



Play, Learn, Grow

Mount Barker Kindergarten Inc

2022 annual report to the community

Mount Barker Kindergarten Inc Number: 4637

Partnership: Heysen

Signature

Preschool director:

Mrs Mandy Smith

Governing council chair:

Helaine Stanton

Date of endorsement:

24 February 2023



**Government
of South Australia**
Department for Education

Context and highlights

Since 1981 Mount Barker Kindergarten has operated as a full-time stand-alone site, in a picturesque setting with a large outdoor learning environment. It is situated adjacent to Mount Barker Primary school and the Mount Barker School Dental Clinic. 56 children were enrolled across 2022 with about 40% of our families having diverse, multicultural backgrounds. In addition to the core staff team of teachers and early childhood workers, the kindergarten employs preschool support staff to ensure children have greater opportunities for 1:1 and/or small group work, based on Individual Learning Programs. This year we had an increased number of children with significant sensory and self-regulation needs along with speech, language and other needs. Through strong partnerships with Mount Barker Council and Mount Barker Primary School, the kindergarten (via the Department for Education) owns the land immediately outside our perimeter fence (including a natural bushland). Ready access to nature enriches our curriculum providing deeper learning opportunities through nature inquiry, STEM, sustainability and indigenous perspectives. AEDC data was used to inform planning for children's learning and well-being needs.

2022 began with a resurgence of stringent COVID-19 practices to support the health and wellbeing of our kindergarten community. Our kindergarten natural park provided an excellent area and ample time for families to farewell and reunite with their children away from the busy road. This afforded increased opportunities to touch base face-to-face with our families regarding their child's learning. With the co-operation and understanding of every member of our community, the children quickly developed understandings of routines and increased independent self-help skills.

With the arrival of Term 2 our kindergarten community was directly impacted by COVID resulting in significant absences due to isolation among confirmed cases and close contacts. During this time our staff team made wellbeing the primary focus and supported children's resilience, self-regulation, exploration and learning through play. An extended and evolving focus on gross motor development and self-regulation strategies, supported by staff team professional learning and collaboration with Flinders University saw significant gains in supporting the children's needs at this time.

By Term 3 we were returning to the new COVID normal, with families once again welcomed on site. We were once again on-track with our overall learning program aligned to the Quality Improvement Plan. Two pre-service teachers joined our cohort and our community of learners delved more deeply into nature inquiry exploring life cycles of plants and frogs in particular.

Our re-connecting with the broader community gained momentum in Term 4 with highlights being the reintroduction of our buddy class program in collaboration with Mount Barker Primary School. Our families were delighted when we resumed pre-COVID practices with our kindergarten community such as reintroducing playgroup and, for the first time in a couple of years, our whole kindergarten community participated in end of year celebration of the children's learning through play.

Governing council report

COVID brought about changes in how the Governing Council met. Group emails between the Governing Council group enabled full participation of all members with documented responses shared within the group, printed and kept on file as a records.

Thank you to our highly supportive Governing Council and our wonderful families for your patience and co-operation through all the successes and challenges this year presented. A special thank you to the Stanton Family who donated so much of their time supporting our staff, administration and outdoor learning environment. It has been our privilege to work in partnership with all our families and to share this part of each of your children's learning journeys.

Preschool quality improvement planning

The Quality Improvement Plan is a dynamic document informed by the ongoing critical reflections of the staff team in partnership with the Governing Council, our kindergarten community and the Local Education Team.

Goal 1: To Strengthen Children's Oral Language and Communication Skills

An initial framework was established to address the learning needs of the 2022 cohort and challenge of practice (how the staff would address these needs). Appropriate professional learning was identified then completed by the staff team including Music Strategy courses (phonological awareness); and zones of regulation. Support of all children's self-regulation was initially targeted through identifying feelings and implementing a sensory program which led to an increase in the children's engagement with the curriculum. The goal initially moved to support the children to identify their feelings and increase independent self-regulation skills in order to increase their engagement with the curriculum and development of oral language/communication skills in particular.

A collaborative project with 2nd year Flinders Pre-Service Teachers researched and implemented the zones of regulation which supported the children to identify and express their feeling and make appropriate learning choices to maximise their time in the optimal learning zone and increase their voice in their learning. Next critical reflection led to exploring deeper understandings of differentiated teaching and learning affording the staff team deeper understanding of the diverse needs of our children and the increased benefits of differentiating teaching and learning across the curriculum. This lens was used when documenting observations of children and planning for individual/group needs. As a result of our work to this point we noticed the children's attention, participation and engagement levels increasing as they became more independent in monitoring and managing their own self-regulation along with increase participation in a range of learning experiences and time on task.

