Mt Gambier
Children’s Centre
Annual Report
2014
The Mount Gambier Children’s Centre is in its fifth year of operation. The Centre was officially opened on September 9th, 2010 by the Minister of Education Mr Jay Weatherill. The site is co-located with the Mulga Street Primary School. We provide a new look service that offers an extended range of high quality programs to meet the needs of local families. Our Centre has advantages in terms of ease of access, transition between programs, access to educational and community services. In addition to the Preschool which offers families 15 hours of preschool per week we have a Community Development Coordinator and a Family Services Coordinator.

Programs operating at the Children’s Centre include:

- **Preschool** operates with half-day and full-day sessions with lunch care
- **Fun Friends** social skills and emotional well-being program for preschool children
- **Occasional Care** provides 1 session a week for children under 2 years of age and 5 sessions a week for children over 2 years of age.
- **Playgroup** operates weekly during term time.
- **Young Parents Playgroup** occurs weekly and provides support to young parents.
- **PlayConnect Playgroup** is for children with Autism, funded by Playgroup SA.
- **Toolbox Parenting** – six session program that provides parents with strategies to help then grow great kids.
- **My Time** is a weekly peer support group for mums, dads, grandparents and anyone caring for children with a disability, developmental delay or chronic medical condition and funded by Facsia.
- **Child and Family Health Service** visit the playgroups to provide information to parents, health checks by appointment.
- **Circle of Security** is an 8 week attachment based parenting program that enhances the quality of parent/child relationships with a step by step approaching for promoting secure attachment in children.
- **Patchwork/Reunification Program** – A supported (closed) program that encourages parents to discuss and reflect upon their individual issues that may have impacted on their children and made it difficult for them to be effective parents
- **Spotlight Sessions** – These sessions are held about three times each school term for Relative/Kinship Carers with a focus on supporting parents/families who are caring and supporting a traumatised child/children.
- **Bringing Up Great Kids** – A program developed by the Australian Childhood Foundation that encourages parents to reflect on their own childhoods and how that impacts on their current parenting style.
Tuning Into Kids - A 6 week program to support parents understand and support their children’s emotions.

Targeted Playgroup – Supporting parents who are working with Families SA, to build their parenting skills/capacity. The playgroups incorporate a parent education and de-briefing component.

Group Specific Parenting Programs – The Children’s Centre also delivers many of these programs at Pangula Mannamurna Inc (Aboriginal Agency).

Our work within the community has included forming a Partnership Group with the following membership:

- Families SA
- Disability SA
- Housing SA
- DECD Mount Gambier Education Office and Central Office staff
- South East Regional Community Health Service
- Child and Family Health Service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- AC Care
- Pangula Mannamurna
- Centacare
- TAFE SA
- City of Mount Gambier
- Mulga Street Primary School Governing Council
- Mount Gambier North Primary School
- Mount Gambier Child Care Centre
- OPAL

1. REPORT FROM GOVERNING COUNCIL

The Mount Gambier Children’s Centre is a school based service please refer to the Mulga Street Primary School Annual Report for Governing Council Report.

2. HIGHLIGHTS 2014

Highlights from across the year have included:

Education, Parenting and Community Development

The opportunity to share our programs and practices with other Educational Leaders and services within our local community and beyond including a visit from Victorian Educational Leaders and the Chief Executive, Tony Harrison as well as presenting our work at the Limestone Coast Early Years Forum. This has been encouraging in our “Hub for a community” approach and the opportunity to receive feedback and confirmation of our innovative practices and positive work.

Written feedback received from Blue Lake Educational Leaders:

Fantastic children’s centre… the focus on shared communication, valuing the role of the parents as well as a very clear priority to have children involved, supportive and active in a huge variety of purposeful learning activities was brilliant. No matter what age or size of the school I think everyone could take a little something out of the work you and the team are doing.  Chris Edmonds, Suttontown PS
The atmosphere was bright, calm, with lots of purposeful activity and play, and so many examples of young minds observing and inquiring about the world around them: ‘Why do some leaves change colour? Does it make a difference if they remain dry or become wet? How can we find an answer?’ These were four year olds beginning a learning journey which we hope will continue to be filled with curiosity, imagination and challenge.
Mary Anne Fenwick, Mount Gambier High School

