



Highbury Preschool

2021 annual report to the community

Highbury Preschool Number: 4622

Partnership: Modbury

Signature

Preschool director:

Ms Marnie Hillier

Governing council chair:

Tanya Shuken

Date of endorsement:

12 April 2022



Government
of South Australia

Department for Education

Context and highlights

Highbury Preschool is located at the base of the Adelaide foothills, surrounded by picturesque scenery. The site is often home to a range of different types of Australian wildlife including cockatoos, parrots and koalas. The preschool is co-located with Highbury Primary School, offering a Preschool program and funded Occasional Care for children aged two years and over.

Occasional Care has continued to provide families with an opportunity to have some child free time, it has also been supportive of children transitioning into the preschool program. At the beginning of the year, there were only a small amount of children enrolled, as many had moved into Kindy. As time passed by, the enrolments continued to grow, with families accessing the site between fortnightly and every three weeks.

Our enrolments have blossomed through out the year, with many children commencing with us from Term 2 onwards.

The Preschool has an expansive outdoor play environment, providing an insurmountable amount of opportunities for the children to engage, explore, question and to communicate, whilst developing a love of learning through play. Our philosophy strongly encourages the use of loose parts and nature play within our learning program, with many varied experiences providing opportunities to get messy!

COVID has again provided many challenges for us in being able to actively include families within our learning. We have provided flexible opportunities for meetings online and in being able responsive to the situations families have been involved in.

Whilst our end of year celebrations looked very different to how they have in the past, the children remained the focus. We shared in an evening session of Kindy, where all of the children were invited to attend. There was much dancing in the outdoor disco and challenge in the loose parts provided by Glenn, from Mobile Junkyard and Nature Playground.

Governing council report

This year our ability to meet as a Governing Council was again hindered by the dreaded COVID virus. We started the year with a small but very enthusiastic group of members, but as the challenges of not being able to meet face to face progressed, so did the availability of members to engage with meetings. This also obviously included children being unwell and existing commitments from families preventing them from joining meetings.

Our Governing Council supported the staff team in being able to continue to be the voice for the families and preschool community, especially related to decisions impacting access to the site. We often have complexities that are different to other sites, as we are co-located and the school has at times had different guidelines around the implementation of COVID restrictions. This has included families being allowed in the school grounds, but not in the buildings. As a group, decisions were made about gate drops offs, to continue to support the independence many of the children had developed and in their ability to self regulate their own emotional responses at drop off times.

The Governing Council has been pivotal in supporting the on-going planning for the redevelopment of the outdoor nature play space, approving the next stage of the redevelopment. This is now a waiting game for the contractors to be able to commence the planned works. This will be a very exciting time for all involved!

Other decisions that have relied upon the support of the Governing Council have included the proposed upgrade to the porch space located on the Beckman Avenue side of the building. The plans have neared the completion stage with the architect and will then be put out to tender for the work to commence. This will create a much needed learning space for the Educators to be able to come together, a meeting area, as well as a withdrawal space as required.

Thank you to our very committed Governing Council members. The staff team have valued your time and input into discussions and decision making processes. We acknowledge this year as unprecedented and that through it all, you have continued to demonstrate your commitment to continue to make the centre a high functioning learning space for everyone!

Preschool quality improvement planning

This year our team identified two priorities, as outlined in our Preschool Quality Improvement Plan, centred upon literacy and numeracy. The data analysis from 2020 indicated a need to continue to focus upon children's oral language skills, including their ability to communicate within different contexts and for multiple purposes.

In the numeracy space the goal was deliberately broad as we felt the data collected did not provide a clear indication of the direction we needed to take. This was in part reflective of the COVID situation and the inconsistency of attendances at Kindy. Our focus was upon collecting data to improve Educator knowledge and confidence in their use of mathematical language, to develop children's abilities to notice, describe and experiment with mathematical concepts in a playful way.

The actions we documented provided a systemic way of collecting and collating the information required and then in implementing a strategies of what the next steps were for each child in their learning journey. This was represented within their own cycle of learning.

