

2024 annual report to the Community

Stirling East Kindergarten

Stirling East Kindergarten number: 4667

Partnership: Mount Lofty



Preschool director:

Kerry Wood

Date of endorsement:

24/02/2025



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Context Statement

Information about Stirling East Kindergarten is available on the centres website, as well as the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) website.

The kindergarten welcomed a new staff team during 2024, including a new kindergarten director. There were some initial challenges due to issues with access to a range of administrative processes e.g., ICT, banking, but this allowed the opportunity to implement new, contemporary processes over the course of the year such as EMS Finance, online communications, and for the educator team to focus on what truly matters: ensuring that all staff, children, families in the SEK community developed and experienced a strong sense of BELONGING, BEING and BECOMING and the provision of high quality child focused, responsive, relational and place-based pedagogies and practices (including documentation of learning, voice for goal setting), and for a positive culture of hope; agency; of inclusivity, equity and excellence; of strong wellbeing and kindness; of inquiry; and where each person is known, respected, has strong wellbeing, develops as a good citizen, contributes, learns and thrives. The site embraces the Shared Purpose outlined in the Strategy for Public Education and is at the heart of who we are and what we stand for at SEK.

Public education is for every child and young person in every community.

Educators and staff work in partnership with families and communities to nurture, develop and empower all children with the knowledge, skills, and capabilities they need to become fulfilled individuals, active, compassionate citizens, and lifelong learners.



Our preschools are the heart of local communities. They are safe, inclusive, and collaborative – a place where every child is encouraged to contribute, develops positive relationships, has a say in their learning, and where their needs, interests, languages, and cultures are recognised and supported.

Governing Council Report

The Governing Council formed at the 2024 AGM met several times during the year, mostly online but with some face-to-face meetings.

The Governing Council met, discussed, offered ideas and suggestions, considered, and supported the development of processes, ideas, decision-making on a range of matters. The Council's support was pivotal in the early parts of the year when the kindergarten was facing issues with ICT access (including no access to emails and issues accessing some required applications), finance and banking transactions and processes (including the invoicing and processing of fees and payments and inability to make purchases or pay bills). The Governing Council were important representatives of families and the community during 2024, particularly in relation to the consultation around kindy attendance and session pattern models for 2025.

Agenda items and actions supported by the Governing Council included:

- Approval and monitoring of finance, audit report and budget
- Approval of financial delegations and the move to the EMS Finance project managed by the Department for Education School and Preschool Finance Team
- Enrolment and funding updates
- WHS monitoring including responses and support for air conditioning replacement, drainage replacement funded by the Department for Education and minor repairs, enhancements to practice and provision, e.g., the addition of finger guards to all doors, funded by the site
- Site fundraising ideas, plans and actions, including support for the Art Show, which is the site's main fundraiser, sourcing of a band for the end of year gathering, provision of a tap-and-go service at events, sourcing raffle prized and donations. The proceeds of this fundraising enabled the purchase of quality home corner furniture and resources, and the leather lounge used for the beautiful reading area.
- Interest and support for the staff team, for the site directions and the provision of feedback from the community
- Assistance developing surveys and feedback mechanisms for families, including the consultation around the need to change session times/ attendance patterns for 2025.
- Provided ideas and feedback on the end of kindergarten graduation (to be the same for the July and Dec leavers) and themed events such as Mud Day and bedtime story themed World Book Day

2024 Was a wonderful year of magical moments with additional events including:

Welcoming new children in Term 1 and 3, Family Picnics, regular Library Van visits, Author visits, Art Show, Sharing Learning events, Graduation Parades and celebrations, Pancake Day, Snake Catcher visits, Mud Day, Bedtime Story Day, Art Show event, Stirling Community Pageant...



Preschool Attendance

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2021 centre	89.4%	89.1%	94.9%	92.3%
2022 centre	91.5%	77.4%	87.2%	76.7%
2023 centre	83.3%	83.6%	86.5%	84.9%
2024 centre	70.4%		87.9%	

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. Data Source: Department for Education Attendance Data, Semester 1 Report 2024. A blank cell indicates there we no students enrolled.

