



ANNUAL REPORT 2015



Government of South Australia
Department for Education and
Child Development



Philosophy Statement:

Wellbeing - We believe children learn best in an environment where their wellbeing is nurtured. Children feel safe, secure, respected and supported.

Play - Play is children's work - it is fun, creative, hands on, risk taking and explorative. **Relationships** - Developing positive and respectful relationships with children and families is fundamental for supporting children's learning.

Children's Learning - Children learn through a balance of free play and explicit teaching opportunities. Children need to have time to practise and master skills individually and in groups.

Context

Preschool Name: Maitland Children's Centre

Preschool Number: 6612

Preschool Director: Louise Hanrahan

Partnership: Southern Yorke

We are an integrated service that has a Kindergarten program and a Rural Care program. We are a 0.6 centre for Kindergarten and 1.0 Rural Care. Children attend on a fortnightly cycle of 2 days one week and 3 days the following week.

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Music/ICT/Drama/Library at MAS
- Excursions:
 - Maitland Show Parade Picnic
 - Port Vincent Marine Centre & Beach
 - Ardrossan Kindy
 - Adelaide Botanic Gardens
 - Ready Set Go
 - Gymjams
 - Shopping Trips
- Harmony Day
- Pyjama Day Breakfast (Charity Cancer Council)
- Ambulance Visit
- Campfires
- Twilight Kindy

- Transition Visits
- Graduation Ceremonies
- Cooking
- You Can Do It! Program
- Using the microphone
- Show and Tell / Family Posters
- NQS Assessment Visit
- Preschool Works - building commencement
- Amalgamation Discussions and Proposal voted in favour
- Work Experience Students
- Rural Care Staff Maternity Leave so new workers
- Rural Care extra session commenced on Fridays in Term 4

2015 Staffing

Director: Louise Hanrahan

Teacher: Melissa Richards, Kim Black

ECW: Joanne Rawlings

Preschool Support: Tammy Wharton

Rural Care: Michelle Weatherald, Lisa Loffler, Jasmine Stone, Rosie Liebelt

Governing Council Chairperson's Report 2015 - Paula Wegener

25 students began their Kindy journey at the start of 2015 with Louise as director, Kim & Melissa as teachers and Jo & Tammy as Early Childhood workers. Michelle, Lisa, Jasmine & Rosie have worked closely with Rural Care children throughout the year and other staff have included some students doing work experience or placement at the Centre. Playgroup is another experience for young children that is offered on Friday mornings and we thank Kate Butler for her time and effort organising rosters and encouraging families to participate. During the year, staff were involved in a National Quality Standard Assessment where they were able to demonstrate the great things their planning, program and assessment provides and achievements that are being made in a rural centre. We have been involved in many fundraisers this year and I want to make a special mention of Karen Crawford who has done an awesome job initiating a team effort and success at a few of these including: Barley Stacks Gourmet Day, Conference Catering & Tea Towel Fundraiser. Apart from fundraisers we also want to thank parents that have volunteered their time throughout the year whether it be cleaning toys, help with maintaining or improving the facilities or just being at excursions. It is much appreciated and does not go unnoticed. It's been a big year of talk about Amalgamation but also a year of action with works that have started at the Area School. We have been lucky to have had Joann Weckert join us in meetings, answering questions and assisting in advice regarding this new step forward for the Children's Centre. I would also like to thank the other governing council members for their work and support throughout the year which has helped make this process of change run smoothly. New changes will also continue into 2016 as we welcome a new Director, a few new staff and a new group of children and parents. To conclude my report I'd like to recognise the work, effort and achievements of the staff. They are the people that make this Centre the place that our children have all loved coming to and have learnt many things. We make special mention to Louise, Kim and Jo who will be leaving and to show our appreciation. This appreciation extends to all of the families over your time at the Centre. We are grateful for your dedication to your work and the care you have provided for the children and we hope that your roles in 2016 are just as rewarding.