In analysing the data collected, we reflected growth for each child in their oral literacy. This was documented through each child's Statement of Learning and evidenced within the learning snapshots and observations collected by Educators.

Our numeracy priority continued to provide a challenge for us in the implementation of the strategies, as we had identified professional learning as a strong need, but due to the restrictions in place as a result of COVID we were unable to access the training we had planned.

In 2022 our improvement priority will continue to be related to numeracy and we will refine the goal and actions, to enable us to be identified growth for each child. This will include systemic ways of collating learner data available, to be able to identified where there might be gaps in the program, where the strengths are for individuals and how we build capacity for others. The intent is upon differentiation and in sharing the journey with families.

Enrolment

Year

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

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

Attendance had been inconsistent during certain times of the year, as a result of the pandemic. We experienced a lockdown, but fear in the community about the possibility of contracting COVID and then what it would mean for the preschool children, families and staff team impacted our attendances.

We noticed an improvement in families communicating planned absences to us, as well as in notifying us when their child/ren would not be attending for other reasons including illness.

The data is an accurate representation of the patterns described above.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2018	2019	2020	2021
596 - Highbury Primary School	80.7%	80.0%	85.1%	88.3%
8411 - Torrens Valley Christian School	5.3%	2.5%	4.5%	5.0%

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

As we are co-located with Highbury Primary School, the majority of our families move across there upon finishing their time at Kindy, to commence their formal schooling.

We did observe a last minute shift with some of our families who had identified Highbury as the intended school, then accepted positions in both private and public sites. The implementation of school catchment areas has significantly impacted our enrolments at Kindy, as we have different allocated areas to the school and they have restricted flexibility in accepting families from outside of this. This relates to the Department for Education Enrolment Policy.

As in past years, we do have children attending a range of schools, both public and private and communicate with these as required.

Family opinion survey summary

The Parent Opinion Survey was distributed to all families electronically, to encourage families to have a voice. From July, when South Australia experienced a lockdown, families were unable to access the site. We moved to a gate drop off and greeted and farewelled children from this location. This obviously decreased the level of interaction we were able to have and decreased the spontaneous opportunities to share information about their child/ren's day. This is highly likely to be a contributing factor to the feedback given in the survey and the lack of response.

Upon reflecting upon the responses from the seven participants, the information summarised was connected to the comments above related to COVID and the impact of this upon most aspects of our program.

One of our intentional directions for 2022 was to explore the possibility of a digital method of communicating with families and this may assist in supporting families in feeling increasingly more connected. Being allowed back onsite will also be inclusive of the development of relationships with families and in sharing in their child/ren's learning journey at Kindy. It is very difficult to comment on many of the questions asked within the survey, when COVID has significantly impacted our ability to implement a family friendly environment.

Relevant history screening

Screenings are completed as required. For teacher's, it is a requirement within the Teacher Registration process and for ECW's the site leader is notified for permanent staff of the impending requirement, or has been documented with their Authority Letter provided by the Department.

Copies of screenings for other contractors are maintained at the site as required.

Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$598,016
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$38,332
Other	\$0

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	The funding for our literacy goal was used to release staff to engage in Learning Journey conversations with families around literacy and numeracy and in supporting our professional learning through the DfE Orbis Numeracy Program. Additional funds were allocated to provide time for release for the staff team to analyse the learner data available within literacy and numeracy.	The funding allowed for a specific allocation of time to be committed to discussion, planning, implementing and reflecting upon our cycle of planning for each individual child
Inclusive Education Support Program	The IESP centre grant was used to provide specific support to children who were deemed as eligible by the staff team. The funding was allocated individually to specific children and then used to support others within a group context. This included the implementation of specific programs provided by Speech Pathologists and Occupational Therapists. The allocation of the grant was documented on the spreadsheet as required by the Department for Education.	Children were supported in specific learning areas, through intentional and explicit teaching strategies.
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	Not applicable	Not applicable

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