



The John Francis Clark Memorial Kindergarten

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The John Francis Clark Memorial Kindergarten Annual Report 2013



Government of South Australia

Department for Education and
Child Development

Context

Preschool Name: The John Francis Clark Memorial Kindergarten

Preschool Number: 4668

Preschool Director: Heather Fuss

Region: Northern Adelaide

Our centre is a stand-alone kindergarten located next to Ardtornish Primary School. Most of our children have two adults at home, at least one of whom is in the paid labour force. We have nearly 100% fee paying parents and a strong support for our fundraising efforts. We have had a small but very enthusiastic Governing Council this year with committed parents and one Tea Tree Gully Council Member. In 2013 we have again had many staff changes throughout the year. Heather Fuss has continued as director for the second year at the Preschool. We have also had changes in the teaching staff. Tina Denny retired and Arja Blomskog took leave in term 3. Carolyn Bury filled in during Arja's absence and has consistently been employed part time by the preschool throughout the year. We have had Bec Thompson as our half time ECW, Jenni Lane has provided the majority of our preschool support and intervention, supplemented by Bec Thompson and Jo Mickley on Jenni's non-rostered days. Jo Mickley has filled a need for increased admin support on a Friday and Cherryl Tatterelli has provided finance support. At the beginning of 2013 we began operating from the Ardtornish Primary School Hall. The building was refurbished to be suitable for our use as a Kindergarten. We will continue to operate from the hall while the Ardtornish Children's Centre is being built on the Kindergarten site. We have had overwhelming support from the school community to make this transition as smooth as possible and would like to extend our thanks to everyone involved.

Quality Improvement Plan

Quality Improvement Plan

In 2012 we noticed that many of our goals were compliance based and lacked a focus on improvement for learning. This year we aimed to identify improvement priorities with a higher focus on children's learning while still ensuring that we are ensuring compliance with the national quality standard and associated laws and regulations. The following is a summary of the progress we have made in 2013 towards key improvement targets.

Quality Area 1

1.1 To ensure that all areas of the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) are reflected in all of our planning and assessment

Strategies

- review our planning documentation
- update our planning documentation to reflect all outcomes of the EYLF
- Request feedback/support from the early years coordinator associated with our centre
- Reflect on feedback and make any appropriate changes
- review the way that we document Individual learning plan's
- update ILP documentation to reflect all outcomes of the EYLF
- Attach comments to children's work samples and photographs that include a link to the outcome that the child has achieved or is working towards

Evaluation measure

- All 5 areas of the EYLF are reflected in our Planning documentation and Individual Learning Plans (ILP)
- The language we use to comment on children's work sample is consistent with EYLF

Achievements

Our planning processes have dramatically and positively changed this year. Educators are actively planning learning experiences based on children's interests and potential for learning. They are considering and recording connections to EYLF. To achieve this outcome we sought support from the early years consultant, accessed professional learning opportunities and utilised our student free days to critically reflect on our processes, links between outcomes, utilising outcomes to describe children's learning and the spirit of the EYLF outcomes framework. We are aiming to make our planning and programming more accessible to families by displaying it in a family friendly way at the centre in 2014.

We reviewed our ILP format. It now reflects the EYLF outcomes. It is in draft format and requires finalisation. We will begin using the new format in 2014. Some of the work samples and all photographs in children's portfolios now have outcomes attached where appropriate.

1.2.3 All children (not requiring preschool support or intervention for speech and/or language delays or who speak English as a second Language) to achieve a level three or higher in the troll assessment by the end of their 4th term of preschool.

