

# Implementation Progress Report

May 2023



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

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Our Place acknowledges the First Nations people of Australia and Traditional Custodians of the lands that we live and work on, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to working together for a brighter future.



# Introduction



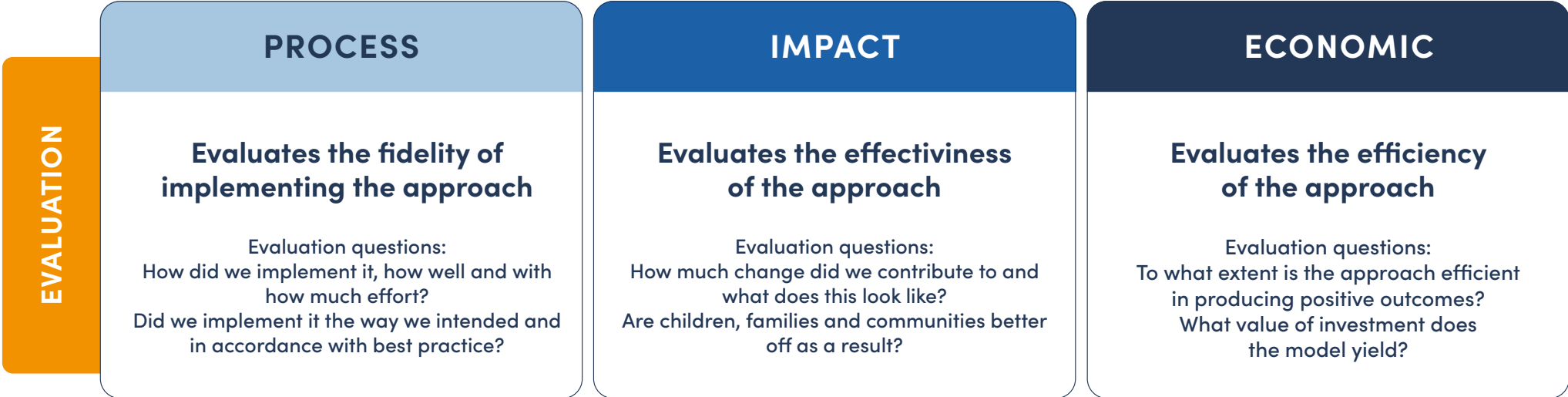
# Evaluation of Our Place

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.

The Our Place approach is being implemented in ten communities throughout Victoria, underpinned by an outcomes framework focused on improvements for children, families and communities.

The evaluation of Our Place's efforts includes measuring both quantitative and qualitative activities across the three primary areas: process, impact and economic value.

The process evaluation helps us understand how the approach has been implemented across the ten communities Our Place works with, which in turn helps us to understand the fidelity of the approach.



# Purpose of this report

This report presents early findings from the process evaluation of the Our Place approach. The process evaluation helps us understand how the approach has been implemented across the ten communities Our Place works with, which in turn helps us to understand the fidelity of the approach.

It presents progress and key learnings about the early implementation up to the end of 2021. It also briefly summarises the current status of sites in terms of implementation up to the end of 2022, which will be explored in greater detail in future reports.

The process evaluation and this report do not seek to evaluate individual sites. Instead, the focus is on learning from the application and implementation of the Our Place approach in a variety of communities.

The report is separated into three sections:

**Implementation progress 2022**

**Implementation markers 2021**

**Enablers and barriers to implementation 2021**

# Considerations

This report draws on information from internal site process evaluation reports and consultations with Our Place Community Facilitators and Partnerships Managers.

The report was written in retrospect, reporting on implementation undertaken since the Our Place initiative began in sites in 2019. The timing of Our Place sites' implementation cycles vary due to several factors, including the length of the pre-establishment phase.

By the end of 2021, Our Place had ten sites in operation, with one site containing more than one school (Frankston North). One site (Bridgewood) completed its involvement with Our Place at the end of 2021, transitioning out of the implementation process on the request from the Department of Education that it would only be involved in its first three years while the community was being established.

