



Ballara Park Kindergarten

2021 annual report to the community

Ballara Park Kindergarten Number: 3608

Partnership: Holdfast

Signature

Preschool director:

Mrs Cathy Hopkins

Governing council chair:

Leonie Forde

Date of endorsement:

7 March 2022



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Context and highlights

Ballara Park Kindergarten was purpose built over fifty years ago, set in the middle of open parklands surrounded by trees and native bird life. We are fortunate to have a long standing staff team committed to providing an environment whereby children feel safe, secure and happy to engage in learning. 2021 for us, again brought it's challenges with COVID 19 still present and impacting the way we communicated with families but I really can't thank the staff team enough as they worked tirelessly, to build connections and continue to keep the children's learning at the forefront.

We started 2021 determined to finish the outdoor re-development, we finished stage one early in the year. We remained focused on creating an environment that enhances children's physical health and wellbeing and provides a connection to nature and the land. The children's learning was enriched as they discussed and observed the development unfold. Our outdoor learning environment was finished in October last year, and I think you will agree it is a beautiful place to play and learn.

Across 2021 we prioritised incorporating knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal Culture into the kindergarten's environment, we worked as a team, reading, discussing and implementing our acknowledgement of country into everyday practice. A highlight for us as a team was attending an Aboriginal art session at the Art gallery, this led us to paint and talk about our own individual journey and you can see our collective Art piece proudly displayed on the Kindy veranda. This connection to Kurna land is reflected within the planting and landscapes of our outdoor learning space and will also be reflected be in the surrounding parklands.

The redevelopment of the surrounding park lands, began in 2021 and provided a project for us to work collaboratively with the Marion Council. We took this opportunity to hear the children's voice in what they were thinking about the surrounding park. The children engaged in discussions about what they like to play, they imagined what could be in that space. Children used their map reading abilities to engage in discussions with representatives from Marion council as they viewed and commented on their architectural drawings. The children were inclusive in their plans, they wanted spaces for everyone. Swings for younger brothers and sisters, seats for older members of the family and playground equipment to meet everyone's abilities in the Kindy. It was here we saw the children flourish as they set to making 3D models of their playground designs.

I look forward to seeing what 2022 will bring.
Cathy Hopkins

Governing council report

The Ballara Park Kindergarten Governing Council would like to extend our gratitude to all staff, volunteers, parents, carers, and the children for their support throughout 2021. Although it has been yet another challenging year to involve the community, where possible the staff made sure families and the wider communities were still involved. Staff still managed to hold their story night, where parents went between story book stations reading books to their children. This was a big success, the children and parents loved it.

With the ever-changing COVID restrictions families went from being able to enter the Kindy grounds to not being able to enter, to being able to enter again. Staff worked tirelessly to make these adjustments as smooth and easy as possible for families and children, keeping them informed and connected during these changes.

Regular newsletters and Kindy programs were sent to families to help parents engage and support their children's learning and development.

Even with COVID the Kindy managed to complete their new outdoor play area along with a new secure fence.

Having such a lovely space for children and staff to use outside is especially helpful during COVID restrictions as the more time outside in the open the better. Staff and children also worked together with the council to help develop a design for the surrounding parklands.

The Governing Council have also written a letter to council advising them of the issues and lack of current parking for the space and asked that they include more parking as part of the redevelopment, unfortunately the children did not include parking as part of their designs. I imagine the governing council this year will keep pushing for these parks.

Fundraising efforts in 2021 included a Bunnings BBQ, a few wine sales which were popular and will be done again this year, and a make your own plate option which was not as successful. All these fundraisers helped contribute to the plants within our edible garden and mature trees.

Although due to COVID our end of year celebration was cancelled, Marg presented each child with their learning folders on their last day of Kindy. They were awarded these as they walked through a wall of streamers making the end celebration significant and a great opportunity for parents to take photos.

We wish all the children and their families the very best with their transition in 2022, and we look forward to seeing them thrive within the community for many years to come.

Jenny Duggan, on behalf of the Governing Council

Preschool quality improvement planning

In 2021 we focused on two improvement goals, firstly to increase children's phonological awareness to support oral language development. Early in the year we conducted an audit of our environment to reflect on how we support oral language development and engaged with a music specialist, Gaby Freer. From here as a staff team, we focused on the bombardment of rhyme and syllables into our daily program, we intentionally worked with music to support rhyme and rhythm. Across the Partnership, with local kindergartens, we worked with Speech pathologists to deeply explore the development of phonological awareness by attending professional development afternoons three times across the year. This provided the opportunity to connect with other sites, share ideas and formalise data collection. We collaborated with our local school, giving our teachers the opportunity to observe and reflect on practice in reception classes. We shared our practice with families through modelling our rhyming songs at our story night and sending information home for children and families to explore together. Documentation evidenced children's growth but also children could be heard spontaneously singing, revisiting favourite rhyming songs and making up their own rhymes demonstrating their enjoyment in learning.

The second improvement goal was to increase children's ability to describe and understand comparison and measurement, this goal allowed educators to continue to explore children's development of measurement understanding. As a team we continued our journey of exploring different types of big, ensuring our environment offered a broad range of measurement opportunities for children to engage with. We audited the documentation we had collected, identified gaps and targeted children to observe and extend their learning. Our project with the Marion council provided a wonderful opportunity for children to demonstrate their measurement language as they built three dimensional models of their own playground designs. This was culminated by children continuing to share their ideas with representatives from the Marion council.

