 (NSW Government, 2011), the North Coast Regional Plan (NSW Government, 2016), and in compliance with the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW Parliament, 2014), Port Macquarie Hastings Council (PMHC) is working to build a more inclusive community. PMHC has developed a Disability Inclusion Plan.

\(^1\) 1) Inclusive and accessible communities, 2) Rights protection, justice and legislation; 3) Economic security; 4) Personal and community support 5) Learning and skills and 6) Health and wellbeing.
Action Plan (Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, 2017a). The aim of this Plan is to address issues of access and inclusion and to promote positive social attitudes towards people with disabilities in the Port Macquarie-Hastings area. Livvi’s Place, Port Macquarie, developed in partnership with TBO in 2014, is an example of a children’s playground that was purposefully designed as an inclusive, all-abilities playspace. Following extensive advocacy and consultation with the local community Livvi’s Place Port Macquarie was established, the first intergenerational and accessible playspace to be developed in the region (Touched By Olivia, 2016a). In 2015 the estimated population of Port Macquarie was 75,635 people, of which an estimated 27% had a disability (adults and children) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). In this context disability “includes profound, severe, moderate, mild limitations as well as persons with a schooling or employment restriction or disability with no restriction or limitation” (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013, Introduction, Notes). Children aged 0-12 years represent 1% of this population according to these ABS figures. The Port Macquarie-Hastings Council owns and manages Livvi’s Place.

Figure 2 Time to play (Port Macquarie-Hastings Council (PMHC), n.d.-b)

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The right of all children to play is enshrined in international law under the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 1989). Australia is a signatory to this convention, ratifying it in 1990 (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 2014). The Convention contains a number of articles which are specifically relevant to children’s experiences of and access to their local environment and their access to play. For example Articles 23 and 31.

Article 23 states:
“State parties recognise that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance, and facilitate the child’s active participation in the community” (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 1989, p. 7).

Article 31 states:
“State parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in
cultural life and the arts” (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), 1989, p. 9).

As a signatory to the Convention on the Rights of the Child Australian governments and local authorities have an obligation to ensure processes are in place to facilitate the right of children to play. This convention underpins the motives of TBO and informs PMHC’s Community Strategic Plan (Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, 2017b).

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

Article 1. of the CRPD links this convention to that on the rights of the child as it outlines the CRPD’s purpose - to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity (United Nations, 2006b). Pertinent to this study are the following General Principles set out in Article 3 of the CRPD. Focusing on the concept of play as a right for all children the General Principles of the CRPD can be understood as recognising that children with disabilities should be respected and allowed freedom to play and make their own play-choices, develop their independence and participate without discrimination as part of society, including in playgrounds and playspaces. Their difference should be respected and accepted with opportunities made available for them to access and participate in play, just like other children, so that their individual capacities can evolve and develop. The eight General Principles of the CRPD appear below:

1. Respect for inherent dignity, individual autonomy including the freedom to make one’s own choices, and independence of persons;
2. Non-discrimination;
3. Full and effective participation and inclusion in society;
4. Respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity;
5. Equality of opportunity;
6. Accessibility;
7. Equality between men and women;
8. Respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities and respect for the right of children with disabilities to preserve their identities.

(United Nations, 2006a, Article 3)

Australia’s States and Territories have an obligation to ensure they take steps to comply with the CRPD, take steps towards changing social attitudes towards people with
disabilities, raising awareness in society of the capabilities of people with disabilities and dismantling negative stereotypes (United Nations, 2006b, Article 8). New South Wales’s plan for the future (NSW Government, 2011) and PMHC’s Community Strategy (Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, 2017b) explicitly target access, participation and social inclusion for people with disabilities. Each Livvi’s Place is deliberately designed as all-abilities playspaces, in recognition all children can play (Touched By Olivia, n.d.-a). The literature confirms that social attitudes can change through contact with people with disabilities (Thompson, Fisher, Purcal, Deeming, & Sawrikar, 2011) suggesting that contact during preschool years where children can experience each other’s differences, play together and make friendships in a playgrounds should be supported.

On the fundamental issue of accessibility (United Nations, 2006b, Article 9), the CRPD requires countries to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers and ensure that persons with disabilities can access their environment and public facilities and services access, on an equal basis with others. Livvi’s Place is an example of how efforts have been made to ensure childrens’ playgrounds are accessible. Access to leisure and recreational activities also ties closely with Article 19 of the CRPD, which recognizes the equal right of all people with disabilities to full inclusion and participation in the community. More specifically, Article 30 specifically calls for states to take action so that people with disabilities can participate on an equal basis with others noting in particular “that children with disabilities have equal access with other children to participation in play, recreation and leisure and sporting activities, including those activities in the school system;” (United Nations, 2006b, Article 30.5.d)). The CRPD is therefore intrinsic to TBO’s vision for all-abilities playspaces.

Having explained TBO’s purpose and its alignment with national, state and local strategies to promote social inclusion for people with disabilities, together with its compliance with international conventions on the rights of children and people with disabilities, it is evident that Livvi’s Place in Port Macquarie was designed to be an inclusive playspace. However, since its 2014 opening no evaluation had been undertaken to determine if Livvi’s Place was meeting its goal of social inclusion. This report now consider how the study addressed that knowledge gap.