Attendance Comment

In South Australia, preschool attendance is not compulsory, but it is strongly encouraged. Preschool gives children the best opportunity to develop skills, which prepare them for school. These benefits include establishing positive routines and habits, friendships, and connections as well as developing communication, problem-solving and creative skills. All children are entitled to access a preschool program over 4 terms the year before they start school.

Directors Report

2024 was a year of significant change, of positivity, enthusiasm, wonder, and hope with the introduction of a new Director and a whole new educator team. Kerry and Cheree started the year together alongside Liesl Arthur who farewelled the site mid-way through the year. Liesl had been a wonderful teacher at the preschool for a number of years and was particularly strong in her knowledge, and implementation of strategies to support the wellbeing and education of neurodiverse children. Zarah joined the team late term one, followed by Jess in term three. The wonderful team of 2024 supported the development of a positive team culture, of cooperation, trust, openness, willingness to develop, try, embrace, and learn new ways of working, being and doing.

From day one, the focus for myself and the team was on forming positive relationships with the children and families, being present, interested, and in seeking to better know, understand and be responsive to them so that each and every child feels welcome, included, valued, respected and experience a strong sense of BELONGING, BEING and BECOMING to Stirling East Kindergarten, and enjoy a preschool year that sets them up to thrive and achieve at preschool and beyond.

Whilst staff reflected on, developed, tried, and implemented new ideas and made noticeable changes in the kindergarten, e.g. to practices and the welcome, the inclusion and provision for all children and families, to the environment, to portfolios, to kindy ‘rhythms and rituals’ (routines); we also made a number of changes to systems and processes behind the scenes to ensure compliance but also to introduce contemporary, efficient, and sustainable ways of working. I would like to acknowledge the bravery, resilience, openness, the long hours, the hard-work, and efforts of the entire staff team who went over and above (and still do) to make sure that everything is spot on for the children and to their perseverance through the challenges when systems weren’t working and my appreciation and gratitude for the resulting changes they have facilitated and taken onboard, that have now placed us in an excellent position for 2025 and beyond.

At our staff reflection day at the end of the year, the entire team enthusiastically reflected on the year and shared their stories of the children’s ideas and interests, their interactions, their shifts in learning, wellbeing, skills, learning and dispositions, their development, the growth mindsets, connections, the agency and problem solving, the aha-moments, the sparkle and the smiles, the profound and significant moments...

We truly had a magical year working, learning, and playing with the children and feel truly privileged to be a part of the Stirling East Kindergarten community.



Preschool Improvement

In 2024 SEK improvement focus was on developing children’s play skills, emotional awareness and self-regulation skills associated with positive mental health and learning.

A range of effective strategies were introduced during the year including:

- Intentional teaching of play skills e.g., entering play, negotiating, and developing play themes, using plans to share and develop thinking/ideas and directions for play and as tools to negotiate and support collaborative approaches.
- Recognising own and others’ emotions, feelings, and needs
- Use of self-regulation tools and creation of an environment, spaces and resources to support children in each of the ‘zones’
- Dispositions, social and emotional and Growth Mindset focused teaching and learning, including You Can Do It, music for self-regulation, The Power of YET, learning from mistakes

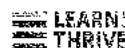
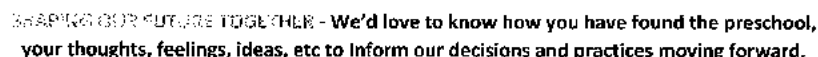
The impact of the improvement actions on outcomes for children evident in their emotional regulation behaviours, talk, interactions, play (social pretend play) and interactions, in feedback from families, and seen in observations and documentation of learning and engagement, was strong with children actively tuning-in to their own and others’ feelings and independently and proactively using the Tools of Regulation amongst other strategies to manage and regulate their emotional state and zone conducive to positive wellbeing, relationships and learning.

Whilst play skills and regulation were key improvement focus the kindergarten underwent significant shifts in processes, practices, with the welcoming of a new team of engaging, skilled, insightful, caring, talented and motivated educators that enabled a renewed culture of positivity, that prioritises children, families, and place-based and relational pedagogies (teaching and learning).