Governing Council Evidence Seen For Quality Areas

- QA1 - Loose parts; Staff implementing Professional Development; Child inquiry/directed curriculum; You Can Do It program; Profile Folders and feedback were comprehensive and informative; Photos; Learning Stories
- QA2 - Body part discussion in Child Protection Curriculum; Hungry Caterpillar with foods; Campfire with food; Natural play; Gardening - growing and cooking vegetables; Show and Tell growing theme - bring plants; Buying ingredients at the shop for cooking; Gymjams; Beach Day.
- QA3 - Volcanoes - following through with child ideas and interests; Gardening; Learning a second language.
- QA4 - Community mindset. Would like to have staffing confirmed earlier with possibility of meeting staff during pre-entry visits; want continuity of staff.
- QA5 - Good relationships with families; Personal relationships with families; Looking out for wellbeing of families.
- QA6 - Amalgamation discussions; Good relationships with the schools - visits; Excursions; PPG-catering and fundraising; Playgroup; Rural care.
- QA7 - Management of amalgamation-community and parents informed; Management of Rural care and Kindy; Organisation of professional development days.

Quality Improvement Plan



The year started with the plan being written using the self review from 2014. Regular reviews of the plan throughout the year ensured that targets were being achieved and identified issues were being worked on. In Term 2 the centre received the National Quality Standard Assessment Visit. This process ensured that all staff members were familiar with the QIP and areas of improvement. We were also able to highlight our strengths. The Assessment Rating was: Working Towards National Quality Standard. This was due to Rural Care staffing ratios that DECD is following up corporately, as we were following DECD procedures. In each area our ratings were: QA1, QA2, QA3, QA6, QA7 - Meeting National Quality Standard; QA4-Working Towards National Quality Standard; QA5-Exceeding National Quality Standard. It is really rewarding to have an Exceeding rating for working with children which we see as our core business.

TARGET AREAS	ACHIEVEMENTS	NEXT STEPS
ATTENDANCE		
To have all children attending 95%. To have no unexplained absences.	Attendance has been promoted with families. Only 8% of the absences were unexplained; 38.6% sickness and 52.9% family reasons. There were 3 families who went on overseas family holidays for extended periods and a few other families having holidays. There was quite a bit of illness in the community including gastro, whooping cough and school sores which kept children away from the centre.	Continue to promote attendance with new families.