Undertaking the Livvi’s Place project

In 2015 TBO was successful in gaining funding of $2500 through Charles Sturt University’s (CSU) Rural and Regional Community Initiated Research Grant to explore whether or not Livvi’s Place, in the regional New South Wales (NSW) town of Port Macquarie, was meeting its goals of social inclusion through play. The research was undertaken by Janice Ollerton and Rosemary Black from Charles Sturt University.

In January 2016 initial meetings between the researchers and Port Macquarie-Hastings Council were conducted in consultation with TBO, to clarify the project’s goals and establish a plan for this evaluative research. A twelve month timeframe was established, a formal plan was developed and this was distributed to PMHC and TBO. Following Human Ethics approval (number 400/2016/07) from Charles Sturt University’s Faculty of Science Human Ethics Committee, the project began.
Methodology

How and when was the research completed?

The Livvi’s Place project sought to find out whether or not Livvi’s Place was meeting its goal of social inclusion. A cross-sectional design questionnaire survey was chosen to be the primary research method as it is an efficient tool for collecting data from a large sample size (Tranter, 2010, p. 155). Survey research combines a number of methodologies (Fowler Jr, 2014, p. 3): Sampling, designing questions, data collection and analysis. Traditional data collection methods generally used in surveys, are often not appropriate or effective with young children (i.e., 6 years and under) because the quality of data gained from a child is dependent upon their developmental language skills and abilities to respond to survey questions. It can therefore be difficult to collect data that accurately and authentically reflects their experience and views (McDonald & Rosier, 2011). Often, more creative and time intensive methods are more appropriate for research involving children participants. As a result of these considerations, along with the resource and time constraints of this project, the research sample was restricted to participants aged 18 years and over, in order to achieve its aims in the prescribed time.

With the specific objective of gauging whether or not Livvi’s Place was socially inclusive the researchers sought the opinions of playground users at both Livvi’s Place and another playground called Town Green Park, Port Macquarie. Town Green Park is a playground located in Port Macquarie’s central business district with a similar range of children’s play equipment to Livvi’s Place. The aim of surveying two different playground-user groups was to collect the views of playground users who may have visited Livvi’s Place previously but were currently using another playground. It was hoped that the survey data would provide insight into why these playground users had chosen not to visit Livvi’s Place on the day the research was undertaken.

The data collection strategy was to randomly select participants from playground users during a specific time period on set days. This was to be achieved by positioning data collectors at all entrances to the playgrounds and inviting people aged over 18 years entering the playground to participate. However, in practice this proved difficult as Town Green Park is not fenced and people could freely enter from three sides. Also, the Livvi’s Place playground was very busy and data collectors often moved away from the gates with the participants to proceed with the survey. Once completed, the data collector frequently then approached the next available playground user rather than moving back to the entry gate and waiting for the next arrival. In this way the desire to maximise participant numbers compromised our ability to maintain a random sample.

Survey researchers have found that survey estimates are often unaffected by mode of data collection (Fowler Jr, 2014, p. 66). However, to maximise our access to as wide a group as possible the survey was conducted using two data collection methods: face to face questionnaire surveys and an online self-administered survey (see Appendix 1 for survey questions). Using a structured questionnaire survey enabled the collection of varying perspectives from across a range of different respondents.

To test the questionnaire a pilot survey was distributed to 10 people residing in Port Macquarie in February 2016. Feedback was sort regarding the time taken to complete the
survey, the clarity and order of the questions, in addition to how it could be improved. The feedback received contributed to an improved version of the survey, which was subsequently trialed via surveymonkey by 15 online respondents (recruited through personal contacts). The online survey trial also allowed us to undertake a trial analysis and determine how the Belonging, Being Becoming framework would be applied to the data analysis.

Face to face questionnaire surveys were conducted on two separate occasions - Saturday 9/4/16 and on Wednesday 12/4/16, between 10am-12pm, at two playgrounds in Port Macquarie – Town Green Park and Livvi’s Place WestPort Park. The Saturday surveys coincided with the Saturday “foreshore market day” in Port Macquarie, to maximize the number of park users. The Wednesday surveys were conducted at both Livvi’s Place and Town Green Park, to collect data from those people who may have avoided the playspace on a busy market day, or who preferred weekday visits. By conducting the survey on two separate occasions it was hoped that we could maximize the variety of playground-users. In total 96 people consented to be surveyed across both survey periods.

CSU Social Work student volunteers undertaking studies in social research methods were recruited to assist with the surveying. Theoretical and practical training in the implementation of surveys was provided to the students in class by one of the researchers. This learning was then complemented and consolidated by the practical experience of conducting surveys within the local community, under the supervision of the researchers.

The second research strategy was to conduct an online self-administered survey using identical questions to those used in the face-to-face surveys. There is evidence that self-administered surveys reduce social desirability bias from some types of questions because the participant does not have to respond directly to the interviewer and is free to be critical and frank in their answers (Fowler Jr, 2014, p. 65). SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com) was used to deliver the online survey. Online survey respondents were recruited through a range of means including social media, posting the online survey web-link to the Port Macquarie Hastings Council and Touched By Olivia’s websites, distributing flyers to all schools listed on the PMHC’s community organization’s database and to PMHC community services such as the local libraries, as well to members of the “Friends of Livvi’s Place Port Macquarie” database. TBO marketing department provided assistance with the design of the promotional flyers.

