Unley Kindergarten
Annual Report
2015
1. CONTEXT

The Unley Kindergarten is situated 4 Km from the city. The Kindergarten is a full time 2 staff site operated by Department for Education and Child Development on property leased from the City of Unley Council. The Kindergarten is situated in close proximity to a range of community and educational services. Many children move between the sites during the course of the day as the range of facilities/services is used in conjunction with Kindergarten. Families from across the metro area try to gain access to our site as it is seen as a well located area in close proximity to the city for working and studying parents. We have had to invoke a priority of access due to high demand for our service. A register is developed of enrollments. We have a designated catchment area and work closely with our local Preschools. Families come from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds including New Zealand, Greece, Italy, India, China, and Malaysia. Although English is the main language spoken, most children are becoming bilingual through the support of other languages at Kindergarten. The majority of children commence their formal education at Unley Primary which is a short walk away from the Kindergarten. Our Kindergarten has had up to 46 children enrolled in any given time during 2015. The Kindergarten operates 9 three hour sessions per week to provide 15 hours of preschool. Children are able to access a combination of full and half day sessions per week, in their eligible year. Many children use our service in conjunction with other early childhood services within the community. We continue to have many children accessing a range of services private & DECD including speech therapy, OT, Bilingual Program & Pre-school support.

At the end of the year all children will continue their educational journey in one of our neighbouring schools – State, Catholic and Independent systems. We continue to use our intervention resources to support children with additional learning issues to give them a more focused and targeted learning program. Having a regular speech therapist during the year has enabled this cohort to make some gains in the area of communication. Due to the difficult layout of our facility it is essential for safety reasons to ensure that we have a high adult child ratio at all times to support all our children in accessing our site and curriculum. This does impact on our site budget quite significantly. We will continue where our budget allows supporting this group of children who have significant learning difficulties.

2. REPORT FROM GOVERNING COUNCIL

This year Governing Council has been made up of Chairperson Lisa, Secretary Emma, Nicole, Yisi, Miriam Stacey and Linda. We have had a great year working with Ann and Annie; we have had lots of fun and are really proud of our achievements.

Our fundraising throughout the year has raised $4599.60 which is a great effort and demonstrates the fantastic support we receive from our community. In term 1 we held the Happy Hour Raffle, we are very grateful to all the families with their generous donations of wine allowing us to raise $848 through raffle ticket sales.

In term 2 we held the Art Show. Our children created and displayed their artworks for families to purchase. This year we decided to hold the Art show on a Sunday morning which was a great success. We had lots of positive comments from our families who really enjoyed this format and felt that it increased their connection with kindy. We sold pancakes, which we could not cook quickly enough to meet demand! We raised $2347.95.

In term 3 we held the kindy sports day. The children and the staff worked so hard to plan and create this event, which was a fantastic learning opportunity for the students. It was such a pleasure to see the students on the day so excited and proud of their efforts. It was made even more special by Kylie one of our parents having worked with the students on their gross motor skills and helped the students with their warm up on the day. It was a real highlight for all the families to share their child’s special day. Families sponsored their child’s participation in the event; we had a sausage sizzle and a book stall. Community feedback was really positive and it was so lovely to see extended family enjoying this event. We raised $1403.65.

This term we are having a Christmas raffle, again with generous donations from our families and ticket sales. The raffle will be drawn at the end of year celebration at the Botanic Gardens.

We would like to acknowledge the fantastic support we have received from the community for example donations from Woolworths, Coles, Unley Meats and Bakers Delight, we could not raise the funds we have without them.
Throughout the term we reviewed a number of policies. We inputted into the Quality Improvement Plan, which has evolved over the year. This is the first year we have had sustainability on the agenda. We appointed Miriam who created a comprehensive sustainability plan for the kindergarten.

We approved the plan for the upgrade of the garden space, creating a wonderful learning in play environment for our children. We have received really positive comments from parents looking forward to their children enjoying this next year.

A new blind has been installed outside. An upgrade to the kitchen is being carried out making better use of the space.

We have been so lucky this year with support from our families in so many ways either contributing wine or goods or giving up their time to help, attending our events and contributing to fundraising activities.

We would like to say a big thank you to Ann and Annie for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. We all feel that kindy is a very special place for our children and for us and we have enjoyed being so involved this year. We wish you all lots of fun and learning for 2016.