Strategies

- Assess and collect troll data
- Determine areas for improvement based on collected data
- Plan and implement strategies to assist children to develop in identified areas
- Staff to access training and development where appropriate to assist us to develop curriculum to meet children's needs
- Record observational notes of children's achievements during sharing box learning experience

Evaluation Measures

- Systematic data collection processes are in place to track children's learning of literacy skills
- Collated TROLL data indicates that the target group has achieved an overall score of level three or higher at the end of term 4

Achievements

We planned and implemented a number of strategies to build on our capacity to develop children's skills and understanding in each of these areas. We included rhyming as a literacy focus in our weekly planning at regular intervals and explicitly taught rhyming. We modelled rhyming and brought attention to examples of rhyming in stories, songs and daily conversation. We planned and provided opportunities for children to practice rhyming using a variety of methods including games, books, songs and group learning experiences. We review our programming and planning at staff meeting and make changes as necessary. We also utilised the Reflect Respect Relate self-reflection tool to analyse our interactions with children. This supported us to evaluate and improve on the ways that we were modelling language and including language learning in our daily routines and interactions with individual children (see Quality Area 5).

Teacher Rating of Oral Language and Literacy	Initial Assessment	Final Assessment
Starting a Conversation	2.94	3.87
Communicating Personal Experiences	3.15	3.75
Asking Questions	2.67	3.65
Talking While in Pretend Play	2.85	3.79
Recognising and Producing Rhymes	2.15	3.23
Varied Vocabulary	2.92	3.63
Intelligible Speech	3.77	3.94
Understanding and Following Instructions	3.33	3.87
Understanding and responding to Questions	2.98	3.77
Total	26.77	33.50

Stages of Development Indicated by Scores

Score	Stage	Developmental Age
0-17	Emerging	Below 4 years
18-24	Developing	4 Years
25-31	Well Developed	4 Years and 6 Months
32-36	Accomplished	5 Years

We had 52 children in our sample group. The sample group consists of all children transitioning to school during 2013 with the exception of children who have identified additional speech and language needs. These are the average results in each area of oral language and the total average of all areas. Each section is out of a maximum of four. There were 8 children who did not achieve a three or higher in all areas. All of these children still showed significant improvement in most areas of oral language. Of these 8 children, 1 had very low attendance, 2 had referrals for speech and language assessment and 3 experienced ongoing separation anxiety all of which may have effected their oral language development. The other 2 children both scored a 2 in rhyming and 3 or better in all other areas.

Quality Area 3

Our focus for quality area 3 has been the development of the new Children's Centre building and our temporary relocation. We have received a positive feedback from the community regarding the high level of presentation of the temporary preschool space and the way that educators have continued to provide high quality education and care while ensuring a smooth transition to our temporary location. We are very grateful to Ardtornish Primary School for their hospitality and the welcome that they have extended us throughout the year. We have had a considerable amount of input into the design of the new building and have provided feedback to the project team with a focus on meeting children's needs and providing a space conducive to high quality education and care. Construction of the new building is due to be complete early in 2014.

Quality Area 5

QA5 Utilise RRR to assess the quality of our interactions with children and utilise the information gathered to plan for improvement.

Strategies

- Use cameras to video tape observations
- To utilize a student free day to explore the document more deeply and practice using the scales with the sample observations provided with the document
- To perform a complete set of observations and scale them.
- Analyse the data and utilize it to guide future directions.

Evaluation Measures

- Staff discussion and feedback relating to their level of familiarity with the document and process for scaling
- The results of the scale

Achievements

We utilized one of our Pupil Free Days to work through a sample observation set to assist educators to become more familiar with the document and the formal scaling process. Educators reported that after having done this they felt confident using the scale. We also looked at connections between RRR, NQS and the curriculum framework.

We have utilised the Respect, Reflect, Relate assessment tool to assess the effectiveness of our interactions with children. The self-assessment indicated that staff interactions with children span the types of interaction outlined by the tool and that they are positive and have depth, supporting children's learning. There were a small number of indicators that we were unable to assess due to lack of gathered evidence. In 2014 we will investigate the meaning of these results.