Initially the focus was on social language necessary for sharing, turn-taking and collaborating with others. The staff team critically reflected, reviewed and enhanced formative assessment processes and opportunities to extend children's oral language through developing understandings of literacy concepts such as rhyme and rhythm using strategies gained through professional development through the Music Education Strategy. Children's increased oral language, vocabulary and phonemic awareness (first sounds of words – particularly the children's names) were observed to be transferred into their every day play contexts.

Mid year the team critically reflection on our assessment and documentation processes through an oral language lens and refined these processes which enabled staff to more effectively analyse oral language data and the distance travelled for each child across the year. This analysis was incorporated into each child individual Statement of Learning.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2019	50	50	51	51
2020	56	N/A	64	66
2021	53	53	47	49
2022	49	51	48	50

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	89.2%	86.4%	86.2%	86.2%
2020 centre	93.3%		73.4%	78.2%
2021 centre	92.0%	89.9%	87.5%	88.9%
2022 centre	87.2%	77.9%	78.8%	80%
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

Across the year, and Term 2 in particular, attendances were significantly impacted by absences due to COVID cases, close contact isolation, and families responsibly keeping their children home when unwell. Absences towards the end of Term 4 are attributed to expectations within the broader community of a COVID wave near the end of school year.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2019	2020	2021	2022
285 - Mount Barker Primary School	66.7%	56.1%	80.0%	67.5%
9046 - St Francis de Sales College	19.1%	12.3%	2.9%	15.0%
8420 - St Mark's Lutheran Primary School	7.1%	12.3%	2.9%	12.5%

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

Each year our children transition to a range of public and private schools across the Adelaide hills including: Mount Barker Primary School (our main feeder school); Mount Barker South Primary School; St Francis De Sales College; Kings College and St Mark's Lutheran Primary School. The majority of our children, approximately 65%, continue to transition to our neighbouring Mount Barker Primary School. Four children transitioned to independent primary schools mid-year.

Family opinion survey summary

Families were very satisfied with the service and quality of education provided. Parent comments:

"Thank you so much for all your hard work, patience and faithfulness in helping my daughter as she develops ... has meant a lot to me and I'm grateful."

"My child really enjoys kindy and often comes home singing the group time songs. She has felt comfortable at being dropped off from the first day."

"She often talks about kindy at home and every day asks if it is a kindy day."

"I have had lots of help with my child this year. I am very happy with my child's time at Mt Barker Kindergarten."
"A very happy place."

"I am so grateful for the support for my boy this year."

The comment below was received through the Department for Education via their Feedback link:

"My son often struggles to adapt to new faces, as many children would, however I wanted to let you know that the staff at Mount Barker Kindy have been beyond amazing. Each staff member continues to be positive and engaging, even throughout the COVID pandemic, are so polite and warm when I drop my child off and are always willing to support me with drop off. I would like to say a massive thank you to all the staff at Mount Barker Kindergarten. Mount Barker should be recognised for the amazing staff."

Relevant history screening

The kindergarten utilised updated Department for education Relevant History Screening directives and information to determine who required screening and informed the staff team. Relevant current documents were sighted by staff for required individuals prior to their working with or near children (including students on placements, service providers and volunteers).

Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$582
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$26,265
Other	\$452

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	Music literacy, staff professional development (self-regulation to, introduction to sensory processing assisting children to tune in, Marte Meo training for new staff members resulting in whole team approach to supporting children's oral language.	Explicit teaching and flexible delivery of programs targeting self-regulation supported children to engage with learning and others. Analysis of each child's oral language across the year evidenced significant lift for all children, most notably for the reluctant talkers.
Inclusive Education Support Program	Successful increased funding enabled supported individualized programs for children with significant needs with specialist teacher. With a substantial increase in children requiring additional support, and a very high level of children with diagnosed and suspected sensory processing, trauma and other needs, the kindergarten efficiently utilized funding to address needs and progress learning.	Targeted individualised programs addressed specific learning needs and enabled full attendance of children with additional/significant needs to access the service and increasingly engage in their own learning and learning with others.
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.