



Mawson Lakes Preschool

2019 annual report to the community



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Mawson Lakes Preschool number: 4163
Partnership: Hollywood Lakes & Gardens

Name of preschool director:

Sandra Cattell

Name of preschool management committee chair:

Tanya Main

Date of endorsement:

11th February 2020

Context and highlights

Mawson Lakes Preschool is located in Adelaide's northern suburbs. It is considered a desirable location & attracts young families. Our preschool is also one of the largest in SA, providing preschool programs for 132 children a week (66/ day). Preschool sessions are offered as two consecutive days either Monday/Tuesday (purple grp) or Thursday/Friday (green grp) with a half day session once a fortnight on Wednesday. The community of Mawson Lakes is culturally diverse. This means many children come to preschool having little to no English, but speaking one or more home languages. We also have a high enrolment of children with special rights. The challenge for our team is to ensure children & families feel welcomed & all educators are knowledgeable about the interests & needs of each child. The whole team actively engage & build relationships with all children, while our small group structure allows educators to develop a deeper, more intimate knowledge of the children.

In 2019 we have continued to work collaboratively with our colleagues in the Hollywood, Lakes & Gardens Partnership on improving outcomes for children in the areas of literacy & numeracy by participating in partnership initiatives including;

- Collecting data on children's phonological awareness & numeracy skills - the data is shared with schools & used to inform planning to provide support & intellectual stretch where needed on entry to school.
- Participating in ongoing professional development through the Playful Literacies project to extend educators knowledge & ways of thinking to better implement innovative programs & environments for learning.

Within our preschool we have also had many highlights over the year including;

- Continuation of our pilot project – "Play, Vocab & Telling Stories: Building Oral Language in the Preschool" with DfE Special services staff. We are now in the second year of the project with staff developing their knowledge of building children's vocabulary using a play based approach.
- Playgroup for children beginning preschool the following year. This program, supported by Mawson Lakes School through a joint funding agreement has been running successfully since 2017
- Gov. Council support for a range of projects including developing our Acknowledgement of Country & mural

There have also been many curriculum highlights including;

- Cultural celebrations
- Incursions & excursions to support learning
- Take home bears/Family books
- STEM days

Report from the preschool management committee

It has been a pleasure to be part of the GC & see preschool change & adapt this year. There is a certain pride that comes with knowing you are part of a community that ensures children feel confident, resilient, socially competent individuals with a passion for learning. An integral part of the GC is to maintain existing programs & review various policies for relevance. Similarly, the QIP is an evolving document but an important one. Statements like "we have a continued commitment to establishing strong relationships with our children" & "provide a continued focus on pedagogy that is play based & builds on children's prior knowledge" provide an insight into the goals of the staff & the preschool itself.

This year has been busy - we have implemented changes to our cleaning contract & archiving system & installed new fans on the veranda. We have given careful consideration to parent requests for a social media presence but after much discussion we concluded the needs of the staff & children outweighed the need for social media. It's not all business - the GC assisted in the welcome & winter warmer evenings where the community could all come together, share delicious food & enjoy various entertainment. We also surprised the staff with afternoon tea & the children made a lovely hand print tree for early childhood educator's day.

This year we have endeavoured to surround children & parents with Aboriginal culture & respect by the children learning to speak & sign an Acknowledgement of Country, starting all governing council meetings with an acknowledgement and had a beautiful mural painted outside. We received positive feedback from visitors & families. We hope to see the continuation & advancement in this regard for the foreseeable future.

To conclude I would like to thank Sandra & staff for the support they have shown myself, my daughter & the preschool community.

Quality improvement planning

We started the year with a reformatted QIP as we felt it more accurately captured our story of improvement & clearly stated our improvement priorities. From our end of year review the team identified two broad improvement priorities under which our goals & strategies would sit. These were;

Improvement Priority 1: High quality learning for all children

Goal 1: Provide a continued focus on pedagogy that is play based & builds on children's prior knowledge & provides intellectual stretch, with a particular focus on numeracy & literacy learning & STEM.

Goal 2: Critically reflect on how to authentically document children's learning and voice.