Curriculum and Continuity in learning
We continue to work closely with Mulga Street Primary School to promote continuity in learning and a successful transition to school for all children. We completed a Numeracy Inquiry Research Project with the Junior Primary teachers. The findings outlined the benefit of explicitly teaching the components of patterning; recognising, continuing and creating patterns to build children's understanding and to be able to articulate their learning. Staff also explored play and pedagogical practices including a representative from preschool and reception attending a 'Continuity of learning in the Early Years' professional learning day at Blair Athol North B-7 School. This was a worthwhile opportunity to learn more about their innovative practice to address continuity of children's learning from B-2 through play, with a focus on literacy while exploring the possibilities of the Same First Day policy. It has supported critical reflection on our current pedagogical practices and further exploring continuity of learning at our site. Pauline also participated in an observation day at Alberton PS to learn more about the 'The Nest' project in which the preschool and reception class share the outdoor learning environment and combined learning time with a focus on literacy/numeracy through play and discovery learning. We have been inspired to explore play and pedagogy further as an Early Years Team with the reception classes in 2015.

Community Engagement
We had a high level of community engagement including working with the Mount Gambier City Council continuing work from the 'Perspectives of children' project; Charter for children, 50 things project, Nature Play and community consultation for developing the John Powell Reserve into a naturescape. We developed a Sensory Trail representing the local Aboriginal Dreaming Story of Craitbul. The project has been highly received by the local Aboriginal community with very positive feedback about the creative nature space that promotes a connection to Boandik country. Community engagement included consultation with local Elders, members of the broader Aboriginal community, participation in NAIDOC celebrations, involving students from Mulga Street PS and a community celebration.

See section 9: Community Development Coordinator and Family Services Coordinator report for further information on community engagement.

Natural Resource Management Grant – Craitbul sensory trail
Our grant application was successful and we received a grant of $2000 to develop a sensory trail reflecting the Boandik dreaming Story of Craitbul, including plants local to the area. The project included learning more about the local Bunganditj people with Playful Beginnings workshops and an excursion with children and parents highlighting the story of Craitbul, visiting the Blue Lake, Lady Nelson Discovery Centre and City Library.
The design incorporates a pebble pathway with Aboriginal art symbols, two volcanoes representing Mount Muirhead and Mount Schank, the crater lakes and a creek leading into a shell bay complete with limestone sculpture work by local artist, Samantha Wass, with waves representing the coastal area of Carpenter’s Rocks. Our centre was asked to present our work on this project at the Limestone Coast Early Years Forum as part of best practice in cultural competency and environmental awareness. This project provides an exciting nature space for children to explore and to develop an awareness and appreciation of the local Bunganditj people and our local landscape.

Grounds and Maintenance
The Repairs and Maintenance Grant enabled us to complete a variety of projects including: pin boards, bird proofing under the verandah, exterior painting and new rubber matting around the sandpit. The children's outdoor play area adjacent to the cubby was also redeveloped as a centre project with the children and families and supported by the community Men's Shed and School Grounds and Maintenance for replacement fencing.

3. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Quality Improvement Plan Processes
A Quality Improvement Plan was developed based on 2013 review and in consultation with staff, Governing Council and family feedback. A progress report was provided each term to Governing Council and families. The progress reports were valuable as part of review processes. Planning and monitoring processes have been effective with review processes identified as needing to be more strategic in 2015.

Quality Improvement Plan priorities, actions, achievements and next steps:

Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice
Element 1.1.2 To build on our knowledge of the local Boandik people and further embed Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum.
- **Staff workshop** to learn more about the culture of the local Bunganditj people and how we can incorporate this into the preschool curriculum
- **Preschool Bunganditj (Boandik) Language mornings for the children**, a fun introduction to traditional greetings and the names of body parts for their favourite songs: Heads and Shoulders and the Hokey Pokey with the help of puppet characters Ivan and Annie.
- **Exploring Sheoak trees** on school grounds and seed pods collected by Henry from the Sheoak tree. This tree is significant to Aboriginal people as the ‘Dreaming Tree’ as you can hear the wind whisper through the leaves even on a still day.
- Promoting respect for cultural diversity with **Harmony Day and Reconciliation week**
• Sharing the **Dreaming Story of Craitbul** and volcano experiments.
• **Circular Rhythm performance with Lucas Proudfoot** featuring guitar, stomp box, didgeridoo, clap sticks and boomerangs.
• **Excursion highlighting the Dreaming story of Craitbul**
• Incorporating **Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum** including Aboriginal art, exploring traditional symbols, incorporated into design work for the sensory trail and for storytelling, Dreaming stories, cooking and campfires.
• **Limestone Sculpture** with local artist, Sam Wass
• **Natural Resources Management grant - Craitbul Sensory trail developed** including consultation with local community, NAIDOC Week celebrations and input from visiting students at Mulga Street P.S.
• **Limestone Coast Early Years Forum presentation 'Connecting to Culture, Country and Community' with Linda Clayton**
• **Valley Lakes - Christmas family evening** celebration incorporating Aboriginal and Torrens Strait Islander song and appreciation of our rich local landscape with the crater lakes.

This has been an area of significant achievement for 2014. We have evidently built on our knowledge of the local Boandik people and embedded Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum through authentic learning experiences including developing the Craitbul Sensory Trail. Please see attached report about our cultural competency journey.

**Element 1.2.3 Critical reflection and effective communication to support the program and children’s learning and development.**

• **Documented educator daily reflection;** has enhanced critical reflection and more effective communication to support the program and children’s learning and development by providing a consistent process and written record to promote communication to whole of staff. Staff reflect on educator practice and children’s interests, capabilities, engagement and learning as part of the Early Years Planning Cycle.
• **Weekly photos stories** on the program board support communication with children and families about children’s learning and possible lines of development.
• Educators have been exploring **Continuity in learning** (as above) and attended the Limestone Coast Early Years forum which highlighted the work at both Blair Athol North B-7 and 'The Nest' at Alberton. Educators have been working on an Inquiry project as part of the Early years Team - focusing on developing children’s patterning skills to recognise, continue and create patterns.
• Staff have engaged in shared professional learning and working with the Involvement Observational Scales as part of critical reflection on educator practice working with Reflect, Respect, Relate. The level of children's involvement indicates how well the educational environment succeeds in meeting children's learning priorities. It is a useful tool to help identify children’s interests and strengths so as to facilitate more complex learning connections.

Our more strategic and collaborative approach has been noted by all staff as a positive area of improvement that supports critical reflection and effective communication.

**Next steps:** Further developing our use of Reflect, Respect, Relate to support critical reflection.

**Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety**
**Element 2.1.3 Up to date policies and procedures in place**

• Behaviour Guidance Code updated to include Circle of Security strategies
• Nutrition Policy updated
• Toileting procedure

Updating policies remains a challenging area due to time and resourcing needed.
Next steps: Strategically review one policy per month with a ‘Policy of the month' to promote parent awareness and decision making/feedback.

**Element 2.3.2/2.3.4 Implementation of a sequential and ongoing child protection program**
- **Term 1:** Introduction of Topic 1 of the SA Child Protection program – *Feelings*
  Children are developing a greater awareness of their emotions and the emotions of others. Children able to articulate safe/unsafe play behaviours and are demonstrating increased positive behaviours in their social interactions.
- **Term 2:** Introduction of Topic 2 of the SA Child Protection program – *Relationships*
  Identifying different people and their roles/relationships in their lives e.g. family, extended family, people in the community.
- **Term 3:** Introduction of Topic 3 - *Recognising and responding to abuse*
  Learning about privacy and names of body parts, touching, recognizing abuse, secrets. We aim to empower children to feel safe, secure and supported by articulating their feelings and being assertive to speak up about their safety and feelings.
  Setting up a ‘Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum book’
- **Term 4:** Introduction of Topic 4 - *Safety strategies*
  As educators we advocate for the rights of all children to be safe and actively implement the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum in our day to day teaching.
  - Assertiveness - No and Stop, I don't like it when ...
  Two staff attended a Child Protection workshop with the updated curriculum
  A sequential and ongoing child protection program was implemented and has been a focus across the site.
Next steps: Utilise Site Implementation Rubric as part of review and planning.