We used to	Now we	So what? (IMPACT)
Set snack time	Kindy café	Empowering children to tune-in to their bodies (self-awareness) and respond appropriately, respects their agency/ play
Bell for packing up AND emergencies	No Bell – kindy train for RESET/ coming together and whistles for emergency notification	Children actively join and engage with the kindy train/ smoother transition processes
Children chose own locker each day which made it difficult to locate bags and pair/ collect items e.g., spare clothes. They packed and placed bags in row near the entrance at the end of the day which presented a potential trip/ emergency exiting hazard.	Each child has a named locker Bags are packed and remain in lockers where they are collected by the child/ carer as children leave.	Children can find and take more responsibility for organising their bag and belongings more readily. Items can be matched to the child/ bag reducing lost property, and spare clothes etc can be easily located (even if several children have a Bluey bag!). There are less issues with bags being moved by children (prompting

		conflict) and the end of day organisation has removed a significant WHS hazard.
Emergency procedures non-current/ evacuation and bushfire kits in cupboards. Practices initiated by educators	Revision of emergency procedures. Scenario based practices including child-initiated scenarios, e.g., if child spots a hazard such as a snake, fire. Emergency evacuation kits packed in trolleys, with additions of torches, fire blankets, emergency contacts etc in each.	Clearer emergency procedure activation signals and processes. Children alert to / actively involved in identification of hazards and enacting processes, e.g., what to do and how to alert others of danger such as a snake. Emergency kits ready to go promptly if/ when required
Manual/ outdated administrative items, non-updated filing, and processes, e.g., finance, enrolments, mapping of student needs and interventions, documents / files found more than 30 years old *significant issues with banking authorities/ approved signatories and processing of all transactions at the start of the year; not all information regarding Registrations of Interest and Student details including of special needs, were available due to a range of reasons including ICT access and being unable to locate 'hard copies' of documents	All admin documents and files sorted for currency and relevance. Consolidation of documents/ files for improved use and access. Central School and Preschool Finance Team (through EMS Finance) now responsible for the processing of financial transactions	Efficient, modern systems and processes introduced, including for finance, Induction, WHS, Risk Assessments, Enrolments (including registers for Registrations of Interest and required documentation), Skills Mapping (Inclusive Education Support Planning)
Resources, environment, spaces prioritising educator/ adult and other displays and resources not aligned with our philosophy fore-fronted, e.g., teacher cupboards, white board, TV. Lots of outdated/ low quality/ inappropriate resources (puzzles, sorting and construction toys, home corner), minimal spaces/ places/ resources to support children to respond and meet their needs in each of the zones of regulation e.g., where to go if feel overwhelmed.	Investment in resources and environments for children, e.g., quality home corner and block area furniture and resources, repurposing of storage/ intervention space as a calm zone/ focus activity area. Investment in calm nook, sensory tools, timers, etc. Educators encouraged to intentionally reflect on and consider the design of the environment from a child's viewpoint and to consider sensory input, macro concepts, energy, engagement, opportunities e.g., social and zone, purpose, etc as part of the process. Intentional selection of fit for purpose/ quality resources.	Quality inclusive, purposeful, and enabling environment and resources aligned to child focus and site team values, pedagogy, intentionality, and philosophy (and supported these to be visible to families and for them to know that our priority is for a quality preschool experience for each and every child).
Set kindergarten routines and group times, with children having a morning group time with shared snack, then a seemingly long pack-up/rest/ large group time at the end of the day. Packing up routine	More flexible routines introduced and focus for group times, e.g., short morning meeting once most children have arrived to kickstart the day, flexible kindy cafe with shorter end of day 'RESET'	More respectful/ responsive. Less interrupted 'play' time for children to get deeply involved and engaged in learning, interactions, and explorations and to be curious, to reflect, to develop, apply, practice, refine and deepen their thinking, skills, capabilities, and dispositions. RESET empowers children to think positively and act to create and be responsible for the resources, environment/ spaces and places they want to encounter. It is less final and invitational and opens-up the notion of continuing on.
Scope to improve inclusive practices and culture, advocacy, referrals and support for children with diverse needs (including disability, continence care), and submission of Applications for Inclusive Education Support	Comprehensive evidence collated, strategies tried/ reviewed, plan produced and IESP funding application submitted and approved by the panel	Child received funding for 12 hours per week of ECW support to foster his wellbeing, inclusion, active and successful engagement in all aspects of the kindergarten (including social, learning). The child was able to transition successfully and have a smooth start to school.
Documentation and children's learning journals largely reflected generic group/ educator led experiences with parent input through required tasks, e.g., note the book read to the child each night or recording of holiday activities. End of year statements of learning often generic, reflecting what the child was exposed to during the year rather than their unique self.	Listening tools and learning design. Each child's learning journal reflects and makes visible their individual agency, learning, preferences, theories, motivations, engagement, and character, along with their 'growth and development. Parent contributions are encouraged but homework is replaced with practical play-based and inquiry provocations, packs, and activity ideas, e.g., self-regulation toolkit packs.	Documentation, journals, and statements of learning authentically and clearly reflect children's unique strengths, interests, skills, capabilities, character, growth and how they are learning, developing, growing, changing, and thriving over THEIR preschool year. Goals for individual children reflect the child's own motivations and desire to learn, grow and thrive whilst promoting their self-image and habits of mind, e.g., can do