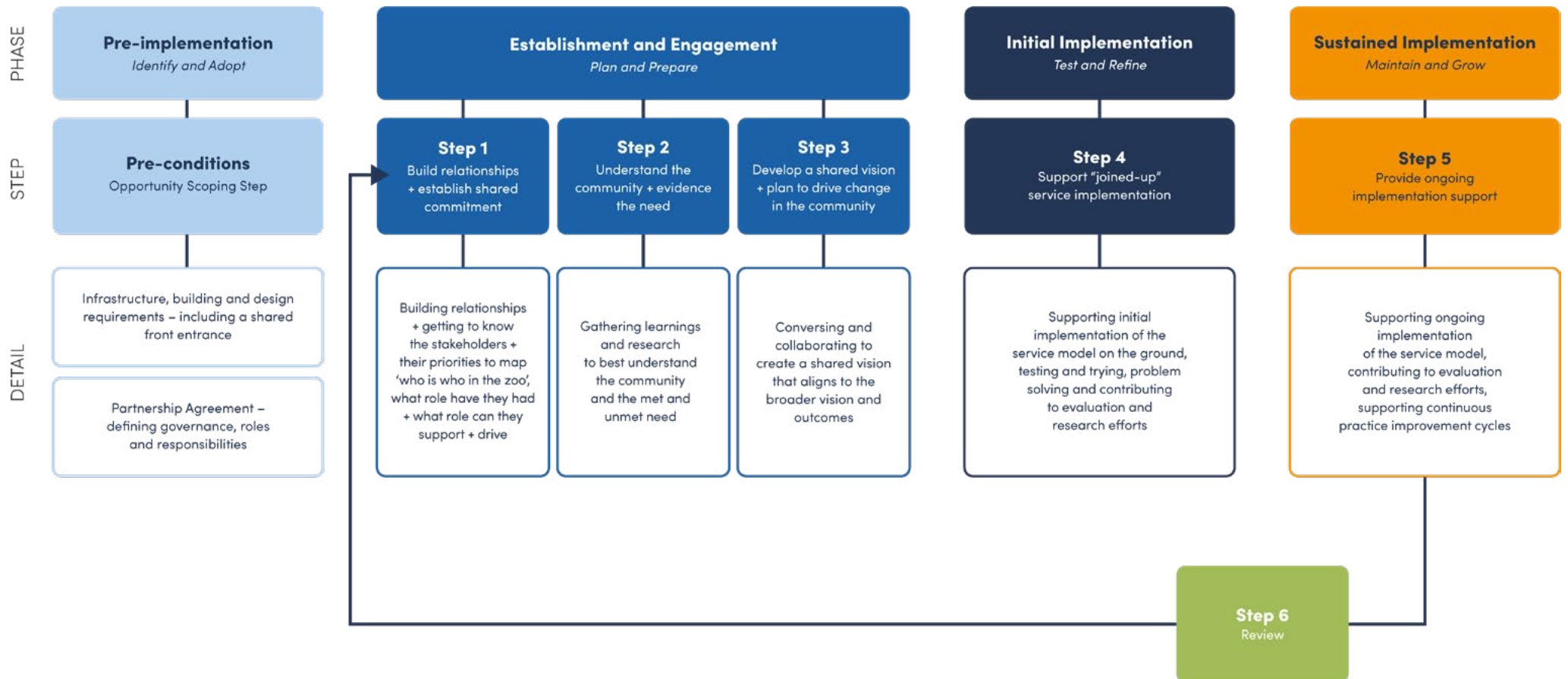


# Implementation Progress 2022



# Implementation cycle

Implementation of the Our Place approach follows a six-step cycle.



# Implementation process

Each site begins implementation at different times depending on the duration of the pre-implementation phase. Some steps overlap and happen concurrently. In several steps, concurrent implementation is expected and intentional, and thus, the implementation process is not necessarily a linear one.

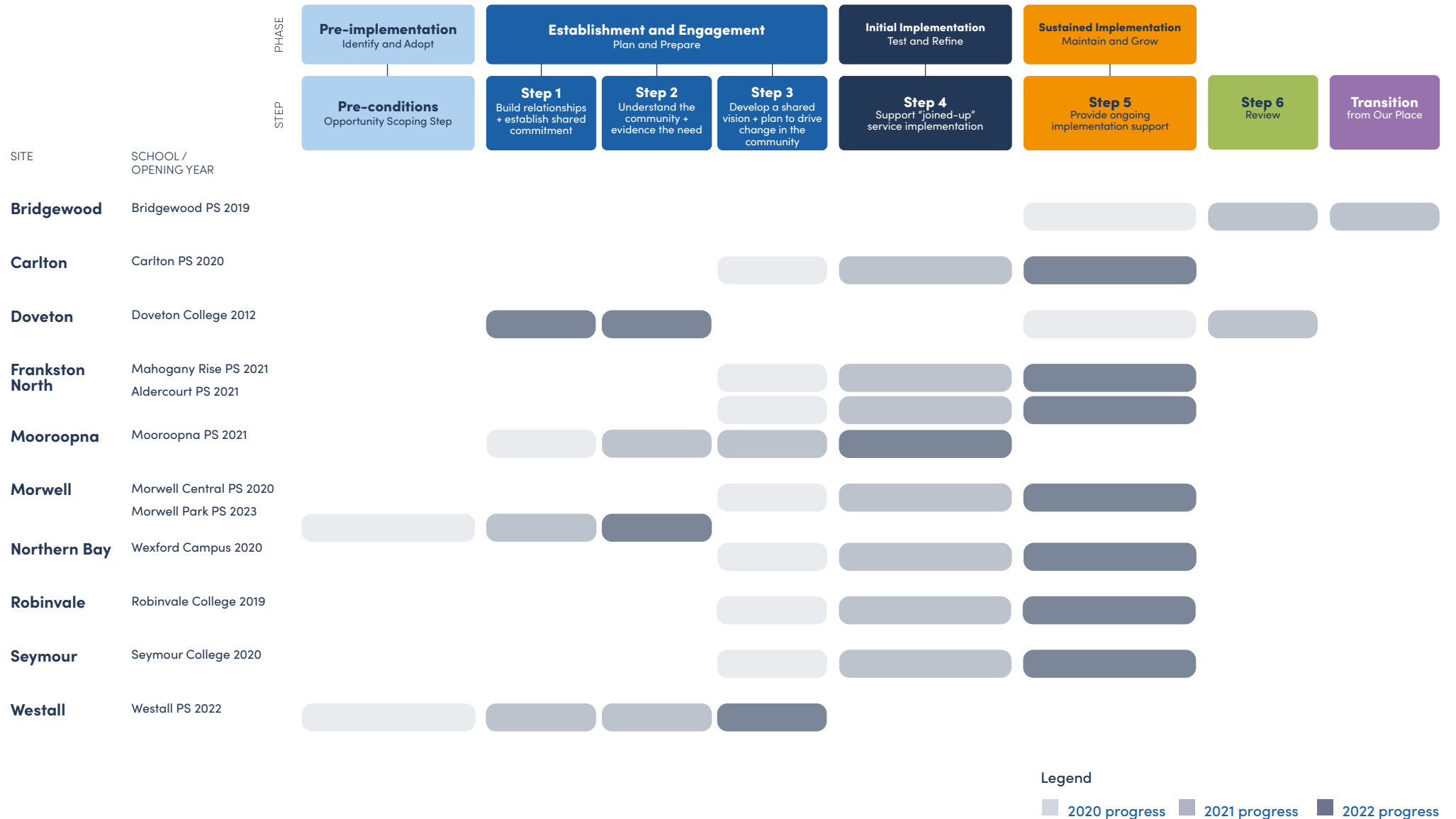
The following depicts the progress of each site (and school) along the Our Place implementation process Steps from 2020 to 2022. It is important to note that while this section presents 2022 progress, the following two sections of this report will focus on implementation up until the end of 2021.