**Quality Area 3: Physical Environment**

**Element 3.3.2 Everyday opportunities within the preschool to support children in being environmentally responsible and supported to continue this involvement in the broader community.**
- **Wipe Out Waste workshop** attended by Pauline as staff representative
- Application successfully submitted for **Wipe Out Waste grant**
- **Sustainability projects incorporated into daily practice;** Wipe Out Waste/ Landcare,
- Wally and the Wipe Out Wizard, Recycling Enterprise Project involving children/families collecting 10c containers for canteen hot dog day, vegetable garden, water conservation, setting up our own wormery
- **Natural Resources S.E.** Connecting with nature sign awarded to display at our centre in recognition of NRM grant

This has been a positive area of achievement with sustainably practices extended to broader community involvement.

Next steps: Continue recycling enterprise projects

**Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements**

**Element 4.2.2** Educator, whole team shared professional learning conversations and opportunities.
- **Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements**
  Element 4.2.2: Educator, whole team shared professional learning conversations and opportunities.
  - **Shared professional learning** focused on Continuity in learning, speech and language
development with a 'Making meaning with books' workshop with DECD Speech Pathologist Bee Lan See, ‘Powerful Learners‘ with Martin Westwall, SMART training and Reflect, Respect, Relate - Involvement Observational Scales

- Lauren and Pauline both attended Autism SA training on visual strategies

Shared professional learning has supported common understanding, consistency and critical reflection across the team to meet the holistic needs of children and to support effective teaching and learning.

Next step: shared professional learning with the Early Years Team with a focus on play and pedagogy - area identified to develop further utilising the transition rubric.

**Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children**

**Element 5.2.2: Professional Learning to support staff in behaviour guidance and working with children with challenging behaviours**

- **Shared professional learning** including: Restorative Practices, Raising Beaut Kids parent session with Mark Le Messurier and working with Interagency Behaviour Coordinator. The Children’s Centre team joined Mulga Street PS staff at Professional Learning Days for ‘Play is the way’ and Smart training.

- **Staff share professional learning and reflections** at staff meetings

  This have been beneficial in developing shared understanding and to support behaviour guidance strategies to improve children's emotional well-being, safe behaviours and positive social interactions.

  Next steps: Utilising 'Play is the way' resource

**Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities**

**Element 6.3.2: Continuity of learning to support school transition processes.**

- **Early Years Team (Junior Primary/Kindy teachers) Inquiry Research Project** focusing on developing children's numeracy skills in patterning

- **Kindy children involved in a broad variety of learning experiences across sites** including sustainability projects; visits to Landcare, Wally and the Wipe Out Wizard, Recycling Enterprise Project (collecting 10c containers for canteen hot dog day), Magical world of crazy science, Reconciliation week celebrations, circular rhythm music with Lucas Proudfoot, library borrowing, visits to JP classes, combined play with school children, touring the school, exploring the school grounds, autumn adventure walks etc

- **Reflecting on our current pedagogical practices and continuity of learning from preschool to reception utilising the transition rubric to review the six areas** - we are working at a strengthening level for most areas. The area that we need to further develop for 2015 is in the area of play and pedagogy.

Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities is an area of strength and has included significant steps for successful school transition processes including professional collaboration and building relationships, as identified in the transition to school rubric.

Next step: Inquiry research project with reception teachers on play and pedagogy

**Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management**

**Element 7.2.2 An effective, clearly defined and consistent process for personal and professional improvement plans that are inclusive of site and partnership directions**

- **Consistent proforma being utilised by all staff**

- **Leadership Team Performance Development Plan developed with Director, Family Services Coordinator and Community Development Coordinator inclusive of Children’s Centre Outcomes.**

- **Performance Development Plans focused, with a defined process and outcome.**

- **Performance Development Reviews completed with comprehensive written feedback**

  A consistent proforma and formalised process supported effective Performance
Development to assist staff in performance development planning and professional learning with establishing goals, strategies and success measures. PDP for all staff was line managed by the Director for 2104 including Family Services Coordinator and Community Development Coordinator. A Leadership Team plan incorporating the FSC and CDC promoted a collaborative approach to support targeted outcomes.

Next step: To incorporate site and partnership directions for 2015 with a focus on 'Powerful learners' - play and pedagogy, literacy/numeracy.