3. HIGHLIGHTS 2015

During the year children engaged in a range of planned and emergent curriculum experiences. Staff have worked collaboratively to enact pedagogical changes with a major focus on familiarization of the preschool numeracy and literacy indicators. Our major highlight was a staff educational trip to Melbourne to view natural play spaces and sustainable practices in the early years. This was a catalyst in expanding our thinking around implementing new ideas into our program. The opportunity for all staff to work together through the partnership networks has been highly valued. Professional learning has focused on training together and attending – Michael Fullan, Leading Numeracy & Literacy and Echo events to name a few. Staff also presented their recent learning at a conference titled “sustainable practice in a small space.”

Children’s voice has involved children in developing ideas for their own learning through an inquiry process & project approach. Children have then been able to share & celebrate their learning with others & their families particularly through documented learning stories, photo displays & reflective daily practice and Information in the floor book

Other events & curriculum topics have included:

### Term 1:
- Harmony Day celebrations
- Greek Festival (Family/community involvement)
- V.I.P. Day
- Fire Appliance visit
- Chicken hatching program
- Outdoor natural play space development

### Term 2:
- Art Show- Breakfast (Family Involvement)
- Photos
- Aboriginal cultural session- Trent
- Trish/Sarah- music movement session
- Child Protection curriculum
- Campfire & Damper

### Term 3:
- Science, Book and Numeracy weeks
- Cubby building
- Woolworths earn & learn stickers – Community help
- PE with Kylie & sports day
  - Workshops with children-
  - cooking, clay, art
- Sustainable practices

### Term 4:
- Teddy bear picnic
- Gardening
- Remembrance Day
- Visits to Unley Library
- Visits to and from school
- Orientation for children starting 2016 at Kindy
- End of year celebrations at Botanic Gardens- family event

**Staff Involvement:** Throughout the year staff attended the Greenhill South Partnership Early Years/Teachers Network meetings which focused on partnership directions and priorities, literacy and numeracy, and DECD strategic directions.

**Families** have been involved in many of the above mentioned events as well as supporting the curriculum – dance, talking about their jobs, borrowing animals and kits from the Nature Education Resource Centre, termly Child and Youth Health Checks etc.
4. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice:

- Achievements: Staff has become familiar with the indicators and chose to unpack each area with a focus on pattern, number, data, and space. We brainstormed our ideas in each area to try and develop a common language.

- Next Steps: To use the indicators to inform their planning and teaching, to monitor children’s numeracy and literacy development, and to inform the Statement of learning for discussion with and reporting to families. The information will also be used to support the transition of children from preschool to school.

Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety:

- Achievements: A Parent provided a regular physical education program during term 3 with a fortnightly focus on different skill areas – balance, jumping etc. This was a lead in to preparing the children for their sports day which they had planned during the term. The site had visits from a sporting organization to experience a range of gross motor and group activities. We engaged a dance company to provide music and a movement session during term 4 as this was a particular interest of many of our children.

- Quality Area 3: Physical environment:

- Achievements: The outside area was transformed during term 2 as we created small natural spaces by sand area and this became a great source of ingredients for our mud kitchen. A herb bed was built near the sand area and this became a great source of ingredients for our regular cooking. A log through which water can run through also added another dimension to the children’s learning. The wooden log structure erected near the swing area has become a flexible area for children to use loose parts and creatively and imaginatively engage with their natural environment.

- Quality Area 4: Financial and resource management:

- Achievements: This became a whole site focus embraced by all. By the end of the year we had considerably reduced our landfill. Children were educating their families and engaging in numerous rubbish audits. The children became confident in their understanding and used phrases such as “No plastic – that’s Fantastic”. Staff were asked to present at a conference with our focus on “Sustainability in a
small space”. We also attended workshops and visited sites in Melbourne as part of a study tour to gain insight into sustainable practice in the early years.

**Next Steps:** Continue on in 2016 with a focus on community and working with third part providers. Work with NRM to review and add to our Site Environmental Management plan.

**Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements:**
- To develop a professional learning community at partnership level for all staff

**Achievements:** The partnership came to an agreement to release 1 teacher each term for half a day to engage in professional learning. This was highly valued from the members as they shared practice and visited sites. They explored the numeracy and literacy indicators as well as working collaboratively on transition processes with the early years staff from school. Staff also attended Results plus workshops as a team which was a powerful learning opportunity in the partnership. Staff engaged in sessions to explore 21st century learning and teaching at site and partnership levels

**Next Steps:** To continue and look at a full day to allow staff to familiarize themselves with the partnership plan and direction for 2016
- To foster and utilise each staff’s members strength, interests and expertise throughout the curriculum

**Achievements:** Staff provided regular workshops each Wednesday in an area of their interest with a small group of children. These were well planned and coordinated and included cooking, art, science, clay, loose parts. Children really embraced these and constantly talked about these sessions. The children had a chance to attend each focus area of learning at some stage during the term. This provided a set time for each educator to work with small groups and document individual learning and planning around their topic.

**Next Steps:** Continue concept and format in 2016 –

**Quality Area 5: Relationships with children:**
- To be able to identify signs of children’s social and emotional learning and development, and use these to support children’s future learning, mental health and wellbeing – explore “Executive functioning”

**Achievements:** Staff have completed extensive reading about the executive functioning skills and have used this knowledge as a lens to observe children’s development with a particular focus on pretend play. Educators have worked with children on play plans to extend sustained themes and bookmaking for creating scripts and practicing retelling stories. We have used Plan, Roles, Props, Extended time frame, and Language as a framework to gain an understanding of children’s stages of make believe play. An emphasis has been placed on scripts, scenarios, roles and language in this context. Staff have also explored the link between pretend play and literacy development and the impact this has on narratives in later schooling. We worked closely with Julie James our speech pathologist around this area.

**Next Steps:** Continue on in 2015 and working with our speech therapist

**Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities:**
- To provide relevant information in a range of home languages and develop parent resources in our site

**Achievements:** NQS information has been downloaded in Hindi and Chinese for our families. We have also provided information around sustainability, literacy and numeracy tips in these languages for families. These resources are displayed around the Kindergarten.

**Next Steps:** Continue to build up resources for families from a range of cultures to support their understanding of the learning that happens in Preschool and how they can build on this at home.
- Enhance and further develop community partnerships that focus on consultation, collaboration and communication to support children’s wellbeing and learning as they transition through these points

**Achievements:** We have engaged in meetings with agencies and other services to develop strategies to work together. Close liaison with Unley Primary School continues as a real focus – transition and pedagogy around Numeracy & Literacy.

**Next Steps:** Continue and embed in 2016 to develop, implement and review our transition plan that aligns with our Partnership Transition Agreement in terms of outcomes for each child

**Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management:**
- A well-documented cycle of planning

**Achievements:** A clear process for collecting, documenting and reviewing has been refined and is understood by all educators.

**Next Steps:** Implement and review
- Develop and improve archiving processes

**Achievements:** This has commenced with many records now being approved to be stored off site. This has been done in accordance with DECD archival processes.

**Next Steps:** Continue in 2016

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5. **INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

Special Needs: In 2015, 17% of the total enrolment of children had special needs including communication; speech and language delay, sensory processing issues. There were four children who were bilingual and received support from the Bilingual Program. Their language was Mandarin and
Cantonese. All these children had relevant plans and programs developed by staff and DECD consultants, and other agencies involved with specific children. There were Individual Learning Plans for children with special needs.

Children’s Learning – Statement of Learning:
Each child received a Statement of Learning including termly reflections and a summative report during term 4. All children had gained self-confidence by the end of their Kindergarten year and this was reflected in their learning attainments. During 2015 there were 46 children who exited kindergarten with Statement of Learning Reports -being 25 girls and 21 boys. Staff reported against the National Early Years Learning Framework: using the 5 learning outcomes with a focus on Literacy and numeracy.

Concepts of Print: Data demonstrated significant improvement in children’s understanding of concepts of print. We believe the Book Making Workshops have supported this improvement along with capitalising on opportunities to reinforce these concepts throughout the curriculum, e.g. as we read big books to children, children reading our Kaurna acknowledgement.

Phonological Awareness: We have noticed significant improvement over the year in children’s awareness and understanding of rhyme. We capitalise on every opportunity throughout the curriculum to notice with the children the rhyming-in books, songs, nude food rhyme. Our data demonstrated not such a significant improvement in the area of Starting Sound awareness. This will become a target for 2016 literacy planning.

