

LEARN ABOUT **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

.....
**CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM
TEACHER RESOURCE**





   @fairfieldcity

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 www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au

Our free Civic Education Program is available to primary schools in the Fairfield local government area. The two-hour program is run at our Council Chambers by our Communications and Marketing team.

We understand some primary schools are unable to attend due to resource constraints, so we have made the resources available online for the teachers to run the program at the school.

Resources include:

- Learning about Local Government (16 page) activity book
- Certificate of Participation
- Council meeting role play
- Voting cards
- Voting student lanyards

The resources are available online by visiting www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/civiceducation

PART ONE:

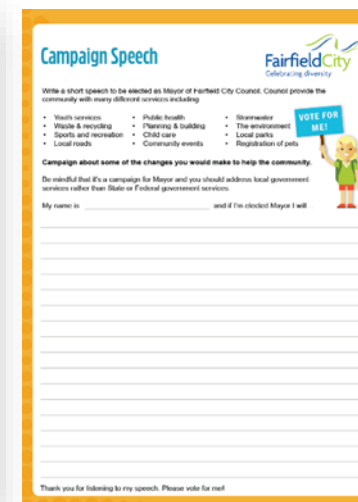
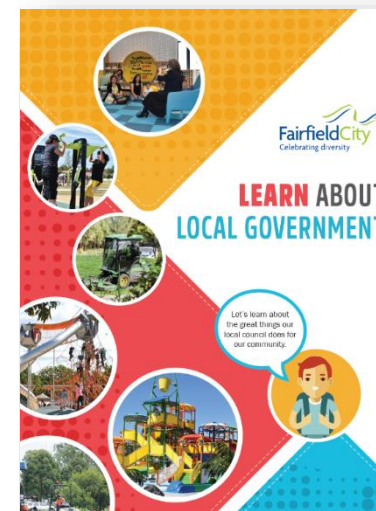
- Students work through the 'Learn About Local Government' activity booklet with the teacher

PART TWO:

Mayor of Fairfield City Frank Carbone is available for bookings to visit local primary schools to speak to students about local government.

- Mayor can visit the school or meet online to speak with students
- At visits the Mayor presents the students running for Mayor with certificates
- Mayor for the day is presented with a certificate of recognition and gift
- School is provided with two Aquatopia family day passes

For bookings or more information email execoffice@fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au or phone 9725 0203.



STEP ONE - Teacher to work through activities with students.

Learning About Local Government

Activity

Match the service with the correct level of government

- ... airports and air safety
- ... blue paths
- ... child care centres
- ... currency and taxation
- ... education
- ... fire and emergency services
- ... foreign policy
- ... immigration
- ... internet centres
- ... libraries
- ... local roads
- ... Medicare
- ... pet registration
- ... natural resources and the environment
- ... planning and building
- ... playgrounds
- ... police force
- ... post
- ... public housing
- ... public transport
- ... sportsfields
- ... telecommunications
- ... tourism
- ... trade and commerce
- ... water and power supply
- ... waste and recycling

Federal Government reports and air safety

STATE Government

NSW

LOCAL Government

Fairfield City Council

Blue paths are a great way to explore Fairfield City.

History of Fairfield City

Fairfield City Council acknowledges the original inhabitants of the Fairfield area, the Cabralgal of the Darug Nation.

For more than 30,000 years the land of this City has been home to Aboriginal people from the Cabralgal Clans of the Darug Peoples.

These 'lost people' of the land hunted and gathered in the local rivers and creeks. In July 2000, Council signed a Local Government Covenant that both acknowledges and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first people of Australia.

Did you know? The first local councils were formed in our area more than 120 years ago. Two of the first councils formed in Fairfield City were the Municipality of Smithfield and Fairfield and the Municipality of Cabramatta and Darley Vale.

Municipality of Smithfield and Fairfield
In February 1898 members of the newly incorporated Municipality of Smithfield and Fairfield were elected. Francis Blake became the first council Mayor.

Municipality of Cabramatta and Darley Vale
In December 1897 Municipality of Cabramatta, New South Wales became the first municipality in the world to elect a woman, Mrs. M. J. Blake as the first council Mayor.

These two councils came together to form the Fairfield Municipal Council.

Fairfield Municipal Council
In early 1916 the locality later renamed to Smith was Council and in 1917 the Municipality of Fairfield was merged with the Municipality of Cabramatta and Darley Vale to form the Fairfield Municipal Council.

Fairfield became a City in May 1978.

The current Fairfield City Council was formed in 2004.

Over the years the Fairfield local government area has grown in population. It became a city in May 2010. Council is in focus to over 250,000 people.

It is an honour that our citizens have been elected to the Fairfield City Council.

Three types of government

Watch the video to reinforce what the three types of government are responsible for.

Activity: Match the service with the correct type of government

History of Fairfield

Students to read through the information on the history of Fairfield

Links:

[Civics and citizenship - DOE](#)

[Three levels of government - PEO](#)

[Levels of government - PEO](#)

What is democracy?