Improvement Priority 2: Building relationships

Goal 1: To build an understanding & respect for the traditional owners of this land & engage in meaningful dialogue & learning with our families

Goal 2: We have a continued commitment to establishing strong relationships with our children, so they feel valued & connected & demonstrate strong & positive dispositions for learning through appropriate social engagement

Evidence of our progress would be collected/observed in two ways

- Educator actions/behaviour/pedagogy
- Children's experiences/attitudes/knowledge

Each term the team evaluated & reviewed our progress against our goals using a matrix. The matrix helped us describe actions/events/progress from low level indicators (things that we did) to high level indicators (improvement in outcomes and learning) This helped us clearly identify where we were making progress & what areas still needed attention.

During 2019 we were able to make progress within all the goals we had identified for improvement. The PASM & 4 Top 5 data collected in Terms 1 & 4 clearly show progression for all our children & we feel they move onto school with a good grounding in literacy & numeracy. During the year the team has also worked on developing more responsive ways of documenting children's learning & voice. This included various 'paper' program formats as well as Corey working on developing an electronic version. This continues to be a work in progress for us as we search for the right mix.

The team is especially proud of the work we undertook to start to embed Aboriginal perspectives within our centre. This goal came about from a comment by one of our Governing Council members who had noted we didn't include an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of meetings. With strong leadership from Governing Council we began to research different Acknowledgements & formulated two versions – one that could be used at meetings & one the children could use. It was a highlight of our Winter Warmers Night in Term 2, when the children performed our Acknowledgement of Country in one voice & with accompanying sign language to their families and friends. By the end of the year our Acknowledgement of Country has become an embedded aspect of our curriculum & is performed every day. The team also worked hard to ensure Aboriginal perspectives were reflected in our program & centre in other ways. After attending a conference in Melbourne, Kimberly led us through an audit of our resources to identify gaps and start to prioritise purchasing. Within all areas of our program we started to look at how we could reflect Aboriginal perspectives & culture through how we set up various learning areas. Kimberly also took the lead in working with Scott from Rusted Tin to design & paint a mural reflecting the uniqueness of our space.

During 2019 the team also worked to prepare for the new site improvement planning process – the PQIP. Closure days were used to critically reflect & refine our philosophy & strengths as well as developing our goal & challenge of practice, which will guide our actions and improvement in 2020.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2016	130	132	128	127
2017	127	128	127	124
2018	131	129	125	122
2019	122	129	129	

NOTE: The data is based on person counts in the two week reference period each term. Excludes pre-entry.
Source: Preschool data collection, Data Reporting and Analytics directorate.

Enrolment comment

Mawson Lakes Preschool continues to have a high enrolment demand, therefore has a Priority of Access Policy in place to support a transparent and equitable intake process.

We began 2019 slightly down on previous years due to families withdrawing in the first week of preschool. The withdrawals and non attendance was due to families moving out of the area or having difficulties in finding complementary care options.

During the year we lost some enrolments due to families choosing to take up the Catholic Sector's offer of a mid year intake and other families relocating interstate due to work work commitments, however we were able to fill those vacancies with new families. Many families took the opportunity to take extended holidays during the year which also affected our enrolments.

In 2019 there was movement by families in and out of our preschool due to employment relocations during the year. No families left our centre in 2019 due to dissatisfaction with our program or staff.

Attendance

Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2016 centre	95.5%	86.4%	90.2%	84.5%
2017 centre	89.8%	91.2%	84.1%	84.3%
2018 centre	88.0%	88.2%	83.9%	88.5%
2019 centre	88.9%	85.6%	89.0%	
2016 state	91.1%	89.0%	87.2%	87.5%
2017 state	90.5%	88.2%	85.9%	87.2%
2018 state	90.7%	88.3%	87.0%	87.2%
2019 state	90.3%	87.4%	85.8%	

Based on attendances recorded in the two week reference period each term. Data for eligible enrolments as described in the department's Enrolment policy.

Attendance rates may differ to previous reporting with the transfer from calculations based on deemed attendance to actual attendance using booked hours divided by attended hours.

Attendance comment

Our attendances in 2019 remained steady and we were able to exceed the state average in Term 3, which we haven't done since term 4 2018. Our cohort of families can be quite transient, with many families choosing to take extended holidays overseas during their preschool year. In Term 2 many families were impacted by illness which led to non attendance.

Many families have also chosen not to attend the Wednesday half day session due to difficulties in arranging care. While we have had many discussions with our community and Governing Council regarding moving to a long day program, at this stage our families prefer the current session times and days.

