



Elsie Ey Children's Centre

2022 annual report to the community

Elsie Ey Children's Centre Number: 2622

Partnership: Greater Gawler

Signature

Children's centre director: Ms Michelle Cunningham

Governing council chair: Kristen Jones

Date of endorsement: 20 March 2023



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Context and highlights

Elsie Ey Children's Centre (EECC) continues to provide children with an authentic and unique social setting for their preschool learning experience. We are a not-for-profit organisation offering a DE play-based preschool program through the implementation of the "Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia" document. EECC offers an Inclusive Preschool Program (IPP) that enables children with complex health and learning needs to access the general preschool program with modified learning plans and intensive support. Fostering an understanding and appreciation of social diversity is a key component in our learning community. Being a Children's Centre we have an added advantage of our Community Development Coordinator, Occupational Therapist and Speech pathologist working in partnerships with children and families. We also frequently liaise with the Student Support Services team to broaden the multiple perspectives included in planning for children. This includes annual involvement in the special options for schooling process to transition our learners into their best matched curriculum stream for reception. Children are able to access 15 hours of preschool per week (12 for early entry). Families are offered a choice of two attendance patterns; full days Monday/Tuesday or Thursday/Friday, and alternate Wednesday mornings. Set attendance patterns ensure children experience consistency with both peers and educators, enabling them to develop meaningful and rewarding relationships while facilitating the continuity of their learning. Our program heavily values exploring our local community, both with the adjoining primary school and the surrounding nature trails and reserves. These spaces are integral parts of our intentional planning and are environments in which children are supported to extend their capabilities, take risks, explore social engagement and transfer learning to settings beyond the preschool grounds. In partnership with Hewett Primary School, we have this year secured an onsite hub from which to locate our community team and run universal and targeted programs. We envisage this addition being integral for raising the profile of our Centre throughout the community in 2023 and beyond.

Governing council report

Firstly, I would like to thank the outgoing members of the 2022 Governing Council and the staff for their contributions to the centre.

2022 carried on with covid some restrictions within the preschool but to a lesser extent than the previous year. These restrictions were met practically, professionally and as seamlessly as possible within the preschool. Families were very understanding and very happy to be welcomed into the preschool yard. Restrictions were slowly lifted, and families were welcomed inside the building as the year rolled on.

The governing council was involved in the consultation and approval of site improvements. Some of those being the concertina doors to the quiet area, this allows for a line of sight between educators and children using the back relaxation space, acoustic panels which were approved in 2021 but delayed and the wooden doors to be refurbished. A suggestion was raised last year to upgrade the kitchen area to match the previous cabinetry upgrades made in 2021 and 2022.

In 2021 governing council made some changes to the uniform which were implemented for 2022. The children loved the choice of more colours for their kindy tops and the favourites would be the ones to move forward with for 2023 and beyond.

Fundraising for 2022 included Picture Plates and Kindy photos. Unfortunately, with the cost of living the governing council decided to give each family a commemorative tea towel which would normally be used as part of fundraising therefore taking a loss in fundraising for 2022.

Members reviewed key policies and documents as required and made the appropriate changes as necessary. Last year saw the opening of the community house which was used for the running of play groups and other fun things.

Finally, I would like to thank Michelle and all the staff at Elsie Ey for all their hard work over the year with our children. They have all gained so much this past year while in your care and I know they will thrive at school thanks to all the wonderful support from Elsie Ey children's centre.

Thank you for all attending tonight. As a council member continuing for 2023, I look forward to another productive year of contributing to what the centre has to offer our children.

Preschool quality improvement planning

Our first goal for 2022 focused on children increasing their ability to listen and respond to sounds and patterns in speech, stories and rhymes. A range of data showed an increase in children's communicative abilities. This data was collected both formally (using the PASM document) and informally (educator observations of children demonstrating their skills, abilities and knowledge in these areas and transferring them into their play). Children's end of year statements of learning and some parent feedback also demonstrated growth in communicative abilities. Educators successfully planned, implemented, reflected on and modified emergent literacy small group experiences and incorporated music, singing and story tables in the large play space to match the texts used in the groups. Dialogic reading was used as a strategy across the site when engaging children in individual reading experiences. Across the year, 72% of children showed a significant increase in rhyming proficiency and 65% in identifying syllables. An average of 55% of children involved in targeted emergent literacy small group experiences showed progression in their targeted areas. All educators were committed to the goals, challenge of practice and actions in the PQIP, and had a sound knowledge of the content. The data collection process was consistent, multi-faceted and uniform across the site. The information was consistently used to plan and inform our general program as well as our emergent literacy groups which fostered the intentionality of educators as they facilitated learning. Regular reflection on progress allowed for continuous planning cycles, including discussions with families where applicable. Emergent literacy groups were consistently ran, invitational, critically reflected on and modified based on child interest, skill development and willingness to engage. Families received formal information on the development of phonological awareness through our bi-termly newsletters and Department for Education early literacy pamphlet.