The online survey was open for six weeks, to accommodate school holidays and any minor delays that might be encountered posting the promotional flyers on community notice boards or by missing cut-off dates for flyer inclusion in month/weekly school newsletters. Online survey reminders were posted on Facebook during the last week the survey was open to increase responses. In total 97 people participated in the online survey. Similarly to the face to face surveys, most of the respondents were female.

The survey comprised of 33 questions including open and closed questions. Some of the survey questions were developed and drew upon the principles and values underpinning Australia’s early childhood learning framework - Belonging, Being & Becoming (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2009). Based on the notion of Belonging to the Port
Macquarie community, Being part of the Port Macquarie Community and Becoming part of the Port Macquarie community these concepts informed the survey questions and data analysis:

Belonging: This concept involves an understanding that one is part of a group, that they are somehow linked with others and experience meaningful relationships. A sense of belonging is linked to a sense of security and can relate to how comfortable people are within a particular setting (Aussie Childcare Network, 2010).

Being: A child’s sense of being can relate to how childcare professionals show respect to each individual child, through greetings, conversations and actions. When a child has a sense of being they build and maintain relationships with others, take part in life’s journey and face challenges in everyday life.

Becoming: This concept acknowledges that who we each become in this world is shaped by different events and circumstances we experience throughout our lives. Becoming reflects the process of rapid and significant change that occurs during childhood as a child’s knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change. The notion of becoming emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2009).

The survey questions asked whether or not respondents had visited Livvi’s Place and if they would return (if not why not). Questions were asked about feelings of safety, comfort, happiness, learning and imaginary play opportunities, social engagement with others and of the ways respondents had observed Livvi’s Place being used. Suggestions for improvement were also sought from the respondents along with a series of demographic questions. The face to face survey took approximately eight minutes to complete.

Data from the face to face surveys sheets were manually entered into SurveyMonkey for collation. The closed questions of both the online and face to face surveys were then analysed using SurveyMonkey. The open ended questions were thematically analysed according to commonly used words and recurring topics raised by the respondents. The results of the face to face surveys and online surveys were kept separate to determine if there were any differences in the survey results. Some differences were noted.

The results presented in the next section are for the total number of surveys that was 193 (online and face to face surveys). Some quotes from the open ended questions have been included to support the quantitative analysis.

Limitations

This was a small study with limited resources and this is reflected in the design and scope of the project. The sample was limited in size and data were only collected on two days at Livvi’s Place and one other playground. A limitation of this study was it did not canvas the views of the children who use Livvi’s Place Port Macquarie. The authors acknowledge that the voice of children with disabilities is frequently overlooked in research, even in the fields of Childhood Studies and Disability Studies (Curran & Runswick-Cole, 2014; Stafford, 2017). We also acknowledge UNICEF’s definition of child-friendly cities, which is underpinned by
the international Convention on the Rights of The Child (United Nations, 1989), is one which recognises the right of children to have a say in what kind of city they want and to influence decisions made about their city (UNICEF, 2004, p. 7). We would therefore recommend that Port Macquarie-Hastings Council build upon this study by researching the views of children, particularly those with disabilities, regarding Livvi’s Place.

The analytical framework
The aim of this study was to assess whether Livvi’s Place was achieving its goal of social inclusion through play and as such the authors drew upon the principles of inclusive play underpinning the Livvi’s Place playspace. These included the notions that play is a fundamental social building block that should be fun and shared. Inclusive play is grounded on the principle that play can be experienced by people of all abilities to promote independence and a sense of mastery and accomplishment (Inclusive Play Space, 2012).

Livvi’s Place is a playspace that was specially designed to encourage accessible and intergenerational play. Since play is a learning medium for people of all ages the authors drew upon the principles and values underpinning Australia’s early childhood learning framework - Belonging, Being and Becoming (Council of Australian Governments (COAG), 2009). While most educators recognise play as intrinsic to learning for young children, play pervades the whole of human life. Humans are a particularly playful species and our ability to play right through to older life keeps our thinking and life skills sharp (Bergen, 2009). The researchers used the existing pedagogical framework of Belonging, Being and Becoming to explore whether or not users of Livvi’s Place had a sense of Belonging to the Port Macquarie community, of Being part of the Port Macquarie community and of Becoming part of the Port Macquarie community. This framework was used to guide the data analysis.

Demographic data collected from the structured surveys were compared to ABS datacubes derived from information from the 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers for people with disability, and carers, in relation to labour force participation, satisfaction with services, social and community participation, and the health and wellbeing of carers.

Drawing from the COAG (2009, p. 7) report the concepts were understood as follows:

**Belonging**
*Belonging* involves an understanding that one is part of a group, and acknowledges that all people are interdependent upon one another. We all belong somewhere – to a family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and to the wider community. A sense of belonging is integral to our human existence and is the basis upon which we establish relationships and by which we define our identities. A sense of belonging is linked to a sense of security and can relate to how comfortable people are within a particular setting (Aussie Childcare Network, 2010). *Belonging* is central to *being* and *becoming* because it shapes who we are and who we can become.

