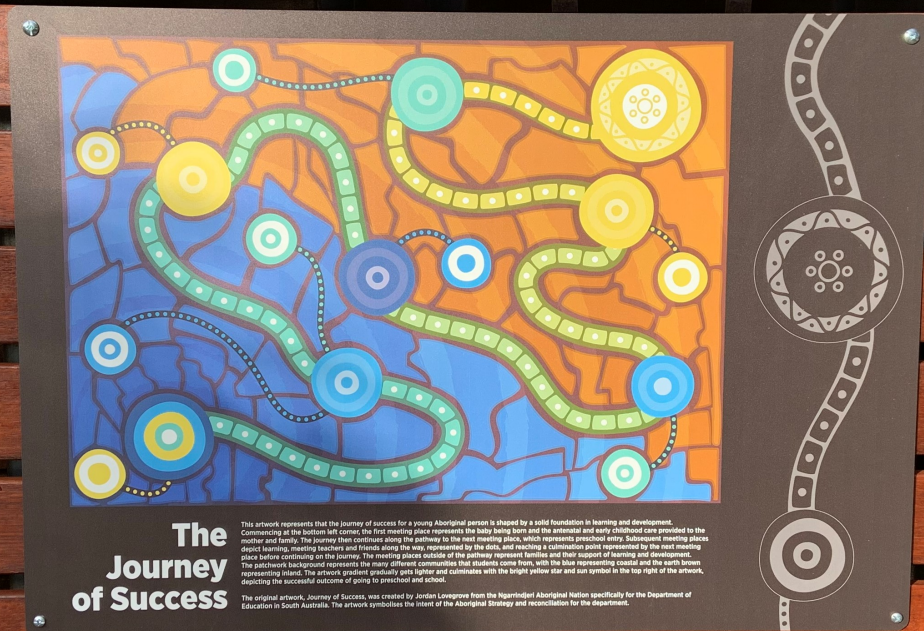


Gawler East Preschool



Gawler East Preschool Centre

2022 annual report to the community

Gawler East Preschool Centre Number: 2691

Partnership: Greater Gawler

Signature

Preschool director:

Ms Sandra Ball

Governing council chair:

Fiona McCann

Date of endorsement:

17 March 2023



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Context and highlights

Gawler East Preschool is a Department for Education standalone preschool situated in close proximity to Gawler East Primary School, the YMCA Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) service located at the school and Gawler Community Child Care Centre. Around 78% of our families have children who attend (or will attend) the local school. Many families utilize the Child Care Centre for care on "non-preschool" days, and an increasing number of families are using the OSHC service, as this service is now available for preschool children (even if they are not planning to attend the Gawler East Primary school).

Children attended the preschool for 2 consecutive days and a half day per fortnight (to total 15 hours), which ensured consistency of educators and curriculum. In total 8 educators worked at the preschool, in 2022, plus consistent relief staff, with the Director being the only who worked full time. 2 volunteer handymen regularly attended on Fridays, providing invaluable skills and time to maintain our centre.

In 2022 we catered for a diverse range of families and learners including 15% who identified as Aboriginal and 30% who met criteria for support for Speech and Language or other identified needs, including Hearing and Vision Impaired, and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

HIGHLIGHTS/IMPACTS: 2022 saw the Coronavirus Pandemic continue, and even escalate at our preschool. This had significant impact on attendance of children and educators. Long periods of absence were difficult to recover or replace with relief staff, impacting learning programs and initiatives. The Department for Education called for a PAUSE on all additional workload to support educators' health and wellbeing, and this impacted things such as work toward our PQIP (Preschool Quality Improvement Plan) and any new initiatives.

The previously set up Facebook page continued to support us to connect with and inform families, and educators used more streamlined and collaborative practices to monitor and track children's progress.

Incursions included Australian Bush animal visit and The Drumming Monkeys, along with a visit from the CFS, Dental Therapists and Police. A visit by a parent to share a dreamtime story and mindfulness activity was a highlight for many.

School visits and use of facilities rated highly as a highlight for the year, amongst families and children, and included being involved in the School Sports Day.

Our Outdoor drop off area was completed, providing a lovely space to transition from home to kindy (and back again) and a project to clean up the "front" of the preschool was begun with the help of a volunteer grandparent. ICT continued to be upgraded throughout 2022 with new iPads, Cable link completed and training in TEAMS as a format to provide a cloud-based access to documents from any device.