**Building Teacher Capacity funding for targeted professional learning: Reflect Respect Relate.**

The grant was utilised to provide funding for staff at the Mount Gambier Children's Centre in working with the Reflect, Respect, Relate Involvement Observational Scales. Staff engaged in professional learning time to become more familiar with the resource and levels of involvement including professional reading, viewing the DVD and utilising the indicators to assess and reflect on children's levels of involvement. On reflection it was agreed that the Involvement Observational Scales are a valuable part of critical reflection on educator practice and we plan to use the Observational Scales earlier and more strategically in 2015. Staff found that they reflected on children's levels of involvement as part of their daily practice and that the Observational Scales provided formalized indicators which could assist in this. Staff have identified that future directions for 2015 include utilising the Active Learning Environment Observational Scales as this links closely with children's levels of involvement.

**4. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS**

During 2014, seven children received funded Preschool Support and a further eight children received site targeted support. The main target of the support was for Speech and Language Development and Autism Spectrum Disorder. Children were supported with a targeted DECD speech pathology program. Ongoing assessment and reporting showed general improvement in children's speech and language development. Children's confidence and social literacy improved along with their progress as well as their levels of participation and improved learning outcomes across the curriculum. This has increased their ability to achieve success in the Preschool environment and to support their transition to school.

During 2014 regular attendance was linked to significant improvement in both literacy and numeracy on entry to school. Literacy program funding was beneficial to support a successful transition from home to preschool. We found that my investing in building positive relationships and a sense of belonging that children engaged in the play based curriculum and participated positively in the Kindergarten routine. Staff provided targeted support for engagement in literacy in the area of building oral literacy skills.
In support of the Partnership Improvement Plan we worked on a consistent and whole site approach to improving literacy and numeracy with targeted intervention and support.

Literacy: Teaching and learning focused on developing children's oral literacy skills to support speech and language development. Oral literacy is fully integrated into the curriculum through everyday experiences, play and intentional teaching including socio-dramatic play, small world play, story tables and a Wonder Wall to record children's theories. Staff recorded children's oral literacy skills in their individual portfolios including learning stories. Staff also utilised an oral literacy rubric to assess and monitor children's progress across the year with all children showing improvement. Improvements in social literacy led to improvements in children's social engagement and participation and educators noted this strongly supported their overall progress and improved learning outcomes.

Numeracy: Teaching and learning focused on developing children's numeracy skills to support the concept of patterning. This concept was identified as an area of concern from the school's Naplan results. We worked together with the Junior Primary reception teachers, as part of the Early Years Team inquiry research project. Findings indicated that explicit teaching of the components of patterning (recognising, continuing and creating) supported children's learning and success. We will continue to incorporate explicit teaching of the components of patterning in our future teaching practices as part of the play based curriculum. Concept of number focused on making meaning with number through capturing teachable moments in everyday experiences and children showed this was an area of strength with all children making progress and children working at a more advanced level with counting 20+ some to 100+, number recognition and subitising to 6.

Our future focus is to become familiar with the literacy and numeracy indicators and to engage in a Powerful Learners and Playful Pedagogy project with the Junior Primary teachers as part of our Early Years team.
5. STUDENT DATA

6.1 Enrolments

Figure 1: Enrolments by Term

Table 1: Enrolments by Term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on person counts in the two week reference period each term. Excludes pre-entry. Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

2014 showed stable enrolments across the year. The number of enrolments was lower than the past two years, to some extent this is due to the local context of the opening of The Early Learning Centre at a neighbouring private school (Tenison Woods College) which can now provide a 'one stop shop' for families from K to 12, including before and after school care. 2015 enrolments are currently 62.

6.2 Attendance

Figure 2: Attendance by Term

Attendance Percentages 2012 - 2014
Table 2: Attendance Percentages 2012 - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012 Centre</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>90.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Centre</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 Centre</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 State</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 State</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 State</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

Attendance percentages were slightly higher than state average. This is a good indicator that children and families valued their Kindergarten experience the flexibility provided to support attendance such as being able to ask if they could change their child's days at Kindy according to changes in their work days.

