

Position Description

This position description is available in large print and other accessible formats upon request.

Position Title	Senior Practitioner, Early Connections
Directorate / Service / Program	Children's Services / Early Childhood Approach
Reports to	Team Leader, Early Connections
Location	Geelong
Classification	Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award Level 6
Date Revised	June 2026

About Us

We are Meli, inspired by the word Meliorism. The belief that the world can be made better through human effort.

Meli is a Victorian not-for-profit organisation, offering a unique combination of services to support members of our community throughout their lifetime, from early childhood through to adolescence and adulthood.

Everyone faces challenges occasionally, and Meli is here to lend compassionate help, and to take a preventative and early response approach – no matter how big or small a problem.

Our Purpose: Supporting people, strengthening communities.

Our Vision: A fair, safe and inclusive community where everyone can thrive.

Our Values: Build Connection, Show Courage, Inspire Action, Celebrate Difference, Be Dynamic.

To learn more about Meli please visit our website www.meli.org.au

Position Overview

Meli is the NDIS Early Childhood Partner in the Barwon region, responsible for delivering the Early Childhood Approach to children aged 0–5 years with developmental delays or concerns, and children aged 0–8 years with disability. The Early Childhood Senior Practitioner provides advanced clinical expertise, practice leadership, and operational guidance to a team of Early Connections Practitioners delivering services across the Barwon Region. This role plays a critical oversight function in driving high-quality, consistent, and evidence-informed practice, supporting staff capability, and ensuring alignment with the NDIS Practice Standards and Early Childhood Approach.

The Senior Practitioner works directly with children and families to model best practice, delivering support using a family-centred, strengths-based approach that promotes inclusion in mainstream and disability services. In addition, the role is responsible for mentoring practitioners, supporting complex decision-making, and contributing to continuous improvement and service development. A strong focus is maintained on early intervention outcomes and compliance with the NDIS Act 2013, the NDIS Amendment Act (2024), and relevant legislation and policy, ensuring services are delivered ethically, effectively, and in line with best practice standards.

Key Accountabilities

Duties of this position may include, but are not limited to the following:

Practice Lead

- Provide professional practice oversight, advice, training, and guidance to Early Connections practitioners including operating within the clinic model, ensuring compliance with NDIS legislation, policy, and operational guidelines and maintaining high levels of accountability.
- Support and monitor practitioners to achieve expected service delivery outcomes in line with NDIS timeframes and Performance Management Framework (PMF) requirements, including Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Provide case consultation using contemporary developmental knowledge, evidence-based practice, and NDIS legislation to support sound decision-making and promote a consistent application of NDIS Access Criteria.
- Support the Team Leader with operational and administrative functions, including reporting, practitioner allocations, compliance activities, and workforce planning related to Early Connections.
- Allocate referrals equitably using internal data systems, ensuring timeliness and fairness in workload distribution.
- Contribute to data collection, analysis, and reporting as required.
- Embed and promote a positive workplace culture that reflects Meli's values.
- Lead and support practitioner capability development by building understanding and implementation of evidence-based strategies, assessment tools, and best-practice approaches across the team.
- Deliver training and professional development activities, including implementation of Meli's Common Practice Framework.
- Lead and oversee student placements, including supervision, coaching, mentoring, and development of placement timetables to optimise learning outcomes.
- Support the Team Leader to establish and maintain effective relationships with external stakeholders, including mainstream and community services.

Program Delivery:

- Deliver the NDIS Early Childhood Approach to children and families in accordance with NDIS requirements.

- Maintain a caseload equivalent to 50% of a standard practitioner workload.
- Provide Early Connections services to children and families with complex needs, including super-intensive supports.
- Deliver services such as groups, assessments, and observations, and support families to build community linkages for children with disability and/or developmental delay.
- Deliver services in a manner that builds parent capacity, knowledge, and confidence to access supports and advocate for their child.
- Accurately record and maintain data in accordance with NDIS and organisational requirements.
- Prepare culturally responsive reports and documentation that respect the values, beliefs, and backgrounds of children and families.