Quality Area 6

6.1.2 To provide more opportunities for families to be involved in the program

Strategies

- Host an event each term and invite families
- Approach parents who have expressed interest in being involved individually
- Ask for volunteers to assist with programs and tasks in the fortnightly newsletter

Evaluation Measures

- Increase in the frequency of parent participation in the program
- Increase in the number of families actively involved in the program

Achievements

We were not able to host an event each term for the whole preschool. However, special visitors day, the art show and concert and the open day we had at the end of a block of dancing tuition were all very popular. We had a number of family and community members volunteer their time throughout the year and would like to thank those people for their generosity. We ran a parenting program called Building Emotional Understanding that was facilitated by Parenting by Connection. The program had good attendance and the majority of parents that attended gave positive feedback about the experience. Many families took home 'Can you help bags'. These were small preparation tasks that

assisted us to provide a range of activities and materials to children. As mentioned in the 2012 annual report, we have changed our thinking about parent involvement and have provided opportunities for families to volunteer their time outside of preschool hours. This has suited many of our working families and saw an increase in participation in this area. Overall participation decreased throughout the year. This correlates with the decrease in our numbers due to the transition to single intake.

John Buckell is implementing a just one thing program, to encourage more involvement across the campus. This will be implemented in 2014. We have also found that twilight play and other events have continued to have very low attendance numbers.

Heather Fuss is producing an assessment schedule to be implemented in 2014 including increased reporting to families and increased opportunities for families to provide information about their child.

Quality Area 7

7.3.5 To ensure that we have all of the required policies and procedures and that they suit the needs of children and families that access our centre

Strategies

- Collect examples of policies and procedures as well as DECD policies and procedures that are relevant to our context
- Develop policies and procedures that suit the needs of children and families that access our centre with opportunities for families to provide feedback

Evaluation Measures

- All required policies and procedures are available at the centre and suit the needs of families that access our centre

Achievements

John Buckell is working through philosophy, policy and procedure review. Site based policies have been written and accepted by governing council. We have provided opportunities for families to provide feedback. Copies of the new policies have been distributed. John is putting together a policy folder for families to access at the centre. Links to our policies are on our web site and will be updated to reflect our policy review in the near future. All required policies and procedures are available at the centre and suit the needs of families that access our centre. Heather Fuss has produced a review of our progress with policy and procedure documentation to be attached to our 2014 Quality Improvement Plan. John will continue to work with staff to document our procedures and additional policies that we feel would be beneficial for our site.

Intervention and Support Programs

Intervention and Preschool Support for children needing extra support has been provided by Jenni Lane, Jo Mickley and Bec Thompson this year. Children's learning goals varied depending on their needs. This year we again included play and social skills coaching in our intervention planning. We had a number of children who were finding it difficult to enter play, sustain play or interact during play. Targeted small group activities and play experiences were offered and children were explicitly and intentionally taught how to involve themselves in play. For a number of children, intervention and support took the form of extended transition to school in order to develop school readiness skills and familiarise identified children with the new environment and expected behaviors and routines. Our close relationship with Ardtornish Primary School has made this possible and has had a significant impact on children's confidence entering school. Individual children's progress towards their target learning is recorded in a learning journal. Educators' and families' anecdotal comments suggested that learning experiences and support provided were assisting children to develop the desired skills. Many families indicated that their children had shown a noticeable improvement in other settings as well.

Report from Governing Council

2013 has been a great and busy but always fun for the kids year at JFC Kindy. We began the year in late January, welcoming a new and rather small Governing Council, with Belinda Hussell as Secretary, Sue Armstrong as Treasurer, Kerrie Barlow as Fundraiser Coordinator, and myself as Chairperson. We may have been small, but we have had a supportive Committee this year, with much time and efforts being made to assist with various tasks and fundraisers throughout the year. A very sincere 'Thank You' must go to all members of the Committee, for all their hard work and diligence in fulfilling their various responsibilities.