**Being**
*Being* recognises the significance of living in the present -the here and now, and not just preparing for the future. A sense of being is about people knowing themselves, building and maintaining relationships with others, engaging with life’s joys and complexities, and meeting challenges in everyday life (Aussie Childcare Network, 2010). Children’s immersion in their play provides a picture for us of how play enables them to simply enjoy *being*. 
Becoming

_Becoming_ acknowledges that who we each become in this world is shaped by different events and circumstances we experience throughout our lives. _Becoming_ reflects the process of rapid and significant change that occurs during childhood as a child’s knowledge, understandings, capacities, skills and relationships change. The notion of _becoming_ emphasises learning to participate fully and actively in society.

Results

Who uses Livvi’s Place?

The demographic profile of respondents for both the online and face to face surveys was very similar although there were some differences. The majority of respondents (98% of face to face and 94% online survey) brought children with them to Livvi’s Place and most were parents (75% face to face and 89% online). (see Appendix 1 for a detailed comparison of the face to face and online survey respondent demographic data).

Our survey respondents

Survey respondents mainly (83%) resided in the Port Macquarie-Hastings Council area. However, some respondents were visitors from other parts of New South Wales, including the Hunter region, Bathurst, Orange and Sydney. Others came from Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania along with international visitors. Although the respondents were randomly chosen for the face to face surveys or self-selected to participate in the online survey, both survey modes reflected a higher percentage of female respondents to males. Most respondents did not identify as coming from a linguistically or culturally diverse backgrounds (84% face to face, 72% online). Interestingly, 6.32% of face to face respondents compared to 5% online identified as Indigenous or Torres Strait Islander. These latter figures broadly reflect the demographic profile of Port Macquarie which is 92.72% non-Indigenous and 3.32% of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent (Port Macquarie-Hastings Council, 2011). Two thirds (66%) of the all the survey respondents were female and approximately one third (31.58%) were male. The proportion of female online survey respondents was higher at 86.08% with only 12.66% male compared to the face to face survey respondents. Most of the respondents to both surveys were in the 31-40 years age group, with a higher proportion being online respondents (54%) compared to 44% of face to face survey respondents. The majority of respondents were aged 31-40 years old (44% face to face, 54% online). The majority (94% face to face, 95% online) of the children brought to Livvi’s Place were under 13 years of age, with the most common age group being 3-5 year olds (69.5% face to face, 58% online).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimated that in 2015 Port Macquarie had a population of 75,635 people, of which 27% had a disability (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013). It also estimates that 1% of the population were children aged twelve years and below with disabilities. Only 5% of our survey respondents identified as having a disability. This indicates that people with disability are under-represented in our survey results. However 9% of our respondents reported having children with disabilities. According to the ABS data 1% of all individuals in Port Macquarie-Hastings region with disabilities are children aged 0-12 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). This suggests that the figure
of 9% is an over-representation of this group at Livvi’s Place. This is a positive result indicating Livvi’s Place is achieving its goal of social inclusion for children with disabilities since many parents are bringing their children aged 0-12 years with disabilities to play there. Livvi’s Place is being regularly used in a variety of ways by people in the Port Macquarie area and is building a sense of community. Firstly, through a sense of belonging.

Belonging
All the survey results demonstrated that Livvi’s Place is a space of belonging, where people were happy to bring their children to play. Survey respondents said that they felt welcome (98.77% face to face/88% online) at Livvi’s Place, that there was a sense that they were “insiders” who belonged there (96% face to face/87% online) and they felt safe at Livvi’s Place (92% face to face/ 85% online). Almost all respondents (93% face to face/88.46% online) expected others to also be using the playspace when they arrived suggesting that Livvi’s Place was recognised by our respondents as a community facility that was actively in use by the local community. The respondents observed that Livvi’s Place was being used for a number of activities. Some of the interactive ways Livvi’s Place is used included:

- Family picnics: (68% face to face/57% online)
- Parties: (61.25% face to face/54% online)
- Parent groups: (63.75 face to face/44% online)
- Meeting friends: (65% face to face/69.4% online)
- Playgroup: (61.25% face to face/37.5%% online)

Belonging acknowledges our interdependence with others. A sense of interdependence and belonging emerged from the data in the respondents’ willingness to engage in conversation with strangers. Most respondents (53.66% face to face/75% online) stated it was likely that they would have conversations with other Livvi’s Place users not known to them, and some respondents (18.29% face to face/ 5% online) thought that such conversations were very likely. While most of the respondents stated Livvi’s Place encouraged children to play together the proportional difference of the survey group answers to this question (95.18% face to face/ 56% online) is interesting. One explanation for this difference could be that many face to face respondents were at Livvi’s Place when the question was asked and could actually see children playing together. The study found that children want to visit Livvi’s place since 89% of face to face and 71% of online respondents claimed their children eagerly looked forward to the Livvi’s Place experience. It was a place they wanted to be in.