6.3 Destination – Feeder Schools

Table 3: Feeder School Percentage Data 2012 - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeder Schools</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0290 - Reidy Park Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0422 - Suttontown Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0724 - Compton Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1021 - McDonald Park School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1650 - Mulga Street Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>82.8</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8260 - Tenison Woods College</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8359 - St Martins Lutheran College</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9031 - St Martin’s Catholic Primary School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9066 - Tenison Woods Catholic PS</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

The majority of children from the Children’s Centre transitioned to Mulga Street Primary School, with 86.5% starting at the onsite campus. 13.5% of children transitioned to other feeder schools for a variety of reasons including proximity to rural schools and six children attending private schools.

6. CLIENT OPINION

![Graph showing parent opinion survey results]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I think my child receives high quality teaching at this preschool.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child’s teachers know what my child can do and what he/she needs to learn.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This preschool has the expectation that children will learn.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers are enthusiastic in their teaching.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied with the learning programs offered at this child's preschool.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child's teachers clearly inform me about the learning program.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child's teachers make learning interesting and enjoyable.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers at this preschool really want to help my child learn.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The preschool has an excellent learning environment.</td>
<td>0%  0%   0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DECD Parent Opinion Survey 2014
1695 Mount Gambier Children's Centre
Aggregation of Preschool Survey Responses
Parent Opinion - Support of Learning

No. Statement | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | Responses
--- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | ---
1. My child is motivated to learn at this preschool. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 73% | 27% | 11
2. My child receives help and support when he needs it. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 38% | 62% | 11
3. My child has access to quality materials and resources that help learning to occur. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 75% | 25% | 11
4. My child is happy at the preschool this year. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
5. My child would receive support if any special needs were noted. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 45% | 55% | 11
6. The preschool changes its programs and activities to improve student achievement. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 22% | 78% | 9
7. Children know how they are expected to behave at preschool. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
8. Teachers at this preschool treat my child fairly. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
9. This preschool provides a safe and secure environment. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
10. Children have enough materials and resources for their learning. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
11. This preschool has information available about other support agencies within the community. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 40% | 60% | 10
12. This preschool encourages children to have a sense of pride in their achievement. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 11

DECD Parent Opinion Survey 2014
1695 Mount Gambier Children's Centre
Aggregation of Preschool Survey Responses
Parent Opinion - Relationships and Communication

No. Statement | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree | Responses
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1. I feel welcome at this preschool. | 7% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 66% | 11
2. This preschool assists the development of my child's personal and social skills. | 9% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 66% | 11
3. I am comfortable about approaching my child's teachers to talk about their progress. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 9% | 91% | 11
4. I am given opportunities to have a say in matters about this preschool. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
5. There is a variety of communication that inform me about the preschool. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
6. Children from all backgrounds and cultures are treated fairly at this preschool. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% | 11
7. If the staff share the information I have to say about my child's development and needs. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
8. I receive helpful information about my child's progress and achievement. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 14% | 86% | 11
9. The preschool provides opportunities to discuss my child's progress. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
10. I am well informed about preschool activities. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
11. I believe that if I have concerns or suggestions, the preschool would respond appropriately. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% | 0% | 11
12. I am encouraged to be involved in the preschool in all kinds of ways. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
13. Teachers let me know how well my child is doing. | 0% | 0% | 0% | 27% | 73% | 11
Overall parent opinion indicates a high level of satisfaction with the preschool, with a majority of strongly agree and agree responses and only four questions receiving neutral responses and no disagree responses recorded across the four areas. The area of highest strongly agree responses was in the area of relationships. Other responses of highest satisfaction include teachers wanting to help children learn and providing an excellent learning environment, encouraging children's sense of pride in their achievements, confidence in how the preschool is managed and effective educational leadership.

Areas to further develop include information sharing, parent decision making and parent opinion about programs. We will explore ways to further develop this in 2015 including informal daily information sharing, formal communication via the parent information and program board and newsletters and developing processes to further support parent feedback, decision making and input.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

Processes are in place for ensuring compliance with the DECD Relevant History Screening Summary in accordance to requirements - Relevant History Screening - Summary for Site Leaders November 2014.

The Human Resources System is utilised on Eduportal for SSOs and ECWs and a hardcopy kept on record at the centre in the staff members file. Teaching staff clearance is acknowledged via their teacher's registration. Volunteers and placements students have had DCSI clearance with a copy kept on file. DECD personnel identity has been verified by sighting DECD badge and all visitors sign in at the site.