Children's individual goals determined by educators (often focused on overcoming deficits in regulation, pencil control and fine-motor skills, or furthering their rote counting).	Parent's hopes and aspirations underpin the goals for each child's preschool year. Children are interviewed about what they want to learn, and this goal is recorded, valued and children are encouraged to work towards, reflect on, and celebrate their progress towards their self-determined goals and achievements. Educator goals for individual children are strength based and include dispositions (habits for life). Skills mapping is used to map and identify areas for development and opportunities to find out more information, intentional teaching, and early intervention, intentional teaching and/or support, e.g., to develop play skills, continence care or routines, speech articulation, fine or gross motor skills.	attitude. The goals and valuing of dispositions support children's rights as citizens, helping to position them as co-constructors and protagonists of learning. Goals also reflect, value and support parents and educators to work together with shared purpose and intent (around what matters) to foster children's dispositions and capabilities so they can learn and thrive. Skills mapping supports identification and mapping of children's needs and informs the planning, resourcing, priorities for intervention, e.g., speech programs, use of regulation tools, core strength. All documentation and the goals are used to inform the kindergarten program and priorities (design of learning, inquiries, practices, environments, support, resources)
Educator 'expert' (instructional / direct teaching model) with curriculum program centred around educator, pre-planned outcomes and resources allocated or restricted accordingly, e.g., selected colours only for observational drawing. Children compliant, product and knowledge focused, perfection/ risk adverse	More flexible, responsive, open-entry/ended learning design and resourcing including spontaneous, opportunities for child-directed learning and inquiry with clear links to observations/ pedagogical documentation, etc Move to play-based learning with children's play, thinking, theories, questions, wonderings, and ideas the focus for learning design. Learning from mistakes, growth mindset and the power of YET amongst intentional teaching themes	Image of child as capable, competent learners with move to inquiry learning and fostering children's agency, the co-construction of learning, children as researchers, and curators of learning. Children more open-minded to learning, wondering, productive struggle, challenges, and demonstrating improved growth mindsets.



Thanks for all your hard efforts over the past 6 months. its not easy coming in to a new environment, especially the absolute shit show that the last director left the place in (trust me, it didnt go unnoticed). You are the change and energy that the Hills Community need and will value in a kindy but it will just take time to build back up that trust. The kindy and culture and environment is yours now - believe in yourself, back yourself, dont worry about imposter syndrome and make it your own! You show kindness, compassion and empathy - this is all parents want when they let their kids go each morning. Getting a wonderful team behind you again, stable staffing, will only help the nurturing environment. it hasnt been easy for you (I can only imagine), but I 100% believe it will be worth it! ♥ Hollie

June 2024

DEAN KERRY.

It has been a breath of fresh air having you join the family. Thank you for your passion, kindness and love for the kids. It has been a joy seeing Lucy's face light up when she talks about you!