Being
The second concept considered in our analysis of the data was that of Being. This recognises the significance of living in the present - the here and now. Our study found that Livvi’s Place encouraged a sense of being. Most of the respondents (98.79% face to face/96% online) were happy while they were at Livvi’s Place with 30% face to face and 10.26% online stressing they were very happy at Livvi’s Place. Similarly, our respondents indicated that their children were also happy to be at Livvi’s Place (98.79% face to face/ 96% online).
Although there were proportional differences between the survey and online responses to questions on imaginary and collaborative play by both survey groups (online responses tending to be more conservative), most respondents stated Livvi’s Place was a place that encouraged children to use their imagination (87.95% face to face/50% online) and also encouraged children to play together (95.18%/56% online). These are important findings with respect to Being, as imagination fosters creative and active learning through play and helps children to not only initiate learning opportunities it also enhances a sense of well-being (COAG, 2009). Playing with others also provides an environment where children can ask questions, collaboratively solve problems and engage in critical thinking. Playing with others can expand children’s thinking and nurture their desire to know and to learn more. In these ways play promotes a positive disposition towards learning (COAG, 2009, p.9).

The face to face respondents acknowledged Livvi’s Place as a space that facilitated social interaction between adults (81.93%). In contrast the online respondents were less certain with 41% stating they thought Livvi’s place did encourage social interaction and 41% were unsure. However, both survey groups agreed it facilitated social interaction between children (98% face to face/82% online).

With regards to seizing the day or living in the moment, the respondents had used Livvi’s Place or had seen others using Livvi’s Place as a playspace in a number of ways:

- On the way to the shops (50% face to face/47% online)
- After school play (45% face to face/44% online)
- As a place to learn new skills (45% face to face/37.5% online)
- As a place to make friends (36.25% face to face/39% online)

**Becoming**

The third concept considered was that of Becoming. Our relationships with other people have a strong influence on our becoming the person we will eventually grow into. Livvi’s Place was specifically designed to encourage accessible and intergenerational play. It is for everyone, not just for the children. The survey explored whether or not people felt that they were becoming part of the Port Macquarie community by looking at whether Livvi’s Place was a space that encouraged relationships with other people.

Less than one in five online respondents thought it likely or very likely that adult friendships would be formed from the people they met at Livvi’s Place, and 45.45% were unsure. In contrast 55% of the face to face respondents stated that it was likely or very likely that adult friendships would form.

In the case of children making friendships at Livvi’s Place most respondents (79.5% face to face/52% online) considered it was only ‘likely’ that friendships would be formed between children.
The respondents agreed that Livvi’s Place provides good learning opportunities for children (92% face to face/ 77% online) supporting the proposition that play helps one learn new things, to practice and hone skills (Ebbeck, Yim, & Lee, 2013).

Community suggestions for improvement
 Whilst the data has shown that Livvi’s place is recognised by the survey respondents as a safe and welcoming environment in which people feel happy, children play and learn and make friends with one another and adults engage with one another, the respondents mentioned areas for improvement. Survey respondents were asked for suggestions on how Livvi’s playspace could be improved and made more inclusive. The following is a list of the main suggestions mentioned by the respondents (see Appendix 2 and 3 for a complete list of suggested improvements). Note the total number of times mentioned by all respondents is in parentheses.

Shade – (106)

Toilets – (32) (including baby change areas and disability accessible toilets)

Equipment - more equipment suitable for older children, e.g. climbing equipment (28)
  - more swings, including swings specifically for babies and toddlers, wheelchair users (34)
  - more seating/benches (27)
  - more play equipment for children with disabilities (15)

Safety - Concerns about the playground gates including the gates being left open and that there were too many entry/exit points to the playground through which small children could leave. Respondents recommended self-closing gates and fewer gates (16)
  Algae and slipping in water play area (10)
  Plants/equipment obscures line of sight to children (7)

Recommendations

1. Strategies to improve shade at Livvi’s Place be addressed as a priority. It is noted that since the surveys were completed a shade sail has been erected over the water fountain. However, as respondents recommended shade was required over other sections of the park (for example, the sandpit) further research is required to determine whether or not the current level of shade available is acceptable to park users.

2. Consideration is given to erecting an accessible toilet/change room facility adjacent to Livvi’s Place. One option based on respondents’ suggestions (See Appendices 3 and 4) would be to incorporate the cafe/kiosk suggestion into this building.

3. Self-closing gates should be fitted to all Livvi’s Place exits and consideration given to reducing the number of gates to two, one on the north side of playground (facing
the car park) and the other directly opposite on the south side of the playground (facing WestPort Bowling Club).

4. Child safety would be enhanced by improved maintenance of the wet play area removing the build up of slippery algae. Regular pruning of the plants inside the playspace is recommended to ensure visitors have a clear line of sight across the park to their children, from all sides of the playspace. This is especially needed during peak use periods, such as market day, when the playground is crowded. The replacement of the long grasses with a different shrub that would not harbour snakes or rodents (see comments in Appendices 3 and 4), is also recommended.

5. Consideration is given to enhancing the “all abilities” concept underpinning Livvi’s place and the desire to promote inter-generational play, by incorporating more play opportunities for children with disabilities, infant playspaces and challenging play equipment that would appeal to older children. This would provide a wider range of activities for families with children of mixed ages and abilities.