Quantifying my world: We observed children’s interaction with numeracy materials and noticed their ability to count to 10, recognise numerals 1-10 and their understanding of simple addition, subtraction and division, e.g. “If you had 5 bananas and you gave me 1, how many would you have left?” We found that most children had a very good understanding of number and our numeracy focus was to extend these children’s numeracy learning opportunities, providing challenges and opportunity to theorise about number in their world.

Analyzing, reading and organizing data: We observed children’s interaction with numeracy materials and noticed their ability to sort a variety of objects and communicate about their sorting, e.g. “what is your rule?” We challenged them with more complex classification and asked them to guess my rule e.g. plane, bird, helicopter- they can all fly.
6. STUDENT DATA

6.1 Enrolments

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Based on person counts in the two week reference period each term.

Enrolments have remained steady and are in line with our deemed site capacity. A high demand is placed on our limited vacancies from our local and wider community. A priority of access is in place. The new staffing ratio for 2016 will impact further on our enrolment numbers for the following years.

NESB – Preschool enrolments- Over the last three years there has been a steady increase in the number of enrolments of children commencing Kindergarten with English as their second language. This is reflected by the charts below.

No ATSI Preschool enrolments at Unley Kindergarten during the last 3 years

6.2 Attendance

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Based on attendances recorded in the two week reference period each term, and calculated to an average unadjusted daily attendance (deemed attendance). Attendance percentages are based on the calculated deemed attendance (integer), divided by the number of enrolments.

Attendance data suggest that the Centre attendance rate is slightly lower than the State average in Terms 1 & 2 in each year but greater than state average in term 3. Many of our families go on vacation or return to their home countries at the beginning of each term early in the year. This is a common trend over the past few years.

6.3 Destination – Feeder Schools

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The Feeder Schools data indicates that the majority of children begin their schooling at Unley Primary. It also demonstrates that families generally start their children in the local government schools. Only a small percentage in 2016 will be accessing the non-government system. This is reflective of our current cohort.

7. CLIENT OPINION

Surveys were provided to a random sample of 23 families during term 3. Thirteen responses were received. The majority of responses demonstrated high level of satisfaction with all areas. The following graphs are an aggregation of the responses and the percentages are averages.
100% of the responses were in the agree to strongly agree category in Teaching and Learning

Comment:
The teachers at Unley Kindergarten have been beyond expectations. They definitely have the heart and passion for learning with our children.
I am learning about how to support my child with learning and development from the teachers, which is a wonderful bonus.
We have been well advised about the topics being taught each term and I regularly see evidence that my child is learning new concepts and skills. The teachers are kind and knowledgeable and the children respond well to them.
I am very excited by the fact that our daughter comes home and communicates what she has learned throughout the week. I am also happy that she is showing signs of stepping outside of her comfort zone - something she has struggled with - the teachers are really showing a positive influence.
I am very satisfied with the preschool.

80% of the responses were in the agree to strongly agree category in Support of Learning
20% of the responses were in the neutral category

Comment:
My child doesn't have any particularly special needs but I am sure that those who have would be well supported in this environment.
8. ACCOUNTABILITY

All teachers have a clearance through the Teachers Registration Board (Director, Teacher, and Relief Teacher’s). Early Childhood Workers who have worked in the roles of preschool support and bilingual provided their documentation at the beginning of the year. All Governing Council Members of 2015 either had a criminal history check; some were teachers or worked for DECD therefore had a check through the teacher’s registration process. For a few we had to apply through DECD. This was done late in 2014 to avoid any delays to carrying out roles. Third party employees – cleaner also provided their certificate. An audit was conducted earlier in the year. The Director keeps a spreadsheet of a current data base on the computer and archives as required. Hard copies are held in a staff folder.

92% of the responses were in the agree to strongly agree category in Relationships and Communication

8% of the responses were in the neutral category

Comment

They’re very inclusive. There are portfolios we can access, a white board that illustrates the week’s activities, and newsletters. Ann works hard to communicate with parents. I also really liked the parent teacher interviews

100% of the responses were in the agree to strongly agree category in Leadership and decision making

Comment:

The kindergarten leader is clearly well experienced and organized.

Other comments:

Thank you for providing such an engaging program in such and enriching environment, with such engaged and switched on teachers who really care about the children and clearly know so very much.

Thank you for accepting us into your community and for helping our child excel

A fantastic Kindy, we hope our younger children will have the same opportunities this Kindy offers and the same experience our current child has.
9. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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