Heather Fuss entered her second year as the Kindy Director in 2013, and she has fulfilled her responsibilities to the kids and the Kindy beautifully. Tina Denny retired part way through the year to many a sad face. She has and will be missed, but still fills in on occasion. Arja Blomskog continued to work part-time at the centre in a teaching role, taking leave in term 3. Bec Thompson has continued to fill the part-time ECW position.

Jenni Lane has provided most of the pre-school support and intervention, with Bec and Jo Mickley assisting on Jenni's non-rostered days. Jo has also provided administrative support and Cheryl Taterelli has provided finance support. Carolyn Bury also took on relief positions throughout the year due to some extended teacher absences and has consistently been employed at the Kindy part-time throughout the year. All the staff have taken a sincere interest in the kids and have shown respect for them at all times, even at some quite challenging moments. We acknowledge and appreciate their work.

As was the case in 2012, one of the main complications for Heather, the other staff and the Committee over the last year has been the constantly changing plans and dates for the opening of the Children's Centre. Much progress has been made, and the Centre should open within a few months. We appreciate the hours that Heather and the staff have spent pouring over designs and attending to meetings and inquiries from those responsible for the Children's Centre. Using the old image of a duck swimming so smoothly on a lake, the Kindy has appeared to run serenely and almost effortlessly, though I'm sure there was lots of leg work going on underneath that we couldn't see! In the meantime, the Kindy has remained in the old school hall, where it continues to look fresh and great, and provide for the needs of the children.

Much to our happiness the Children's Centre has been officially named, and will be known as The Ardtornish Children's Centre once it is opened.

John Buckell has continued in his role as Community Development Coordinator this year, and has once again been a great asset to the Kindy and the whole school community. He has continued to run programs, such as Twilight play and School Holiday activities. His enthusiasm for being involved with both the children and the Committee is appreciated by staff and parents/caregivers alike, but mostly by the kids themselves.

Over the year, a number of successful fundraisers were held, including the Hop-a-thon, the Art Show, tea towels, family photos and the Cadbury Chocolate Drive. The children also enjoyed various excursions, such as the Patch Theatre performance, as well as a number of events at the Kindy, such as the much loved Sunny Sun Safe. Special theme days were run, including the very popular Dress-up day, and the children were also given the opportunity during the year to visit and borrow from the School's library on Wednesdays.

We have many members of the Council retiring this year and once again, I would like to thank each member for their contributions and assistance on the Governing Council for 2013. I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome all of our new members. May 2014 be happy and successful for each of us and for the Ardtornish Children's Centre!

Katherine Nairn, Chairperson

Report from Community Development Coordinator

Uniting local family needs and community assets has progressed positively across the campus in 2013. Our key themes are building relationships, developing a child friendly community and encouraging positive health choices. Highlights included events such as the 'Child's Eye View' exhibition of pre-schooler's photos at the Tea Tree gully Library, Cycle Saturday, a Day with the Scouts and cross community work to build the school's food garden and the Butterfly Garden. Each further developed partnership with local services such as the Hope Valley Scouts, Tea Tree Gully Council, Kiwanis, the TTG BMX club and some very dedicated parents who assisted throughout the year.

Our ongoing University of SA student placement teams promoted active play and community awareness in the Kindy and Playgroup. The K Kids work for Disability SA, OSHC and Kindy children's gardens all contributed to improving the use of the food garden. Our appreciation and thanks to the members of the Grounds Committee, especially Michael Sneyd, and to Bruce Deny, for their substantial, on-going voluntary contributions to the campus environment.

The six week **Building Emotional Understanding** course in Term I and **Mark LeMessurier's** series of three workshops held at local schools and preschools in terms III & IV were well attended by DECD staff and parents. Local education and care services shared the cost of Mark's presentations.

Attendance at the **Twilight Play** Sessions for male relatives and carers faded towards the end of the year as kindy numbers reduced - we plan for a more inclusive evening program with new spaces and options in the Ardtornish Children's Centre. We are always open to suggestion and requests for activities and information to support parents of young children; be heard in 2014.