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT
The Mount Gambier Children's Centre is a school based service: please refer to the Mulga Street Primary School Annual Report for Financial Statement.

9. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR & FAMILY SERVICES COORDINATOR

Family services Coordinator: Kelly Williams
Community Development Coordinator: Fiona Pulford

It has been a very busy year at the Children’s Centre and we have continued to run a variety of parenting programs. These programs continue to be well attended which is pleasing and shows the need for parents looking for strategies that will help them in the role as parents.

Programs covered included:
- Fun Friends
- What’s the Buzz (which has been delivered at Moorak and Yahl Primary Schools)
- Toolbox Parenting Program
- Circle of Security
- Spotlight Sessions (Targets Relative Carers supporting children who have been traumatised)
- I am Woman Program
- Tuning into Kids
- Patchwork

The “I am Woman” program focuses on developing the self-esteem of vulnerable woman in the community and covers such topics as Assertive Communication, Healthy Relationships, The importance of caring for yourself and we have also included a range of esteem and confidence builders such as boxing, visits to a fashion stylist, yoga, meditation, hair makeovers (cuts and colours) and finishing off the program with a celebration lunch. This program has provided some amazing outcomes for those attending with two of those attending having enrolled to start Tafe and University study. Many of the others attending have also made substantial changes to their own lives and have shown real improvements in personal strength, confidence and determination.

Kelly’s involvement with Families SA parents and families has increased quite a lot over the last 12 months and we have seen many of these parents successfully reunited with their children. Assisting vulnerable parents and children within the community is a big part in Children’s Centre business therefore seeing families make positive changes within their family unit is extremely rewarding. And referrals from other agencies have also increased to include Housing SA and SERCHS _Sexual Health Nurse.

Natasha Srpicic’s presentation on Art Therapy generated a lot of interest from teachers, parents and professionals in this region. Fiona was approached by Leanne Syron (Art Therapy student) who had attended Natasha’s presentation and was looking to complete 35 placement hours. The outcome resulted in a decision being made to provide art sessions in different settings to three different groups of children including:
- A group at Mount Gambier North Primary School in their Community Hub.
- A small group from Mulga Street Primary School.
- A small group of children under the Guardianship of the Minister (Families SA)

Leanne’s placement was supervised by Kelly and the feedback from the children attending the groups to date has been really positive.

Fiona has been extremely busy in her role as Community Development Coordinator particularly with the “50 things to do before you’re thirteen” project. This project has involved a lot of community consultation to ensure that the “voices and ideas” of the families and children in the community were captured. The very successful launch and now rollout of the 50 things to do in Mount Gambier before you turn 13 project on November 25th has certainly
given us a strong community presence with our work being showcased across the entire city. A movie was produced to bring the project to life with children from Mulga St, Yahl and Melaleuca Park Primary Schools as well as children from the broader community. Within the first 24 hours the film had been watched almost 400 times.

We have strengthened our relationship with the city council so that we now work very collaboratively with their Community Development team. An opportunity to showcase the great work being done in the early childhood sector in Mount Gambier has arisen with Barbara Cernovskis (Community Development and Services Manager City of Mount Gambier) Karen Hancock-Saunders (TafeSA) Suzie Cottle (Early Childhood Leader) and Fiona Pulford (Community Development Coordinator) being accepted to present at a national AEDC (Australian Early Development Census, formally AEDI) conference in February 2015. It will be fantastic for our centre and our community to demonstrate the whole of community approach Mount Gambier has adopted to support children and families on a national stage.

This year has been particularly rewarding in providing more targeted support across the whole community as sites are understanding we are a centre for all Mount Gambier and not just the Mulga St families. This is testament to the ground work of the past 5 years to have now established ourselves as a significant community resource, culminating with an award being granted from the 2014 School Industry Partnership Awards for an Emerging Partnership for our work with the North School Community Hub. More will emerge in 2015 as we commence a journey to support Melaleuca Park with their Outdoor learning Environment Project and Community Hub.

Director: Pauline Bosco       Principal: Janine Milsop       Governing Council Chair: Tim Hann