Organisational Accountabilities:

- Other reasonable duties as directed
- Apply Meli's quality and risk management frameworks
- Understand and comply with the standards of a child safe organisation in both practice and culture
- Active involvement in professional development to build knowledge and skills
- Make decisions following the values, and the relevant standards, practices, policies, procedures, regulations, industrial instruments and legislation

Qualifications, Skills, and Experience

- Bachelor's degree in Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Early Childhood or other Allied Health discipline or equivalent or equivalent and substantial experience
- Strong understanding of the needs of children aged 0-9 and their families with children with developmental delay, concern, or disability, including milestones and behaviours.
- Demonstrated strong communication, interpersonal and negotiation skills including the ability to engage with families, stakeholders, and community organisations.
- Demonstrated experience in managing complex cases requiring strong understanding of the NDIA legislation NDIA processes and the needs of children and their families.
- Understanding of the purpose and expectation of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and demonstrated commitment to contributing to a child safe organisation in both practice and culture

Other requirements of the role

All employees must undergo and maintain a range of satisfactory checks as a condition of employment. These include:

- Working with Children Check
- National Coordinated Criminal History Check (NCCHC)
- International Police Check (if required)
- Have the right to work in Australia
- Current Victorian Driver's Licence

Key Stakeholders

- Meli employees
- Children and Families
- NDIA
- NDIS Registered Providers
- Mainstream and Community Services/Agencies

Physical requirements & Environmental Conditions of the role

Meli is committed to creating inclusive spaces that are accessible for everyone by reducing and/or removing barriers through reasonable adjustments.

The following table shows the physical and psychological work environment characteristics that have been identified as part of this role. Where possible, Meli will make reasonable adjustments to support individuals to succeed in their roles.

Required Activities / Working Environment	Frequency
Computer based tasks, sedentary position, office based	Often
Repetitive manual tasks	Rarely
Working in buildings which may have stairs <i>(Reasonable adjustments can be made)</i>	Sometimes
Driving, in & out of vehicles <i>(If driving is required, must hold current Victorian Driver Licence)</i>	Often
Bending, lifting, pushing, pulling	Rarely
Working alone or at a co-located site	Sometimes
Confrontational/confronting situations <i>(Due to the nature of our work, there may be times when staff are exposed to content, behaviour, language and/or situations that can be confronting)</i>	Rarely
Working outside in differing weather conditions	N/A

Working on-call and/or after hours	N/A
Attending external locations including client homes	Often

Inclusion Statement

Meli is committed to being a place where everyone has a sense of belonging.

We embrace the unique perspectives and experience of our people and our community, and their voice is at the heart of our values and decision making.

We aim to be courageous as we learn, grow, and evolve as an accessible, inclusive and safe organisation for people of all identities.

We are working to create a team of people who reflect the diverse community we support. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTQIA+, culturally diverse people, those living with a disability, and those looking to return to the workforce following a break in their career, are encouraged to apply for our roles.

Child Safety Statement

Meli is committed to child safety in every aspect of the organisation. We take deliberate steps to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse and neglect. Our organisation fosters openness to create a culture in which everyone – staff, parents, carers, and children – feel confident, enabled, and supported to safely disclose child safety or wellbeing concerns.

We have zero tolerance of any abuse or maltreatment of children. We are committed to ensuring children and young people are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We understand our legal and moral obligations to treat any child safety concerns seriously. We report any allegations and wellbeing concerns to authorities. We are committed to the cultural safety of all children and young people. This includes providing a safe environment for children and young people with a disability, who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds or who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Meli's policies and practices promote the safety and wellbeing of children and establish an effective, consistent approach to prevent, respond to and encourage the reporting of allegations of child abuse and harm.

All children, their families and carers should feel welcome at Meli, including feeling able to express their identity and raise concerns about their own or others' safety.

Employee Declaration

I have read and understood this Position Description and in signing this document agree that I can fulfill all the requirements of the position described in this document. Additionally, I agree to notify management immediately of any change in my capacity to meet any of the requirements outlined in this Position Description.

Name:	Signature:	Date:
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Note: The intention of the position description is to provide an outline of scope and responsibilities, at a point in time. Please note, responsibilities may evolve in accordance with organisational needs.