♡ Lucy + the Homer family

rough your attendance, support, volunteering and their work behind the scenes but also on the night

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diant provide any feedback but it was a wonderful event and we were glad to be part of it and support Well done to you, the team and volunteers! We greatly value your support with Nadia's education and are and couldn't be happier.

- li Kerry

History and Background

From: Kerry.Wood341@schools.sae.edu.au <Kerry.Wood341@schools.sae.edu.au>
Sent: Monday, July 1, 2024 11:07 AM
To: Megan Hales <megan@wholenoteagency.com>
Subject: THANK YOU for making our ART SHOW a great success

Thank you -
it's been
such a good
6 months



CONGRATULATIONS KERRY, it was a lovely Art Show and environment to celebrate the kids with other families! So please it was such a financial success.

Megan

Finch, 2017 Feedback.

We'd love your thoughts about our 2024 Art Show.

We hope you enjoyed it.

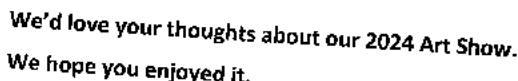
What an impressive display!
Well done, loved it!



We'd love your thoughts about our 2024 Art Show.

We hope you enjoyed it.

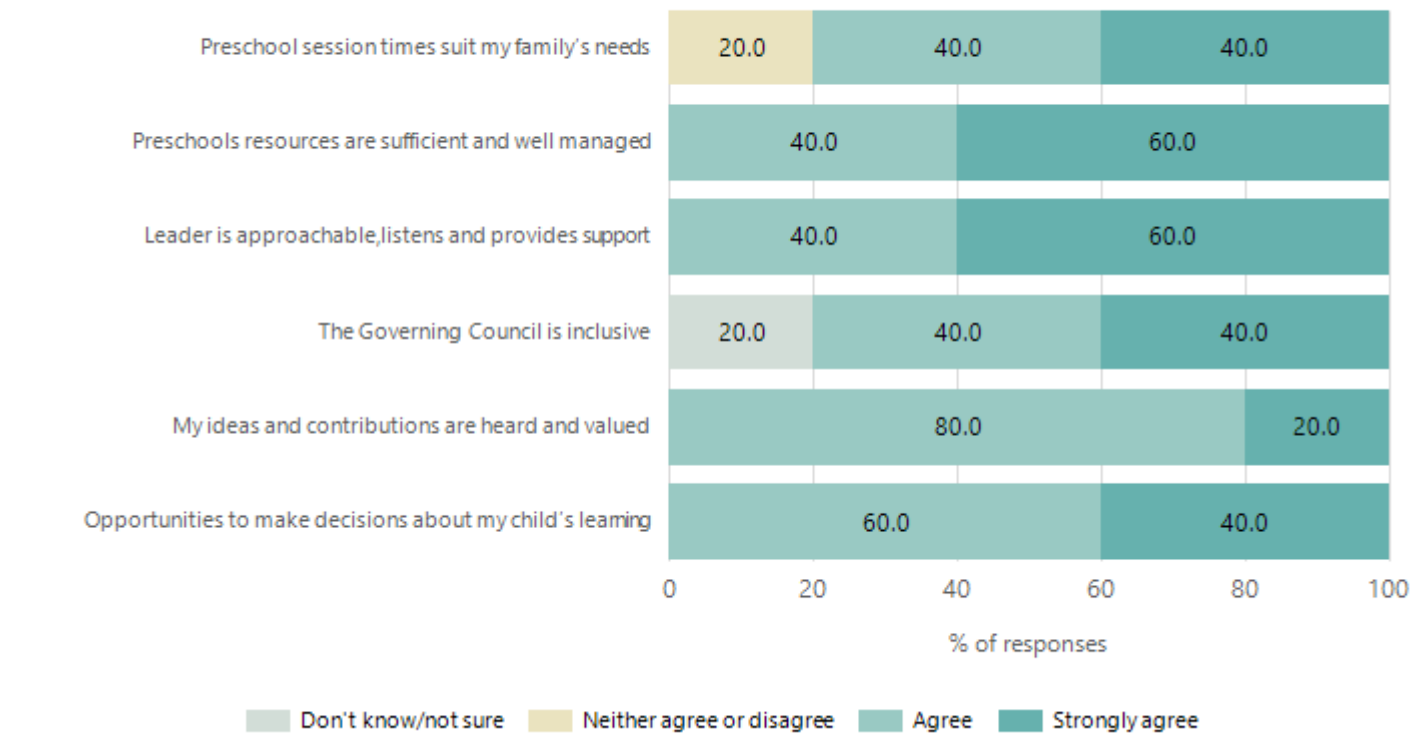
loved it! Great to feel part of
the children's activities and to