Our second goal focused on regulation and children being ready to learn. Clear and documented progress was evident for targeted individual children across the site through a reduction in IESP funding, closure of Student Support Service involvement, parent feedback, development of peer relationships and increased ability to positively participate in the preschool program. Most children showed an increased ability to identify learning zones (via colour) and more effectively express their emotions. This included being able to identify reactive strategies to re-regulate along with accessing proactive strategies (eg social stories, putty, quiet space) to maintain regulation through identified trigger points. Some children showed growth in emotional intelligence including correctly identifying learning zones/emotions in other children and communicating this to peers and educators. Children expressed pride in their learning (sharing with educators/peers/family) and were able to answer questions such as "what are you learning here" in context (related to a concept, not naming an activity). Educators using common language, being aware of consistent strategies and knowing resources available throughout the centre to support children was critical, as was the centre budget with an allocation for purchasing new resources. Staffing ratios and clear, intentionally scaffolded support plans with regular critical reflection and review were integral to success for individual children. Consistent wave 1 interventions at a whole site level including daily yoga sessions, permanent quiet space, the use of music/rhyme/rhythm and movement in daily routines, and the common language mentioned above were also key.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2019	103	107	101	102
2020	86	N/A	88	90
2021	79	83	85	84
2022	78	84	82	82

NOTE: The data is based on person counts in the two week reference period each term. Excludes pre-entry.

Data Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Reporting and Analytics directorate.

Term 2 2020 data may not be available for all preschools.

Attendance

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2019 centre	94.1%	88.7%	89.0%	87.7%
2020 centre	92.3%		91.6%	89.9%
2021 centre	90.2%	76.2%	89.2%	88.7%
2022 centre	86.7%	69.8%	84.2%	84%
2019 state	90.8%	88.2%	86.8%	87.6%
2020 state	89.8%	83.6%	86.2%	87.2%
2021 state	88.6%	86.5%	88.6%	85.6%
2022 state	84.9%	79.8%	80.3%	77.5%

Based on attendances recorded in the two week reference period each term. Data for eligible enrolments as described in the department's Enrolment policy.

Attendance rates may differ to previous reporting with the transfer from calculations based on deemed attendance to actual attendance using booked hours divided by attended hours.

*Note: Term 2 2020 data may not be available for all preschools.

Attendance comment

Central location within the Hewett suburb, access to childcare and OSHC facilities, being on-site with the Hewett Primary School and public transport services all assist with regular attendance at out site. During 2022 families were diligent in providing advanced notice for any upcoming absences, and regularly called the Centre on the day to notify of illness or unexpected absence. Educators were in regular contact with families who chose to keep their child home during any part of the year with a particular focus on our vulnerable learners. Several feeder schools are increasing the number of transition sessions they offer to children entering reception which does effect term 4 attendance. Within the Centre, the development of respectful relationships and open communication with families allows for any difficulties with attendance to be discussed and support strategies to be devised. In a small number of situations, regular attendance becomes difficult despite these strategies and families are supported by our community staff and external services.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2019	2020	2021	2022
1008 - Gawler East Primary School	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	3.1%
1876 - Hewett Primary School	57.3%	73.2%	60.5%	78.1%
387 - Roseworthy Primary School	14.6%	7.0%	13.2%	9.4%

NOTE: The data is collected in Term 3. It does not reflect actual schools enrolled in by exiting preschool children. Only schools that are a destination for 3% or more of students are shown.

Data Source: Site Performance Reporting System (SPER), Term 3 2022 collection.

Destination schools comment

N/A

Family opinion survey summary

In 2022 we used the department for education preschool family opinion survey to get a deeper reflection on families' preschool experience. The response rate was down for this year, sitting at 24%.

To the items relating to:

- being able to be involved in the preschool program
 - being clearly informed about the learning program and,
 - that a broad variety of communications are used to inform families about the preschool
- 1 respondent answered 'disagree'. These measures were considered in our end of year critical reflection and informed processes and planning moving in to 2023.

100% of respondents answered 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' to the following measures:

- preschool is well organised and managed
- preschool is always looking for ways to improve
- Overall, happy with the preschool planning
- Satisfied with them learning program
- Excellent learning environment
- Teachers are enthusiastic
- Feel welcome in the preschool
- Feel well informed about preschool activities
- Children are treated fairly

Some parent comments included:

- Maybe consider using see-saw, story park or class dojo where the messaging service is there to be able to communicate with parents a quick message if they are working.
- I truly could not fault the pre school and the educators this year especially being such a difficult year with covid they have adapted so well to all the rules and regulations and still managed to make our children mental and physical health a top priority while transitioning them to school. I will forever be grateful for this experience and for all the staff at Elsie Ey Kindergarten!
- Truly appreciate the relationship and communication both between my child and her educators and myself and her educators feel very involved in what's going on during this entry to school transition and really appreciate it.
- Absolutely love the way they learn through play and are able to help go at the child's pace no unrealistic expectations so grateful for the educators my daughter has!
- Individualised to each and every pupil's strengths, weaknesses and interests!