Initiative-wide observations:

- Sites began the implementation process at different times depending on their opening year.
- By the end of 2022, the majority of sites (seven) had reached Step 5 Sustained Implementation.
- All sites progressed at least one step in 2021 despite the impact of COVID-19. By the end of 2021, most sites (six) moved from the Establishment and Engagement phases of Steps 1 to 3 into the Initial Implementation Phase of Step 4.
- Bridgewood completed its involvement with Our Place by the end of 2021 when it transitioned out of the implementation process.
- Previously completing its own implementation cycle that began in 2012, Doveton undertook its review phase in 2021, and was the first site to begin a second implementation cycle as part of Our Place in 2022, reaching Step 3 by the end of that year.



# Implementation progress 2022



# Progress by site

## **Bridgewood**

completed its involvement with Our Place by the end of 2021, transitioning out of the implementation process by this time, therefore no 2022 progress is shown.

## **Morwell**

has two primary schools and progressed through the implementation steps at different times due to the school's different opening years. Morwell Central opened in 2020 and Morwell Park Primary School opened in 2023. Morwell Central reached Step 5 by the end of 2022, while Morwell Park completed Step 2 by the end of 2022.

## **Carlton**

reached Step 5 Sustained Implementation by the end of 2022, two years after officially opening as an Our Place site at the beginning of 2020. Previous Steps 1-2 were completed prior to its opening year.

## **Northern Bay**

reached Step 5 by the end of 2022 after opening in 2020, two years after officially opening as an Our Place site at the beginning of 2020. Previous Steps 1-2 were completed prior to its opening year.

## **Doveton**

showed progress in Steps 1-3 in 2022 after activity in Steps 5-6 in earlier years (2020-21) due to the cyclical nature of the implementation process. Once a site finishes the cycle and reaches Step 6, the process restarts at Step 1. Doveton commenced its first cycle in 2012 and entered a second round of implementation as part of Our Place in 2022, after undertaking Step 6 Review in 2021. It is the first site to undergo this step. Following its review, Doveton commenced Step 1 and has begun to repeat the implementation cycle process for a second time.

## **Frankston North**

has two primary schools, Aldercourt and Mahogany Rise. Both opened as part of Our Place in 2021, and have progressed through one step each year. Frankston North began Step 3 in 2020 and Step 4 in 2021.

## **Robinvale**

opened early in 2019 and had reached Step 5 by the end of 2022. Previous Steps 1-2 were completed in 2018 and 2019, before the designated evaluation period of 2020-2022.

## **Mooroopna**

was one of the later sites to be formally opened in 2021. Despite this, it had progressed through Steps 1 to 4 in two years, from 2021 to 2022.

## **Seymour**

reached Step 5 by the end of 2022, two years after officially opening as an Our Place site in 2020. Previous Steps 1-2 were completed prior to its opening.

## **Westall**

while not officially operating as an Our Place site until the beginning of 2022, made progress on several areas before its official opening, in part due to Our Place's involvement on site in the years leading up to 2022. Westall had reached Step 3 by the end of 2022.

# Implementation Markers 2021





# Markers and considerations

The progress of each site is monitored along the Our Place implementation process using a series of implementation markers. By the end of 2021, Carlton, Frankston North, Morwell (its first school Morwell Central Primary School), Northern Bay, Robinvale and Seymour had all reached Step 4 Initial Implementation.

The table on the next page shows each sites' progress against the detailed Our Place implementation markers up to the end of 2021. The table indicates whether the implementation markers were completed, in progress, not yet started or unknown as of December 2021.

## Considerations:

Some are ongoing rather than one-off events.