Did you know that Australia is known throughout the world as a democracy?

The word "democracy" originates from the Greek words "demos" meaning people and "kratos" meaning rule. This means a democracy is "ruled by the people".

As part of a democracy we are able to vote for the Mayor and Councillors who best represent our views. When elected they make local government decisions on our behalf. The local government representatives we elect to represent us are called Councillors and they are elected to represent us.

Australia is a representative democracy and has the following defining values:

1. freedom of election and being elected;
2. freedom of assembly and political participation;
3. freedom of speech, expression and religious belief;
4. rule of law; and
5. other basic human rights.

What is a representative democracy?
In a representative democracy groups of people vote for individuals to represent them at government level. In this system, all eligible citizens can vote for a select number of people to carry out the business of government on their behalf. Unlike direct democracy, this means that not everyone has to attend meetings about laws and policies.

Use your voice to make a change

What is a change you'd like to see in your school or local community?

Can you do anything about it? If not, who is responsible for the problem/issue?

Who can vote?

The Local Government Act 1993 makes voting in Local Government elections compulsory.

People are entitled to vote in Council elections if they are a resident of a Council ward or they own property in Fairfield City.

To vote you must:

- be 18 years old or over;
- be an Australian citizen;
- have lived in the ward for at least three months;
- have your name on the electoral roll.

The main duties for the Council are:

- to make decisions about the running of the community and the Council;
- to listen and respond to the issues and ideas of local people and make sure Council does what they need.

Who should you vote for?

Voting is important in a democratic government as it allows citizens to have their say in the way their local area is governed.

Discuss with your family members what the deciding factors are when they vote in the local elections. What do they feel makes a good local government leader? Write their answers below.

What is important to you? What do you feel makes a good local government leader?

What is a democracy?

Activity: Students to complete the questions.

Who can vote?

Homework Activity: students to discuss with their family members on what they think makes a good leader and answer the questions.

Links:

[Australian Human Rights Commission – What is Democracy?](#)

[Democracy Rules - AEC](#)

[Making your vote count - AEC](#)

[History of Voting - AEC](#)

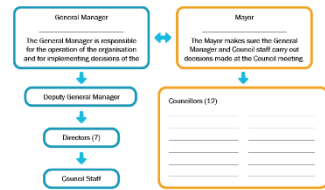
[Voting in Australia - AEC](#)

Fairfield City Council structure

A lot of people work for your local council. These people are responsible for ensuring very important everyday services are provided to the community.

Do you know the names of Fairfield City Council's leaders?

Try to fill in the names on the Council structure below. You can visit Council's website for more information www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au.



The Mayor
The Council elects a leader who is called the Mayor. The Mayor is a Councillor elected by the people. Local voters determine who the Mayor will be for a four-year term. The Mayor performs both an administrative and ceremonial role. The Mayor chairs all Council meetings and has a casting vote when the vote is tied. The Mayor makes sure the General Manager and Council Staff carry out the decisions Council makes. The Mayor also performs duties such as presenting awards, making speeches on Council's behalf and attending official and community functions.

The Councillors
Councillors stand for election because of an interest in the well-being and welfare of the local government area.

General Manager
The General Manager runs Council day-to-day, making sure that Council's decisions are actioned. The General Manager is responsible for employing all Council staff and ensuring the money that Council receives is accounted for. The General Manager employs Directors and Group Managers who in turn look after specific groups within Council. Each group is responsible for a range of Council services and activities.

Our Council

Fairfield City Council has 12 Councillors and a Mayor who are elected by residents and employees every four years. Fairfield City is divided into two wards (shown below) with each ward represented by six Councillors. The current Council was elected in September 2021.

The first stage of electing a new Council involves calling for nominations. Nobody who is allowed to vote in the Council election can stand for election. They must be nominated by at least two other people in the community.



Council Meetings

Ordinary Council meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each month starting at 7pm. A quorum of seven Councillors is required to allow a Council Meeting to proceed. The Mayor acts as an impartial Chairperson for all Council meetings.

During each meeting, Council considers items (reports) that have been referred from the Standing Committees - that is the Outcomes, Services, Independent Development Assessment Committee (IDAC) or Births Committees. Each of these items contains a recommendation or motion from the Standing Committee.

Councillors may direct questions relating to a particular item to the Mayor or the Chairperson of the Committee. The Council will move a motion for each item and each Councillor has an opportunity to speak on each motion. At the completion of debate each item is put to the Council and a vote is taken.

Find the meaning

- quorum _____
- motion _____
- impartial _____
- chairperson _____
- recommendation _____
- debate _____
- nominate _____

Fairfield City Council structure

Activity: students to research and complete the Council structure. Who are the Councillors, Mayor and City Manager?

Council meetings

Activity: Students to find the meaning of the words.

Links:

[Glossary of Terms - AEC](https://www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au/glossary)
www.fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au

Electing a new Council

There are four stages to electing a new council. Briefly describe what happens at each stage below.

