

WHY OUR PLACE?

# Evidence behind the approach



**ourplace**  
education is the key to the door



# Acknowledgements

Thank you to the interviewees who feature in *Success: Stories from Doveton College*. The quotes in this report are drawn from that publication.

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# Introduction

**Our Place is a place-based approach to supporting the education, health and development of all children and families in disadvantaged communities by utilising the universal platform of a school.**

### Purpose of this paper

Since its establishment, Our Place has evolved in line with the latest academic research and practical on-the-ground experience from Australia and around the world.

Our Place has built on and adapted what works, according to the evidence, in order to suit the unique contexts in which Our Place operates. This paper distils a vast array of research and insights to explain the ‘why’ behind the Our Place approach.

It is intended as a concise and accessible summary for the busy reader. The content is presented according to the known evidence that leads to better outcomes for children and families experiencing disadvantage. The links between the evidences and the Our Place elements is discussed.

As Our Place expands to additional sites across Victoria, the ‘how’ of Our Place implementation is also being documented with a range of guidelines and evidence for sites to draw upon. Further insights on implementation will be made available in subsequent publications.

### About Our Place

An initiative of the Colman Education Foundation, Our Place is a unique cross-sector collaboration between education, early learning, health and adult education systems. Through the Foundation’s ten-year partnership with the Victorian state government, Our Place is being implemented in ten school sites across Victoria, with the support of philanthropic partners.

The publication ‘What it means to walk alongside: exploring the Our Place partnership’ details the partnership with the Department of Education and Training that enabled Our Place to come to life. The work is also consistent with the Department of Premier and Cabinet’s strategy of empowering communities to lead change through place-based approaches.

The Our Place approach is built on the strong body of evidence of what actually works and the translation of learnings from the lighthouse site at Doveton College, which commenced operation in 2012. It seeks to improve the education, health and development for all children by:

- Supporting high-quality environments for children – at home, in early childhood settings and in schools
- Supporting the service system to better address known biological and environmental risks allowing for prevention and early intervention
- Driving better outcomes from the existing service system

The Our Place approach has been designed to achieve this by focusing on more than the classroom. The focus is on changing the overall environment for children and families. It has been built on the recognition that families must be able to meet children and young people’s health, developmental and wellbeing needs, and that those closest to the child (especially parents) must value education and role model learning in ways that support aspirations and realise opportunities.

Our Place also recognises that in communities experiencing disadvantage, there are many things that families need in order to step through the door and make the most of the opportunities available.

Our Place works with one of the most important community resources – schools – to expand the whole-life opportunities open to children and families in highly disadvantaged communities. Our Place brings together the resources children and families need to thrive – in ways that meet the needs and help fulfil the aspirations of the community. >