In 2022, we will continue our strive to reflect on and improve ways to support and document children's oral language development as well as a deep dive into numeracy in the early years. This numeracy project involves working with our local Kindergartens and the Primary Maths Association, our aim is to support children to think like mathematicians. We look forward to sharing the numeracy journey with you and your children.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2018	66	66	66	65
2019	66	66	65	65
2020	63	N/A	64	63
2021	61	59	60	60

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
2018 centre	96.2%	95.8%	85.2%	90.4%
2019 centre	97.3%	97.7%	93.8%	90.4%
2020 centre	92.0%		95.1%	95.5%
2021 centre	93.4%	87.6%	89.9%	87%
2018 state	90.8%	88.4%	88.0%	88.2%
2019 state	90.8%	88.2%	86.9%	87.6%
2020 state	89.8%	73.0%	86.3%	87.0%
2021 state	88.6%	86.5%	88.4%	85.0%

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

COVID-19 yet again influenced attendance at Preschool during 2021, it was an interesting year for children's attendance with families keeping children home if unwell and at times when feeling unsure.

2021 was also a shift in operating hours for Ballara Park Kindy moving to a five day fortnight for children, this has impacted daily attendance for some children as families juggle working arrangements.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2018	2019	2020	2021
637 - Brighton Primary School	12.0%	9.2%	23.8%	3.6%
9085 - Christ the King School	3.0%	10.8%	4.8%	12.5%
1017 - Glenelg Primary School	6.0%	4.6%	7.9%	7.1%
8264 - McAuley Community School	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%	7.1%
9029 - Our Lady of Grace School	1.0%	1.5%	3.2%	3.6%
668 - Paringa Park Primary School	45.0%	44.6%	28.6%	39.3%
8220 - St Mary's Memorial School	6.0%	3.1%	1.6%	5.4%
933 - Warradale Primary School	20.0%	13.9%	22.2%	21.4%

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 2021 collection.

Destination schools comment

Children from Ballara Park Kindergarten, attend a variety of local department for Education primary schools, including Paringa Park Primary, Warradale Primary, Brighton Primary and Glenelg Primary.

We also had a number of children attend private schools in the local area including Christ the King, McAuley Community, Our Lady of Grace, St Mary's Catholic School and St Peter's Woodlands.

Family opinion survey summary

2021 saw only 13% of families respond to the online parent survey, this is a significant decrease from previous years, but provided a snapshot for us to analyse and discuss. With regards to leadership and Decision making, 100 % of responses agreed or strongly agreed that the preschool is well organised, families had confidence in how the preschool is managed and believed there was effective educational leadership. However, families wanted more opportunity to be involved in preschool educational activities and in decision making about their child's education.

Overall, In regards to the quality of teaching and learning at Ballara Park Kindy, responses were positive. COVID saw families on the outside of the gate for a large percentage of the year, making the incidental chats morning and afternoon a little more tricky. Families found it difficult to see the teaching and learning in action but families commented that staff worked tirelessly to ensure programme information was sent home regularly. Families agreed or strongly agreed that the teachers make the learning interesting and enjoyable and really want to help the children to learn. Feedback also supports that the preschool has an excellent learning environment.

In terms of relationships and communication, families all agreed that they felt welcome and the preschool assists the development of all children's personal and social skills. Families all felt comfortable to approach teachers to talk about their child progress but wanted more variety in communication about the preschool. Families all believed that staff would listen and respond to any concerns they may have and they are well informed of the preschool activities.

Families were overwhelmingly positive with regards to the support of learning for their child, noting their children are happy, and have access to quality materials and resources. In summary, one person commented "Ballara Park is such a wonderful Kindy, with wonderful dedicated teachers and educators. It is such a warm welcoming, safe and happy place for children to learn, grow and develop."

Relevant history screening

All teaching and ancillary staff including permanent and relieving have up to date relevant history screenings, Now called 'Working with children checks.'

Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$516,678
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$45,183
Other	\$5,655

2021 Preschool annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2021 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	Educators engaged in Professional development, then worked with all children to ensure development of oral language, data collection is now embed in practice and demonstrates individual growth. Educators have an increased intentionality when observing children's play to notice, name and document children's numeracy learning in measurement after professional development and changes in pedagogy.	Data collection and documentation showed an increase in children's ability in oral language and supports children's abilities to use comparative language in measurement.
Inclusive Education Support Program	In 2021 we had a number of children who received additional support through the IESP program, with the site having control of the funds meant staffing could be allocated across the day to support children when needed most working on and targeting individual goals.	All children made progress towards their individual goals set in conjunction with early intervention specialists both private and within department for Education.
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	We accessed the support of a bilingual worker to assist us to build a relationship with a child needing early intervention - this was invaluable as it gave us a clear picture of the child's abilities in her home language. The family was supported and this assisted with the development of a trusting relationship which lead to positive outcomes for the child and family.	Using the Bilingual service to begin with we were then able to confidently support the child using other channels to increase her engagement in the preschool program.

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