- Nominations** _____
- Campaigning** _____
- Voting** _____
- Counting the votes** _____

Campaign poster activity

Get creative and make your own campaign poster!

Being a Councillor is a very responsible position. You need to represent the views of your community and make decisions on the City's future.

You have been nominated to run for a position on a local council representation. It is now the campaigning stage of the elections and you need to design your own campaign poster to help your chances of being elected.

Think of a slogan that best suits your vision, for example, "Working towards making your city a better place."

Campaign Speech

Now it's your turn to run for the position of a local councillor and elect the Mayor!

There are some great ideas for our city and list them below. Then write a short speech (one minute) convincing the local community to vote for you to be a Councillor or the next Mayor.



Electing a new council

Activity: students to complete a brief description of the four main stages in an election.

Campaign poster

Activity: students to create their own campaign poster.

Teacher preparation:

- Provide the students with an A3 sized paper to create their own campaign poster
- Encourage them to come up with their own campaign slogan
- Teacher to select one student from each class to run for Mayor

Links:

[Kids News: How candidates chase votes on the campaign trail](https://www.aec.gov.au/kids-news)
[Voting in Australia - AEC](https://www.aec.gov.au/voting)

Campaign Speech

Fairfield City
Celebrating diversity

Write a short speech to be elected as Mayor of Fairfield City Council. Council provide the community with many different services including:

- Youth services
- Waste & recycling
- Sports and recreation
- Local roads
- Public health
- Planning & building
- Child care
- Community events
- Stoneworker
- The environment
- Local parks
- Regulation of pets

VOTE FOR ME!

Campaign about some of the changes you would make to help the community.

Be mindful that it's a campaign for Mayor and you should address local government services rather than State or Federal government services.

My name is _____ and if I'm elected Mayor I will _____

Thank you for listening to my speech. Please vote for me!

Vote for Mayor

Fairfield City
Celebrating diversity

VOTE 1

VOTE 2

VOTE 3

VOTE 4



Campaign speech

Activity: Students to write a short speech (1 minute) to convince the local community to vote them. Students to present their speech in class and the teacher selects one student (from each class) to run for Mayor.

Vote for student Mayor

The students who were selected by their teacher will now present their campaign speech to all students in the grade. Each student will then vote for their preferred Student Mayor based on their campaign speech. The students running for Mayor can also vote.

Teacher preparation:

- Vote Lanyards to be placed on each student running for Student Mayor with their names
- Set up of tables with pencils and voting papers for students to complete
- Ballot boxes for students to place their votes

Council Meeting Roleplay

1 Fairfield City
Celebrating diversity

The Mayor "I would like to acknowledge the Cabrogal of the Darug Nation, traditional custodians of this land upon which we are meeting today. In particular I wish to acknowledge their elders and their descendants.

We acknowledge your rich culture and your unique role here in the Fairfield region. Your heritage and traditions are important to us all and part and parcel of the great history of Australia."

Councillor 1 We give thanks for being elected to this office of honour and trust. Give us grace, diligently and honourably, free from private interest and prejudice, to discharge the duties entrusted to us for the common good of mankind.

The Mayor Everyone please be seated. The item we will discuss is number 235, an application to change the zoning of land in Avocal Road from parkland into business land. Is there any discussion?

Councillor 2 Yes Mr/Ms Mayor. I move that this be approved. This will allow a McBurger to be built on the land.

The Mayor Do you have a seconder?

Councillor 3 I second the motion Mr/Ms Mayor. This McBurger will create jobs for local people and allow families to enjoy an affordable meal together.

Please Note: This script is only a guide to the roles of the Council Members. The content of the script is made up and is not a proposal currently being considered by Council.



Council meeting roleplay

Activity: Students to participate in a Council meeting roleplay.

Teacher preparation

- If possible, set up in one room to cater for all students from the grade who participated in the campaign.
- Set up is shown on the Council Chambers page which represents the layout of a Council meeting
- Select a number of students to play a role: Mayor (elected student), Councillor x 12, public member x 2, public member audience group of 5 students.

STEP TWO - Teacher to contact Council to arrange a visit in person or online.

Mayor to visit your school or attend an online meeting to speak to students

To submit a request for the Mayor to attend your school or attend an online meeting, please email to execoffice@fairfieldcity.nsw.gov.au or phone 9725 0203 Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm.

Mayor visits the school

The Mayor attends the school to speak to the students about their role in the local community. Students will be given the opportunity to ask the Mayor questions.

Teacher preparation

- Ask the students to think about questions they would like to ask the Mayor prior to his visit

Mayor presents certificates

The Mayor will assist with placing the Mayoral robe on the elected student and then will present them with a certificate and gift. The remaining students who were selected by the teachers to campaign for Mayor will also be presented with a certificate. The Mayor will also present the school with Aquatopia Family Day Passes.

Teacher preparation

- Prepare selected students who participated in the Mayor campaign
- Select a student to present the Mayor with the “My Great Ideas!” student work sheets