Many thanks to the school for generously accommodating me in 2013. Vale The John Francis Memorial Kindergarten.

John Buckell

Children's Centre CDC
Community Representative Governing Council

Student Data

Enrolments

Figure 1: Enrolments by Term

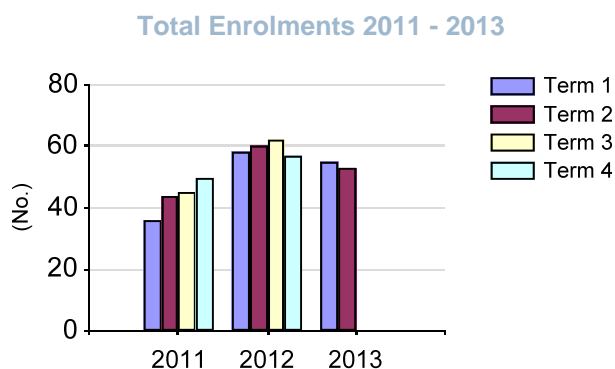


Table 1: Enrolments by Term

Enrolment by Term				
2011	36	44	45	50
2012	58	60	62	57
2013	55	53		

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

Excludes pre-entry.

Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

Our numbers increased in 2012 and we maintained similar enrolment patterns for the first part of 2013. The later part of 2013 saw a decline in our numbers due to the transition to single intake. We are expecting 48 enrolments as at the beginning of 2014. We expect that with the opening of the new centre and addition of additional programs including occasional care that we will again see an increase in our numbers.

Attendance

Figure 2: Attendance by Term

Attendance Percentages 2011 - 2013

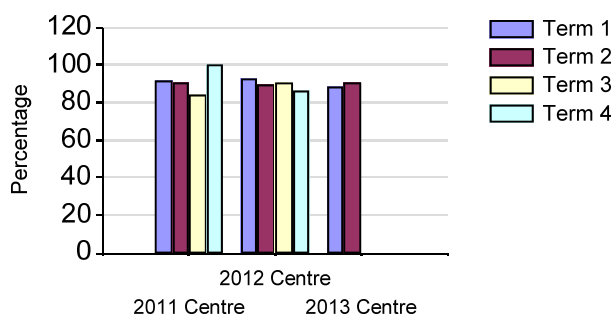


Table 2: Attendance Percentages 2011 - 2013

Attendance Percentage				
Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2011 Centre	91.7	90.9	84.4	100.0
2012 Centre	93.1	90.0	90.3	86.0
2013 Centre	89.1	90.6		
2011 State	89.9	89.1	88.4	89.6
2012 State	87.4	85.9	84.5	85.5
2013 State	88.7	88.0		

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. Excludes pre-entry

Note 1: Figures have been revised for previous years, using integer deemed attendance not decimal.

Note 2: Data for Term 3 and Term 4 2013 will not be reported. It is not comparable with previous years due to the transition to the Same First Day enrolment policy for preschools in 2013 creating a break in series.

Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

We have maintained attendance percentages above the state average over the past eighteen months. We encourage regular attendance. Absences are mostly due to illness, family holidays or emergencies. Most families report absences and their reasons to the Kindergarten. Prolonged absences that are not notified are followed up by centre educators and where appropriate families are assisted to re-engage with the preschool program.

Feeder Schools

Table 3: Feeder School Percentage Data 2011 - 2013

Feeder Schools				
Site number - Name	Type	2011	2012	2013
1540 - Ardtornish Primary School	Govt.	94.0	100.0	100.0
8385 - Saint David's Parish School	Non-Govt.	2.0		

8419 - Good Shepherd Luth Sch - Para Vista	Non-Govt.	2.0		
9115 - Prescott Primary Northern	Non-Govt.	2.0		
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0

Based on the percent of children currently enrolled who will attend school in the following year, where the expected school is known.

Due to rounding totals may not add up to 100%.