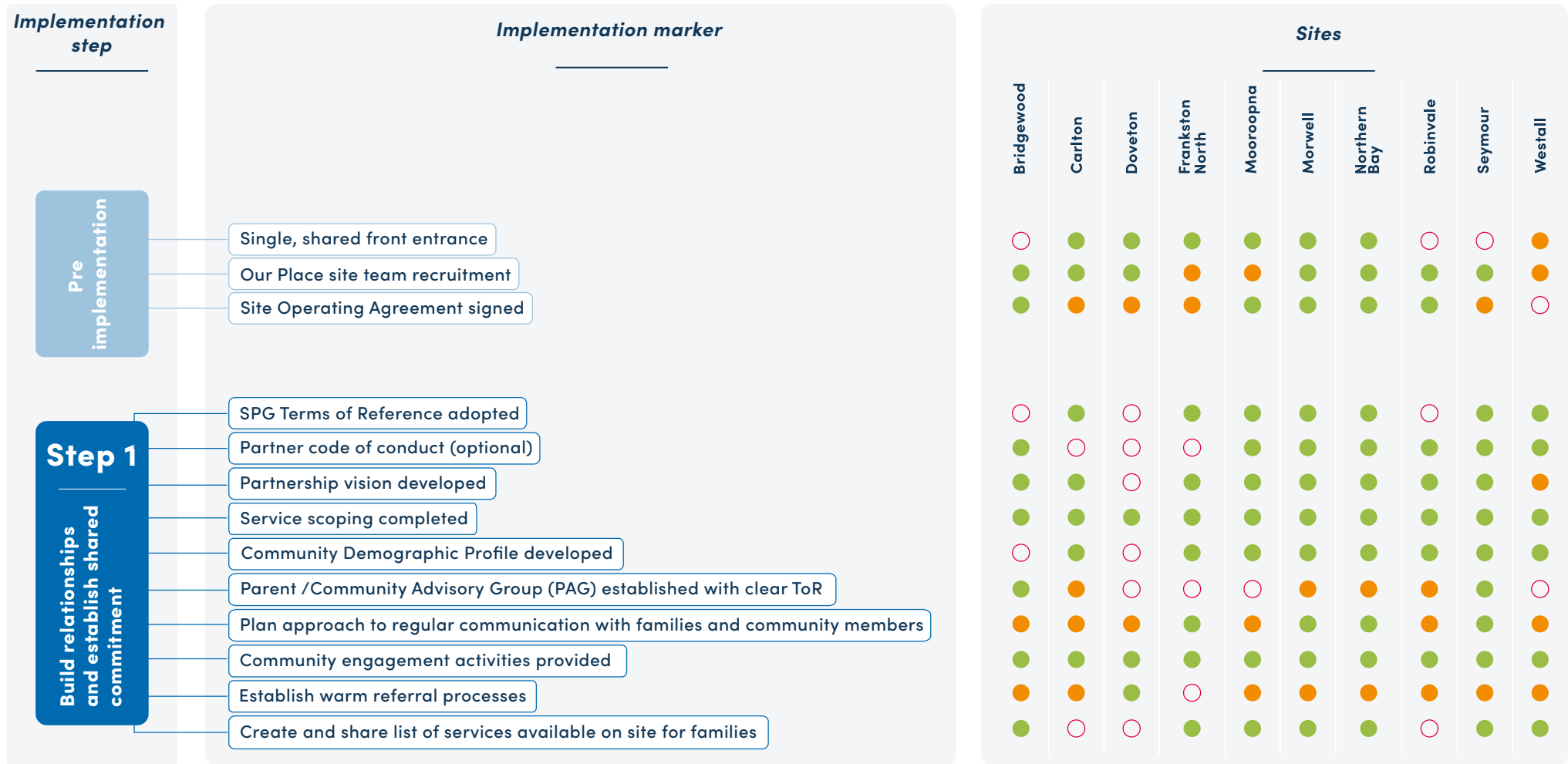
Some are much larger and of more importance than others. This table does not show this variation.

The table does not indicate how well each step was undertaken.

The table goes up to Step 4 only. The table will be updated in future reports to include Steps 5 and 6.

Information used to complete this table was drawn from process evaluation reports and consultations with staff and is limited to these sources.

# Implementation markers 2021: Pre-Implementation and Step 1



Bridgewood was in the last year of operation in 2021, with some implementation markers left incomplete. Doveton, while not officially operating under the Our Place Partnership Agreement until 2022, had already completed many of the implementation markers in some form prior to this time.