Relevant history screening

All EECC staff have an up-to-date Working with Children Check with a five year expiry date. Documentation for permanent/ contracted staff is kept in hard copy in their personal file. For staff that were employed as relief workers "Authority to Work" and "Authority to Teach" letters are checked for currency before employment on site along with their relevant history screening documentation. All work experience students and private support providers who interact with children are required to present their clearances prior to their first visit and these are filed onsite. Staff are reminded 6 months prior to their clearances expiring so that they have sufficient time to re-apply for up-dated certificates.

Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$1,029,744
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$26,628
Other	\$53,662

2022 Preschool annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2022 funding was used to improve the relevant department's standard of educational achievement outcomes (where applicable):*	Outcomes achieved or progress towards these outcomes:
Improved outcomes for numeracy and literacy	With a continued Partnership focus on the development of children's Phonological Awareness, funding contributed to staffing emergent literacy targeted small group programs for children identified with limited understanding in rhyme and segmentation. In liaison with the DfE speech pathologist, speech support ECW's were also funded to attend capacity building sessions in speech and language development and administering screeners.	Educators successfully planned, implemented, reflected on and modified emergent literacy small group experiences and incorporated music, singing and story tables in the large play space to match the texts used in the groups. Dialogic reading was used as a strategy across the site when engaging children in individual reading experiences. Across the year, 72% of children showed a significant increase in rhyming proficiency and 65% in identifying syllables. An average of 55% of children involved in targeted emergent literacy small group experiences showed progression in their targeted areas.
Inclusive Education Support Program	Funding was used to provide intensive levels of support to children with identified needs . To maximise the impact of funding both 1:1 and small group support was implemented where possible. The primary area of support was for externalised behaviours due to safety risks to children and educators. The remaining use of funding can be broadly categorised into: Developing interoceptive awareness, 1:1 transitional support into school, implementation of speech and language programs for children identified with severe delays and 1:1 programs for children unable to access the general preschool program and/or daily routines and transition points.	Strategies recommended by DfE student support service professionals, and implemented by centre support educators, saw significant increases in children being able to positively engage in the preschool program. A range of data was analysed to draw this conclusion including:Reduced incident and injury reports, reduction in allocated support hours to most children as the year progressed, educator observations of increased social engagement and successful use of regulation strategies, and closure of speech support cases by the end of children's preschool year. Information sharing with destination schools also enabled targeted transition programs.
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	N/A in 2022	N/A in 2022

* The department's standard of educational achievement is defined as children and young people progressing and achieving at or above their appropriate year level.

2022 Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2022 funding was used, and what programs were run, to improve the relevant department's standard of educational achievement outcomes (where applicable):*	Outcomes achieved or progress towards these outcomes:
Improved ECD and parenting outcomes	In 2022, educators provided general information to families on brain development and ways to identify and facilitate regulation with the aim of supporting children's ability to learn. Zones of regulation scales were created and sent home for individual children on support plans, or where parents had requested help from educators for behaviours at home. Families also received information on phonological awareness and ways to promote their child's emergent literacy skills through everyday experiences. Families were welcomed into the centre to extend children's interests and in this way contribute to the preschool program.	Parents using the zones of regulation information reported significant increases in children's regulation at home. Children being able to more easily follow instructions, display resiliency when 'things don't go right' and use pro-active strategies to manage big emotions were areas of growth listed by parents. An increase in children singing and rhyming at home, and parents feeling more confident in supporting children's rhyming and segmenting development also rated in our end of year parent survey on our quality improvement areas.
Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting Grants	Our community development coordinator, Denise Scappaticci, both facilitated groups, and coordinated those ran by NGO's and DHS across the year. Community services grant funding was used to cover costs associated with: Resources for groups, food provided at allocated groups, additional staffing/ creche workers, mobile phone, establishment of the acquired office spaces in the co-located primary school and emergency food and taxi vouchers. Funding allocated for allied health staff will be rolled-over to 2023 as these positions were largely unfilled in 2022.	The visibility of Elsie Ey as a Children's Centre is slowly increasing across the local community as a direct result of the consistent provision of services now able to be offered. A diverse range of parents and carers have been supported to be actively involved in their child's early education due to the variety of programs, and different locations, used to run them. A continued analysis of local needs in this community will be needed to continue to provide for children and families.
Briefly describe or list the community programs offered in 2022 which had a focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playgroup • Parent support • Transition to and from preschool • Any new programs or services not previously offered. 	Programs available to families in 2022 included: Baby massage, universal playgroups, sing and grow, my time, active explorers at the nearby public playground, fun feelings and a series of parenting workshops. Attendance across these programs varied considerably and both suggested and possible reasons were collaboratively reflected on and used in planning 2023 programs and services	

* The department's standard of educational achievement is defined as children and young people progressing and achieving at or above their appropriate year level.