



Darlington Children's Centre

2020 annual report to the community

Darlington Children's Centre Number: 3624

Partnership: Marion Coast

Signature

Preschool director:

Mr David Coulter

Governing council chair:

Erica Solley

Date of endorsement:

2 February 2021



Government
of South Australia

Department for Education

Context and highlights

Darlington Children's Centre provides preschool education for children in the year before attending school, occasional care, a range of community and family programs allied health focused programs. These include programs such as general and targeted supported playgroups. General playgroups are planned to support all parents and children; targeted playgroups have population priorities. These include the ATSI community, baby and early walkers, a connections groups supporting parents transitioning from groups such as ACORN. Parenting programs are delivered by Centre staff who also support and participate in partner agencies with their programs. Partnerships have included CAFHS, Anglicare, Relationships Australia, Indigo, Marion Council and Baptist Care. Individual parent and family support is also provided as required. Referrals by a range of agency and service providers are directed to the Centre.

The preschool enrolments have been maintained in the 55-60 band and the occasional care enrolments have maintained near capacity through the year. There is continuing demand for occasional care places particularly in the under two year old age. Programs at the Centre are informed by the Early Years Learning Frame Work including the DfE Numeracy and Literacy Indicators as well as the Children's Centres Outcome Framework.

The Covid-19 situation in 2020 required the Centre, like most other services to develop new responses to service delivery. The preschool developed and curated a range of resources to support families in anticipation of a move to learning at home. These resources are available through the Centre webpage. Community programs were required to be suspended. Following the advice of SA Health the Centre resumed programs in-line with the advice. During the suspension of onsite programs vulnerable families were supported through regular phone contact. Where necessary and within the Centre capacity families were supported with food and household products.

The focus of the education and care programs have been on developing a relational play based pedagogy that fosters all children's development and growth. Numeracy and literacy development has been a priority. Darlington Children's Centre continues to experience a shift in demographics. Prior to 2017 Arabic language represented the second largest group of preschool families. There has been an increase in the diversity of family backgrounds with 16 languages enrolled.

Governing council report

During 2020 the Governing Council met on a regular basis. In response to the requirements to Covid-19 most meetings were conducted remotely.

The Governing Council formed late 2019 and built a small but positive group of parents representing the preschool and community and family programs.

Through the year the parents were consulted on Centre program design and development providing valuable advice representing the parent body.

There was the continuing development of the outdoor learning environment with a focus on the community Centre that was initiated at the end of the building program. This planning had lead to the development of the priority for 2019-20 where the Centre parents, staff and Occupational Therapy UNISA students evaluated the current outdoor learning area and documented future development.

Governing Council members also lead and participated in

- a working bee to maintain the current play spaces and to add features such as the community space sandpit.
- The policy and purpose discussions to support the Centers social media approach
- Reflecting on the way ATSI language and culture is made visible within the Centre

Improvement planning - review and evaluate

The Centre developed two primary improvement goals relating to Numeracy and Literacy development of children and the ways educators program to enable this.

The Centre staff participated in site and partnership professional development and learning communities.

The numeracy focus was based on the Preschool Indicator for Numeracy- I can analyse, read and organise data in my world. The educators took this focus into the regular planning and evaluation cycle. This was situated in a play based program using a range of concrete materials for children to manipulate to explore and use to make meaning and represent their thoughts.

The literacy focus was based on the Preschool Literacy Indicator of 'I use language to connect with my world.' This lead to a site focus on supporting children's oral language development . This involved a wide range of play based and structures language experiences across the Centre.

Educators used a range of reflective activities to observe themselves while teaching as a way to consider the effectiveness of their approach and the response of the children.

Educators undertook samples and observations of children to gather baseline samples at the beginning of the year then again during the year. These were used to consider the children's progress as well as educators professional practice.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2017	61	66	57	57
2018	53	52	48	54
2019	52	49	52	48
2020	60	N/A	56	58

NOTE: The data is based on person counts in the two week reference period each term. Excludes pre-entry.

Data Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Reporting and Analytics directorate.

*Term 2 2020 data may not be available for all preschools.

Enrolment comment

Darlington Children's Centre's enrolment numbers were consistent through the year though there were a number of children transitioning through the Centre.

The Centre has a number of families from non English speaking backgrounds who attend the preschool. This allowed the Centre to receive funding for a bilingual early childhood educator to support the children's language development.

Additionally the Centre had a range of children with special rights who were supported through additional staffing to ensure that they were able engage with the curriculum along with there peers.