this was a great art show well done

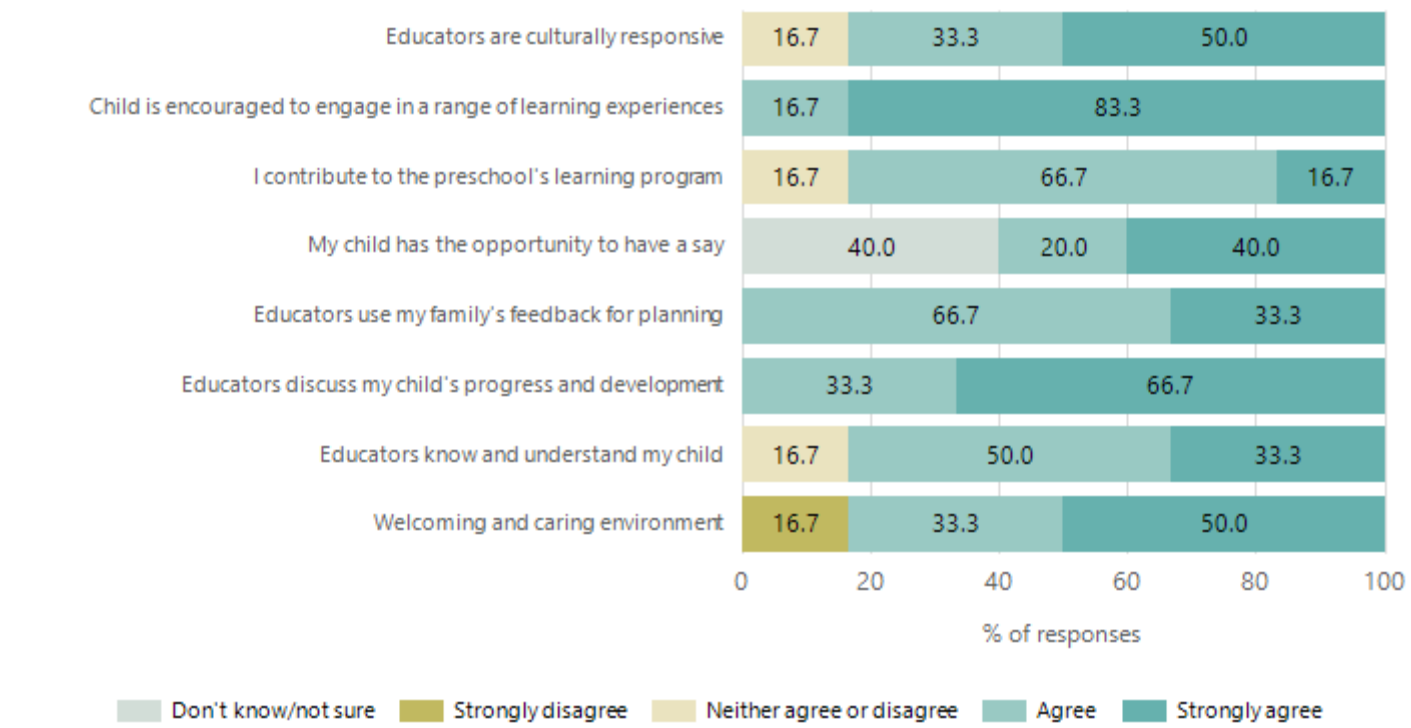
Preschool Family Opinion Survey

Governance, Leadership and Management