6. Recognising that the views of a city’s children should be considered when assessing and possibly making changes to areas that affect them (UNICEF, 2004, p. 4), we recommend that Port Macquarie Hastings Council build upon the this study by investigating the view of children regarding Livvi’s Place. Suggested strategies for accessing the views of children with and without disabilities should include creative participatory methods, such as activity-based interviewing and child-centric co-construction narration, as this will maximise the opportunity for all children to participate in research relevant to them (Stafford, 2017).

Conclusion

Livvi’s Place Port Macquarie is a popular and well used playspace enjoyed by visitors to Port Macquarie and the local community. The current user group is mainly families with children under 13 years and predominantly pre-schoolers aged 3-5years. A significant percentage are families with children with disabilities suggesting that Livvi’s Place is achieving its goal of social inclusion for children with disabilities.

The study found Livvi’s Place promotes a sense of social inclusion among the local community, evidenced by users expressing their feelings of safety, welcome and of belonging whilst at Livvi’s Place. The results also indicate that Livvi’s Place encourages its users to be themselves, live in the moment and enjoy their experience of Livvi’s Place. The friendships formed, conversations started and playful interactions experienced at Livvi’s Place all demonstrate that this is a playspace which facilitates people connecting as members of the local community. The findings also revealed that people recognised that creative learning takes place through play at Livvi’s Place and together with the relationships forged at the playground points to a playspace where people can become included as part of the local community.
This study demonstrates that Livvi’s Place is achieving its goal of social inclusion, however areas for improvement were identified by some respondents that if implemented may both enhance inclusive play and improve the safety aspects of the playspace.

**Acknowledgements**
The authors express their thanks to and acknowledge the assistance provided by Gail Fuller, manager of CSU’s Spatial Data Analysis Network, in setting up the online survey and analyzing the results.
Reference list


Appendix 1. Questionnaire Survey (face to face and online)

Section 1

1. Have you ever visited Livvi’s Playspace at Westport Park Port Macquarie?  
   Yes [proceed to Q.3]  
   No [proceed to Q2]

2. What is your reason for not visiting Livvi’s Playspace? Please choose from the following options.  
   ☐ Never heard of it  
   ☐ Don’t know where it is  
   ☐ The location is not convenient  
   ☐ It is not suitable for our needs  
   ☐ It is too crowded  
   ☐ The play equipment is not adequate  
   ☐ Lack of shade  
   ☐ Lack of amenities  
   ☐ I have heard bad reports about it from others  
   ☐ I’m happy with the parks I do use  
   ☐ Other [write in box]

   Proceed to Q27

3. Having visited Livvi’s, would you ever return?  
   • Yes, I would return (Proceed to Question 7)  
   • No, I would not return  
   • Not sure

4. If you decided not to revisit Livvi’s, we would like to know your reasons.  
   From the following list, please select any of the reasons that apply to you.  
   ☐ The location is not convenient  
   ☐ It is not suitable for our needs  
   ☐ It is too crowded  
   ☐ The play equipment is not adequate  
   ☐ Lack of shade  
   ☐ Lack of amenities  
   ☐ I have heard bad reports about it from others  
   ☐ I’m happy with the parks I do use  
   ☐ Other
Section 2
This section is for Livvi’s users

6. Do you bring a child or children to Livvi’s
   □ Yes
   □ No [Go to question 9]

7. What age groups are the children you bring to the park? [Indicate all that apply]
   □ 0 - 2 years
   □ 3 - 5 years
   □ 6 - 12 years
   □ 13yrs and over

8. What roles or roles do you have when visiting Livvi’s? [select all that apply]
   □ A Parent
   □ A Carer
   □ A Grandparent
   □ Someone who enjoys parks
   □ A teacher/child care worker supervising a group of children
   □ Other (please specify)

9. How often do you visit Livvi’s?
   □ More than once a week
   □ Once a week
   □ Once a month
   □ Occasionally
Section 3

10. When you arrive at Livvi’s, how likely is it that there are others using the playspace at the same time as you?
   - Very unlikely
   - Unlikely
   - Likely
   - Very likely

11. How safe do you feel when you visit Livvi’s?
   - Very unsafe
   - Unsafe
   - Sometimes safe, other times unsafe
   - Safe
   - Very safe

12. How likely is it that you would engage in a conversation with other Livvi’s users unknown to you?
   - Very unlikely
   - Unlikely
   - Likely
   - Very likely

13. Do you feel you are welcome at Livvi’s?
   - Yes
   - Sometimes
   - No

14. When you visit Livvi’s do you feel like an insider (comfortable, as someone who belongs) or as an outsider (uncomfortable, and not one of the ‘locals’)?
   - Insider
   - Outsider

Section 4

15. How happy do you feel while you are at Livvi’s?
   - Very unhappy
   - Unhappy
   - Happy
   - Very happy
16. How happy do you think the children feel while they are at Livvi's?
- Very unhappy
- Unhappy
- Happy
- Very happy

17. In your opinion does Livvi’s encourage children to use their imagination?
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

18. When you visit Livvi’s do you see children playing with others - including children they do not know?
- Yes
- No
- Unsure

Section 5

19. If you take a child or children to Livvi’s do they eagerly look forward to this experience?
- Yes
- Sometimes
- No
- Not applicable

20. Does Livvi’s encourage people to interact and engage with one another?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Adult to Adult</th>
<th>Child to child</th>
<th>Adult to child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unsure</td>
<td></td>
<td>unsure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. How likely do you think it is that friendships will be formed at Livvi’s?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very unlikely</th>
<th>Unlikely</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Very likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22. Livvi’s provides lots of different spaces for play and opportunities for different types of play experiences like using sand, water, sound and play equipment.
How would you rate the learning opportunities available at Livvi’s?