TARGET AREAS	ACHIEVEMENTS	NEXT STEPS
NUMERACY		
For all staff to be familiar with the Numeracy and Literacy Indicators For families to understand what numeracy is and how they can help their children more with numeracy learning; For children to learn what numeracy is and gain a love of learning.	Staff used the preschool indicators to assist in collecting observation data. The indicators were used when writing statements of learning for each child. All Kindergarten staff attended a Numeracy Indicator professional development session with Primary Maths Association. Children were exposed to numeracy and mathematical language throughout their learning. A specific literacy and numeracy area was developed with different activities placed there for children to explore and investigate.	Implementation of partnership approach to numeracy. Parent numeracy information sessions. Continue deeper professional development for staff.
Identified Issue/Success Measure	Progress/Achievement	Next Steps
<u>QA1 Educational Program and Practice</u>		
Documentation of program not encompassing all discussions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program to be evidence based All discussions are recorded in the program folder Rural Care staff having time to reflect on their program and make the program cyclic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program to include: activities, individual learning, reflection and progress of children's learning Rural Care staff new to the position; Program not reflecting children's abilities and interests especially under 2s; Educators being able to scaffold the learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural Care staff confident with their knowledge of children's learning Rural Care program to include individual goals and reflections Observation folder being used to collect individual child observation folders Under 2s included in the program and scaffolded in their learning 	Melissa created proformas to use to record the evidence so written not just in discussions, staff have made a concerted effort to ensure that they write down evidence weekly. Programs are hand written and updated with child interests for the table activities fortnightly. Program review and planning discussions are recorded fortnightly at staff meeting. Completed child interest forms are used to guide the planning. Program format was adapted for Term 4 so that staff were able to record the spontaneous learning and loose parts learning in a more explicit format. Children are doing project work as part of Reggio approach. Louise has been working with the Rural Care staff to develop a program that encompasses age appropriate activities, a review cycle and child initiated activities. After a trial it was decided to adapt the format again to include each child's individual learning goal within the fortnightly program through the planned experiences. Rural Care staff have been completing a program cycle including fortnightly reviews. Observation notes for each child and an ILP goal has been set up with Rural Care staff recording learning. Louise has had discussions with staff around scaffolding the under 2s and the difference in the programming and interactions.	Quality Area 1.1.2 Culture - find out more and include each child's culture into the program. Get families involved. Continue Under 2 focus with Rural Care staff. Develop program format that includes Individual Learning Goals, so that it is not an adjunct to the program but included.
<u>QA 2 Children's Health and Safety</u>		
Lunchboxes containing lots of food from the orange and red groups of the healthy eating chart <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lunchboxes with more 'green' foods than 'orange and red' 	After monitoring lunchboxes during Term 1, they were fairly healthy. It was decided to use information with families as required. Staff have been role modelling healthy eating which started discussions about what things staff were eating. Lunchtime discussions included eating 'green' foods first and then 'red' foods and that red foods are sometimes foods. Healthy cooking experiences fortnightly gave another time for discussion. Recipes were sent home as lunchbox ideas.	Monitor lunchboxes and provide healthy eating information as required.
<u>QA3 Physical Environment</u>		
Safety of outdoor equipment No access to bathroom from outside <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Action plan updated with tasks completed All equipment meeting standards New centre with outdoor toilet access Minimal natural environments for the children to learn in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New garden beds New natural play spaces 	Daily outdoor safety checks were completed as well as termly larger safety checks. Minor maintenance tasks were completed during a working bee; extra pest control arranged for red back spiders' and soft fall was replenished as required. Child projects focussed on gardening, planting, recycling; outdoor area used for different learning experiences including a campfire; natural resources used at the collage table; visit to Botanic Gardens learning about biodiversity. One project was to create new natural play spaces: logs, tyres, plants, garden pots were added after a letter to families inspired donations. A Show and tell focus where children brought in plants/seeds and planted them in the garden assisted in the ownership of the garden. Governing Council members have been interested in the outdoor learning environment and providing resources for this.	New centre - develop the garden area and natural play spaces.