Attendance

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2017 centre	79.2%	82.9%	71.2%	80.4%
2018 centre	76.1%	74.2%	73.5%	77.4%
2019 centre	77.0%	76.3%	71.1%	85.8%
2020 centre	83.5%	N/A	78.8%	81.8%
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%	86.4%
2020 state	89.3%	82.0%	84.8%	85.9%

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.

*Note: Term 2 2020 data may not be available for all preschools.

Attendance comment

The preschool is continuing to experience the average attendance. While the average enrolment was 57.75 there were 75 children enrolled during the year. There were also 34 variations in enrolments after the commencement of term1, 2020. This included children's families moving to other areas, families moving into the area and several children resuming the preschool after a term or longer period of non-attendance.

The preschool attendance has historically been below the State attendance percentages there has been a closing of this gap in some terms though the gap can be explained in part by the enrolment pattern described above.

The Centre's attendance data is also influenced by the decision to maintain enrolments on the EYS system for a number of children experiencing a number of risk factors including a history of family/siblings not engaging with the education system so that when they attend there enrolment is active. Using the EYS system to suspend then reactivate the enrolment would effect the attendance data.

The Centre has engaged a number of strategies to support families to attend the preschool. These include a number of communication approaches.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2017	2018	2019	2020
952 - Clapham Primary School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.1%
666 - Darlington Primary School	66.0%	70.0%	60.9%	61.1%
1066 - Hackham East Primary School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.6%
8261 - IQRA Islamic College of SA	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	5.6%
9074 - Stella Maris Parish School	13.0%	2.0%	13.0%	11.1%
8387 - Sunrise Christian School Marion	0.0%	0.0%	8.7%	5.6%

NOTE: The data is collected in Term3. 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.

Data Source: Site Performance Reporting System (SPER), Term3 2020 collection.

Destination schools comment

The children from Darlington transitioned to 17 schools of which Darlington Primary School has the largest cohort. 71% of children have enrolled in 12 DfE schools with the others in 5 independent schools. Three schools were in the same Partnership as Darlington Children's Centre with others up to 11 kilometers from Darlington.

Anecdotal evidence is suggesting that this may be affecting 2021 potential enrolments where we believe about 25% of these enrolments have enrolled in preschools closer to a preferred school?

Client opinion summary

Behaviour and client opinion

The parent opinion survey was made available to all families with links to the on-line portal and through paper copies.

Responses to the areas of Quality of teaching and learning, support of learning, relationships and communication

and leadership and decision making received strong positive support from the parent responses.

Parent comments were positive and supportive of the range of services that the staff lead and provide.

Other sources of parent opinion were gathered through the year. Samples are retained by the site. The comments are overwhelmingly positive.

Parent feedback via attendance at family events has shown growth year on year.

Relevant history screening

Darlington Children's Centre has complied with criminal screening responsibilities throughout 2017 by:

- Ensuring all employees, volunteers, students and other people involved at Centre are aware of and undertake

Relevant History Screenings in accordance with DfE policy.

- Recording and monitoring clearances and expiry dates on a spreadsheet electronically.
- A paper copy is located in our personnel records folder.
- Reviewing and updating the lists on a regular basis.

Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$733,254
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$21,446
Other	\$16,235

2020 Preschool annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2020 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	The funding was used in line with the Quality improvement plan goals and challenge of practice focusing on data and oral language. The staff engaged in regular professional development activities including at the partnership and site level. Funds supported ensuring all the staff were able to participate.	Evaluation of the children's growth over the year and educator reflection of their approach supports the approach to meeting the QIP goals.
Improved ECD and parenting outcomes (children's centres only)	Additionally the Centre provides a regular supported playgroups for all families as well as targeted supported playgroups and parent groups. These are supported by educators, allied health, community development and family practitioners. This is the Centre program to support families https://www.darlingtoncc.sa.edu.au	Feedback from parents of children from birth to school age suggests that they value the support to parenting and child development.
Inclusive Education Support Program	The Centre received a base grant (IESP) at the beginning of the year as well as a number of adjustments. This money was used to employ educators to ensure the children who attracted these funds were able to access the Centre and the curriculum along side their peers.	The children were able to engage with the program along side their peers. Assessments from support staff such as speech pathologists.
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	Funds were used to employ a bilingual early childhood worker for two days per week. This educator provided a mix of general support, targeted programs for the children as well as supporting communication with families.	Based on baseline samples of children's language development and parent feedback the children demonstrated improved receptive and expressive language skills.

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