- Very poor
- Poor
- Unsure
- Good
- Very good

23. What do you think could be done to make Livvi’s more inclusive for people of different abilities, backgrounds and ages?

24. In what ways have you (or others you have seen) used Livvi’s? Chose as many as you like from this list.

- For family picnics
- For birthday parties
- For parents group/playgroup to meet
- As a meeting for friends
- As a to play on the way to the shops
- As a to play after school
- As a quiet spot to be on your own
- A where I can make friends
- A where a child can make friends
- A where a child can learn new things
- A where a child can use their imagination
- Other

25. How do you think Livvi’s overall could be improved?
Section 6

Finally we’d like to know a little bit about you.

26. What is your postcode? 

27. Are you
   □ Male
   □ Female

28. What age group are you in?
   □ 18-20yrs
   □ 21-30yrs
   □ 31-40yrs
   □ 41-50yrs
   □ 51-60yrs
   □ 61-70yrs
   □ Over 71yrs
   □ Prefer not to answer

29. Would you say that you have a culturally or linguistically diverse background - that might be your language background, your religion or culture or your country of birth or descent
   □ Yes
   □ No
   □ Prefer not to answer

30. Do you identify as an Indigenous Australian or Torres Strait Islander?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   □ Prefer not to answer

31. Are you a person with a disability?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   □ Prefer not to answer

32. If you bring a child or children to Livvi’s do they have a disability?
   □ Yes
   □ No
   □ Not applicable
## Appendix 2: Demographic data of survey respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Face to Face Survey</th>
<th>Online Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brought children</strong></td>
<td>97.59%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social role</strong></td>
<td>(74.7%) parents,</td>
<td>88.61% parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.87% grandparents.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.66% grandparents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td>66.32%) female</td>
<td>86.08% female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.58% male</td>
<td>12.66% male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.11% prefer not to answer</td>
<td>1.27% prefer not to answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td>43.62% 31-40yrs</td>
<td>53.85% 31-40yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25.53%, 21-30yrs</td>
<td>14.1% 41-50yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.83% 41-50yrs</td>
<td>12.82% 21-30yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.9% 51-70yrs.</td>
<td>16.87% 51-70yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child Ages</strong></td>
<td>69.51% 3-5yrs age group</td>
<td>58% 3-5yrs age group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57.32% 6-12yrs age group</td>
<td>51.95% 0-2yrs age group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48.78% 0-2years age group</td>
<td>33.77% 6-12 age group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.10% 13+years</td>
<td>5.19% 13+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CALD backgrounds</strong></td>
<td>84.21% No</td>
<td>72.15% No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.74% Yes</td>
<td>21.52% Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aboriginal or Torres Strait Is.</strong></td>
<td>93.68% No</td>
<td>89.87% (71 respondents) No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.32% Yes</td>
<td>5.06% (4 respondents) Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Person with disability</strong></td>
<td>97.89% No</td>
<td>89.87% No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.11% Yes</td>
<td>7.59% Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child with disability</strong></td>
<td>89.47% No</td>
<td>84.62% No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.37% Yes</td>
<td>11.54% Yes (9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3

Suggested improvements for inclusion and general improvements from face to face survey and online surveys. (Total number of times mentioned in parentheses)

Activities for wider age groups (12)
“More equipment for kids of different ages” (Face-to-face response)
- Cater more for older children 4-6 years
- Different experiences for older children 8+ years
- Needs activities that cater to wider age group
- More challenging equipment for older children, bigger slides, maybe a train, internal bike track, section for ball play
- Provide separate section for toddlers-preschool and primary school age (with more adventurous activities)
- More activities for over 13 yrs- often have teens supervising/with younger children need to keep them engaged eg skating area/graffiti wall etc

More 0-2 yr old and toddler friendly play equipment needed (9)
“Awesome park but caters more for the older children” (Online response)
- Not enough for the very young (0-2yr) children.

Multiculturalism (introduce Indigenous theme (4), multicultural themes (4)
“An Indigenous-based activity or artwork, something that celebrates diversity and multiculturalism” (Online response)
- Add some cultural diversity to it. It seems to be a very "white middle classed" area that fits the status quo with little to no Indigenous visuals, activities.
- Include some Indigenous themed play so that Indigenous children can see the park is not only on their traditional land but their culture has been embedded within the play equipment
- Introduce statues of different ethnicities, more animals on the ground, in and out of play equipment, similar to the fish on the ground

Climbing activities (22)
- More climbing/hanging/balance opportunities
- A small climbing rope/web would be a welcome addition.
- "high rise" course
- Flying fox
- A climbing cubby house
- a climbing frame with a shade sail.