Governing council report

The Governing council was able to meet in person throughout the year as Covid-19 restrictions began to ease. All training and reading required by council members was completed. During council meetings we discussed and voted on improvements that could be made to the preschool, these included but were not limited to:

- Purchasing a new mud kitchen,
- Obtaining new Aboriginal and Australian flags,
- Working bees,
- A parent opinion survey,
- A change to children's profile books,
- Progress of PQIP, and
- The Emergent Literacy Program for 2023.

During our meetings we had two main topics of conversation. The first was Covid and the effects it continued to have on the children and staff. Restrictions began to ease which meant masks were no longer required, and families could once again enter the buildings. However, the impact of Covid and other illnesses remained extremely high. Staff had a high number of days absent due to illness and were short staffed at times as they were unable to find relief staff. An impact of children's emotional regulation was also noticed for those that had time off, and staff found it also had a significant impact on leadership work as they were required to work on the floor when short staffed.

The second main topic this year was that of the Mid-year intake for 2023. It was estimated that around half of children that would begin in 2023, would be enrolling mid-year. With this new change brought concerns of funding staff and how they would cope with the new ratio of staff to children.

During our meetings the Governing Council worked together to ensure that all decisions that were made reflected the Preschools values, and that the children and their families felt safe, cared for and supported.

Fiona McCann

Preschool quality improvement planning

Progression of our Preschool Quality Improvement Plan (PQIP) was significantly impacted by COVID in 2022, both due to poor attendance of educators and children, and as the Department put a PAUSE ON IMPROVEMENT WORK in response to pressures on sites to respond to the pandemic. Our PQIP goals for 2022 were:
GOAL 1: ALL CHILDREN WILL INCREASE THEIR CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY USE AND UNDERSTAND PROGRESSIVELY MORE COMPLEX ORAL LANGUAGE TO CONNECT AND COMMUNICATE, APPROPRIATE TO PURPOSE (INCLUDING NUMERACY LANGUAGE).

GOAL 2: TO STRENGTHEN AND DEVELOP CHILDREN'S CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY ENGAGE WITH TEXTS FOR MEANING, TO DEVELOP THEIR IDENTITIES, DISPOSITIONS AND SKILLS AS READERS

The addition of the “Numeracy language” to the first goal seemed to weaken our the goal as educators grappled with knowledge, skills, understanding of Numeracy, before being able to convert this into an Oral Language goal. To aid this we narrowed the focus to number only and worked on developing understanding of Number Sense and Trust the Count. Training focused on this as a skill set for educators, and we hope to continue this work.

Progress on both goals was evidenced in our screening tools (Yakka Tracker, PASM, Traffic Light scans) as well as in analysing observations of the children. Using this information, we were able to plan interventions to support children needing help, which made better use of our ECWs at group times.

Working with the Speech Pathologist – Emma – also supported the team to learn more about wave 2 (small group) support interventions with these children.

A small intervention group which focused on listening to stories with our youngest cohort, was seen to successfully support these children to extend their ability to listen and interact with a story, and to begin to gain book knowledge. Stories and books were used more often and more purposefully in all areas of the preschool and children asked for stories often, retelling and creating their own stories, with books and in play scripts. Teacher opinion reflected on how practice had changed to pay more attention to reading to children – (the books they chose, the number of times they read it, and the intentional focus on print awareness and book knowledge).

Significant progress was made in developing Individual Learning Plans, with every child having at least one goal recorded and shared with the family. This needs further refining before it can be embedded into our practice.

Children's ability to regulate became a significant factor in progress in 2022. Educators' time became increasingly used to support children with this, and while some of this could be a response to the absence rates of educators this year, the concern this raised has made skilling up our team a priority for 2023.

There were 108 days where an Educator (or more than one) were absent (not including days out for meetings or training) out of a possible 190 days. This illness, inconsistent relief staff, and COVID stress could have significantly contributed to children's ability to regulate emotions.