# Implementation markers 2021: Step 2 and Step 3

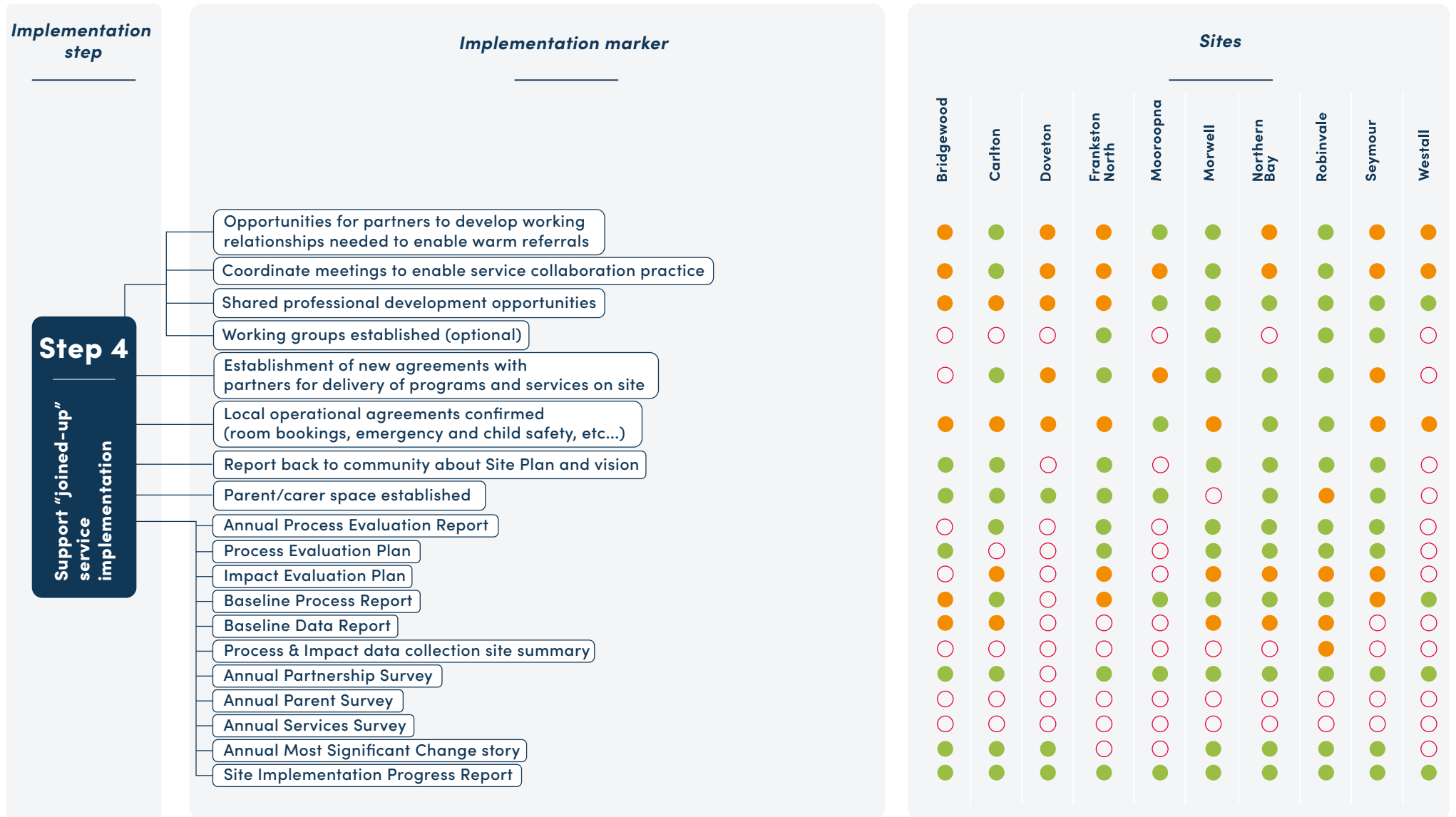


Legend

- Complete
- In progress
- Not started / Unknown



# Implementation markers 2021: Step 4



**Legend**

- Complete
- In progress
- Not started / Unknown

# Implementation markers 2021 summary

## Legend

- Completed
- In progress
- Not started / Unknown

SITE	Pre-implementation Identify and Adopt			Establishment and Engagement Plan and Prepare						Initial Implementation Test and Refine					
	Pre-conditions Opportunity Scoping Step			Step 1 Build relationships + establish shared commitment	Step 2 Understand the community + evidence the need	Step 3 Develop a shared vision + plan to drive change in the community	Step 4 Support "joined-up" service implementation								
	3 markers			10 markers			6 markers			4 markers			19 markers		
<b>Bridgewood</b> Transitioned at Dec 2022	2	1		6	2	2	2	2	2	4			6	6	7
<b>Carlton</b> Step 4 at Dec 2020	2	1		5	3	2	5		1	4			10	4	5
<b>Doveton</b> Step 1 of 2nd cycle at Dec 2022	2	1		3	1	6	1	1	4	3	1		3	5	11
<b>Frankston North</b> Step 4 at Dec 2022	1	2		7	3		5	1		4			8	6	5
<b>Mooroopna</b> Step 3 at Dec 2022	2	1		7	2	1	5	1		2	1	1	7	2	10
<b>Morwell</b> Step 1 & Step 4 at Dec 2022	3			8	2		6			4			12	3	4
<b>Northern Bay</b> Step 4 at Dec 2022	1	2		7	3		5	1		4			11	4	4
<b>Robinvale</b> Step 4 at Dec 2022	2	1		5	3	2	6			4			13	4	2
<b>Seymour</b> Step 4 at Dec 2022	1	1	1	9	1		6			4			9	6	4
<b>Westall</b> Step 1 at Dec 2022	2	1		6	3	1	1	2	3	4			4	3	12

# Markers by site 2021

## Bridgewood

completed its involvement with Our Place by the end of 2021, transitioning out of the implementation process earlier than other sites. Given this, it was not anticipated that Bridgewood would complete all implementation markers, however, many were completed or in progress by the time Our Place's involvement ceased.

## Carlton

reached Step 4 Initial implementation by the end of 2021. After officially opening as an Our Place site at the beginning of 2020, following earlier Our Place involvement prior to this time, Carlton had completed most implementation markers within the initial steps, with only a small number either in progress or not started.

## Doveton

previously completed an implementation cycle beginning 2012 and entered a second round of implementation as part of Our Place in 2022, after undertaking Step 6 Review in 2021. It is the first site to undergo this Step. Following its review, Doveton will commence Step 1 and repeat the implementation cycle process, with many implementation markers already complete.

## Frankston North

completed most implementation markers for Steps 1, 2 and 3. Early work in relation to Step 4 had also commenced. This is despite staff recruitment and Site Operating Agreements still being in progress by the end of 2021 (both part of Step 1), plus the inclusion of two primary schools on one site.





# Markers by site 2021

## Mooroopna

was one of the later sites to be formally established in 2021. Despite this, it had completed most implementation markers within the Establishment and Engagement Phase, and by the end of that year was already up to Step 3. This was also without a full Our Place team in place at the time.

## Morwell

is a site with two schools. The first school reached Step 4 by the end of 2021 after opening in 2020, with only two areas still in progress (parent advisory group and warm referral processes established); the remaining markers in Steps 1 to 3 were complete. The second school in Morwell was due to open three years later in 2023. It had already completed the pre-implementation phase and Step 1 by the end of 2021.