Water (12)
- More water activities (such as “water channels”, where children can divert water)
- More water play activities, larger fountain, more fountains

Specific play zones
“You always find the older kids spinning the roundabout way too fast for the younger kids to feel safe on it” (Online response)
- Quiet play area
- More separate zones for children and parents/ for adult-to-adult interaction and child-to-child interaction
- a baby toddler friendly area with no water play

Exemplars to follow up (3)
“I have recently been to Darwin & Townsville and was in awe of their free water parks that were constructed for all ages” (Online response)

- More things to do. See Speers Point (Lake Macquarie) for an example of a great park
- More exciting play spaces. Eg Ruddock Park, Westleigh in Sydney

**Swings**
- Wheelchair-swings/swings for children with disabilities (15)
- More swings - for 0-2yrs, pre-schoolers, older children (8)

**Slides** - More slippery slides (6)

**Interactive equipment (7)**
- More interactive activities on the boat (i.e. turntable steering wheel)
- More interactive play equipment, like the musical instruments/musical play equipment (4)
- Repair the broken musical equipment (3)

**New additions**
- Needs to be more equipment
- Introduce some of those spring toys, see saws (2) and diggers (fixed excavator toys) in the sand as an idea
- Tunnels to crawl through
- Internal bike track
- A bicycle rack
- A supervised “sensorial trail” where a park ranger shows the children different things

**BBQs and refreshments**
“A coffee shop would be terrific. The toilets are too far away and we need baby change facilities”. (Online response)
- More BBQ (7) /increase size of BBQ /picnic area
- More picnic tables needed outside the play space
- Nearer refreshments (2)
  – build up a Coffee shop
- Water bubblers inside the park (8)
- Kiosk/ coffee van (6)

**Shade (106) and seating (27)**
“Lots of people have childrens' birthday parties there so extra seating is needed” (Online response)
- More seating/bench space and shaded areas for the elderly
- More shade
  - erect temporary (or permanent) shade structures until such time as the trees are mature enough to provide shade
- More seating/more group seating in full view of most equipment, seats with backs (not just benches) for nursing mothers, older people, toddlers
- More tables & chairs outside chairs facing the playground. More covered sitting areas for parents.
- More structured shade (e.g. a gazebo)

**Disability needs**
“We need disability-accessible toilets nearer to the park and baby change facilities”. (Online response)
- Some surprise activities (eg something pops up when you pull a lever, for children with intellectual disability – teaching anticipation)
- Swing for children in wheelchairs (wheel onto it/clamps for chair) (15)
- Liberty swing
- Disability-accessible toilets (3)
- Equipment needs to be seat-belted
- The option of using some kind of clamps for attaching the wheelchair to the "round about".
- Set a specific "special needs time" when they are allowed to come in. To encourage other groups you could set a special time for specific groups. Market the inclusion to specific groups of people.

**Safety**
- Self-closing gates (8)
- Better surface for pram and wheelchair access
- Boat stops vision
- The grass and rocks in the centre of the park removes visibility to half the park.
- Foam on the bars of the carousel thing! It's pretty dangerous
- Inappropriate plants (possible animal habitat, they obstruct view of children playing).
- Clean the algae where the water sits. It is slippery and dangerous (8)
- Ensure parents can have a clear line of sight to the kids (if you are at the tree then you can't see the kids at the other end).
- Emergency phone
- Non-slip surface needed in water play area,
- The roundabout is dangerous. It either needs to be smaller or made so it can't go as fast to prevent injuries.
- Too many entries and exits
- Needs self-closing gates
- Amend the fencing so that there are fewer gates
- kids could go missing
- The round thing is unsafe
- Difficult to see children from the table in corner
- Better fall areas around toys
- Lockable gates

**Toilets (32)/showers (1)/change room (3)**
"Better toilets. The toilets are too far away- unsafe situation" (Face-to-face response)
- Situate the toilets closer, with disability accessible toilet and baby change area
- Toilets – incl. disability-accessible toilets & baby change facilities.
- Shower to wash off the sand after playing in sand/water
- change area for the kids near the water fountain

**Maintenance (8)**
"Tidy the long grass to make it more safe and accessible for children to climb on large rocks" (Online response).
- Repair all the broken musical equipment that are already there
- Park maintenance: The Lomandra have dried flowers, the garden is full of weeds (makes me feel ashamed). The park and garden keepers need to have the park in good condition in the school holidays. This would be good for tourism.
- Tiles around the sandpit are loose - dangerous.
- Re-paint some of the equipment. Maybe use longer-lasting, weather-enduring paint.
- Better maintenance, and cleaned regularly (decking is always dirty)
- The concrete drain/moat is slippery, which is dangerous and I have seen several falls by excited toddlers
- The roundabout is surprisingly hot under foot.
- Repair and maintenance is needed
- tidy gardens, fix instruments, chips in tiles or lifting tiles
- The non-slip paint on the stepping stones is all crackling off and they are slippery
- Better surfaces as the bark chips are not accessible and the ramp to the tree platform was never completed.
Signage
- Better signage. It is not obvious from the road. We found out about it from the web and drove past 3 times before we found it.

Dogs
- Facilities for people with dogs (3) (a leash free area)

Playspace overall (3)/other
“It’s a great park but it could be so much better if it was double the size” (Online response)
- Expansion of the park to cater for younger and older children
- Have a councillor there
- Just make the space bigger
- The play space is not big enough for all the space that was available.