Review of Educators both as part of our Self-Review processes at the end of the year and as part of the Department's Perspective Survey, suggests further time to embed and build on our skills to support children with regulating their emotions, and Emergent Literacy would benefit both progression of children in all areas and development of oral language skills.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2019	59	62	63	65
2020	60	N/A	61	64
2021	67	71	72	75
2022	66	66	69	71

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	92.7%	87.1%	89.7%	90.8%
2020 centre	96.1%		87.0%	88.7%
2021 centre	88.7%	85.4%	92.8%	71.0%
2022 centre	78.2%	82.8%	79.1%	78%
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

2022 was possibly our worst attendance year for many years. During the COVID pandemic in 2020 and 2021 our attendance figures remained consistent and mostly above state average, in the high 80%. In 2022 attendance percentages dropped to Term 1: 84.9% Term 2: 79.8% Term 3: 80.3% and Term 4: 78%. COVID had a significant impact, not only in the number of children contracting COVID/and or being close contacts and needing to remain away from preschool, but also the number of children becoming ill with other illnesses, after contracting COVID.

We also noticed the number of children attending on our Friday half day sessions dropped considerably, prompting us to review this in an effort to boost attendance for the full 15 hours on offer.

Term 4 percentage and attendance rates may have been impacted significantly by both the pandemic and children attending transition visits to schools (which cannot be recorded on the new EMS system).

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2019	2020	2021	2022
1008 - Gawler East Primary School	71.4%	72.9%	78.6%	76.3%
1876 - Hewett Primary School	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	6.8%
8234 - Immanuel Lutheran School	4.8%	8.5%	7.1%	5.1%
8337 - Trinity College North School	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	5.1%

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

Our main feeder school is our local school - Gawler East Primary - now at nearly 77%. This figure seems to be holding steady at this time, with some increasing figures in 2022 to Hewett (6.8%) and Trinity College (5.1%). Immanuel (5.1%) is another consistent receiver of our children, but the latter 2 schools hold a preference for a religious preschool, so the majority of local families enrolling at these schools attend Zion or the Montessori Child Care Centre.

It will be interesting the change to these percentages in our next Annual report when the new Mid-year intake initiative is introduced and the Priority of Access to the preschool is held firm to ensure vacancies are available to local families in the July intake.

Family opinion survey summary

Parent Opinion was sought throughout the year on various aspects of our PQIP and teaching and learning. Towards the end of 2022 the Department Parent Opinion Survey was issued. 33 of our 73 families chose to participate. The survey has statements, rated by the parent from Disagree to Strongly Agree (Strongly Agree being the most positive). The areas are:

Quality of Teaching and Learning: 9 Statements.

Support of Learning: 12 Statements.

Relationships and communication: 13 statements.

Leadership and Decision-making: 10 Statements.

Generally, responses were very positive, with a high number of "Strongly Agree" responses to most statements. The statements we focused on in our Self Review at the end of the year (in preparing our 2023 Preschool Quality Improvement Plan) were:

"My child's teacher clearly informs me about the learning program". (21 Strongly Agree – 12 Agree/Neutral)

"I receive helpful information about my child's progress and achievement" (25 Strongly Agree – 7 Agree/Neutral – 1 Disagree)

"The preschool provides opportunities to discuss my child's progress" (22 Strongly Agree – 11 Agree/Neutral)

Our 2023 PQIP aims to develop practices that support families to engage more with their child's learning and learning programs at the preschool.

Relevant history screening

All staff and Volunteers working at the preschool have undertaken relevant screening. This is managed by the Director and Administrative systems in place ensure this is managed, tracked, monitored and reviewed. The new Working with Children Checks has required effort to ensure the new process and policy is addressed when employing new people, relief staff and/or when checks become due. During COVID additional attention was required as cleaners entered from an outside cleaning service employed by the Department. The preschool was also required to keep record of COVID Immunisation status of employees and volunteers, and to ensure all staff and volunteers underwent RAN update training by the end of 2021.

Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$557,474
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$26,207
Other	\$4,749

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	SEA is not applicable however funding for Improved outcomes for literacy and numeracy was used to support Professional learning around oral language (literacy) and to provide additional resourcing to support educators to implement new practices (see above PQIP info). Educators also participated in some Numeracy training to build skills, again using this funding to support access to this training.	See detail in Preschool Improvement Section
Inclusive Education Support Program	IESP funding was used to provide support for several children with significant speech and language issues, Global Developmental Delay and undiagnosed and diagnosed ASD/Sensory needs and dysregulated behaviour due to Trauma. Extensive adjustment funding was not required this year with averages less than the required 8 hours per term. Several children however did need significant support hours of 4 hours – 9 hours per week, which depleted the budget before the end of the year. We did not apply for additional funding but may need to do so in 2022.	All children progressed against their individual learning goals
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	N/A	N/A

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