Identified Issue/Success Measure	Progress/Achievement	Next Steps
<u>QA4 Staffing Arrangements</u>		
<p>Staff professional development not included yearly updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff completed required training • Certificates displayed and in staff folders 	<p>After discussion it was decided that whole staff team PD sessions were more beneficial as everyone had a common understanding and learning could be implemented into the centre. 16/3/15 Bug Busters Training completed by all. 31/8/15 RAN Training completed by all staff. All staff will have completed their First Aid update on 14/12/15. Rural Care staff are working towards their Diploma qualifications.</p>	<p>Rural Care staff to complete their Diploma.</p> <p>CPR training for all staff.</p> <p>Rural Care ratios changed with DECD policy and procedure changes.</p>
<u>QA5 Relationships with Children</u>		
<p>Some children “fly under our radar” and not have much information recorded for them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All children have notes written on them in the folder 	<p>ILP focus groups has made staff more aware of children in their groups; Learning Story writing list assists to identify children who ‘fly under the radar’. All children have notes in the observation folder. All children have ILPs and work samples. Staff are visually seeing the children who are missed by the lack of notes or learning story not written. Staff spend time with these children</p>	
<u>QA6 Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities</u>		
<p>Governing Council members not taking ownership of the discussion and decisions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents adding agenda items • In-depth discussions before decisions made • At least 1 Rural Care parent on Governing Council <p>Families not having information about services and parenting information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All centre families receive information on a yearly schedule • All families aware of services available to them <p>New service providers not known to staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff know support agency contacts • Current information displayed <p>Transition to school is just visits without shared understandings of children’s learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New transition procedure developed, written and implemented with schools • Play-based learning handout <p>Minimal documentation of staff conversations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child records include staff conversations • More information written on referrals 	<p>During 2015 the Governing Council have been proactive. Members have added agenda items. There have been in-depth discussions this year during meetings before decisions have been made. Amalgamation discussions have been good with lots of questions and views, an extra meeting was also held. Rural Care families were formally invited to the AGM and other meetings throughout the year. We have 1 Rural Care parent rep.</p> <p>Parent information has been sent out through communication books regularly. A folder of resources with a schedule is being developed. Healthy Family Team information was sourced and used by staff and given to families as required. Information is in the front of the roll book folder.</p> <p>We will attempt to have meetings with MAS and MLS staff. Louise is working with Australian Curriculum coordinator on transition programs. Louise had a meeting with David Field (MLS) about their school intakes and policies. Some chats with MLS Reception teacher during transition visits. During parent teacher interviews in Term 1 staff promoted the benefits of play-based learning and the benefits of Kindergarten. This led to only 3 from the possible 8 children starting school in Term 3 at the Lutheran School.</p> <p>A folder has been developed for the program review which also includes staff reflections. Child observations and information is documented in the child observation folder. Preschool Access Profile forms are now completed for children with referrals and more information written. Reflections fortnightly at staff meeting.</p>	<p>Continue to send out regularly information to families about services and parenting tips.</p> <p>Continue Transition discussions with both schools. Use the partnership continuity of learning group as basis of moving forward.</p>

Identified Issue/Success Measure	Progress/Achievement	Next Steps
QA7 Leadership and Service Management		
Parent feedback not being used effectively <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent feedback informing the program Staff not interrogating research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff aware of new research Staff changing practise when required 	Parent feedback has been used in programming and children's ILP goals. Feedback was discussed during staff meetings after the termly profile feedback sheets were returned. Rural Care update child routine sheets regularly which are used to change individual routines. Annual Parent opinion surveys that were returned, were positive with good comments. Governing Council discussions were positive towards the program and management of the centre. Staff started looking at Carla Rinaldi report. Staff meetings were used for staff discussions which included: Dispositions and DECD Numeracy and Literacy Standards. The Loose parts philosophy was discussed and implemented after attendance at a couple of professional development sessions	Continue to look into the Reggio Approach. Continue with interrogation of professional development learning.



Familiarisation of Indicators of Preschool Literacy and Numeracy

All staff attended professional development with Primary Maths Association on the Numeracy Indicators. A discussion and brainstorm produced a list of activities and experiences that were offered and which indicators they fit with. Statements of Learning were written with the indicators as the basis for Literacy and Numeracy. Louise was involved in the Results Plus program for the partnership and has been developing a partnership approach.

Intervention and Support Programs

Bilingual Support: During Term 1 we received funding for Bilingual Support. This was used to assist the child and family to become familiar with the Centre and routines. The worker and all staff encouraged the use of English by the child as the family requested.

Preschool Support: The children who received Preschool Support had programs implemented with a worker. 2 were for speech and language, 1 child had assistance with behavior and being able to regulate themselves in the learning environment. Other children with mild speech who didn't qualify for Preschool Support were also supported by the site with speech and language programs.

We had no Aboriginal 3 year olds enrolled this year.

Enrolments

Enrolment by Term				
Year	T 1	T 2	T 3	T 4
2013	35	34		
2014	28	27	22	24
2015	25	27	22	

Enrolments were low compared to previous years although it is the same since Same Start Day was implemented. Enrolments reduce in Term 3 as some families opt to send their children to the Lutheran School at this entry point. During Parent Interviews, staff talked with families about the importance of play based learning and being in the Preschool environment before School. This led to less children starting school in Term 3 so enrolments were steady. There is always some movement of families in and out of the area as well throughout the year.