## Northern Bay

completed all steps and implementation markers up to Step 4 by the end of 2021 after opening in 2020 except three: parent advisory group, warm referral processes and local level services advisory group. It had also completed most of Step 4 by the end of 2021.

## Robinvale

opened in early 2019 and had reached Step 4 by the end of 2021, with most of the implementation markers complete. Robinvale is a site without a single, shared front entrance, however, a compromise construction has been put in place in its absence. This has meant this particular implementation marker will remain incomplete.

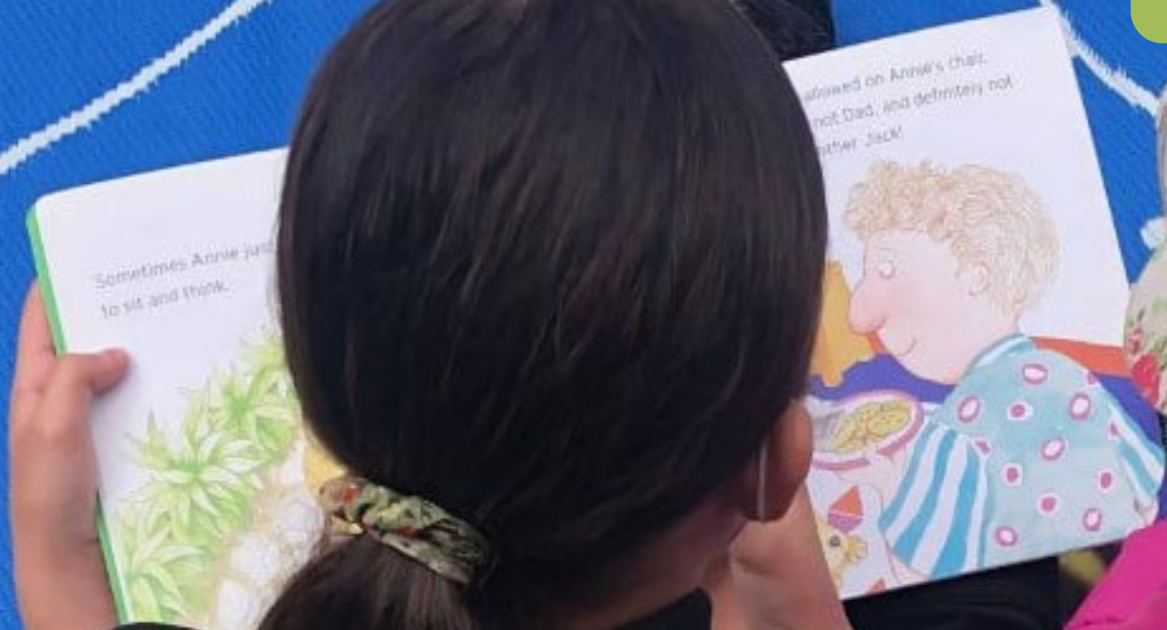
## Seymour

does not have a single, shared front entrance as part of its design. Despite this, the site had progressed to Step 4 by the end of 2020 after opening in 2021.

## Westall

officially became an Our Place site in 2022 when the join up construction between the school and community hub was confirmed. However, Our Place has been involved in the community hub prior to this, including having staff onsite. By the end of 2021, while not officially opened an Our Place site yet, much work had already started or was complete in the pre-implementation phase and Steps 1 and 2.

# Enablers and barriers to early implementation





# Enablers and barriers to early implementation

The following table captures the core enablers and barriers that were present throughout pre-implementation and Steps 1–4 across ten Our Place sites, throughout 2020 and 2021. (Note: this is yet to be completed for 2022.)

Consultations with site staff revealed common themes that were experienced at each implementation step of the Our Place approach. Only sites that had completed steps were able to provide their reflections on these.

Not all individual site barriers and enablers have been listed here, however, where they were mentioned by two or more sites, they have been included. As anticipated, many barriers existed in relation to COVID-19 restrictions.