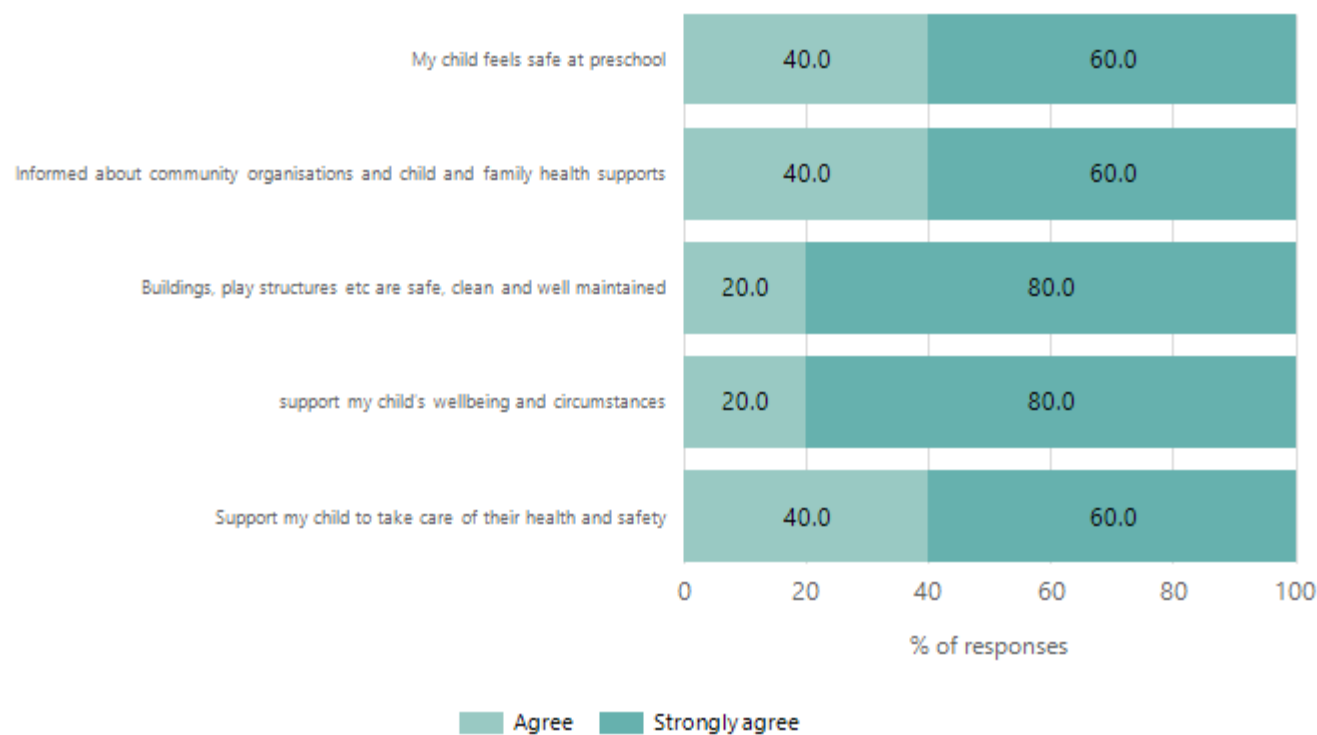
Data Source: 2024 Department for Education Preschool Family Opinions Survey, Term 3 2024.