Source: Term 3 Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

Most of our children go to Ardtornish Primary School which is co-located next to our centre. We had a small number of children who went to private schools or other public schools in 2012 though this is not reflected in the above data. This may be due to late changes in children's intended school due to positions at private schools opening up or the families relocating to other areas.

Client Opinion

FAMILY OPINION SURVEY RESULTS (OUR OWN EXIT SURVEY)

We had 11 families respond to our family opinion survey. One family only filled out half of the survey.

Physical Standard

I being poor, 5 being excellent	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation/cleanliness/Maintenance				1	10
Upkeep of Children's equipment				1	10
Children's safety, standards of supervision				1	10

Comments

- Craft/Drawing supplies are always readily available
- The kindergarten is always kept so clean. I don't know how it's done given the amount of children that go there. Well done Heather for making the transition to the hall such a smooth one. Your efforts didn't go unrecognized!

Educational Standards

I being poor, 5 being excellent	1	2	3	4	5
The program helped your child			1	1	9
The program was relevant for 4 year old children's skills				1	10
Staff were caring and professional				2	9
The transition program reduced anxiety for your child going to school			1	2	8

Comments

- I would like to see the transition to school program extended to six weeks at the end of their last term if at all possible for future children. School visits excellent opportunity for children to better adapt.
- My child has enjoyed her time at kindy immensely. We are happy to see how she has grown socially and academically. The staff are kind and she feels safe there. I think there is a perfect balance of letting the children play/work independently or with teacher intervention.
- The transition program is great. It defiantly made the process of leading into full time kindergarten much easier.
- I think the transition program is a fantastic idea. It definitely helped with anxiety of my child and myself. I'm excited that he's excited for school!
- Love you guys!

Staff/Family Relationships

I being poor, 5 being excellent	1	2	3	4	5
You received information about the centre's activities				1	9
Information about your child was relevant and accurate			1	1	8
Atmosphere/attitude- you felt comfortable at the centre				1	9
Were policies (hat, fruit, behavior etc.) relevant and consistent				1	9

Comments

- Would like to see child "pockets" for newsletters a bit higher on the wall, out of reach of curious little hands, if possible!
- Some more information on how she was going through the year would have been good ie. More focus groups.

- All the staff have been so welcoming and polite. I believe it has set a great example for children and their learning of manners and respect, which I find so important.

Information for families

	Yes	No
Did you read the newsletter/noticeboard	10	
Were educational articles relevant	9	

Comments

- Loved the notice board at the entrance of kindy with photos. The kids enjoyed seeing and talking about their experiences when looking/waiting.

Strengths of the kindergarten as perceived by families

- General attitude of all staff, very important, staff have friendly positive caring attitudes welcoming kids/parents. They create a great atmosphere in the mornings which we love! Also love that staff remind kids to use their manners!!
- Upkeep and facilities are excellent
- Writing- letters etc. Art work/craft
- Transition Program, Learning of different animals (my child loved this), mat time (my child learnt so much during mat times).
- The transition from old centre was smooth and this helped ease anxiety for my child. He did miss the old house and is looking forward to seeing the new one developed.
- The staff I think they are a vital part couldn't have asked for more helpful understanding people. Also range of activities. My child was always excited about kindy and what he would be doing.
- The educators are continually looking at ways to improve the centre and th help make it run smoothly. Every time I'm there the children are engaged in activities, and the wide range of activities are amazing!

Areas for improvement as perceived by families

- Can't think of any!
- Greet children upon arrival. 'Buddy' system for the children or 'friend bench'
- Excursions?
- Perhaps, introducing the parents to the sounds of the alphabet by sending home the flash cards that are used at Ardtornish Primary School and the Home Support Booklet. This way parents can reinforce their learning in collaboration with the kindy and school. I received the flash cards and home support booklet when I attended the school meeting with the principle on the first transiotn. Maybe they should be given to the parents earlier?
- ?

Financial Statement

Contained within our Appendix and available at the site.