# Enablers and barriers: Pre-Implementation and Step 1

Step	Enablers	Barriers
Pre implementation	<p><b>Formation of the partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong governance led by senior-level DET representatives as SPG Chairs</li> <li>• Positive pre-existing relationships with local councils, schools</li> </ul> <p><b>Design and build</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting children and traditional owners helps create attractive, well-designed child and family friendly spaces that enhance community pride</li> </ul> <p><b>Single shared entrance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial plans that included a single entrance prior to Our Place involvement</li> <li>• Visits to sites with single entrance to see the benefits</li> <li>• Creative solutions for sites that don't have a single entrance</li> </ul> <p><b>Our Place team on site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff with existing connections to local community</li> <li>• Staff starting on site before official partnership agreements commenced – building relationships early</li> <li>• Staff being located in the community space critical to building family engagement and service partnerships</li> </ul>	<p><b>Formation of the partnership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the Our Place approach and what it means to be a partner takes time</li> <li>• Other initiatives with similar aims and competing services sometimes led to confusion about Our Place's role</li> </ul> <p><b>Design and build</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of consultation created challenges for shared community and agency spaces and amenities</li> </ul> <p><b>Single shared entrance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all sites are built with a single shared entrance and OP involvement came too late in the process</li> </ul> <p><b>Our Place team on site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty attracting candidates during recruitment and steady turnover, particularly in regional sites</li> <li>• Staff starting on site before official partnership agreements commenced – uncertainty of role</li> </ul>
Step 1 Build relationships and establish shared commitment	<p><b>Engage SPG</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing the SPG led to a greater understanding across stakeholders</li> <li>• Regular update on progress and formation of working groups enabled a clear sense of purpose</li> <li>• Onsite presence and implementation activity helped strengthen partner's understanding and engagement</li> </ul> <p><b>Service scoping</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying existing services offered and gaps</li> <li>• Having same person in two sites increased understanding of Our Place</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Demographic Profile</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provided useful data about the community</li> <li>• Instigated a deeper dive where there were differences between data and perceptions on the ground</li> </ul> <p><b>Start community engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tapping into existing onsite activities, such as playgroup and coffee club</li> <li>• Instigating incidental interactions and attending school assemblies and events helped build rapport</li> <li>• Creative ways to stay connected/build connections during COVID restrictions, including phone contact, transition to online group activities and utilising social media platforms to share information</li> </ul> <p><b>Service interaction and warm referral</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular communication, centre tours, OP signage, regular and planned meetings with key stakeholders including school leadership helped</li> <li>• Establishing early years networks or working groups, focused on shared practice helped with referrals</li> </ul>	<p><b>Engage SPG</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of the Our Place approach and what it means to be a partner takes time</li> <li>• Challenging to understand what a successful site looks like and how it's measured</li> <li>• Partners can have different timelines, deadlines and expectations of Our Place</li> </ul> <p><b>Service scoping</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large number of service providers to scope</li> <li>• Lack of services physically located in some communities</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Demographic Profile</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not available in the planning stages for some early sites</li> <li>• Data out of date or not accurate for some sites</li> </ul> <p><b>Start community engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID restrictions made it difficult to stay connected with community</li> <li>• Understanding engagement as a means to develop relationships, rather than an outcome in itself</li> <li>• Not having a single shared entrance made it more difficult to engage with families and communities</li> </ul> <p><b>Service interaction and warm referral</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variation across sites, with more referrals appearing to take place at more established sites</li> <li>• Multi-level sites makes referrals across services hard</li> <li>• Not all services onsite are familiar with warm referrals</li> </ul>

# Enablers and barriers: Steps 2 and 3

## Step

### Step 2

Understand the community and evidence the need

### Step 3

Develop a shared vision and plan to drive change in the community

## Enablers

### Service mapping

- Creating the map of services helps the agency consultation process
- Community meetings help to lay the foundations for one-on-one agency consultations
- Engaging senior representatives from organisations helps identify alignment of strategic priorities
- Engaging services in consultations creates goodwill for Our Place

### Community consultation

- Face-to-face community consultations through one-on-one conversations and events helped build relationships
- Engaging bilingual interviewers from the community helped to recognise skills in the community and provide them with engagement experience

### Developing a site vision

- Understanding the vision of partners

### Strategic planning

- Commitment from partners to continue strategic planning process despite COVID restrictions
- Engaging partners in the planning process through regular meetings and planning workshops

## Barriers

### Service mapping

- Large community meetings with multiple agencies were not always possible during COVID restrictions

### Community consultation

- Needed to find alternatives to facilitating community consultations during COVID restrictions, such as via phone and online surveys
- Challenges completing community consultations during COVID, as parents/ carers focused on their children's health and safety

### Developing a site vision

- Challenging to encapsulate views of partners into to a new single shared vision

### Strategic planning

- Reduced opportunities for face-to-face collaboration due to COVID restrictions
- Multiple rounds of strategic planning with different foci
- Delays in ELC establishment and recruitment challenges

# Enablers and barriers: Step 4

## Step

### Step 4

Support 'joined-up' service implementation

## Enablers

### Engaging partners in vision and plan

- Shared professional development sessions strengthened collaboration
- Working groups and networks supported plan implementation
- Online meetings enabled relationship building among service providers
- Understanding and commitment to the Our Place approach by site partner leadership

### Identifying partners

- Developing operational agreements with site partners supported the establishment of new activities
- Site partners with strong skills in online activity provision

### Co-location and logistics

- Local operational agreements between site partners helped to consolidate shared processes
- Partners' desire to understand how the Our Place approach works enabled relationship building and expanded onsite opportunities

### Engaging community

- Creative ways to connecting during COVID-19 restrictions included phone contact, online group activities or offsite activities, and social media
- Established relationships and communication processes with community created the foundations to stay connected
- Parent/carer spaces were established/re-established wherever possible

### Site Implementation Plan activities

- Developing the Site Implementation Plan created shared understanding and strengthened collaboration amongst site partners

### Reporting and data collection

- Developing process and impact evaluation plans helped begin to capture onsite engagement
- Partnership surveys provided a snapshot how the partnership groups were functioning, while identifying areas of improvement
- Capturing and demonstrating the work of sites through baseline process evaluation reports

## Barriers

### Engaging partners in vision and plan

- COVID-19 restrictions limited the capacity of services to develop working relationships and understand the Our Place approach
- Timetables and work agreements of Early Learning Centres and schools can limit opportunities to undertake shared PD sessions

### Identifying partners

- Uncertainty and change in COVID-19 restrictions created difficulties with planning and establishing new activities
- Varied experience and skills of site partners in online activity provision

### Co-location and logistics

- Differences in stakeholder regulations limited onsite access for community and Our Place staff
- Delays with Site Operating Agreement finalisation created challenges with clarifying partner responsibilities
- Different understanding among partners for use of space and activity provision