Attendance

Staff have worked to build relationships with families and promote attendance at the centre. Attendance levels have been similar over the years. Non-attendance is explained through family holidays and sickness. The amount of unexplained absences has decreased dramatically.

Attendance Improvement Initiative Funding.

Attendance was promoted with all families. Although a specific session wasn't held, conversations at drop off and pick up times encouraged enrolment and the learning that was happening by attending. Families whose children were absent for a week without an explanation received a phone call to find out about the absence and encourage attendance.

Feeder Schools

There has been a dramatic change to the percentage going to the Lutheran School compared to the Area School. This is due to the amount of siblings already attending the schools and also the strongly faithed Lutheran families with children this year. Families are happy with both schools.

Attendance Percentage				
Year	T 1	T 2	T 3	T 4
2013 Centre	85.7	88.2		
2013 State	88.7	88.0		
2014 Centre	82.1	81.5	86.4	83.3
2014 State	90.0	88.9	86.1	87.1
2015 Centre	92.0	88.9	86.4	
2015 State	90.5	88.5	86.3	

Feeder Schools	2013	2014	2015
Maitland Area	41.7	43.8	20.0
Maitland Lutheran	58.3	56.3	80.0
Total	100.0	100.1	100.0

Parent Opinion Surveys

Out of 25 surveys sent out 13 surveys were returned. This is 50% which is the most surveys to be returned in the last few years.

There were majority of positive responses with 1 response that disagreed in some areas. The area for improvement needs to be: I am well informed about Preschool activities, this was the worst scoring questions. Positive responses were: My child's teachers know what my child can do and what he/she needs

to learn; My child's teachers clearly inform me about the learning program; My child's teachers provide help and support when it is needed; This preschool provides a safe and secure environment; This preschool encourages children to have a sense of pride in their achievement; I feel welcome at this preschool; Children from all backgrounds are
cultures are treated fairly at this preschool; The staff always listen to what I have to say about my child's
 development and needs; I am encouraged to be involved in the preschool in all kinds of ways; Overall, I am satisfied
with the preschool's planning. The best overall was: Parents have the opportunity to be involved in the development
 of school plans through Governing Council. This is great as it has been a focus of the year to have parents involved
 in Governing Council and part of the Amalgamation process. Survey comments included: I feel that my child is
 getting everything she needs; Staff have been amazing support to my child and continue to do so; Very good; I cant
thank the staff enough for their support and communication to the specific needs and development of my child's
 skills. Cannot single out any one staff member—they are all fantastic; Staff have always been encouraging for
 parents to attend all Kindy activities; Each and every staff member individually brings fine qualities to our Preschool,



to make a fantastic team. It is a pleasure, as a parent, to work closely with them; I feel * has had an amazing time at Kindy so far this year. He has
improved in his social, fine motor and communication skills; Maitland Children's
 Centre are incredibly lucky to have the staff that they do. My child has been
 encouraged to be the best she could be. Our town is very lucky to have the
 centre that we do! Thank you so very, very much.

We also received some other parent end of year comments: Thanks Thank you
 for doing such a great job this year. * has had a lot of fun and has learnt heaps.
 She has been well prepared for school; Thank you for your dedication and hard
 work this year; everyone for a fantastic year, * has had a ball!

Child end of year comment: Thank you very much for teaching me at Kindy this
 year. I have had a great time and have enjoyed learning and playing with you all. I really enjoyed the campfire that
 we had and also making the volcano that erupted!!

Overall I believe we have had a great year and this is shown through the positive comments from families
 throughout the year as well as in the survey responses.

Accountability

Criminal History Screenings were completed for all Governing Council members, work experience students and
 Ancillary Staff who required updating. During Term 1 we were audited and were compliant with the screenings. All
 screenings were recorded on a spreadsheet and kept securely in the office.

Financial Statement

	Funding Source	Amount
1	Grants: State	Maintenance: \$5296
2	Grants: Commonwealth	Attendance: \$7082
3	Parent Contributions	\$6262
4	Other	Rural Care: \$4500