All absences are noted on the roll and in EYS, and absences with no notification are followed up by a phone call or email to families. Our newsletters/weekly email updates continue to promote attendance at preschool with information about how poor attendance can affect learning.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2016	2017	2018	2019
9155 - Garden College	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%
8419 - Good Shepherd Luth Sch - Para Vista	0.0%	6.0%	5.0%	3.6%
8421 - King's Baptist Grammar School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%
987 - Mawson Lakes School	82.0%	73.0%	69.0%	74.6%
9115 - Prescott Primary Northern	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%
9116 - St Paul Lutheran School	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%

NOTE: The data is collected in Term 3. It does not reflect actual schools enrolled in by exiting preschool children. Only schools that are a destination for 3% or more of students are shown.

Source: Data Source: Site Performance Reporting System (SPER), Term 3 2019 collection.

Destination schools comment

Mawson Lakes School continues to be the school of choice for most families exiting our preschool. In 2019 there was a significant rise in the number of families who chose Mawson Lakes School.

In 2019 three families were offered places in special options. One family accepted the offer while the other families declined - one due to moving interstate.

If not attending Mawson Lakes School, most families chose private school options. This is due to families wishing to pursue secondary schooling at Endeavour College. Good Shepherd still remains a popular choice, though the numbers of families choosing to attend there has begun to decline.

Client opinion summary

At Mawson Lakes Preschool our families are integral to everything we do. We work hard to provide services that meet the needs of our community. Information about how well – or not so well we are achieving this goal is actively sought in both an informal & formal way. The DfE Parent Opinion Survey is used to gather information about our services & how they are perceived by our families. In 2019 surveys were given out to families at the beginning of Term 3. 126 surveys were distributed with 41 being completed & returned, representing 33% of our parent community. (Down slightly from 2018) Responses show consistently high satisfaction levels, with our approval ratings in all four domains in the upper 90% range. Comments from families included:

- The teachers have been exceptional & wonderful. They are always open & very communicative if approached with concerns
- The staff team supports children excellently; they create a safe supportive & friendly environment. They ensure each child has what they need & they are ready at a moment's notice if a child needs them
- There are a number of ways to communicate with the staff at preschool. I feel all the staff have built a relationship with me & are able to listen to help me if I need it
- Leadership is great; teachers are very approachable & communication is clear and regular
- Amazing preschool; my child is very happy here

However there were some responses that scored significantly lower. These questions related to communication processes. While we think we have an effective communication process in place, the perception from some of our families is different. During 2019 we have explored a number of different communication strategies & will continue to interact with our families to find the right balance of communication that meet the needs of all.

Relevant history screening

All permanent & contract staff, volunteers, work experience/University students or workplace providers were asked to provide a current screening certificate & credentials. These are all kept in a central file called 'Relevant History Screening' located in the Director's office.

All relief staff were asked to provide their DfE authority to teach or authority to work on their first day of relieving at our site.

Financial statement

	Funding Source	Amount
1.	Grants: State	899101.20
2.	Grants: Commonwealth	0.00
3.	Parent Contributions	71155.00 
4.	Other	

2019 Preschool annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2019 funding was used to improve the relevant department's standard of educational achievement outcomes (where applicable):*	Outcomes achieved or progress towards these outcomes:
Improved outcomes for numeracy and literacy	<p>The preschool received grants totalling \$9107.91 Funding was used to;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in the 2nd phase of the HLG Partnership Playful Literacies Project. Release time for 2 staff to, collect & collate data as part of Pilot Project - Play, Vocab & Telling Stories. Collation of Literacy & Numeracy data sets in T1& T4 	<p>Educators planned experiences to strengthen children's competence in reading & writing</p> <p>Data collected T1/T4 shows improvement for all.</p>
Improved ECD and parenting outcomes (children's centres only)	N/A	
Improved outcomes for children with disabilities	<p>IESP grant funding was used to support 25 children (19%) in 2019 for needs including speech/lang, ASD, GDD & behavioural needs. Support was provided in the following areas, implementation of specialist programs, group/social skills, thinking/problem solving/persistence, small group work & transition to school support.</p>	<p>Improvement for all children across EYLF outcomes, 3 children were offered special options placements others went to mainstream schools</p>
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	<p>31 children (23%) were identified as having little/no English and referred for support. Children were supported to develop their English language skills through small group work and scaffolded play scenarios with a range of peers. Our BLA's support children by providing the link between their home language and English</p>	<p>All children made progress in their English understanding and use. Six children were recommended to have continued support at school.</p>

* The department's standard of educational achievement is defined as children and young people progressing and achieving at or above their appropriate year level.