Quality of Teaching and Learning



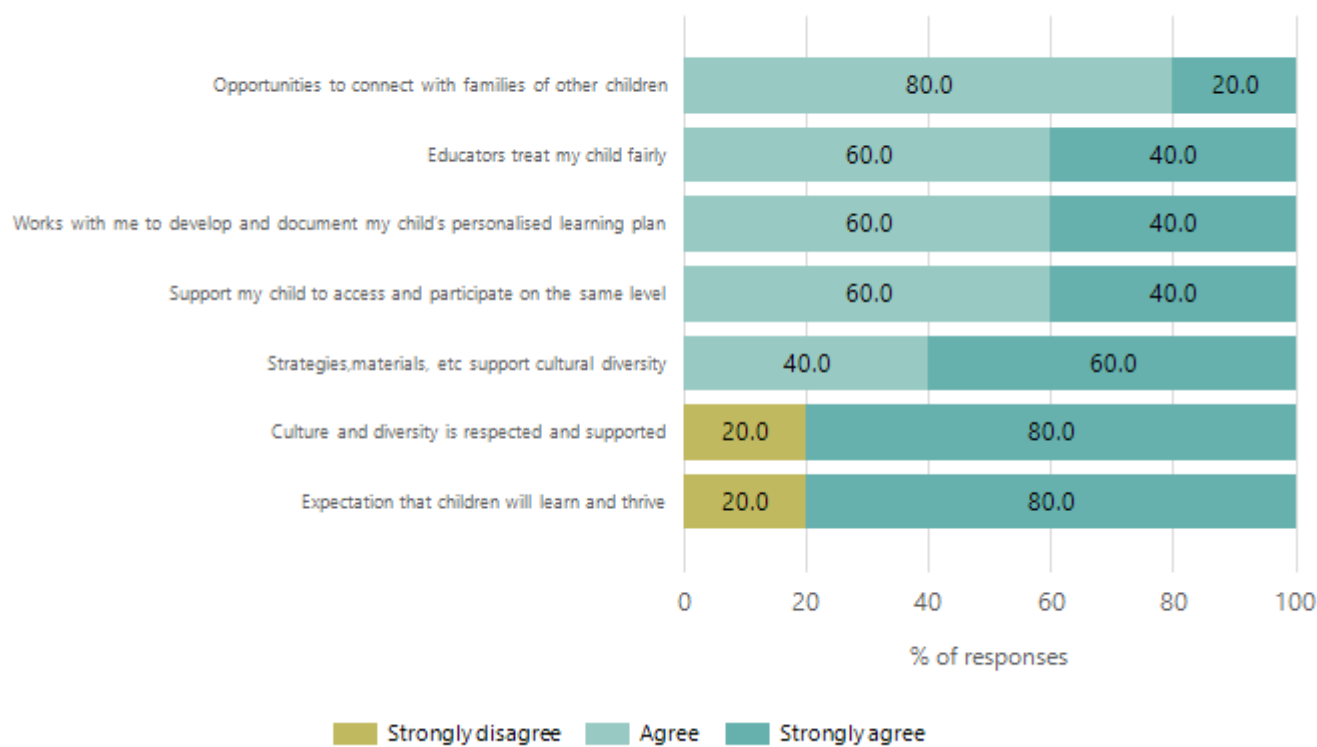
Data Source: 2024 Department for Education Preschool Family Opinions Survey, Term 3 2024.

Safety, Health and Wellbeing



Data Source: 2024 Department for Education Preschool Family Opinions Survey, Term 3 2024.

Support and Inclusion



Data Source: 2024 Department for Education Preschool Family Opinions Survey, Term 3 2024.

Destination Schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2022	2023	2024
0107 - Crafers Primary School	4.7%	16.0%	15.3%
0413 - Stirling East Primary School	86.1%	76.0%	66.1%
9079 - St Catherine's School			6.8%
9999 - Unknown	4.7%	6.0%	8.5%

Note: The data is collected in term 3. It does not reflect actual schools enrolled in by existing preschool children. A blank cell indicates there was no data for students enrolled.

Data Source: Department for Education Destination Data Report, 2024.

Highest Qualifications held by the teaching workforce and workforce composition

All teachers at this school are qualified and registered with the SA Teachers Registration Board.

Qualification Level	Number of Qualifications
Bachelor's degrees or Diplomas	2
Postgraduate Qualifications	3

Data Source: Data extracted from Mandatory Workforce Information Collections as on the last pay date of June 2024. As self-reported by staff in the system.

Please note: Data includes staff who are Actively employed and on extended paid leave. Please note only the highest qualification of the Teaching staff is reported. Excludes any number of other certifications earned.

Workforce composition including indigenous staff

	Teaching Staff		Non-Teaching Staff	
	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Non-Indigenous
Full-Time Equivalents	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.8
Persons	0.0	5.0	0.0	1.0

Data Source: Data extracted from Mandatory Workforce Information Collection as on the last pay date of June 2024.

Please note: Data includes staff who are actively employed and on extended paid leave. "Indigenous category" is self-reported by staff in the system.

Financial Statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	
Grants: Commonwealth	
Parent Contributions	
Fund Raising	
Other	

Data Source: School supplied data.