### Engaging community

- Anxiety about safety following lifts in COVID-19 restrictions led to low engagement on site
- Challenges for community to access and understand information about changes in activities due to literacy, digital literacy, language barriers, and without established relationships and pathways for communication
- Families less likely to engage in open ended community engagement activities (e.g. coffee and chat) compared with targeted activities with a specific purpose

### Site Implementation Plan activities

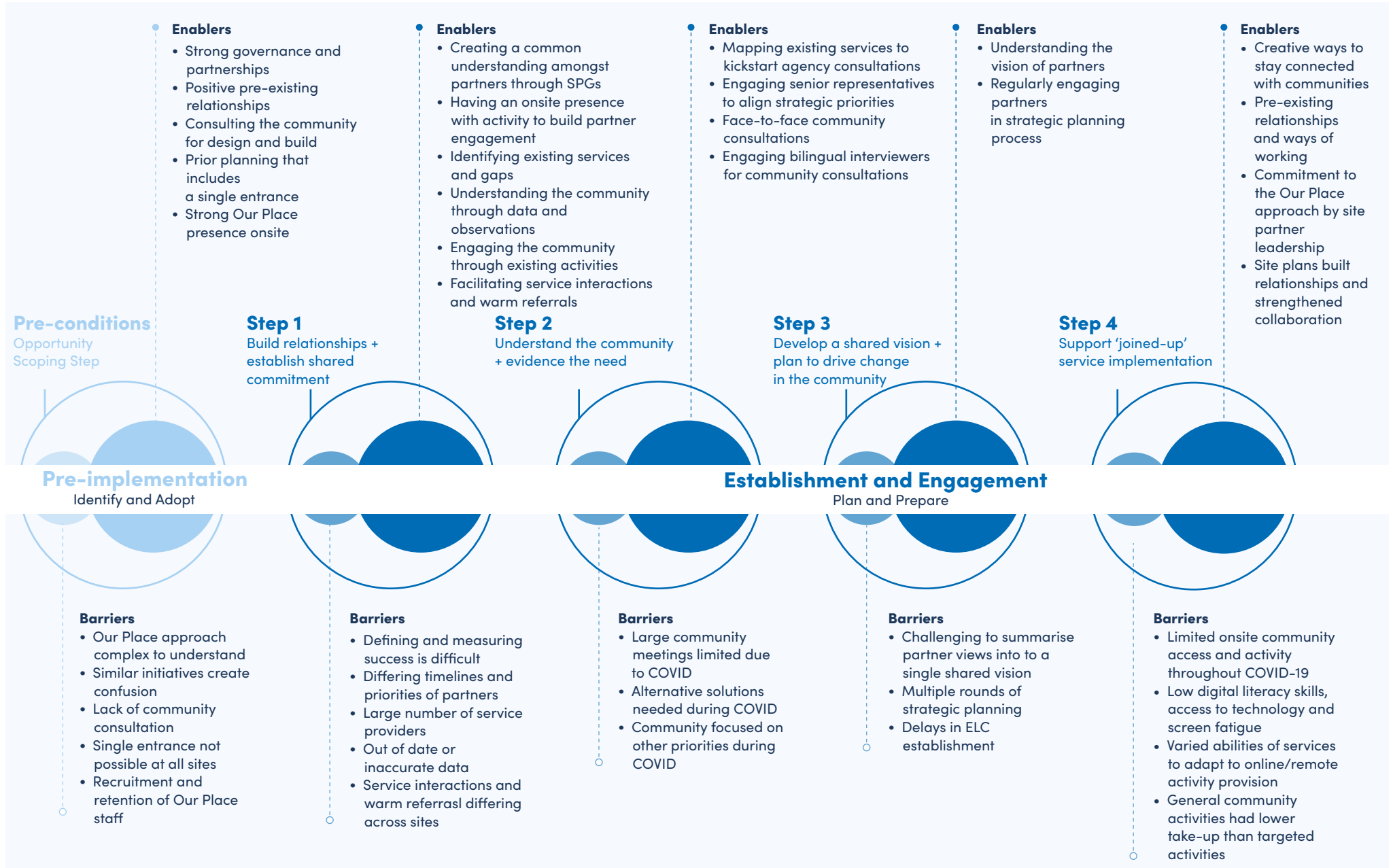
- Some activities not included in Site Implementation Plans and were not able to be properly resourced

### Reporting and data collection

- Challenging to begin collecting data without established activities happening onsite, or data collection processes in place



# Enablers and barriers summary



# Next steps



MOORoopNA PRIMARY  
No. 1432  
PREPARING FOR TOMORROW  
STAFF



# Next steps

Progress and learnings about the early implementation of the Our Place approach have been presented throughout this report, with a focus mainly on implementation up to the end of 2021. Progress has been made across all sites up until the end of 2021 against the implementation markers, despite a range of barriers, including Covid-19.

Progress has continued into 2022 with most sites into the Step 5 Sustained Implementation phase. Implementation in 2022 will be a focus of future reporting.

Future reports will capture lessons on how the approach is being implemented as sites move into the sustained implementation phase, providing an understanding about how Our Place is contributing towards improving outcomes for children, families and communities.





🏠 Part of 64 Tristania Street, Doveton, Victoria, 3177  
✉ info@ourplace.org.au | 🌐 ourplace.org.au

📍  
Carlton | Doveton | Frankston North | Mooroopna | Morwell  
| Northern Bay | Robinvale | Seymour | Westall

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education is the key to the door