

2021: Darlington Children's Centre Annual Report



Site 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 in the 40-50 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 2020-21 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 or school council report

During 2021 the Governing Council met regularly though , because of the Covid-19 situation the numbers were low. Children's Centre. The Governing Council formed in early 2021 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.

Examples of this includes the continuing development of the outdoor learning environment with a focus on a whole site approach. This planning had lead to the development of the priority for 2021 where the Centre team evaluated the current outdoor learning area and to document any future development.

Governing Council members also lead and participated in

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

Performance and attendance

% of children that attended your preschool in Term 4

75.6

Preschool quality improvement planning

The preschool quality improvement plan (QIP) focused on numeracy and literacy. The team attended a combined portfolio professional development day building on a 2020 program named Already Reading. Two teachers participated in an Orbis numeracy program. These programs helped to frame the Centres approach to designing and delivering programs.

The team met regularly for programming and used the QIP to support that work. To support this the team engaged with the DfE Numeracy and Literacy guidebooks that provided a structure to frame our planning and assessment of our approach.

The staff also drew on elements of the Reflect Respect Relate resource to observe how children responded by engagement to our approach.

Through this process we noticed that a consistent approach with a relational emphasis built a base from which children would engage. Across the Centre educators designed literacy experiences that provided rich oral language experiences and helped children to move towards more formal use of print and mark making.

Numeracy experiences built on supporting children to notice similarities and differences through use of collections and children's interests.

During 2021 we reflected on the ways in which all educators support children and their use of number. We drew on the Guides and decided that for educators we should focus our personal /team development and focus on children's use and understanding of number.

The approach to emphasising and building our approach to oral language development has been a goal in 2021 which we assessed as being embedded to the Centre approach. From this we determined that the 2022 literacy goal is to focus our learning and approach on children's mark making to build on the partnership work.

In 2022 the preschool will have a new teacher team. It is anticipated that there will be a review of 2022 progress and introduction to the 2022 QIP goals and challenges of practice.

Attendance comment

Enrolment

During 2021 the preschool had an average of 49 enrolments with an average attendance of 79.1%.

The preschool is continuing to experience the average attendance. While the average enrolment was 49 children enrolled during the year there were children who transitioned through the Centre. Compared to 2020 there were fewer transitions into and from the preschool during the year. These transitions 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.

During 2021 we have experienced a decline in enrolments that appears in line with a broader community decline in eligible four year olds enrolling in preschools.

This has resulted in a reduction in staffing by one early childhood worker position.

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. In 2021 the Covid-19 pandemic has also had an impact on attendance.

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 their enrolment is active. Using the EYS system to suspend then reactivate the enrolment would affect the attendance data.

In 2021 the Centre transitioned from using the Early Years System to the Education Management System. Whilst this has generally been a positive process it has impacted on some data sets and reporting.

Behaviour and client opinion

Parent opinion summary

The parent opinion survey was made available to all families with links to the on-line portal and through paper copies. There were a small number of parents who completed the survey.

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 was sought through all the education, care and community programs both formally and informally.

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

Screening history

Relevant history screening

Darlington Children's Centre has complied with criminal screening responsibilities throughout 2021 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

<i>Funding Source Amount</i>	<i>Amount (rounded to the nearest \$)</i>
Grants: State	Nil
Grants: Commonwealth	Nil
Parent Contributions	17,569
Other	1380

2021 Children’s Centre annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2021 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 strategy were a focus on oral language development and children making sense and use of data in their world. The approach emphasised the how this is supported in formal and informal experiences by educators. The approach was imbedded across the preschool, occasional care, playgroups and parent programs.</p> <p>The educators also built on the partnership preschool directors PLC focus of using bookmaking to link language and text.</p> <p>Educators reviewed their understanding and knowledge of data through engagement with the DfE Numeracy Guide to build deeper understanding and to maximize planned and incidental teaching and learning experiences.</p> <p>Two teachers participated in an Orbis Numeracy program. The learning from this was applied to program design.</p>	<p>Educators expressed that they had increased their knowledge and applied that to their program design. Particularly where an approach was imbedded educators in their programs children showed their developing knowledge.</p> <p>An example of this was a bird watching project where some children sustained an interest in noting/recording observations on tracking charts then engaging in conversations (analyse) of what had been seen.</p>
Improved Early Childhood Development (ECD) and parenting outcomes (children's centres only)	<p>Additional support provided on site by occupational therapist, speech pathologist, CDC, together with agency staff including: CAFHS clinic nurses, financial, legal, parent/child/family counselling, mental health, domestic/family violence.</p> <p>Agencies working together in a “team around the family” approach improved outcomes for families.</p> <p>The Centre provided six playgroups that included catering for babies, toddlers, preschool children and their parents.</p> <p>Parenting programs were delivered by site staff and by partner agencies</p>	<p>The Centre program offering and approach results in high demand for playgroups and parenting support from individual parents and a range of government and non-government organisations.</p> <p>Each program has a set of goals and outcomes that are used to measure and track our response to community needs.</p>
Inclusive Education Support Program	<p>Darlington received an initial IESP allocation that was supplemented three times on application. Student review team meetings were held each term attended by support services staff.</p> <p>IESP grants were allocated to employ ECW’s to support the children to engage with the curriculum on the same basis as their peers.</p> <p>The Centre had enrolled children who required substantial support including children who were eligible for special option placements.</p>	<p>Children who were eligible for additional support received a differentiate program in line with their needs and the program offered. Educators were supported to observe, assess and implement targeted programs and to support children to engage with the program on the same basis as their peers.</p>

<p>Improved outcomes for children with an Additional Language or Dialect who received bilingual support</p>	<p>Bilingual funding was received to support children from 13 language groups other than English. A bilingual ECW2 worked was employed by this grant to support Families attending Multicultural Women’s Group and Bilingual Playgroup reported that they felt supported and had opportunity to meet other bilingual families and the children were happy and more confident. The groups helped reduce social isolation. “a place to meet and share”</p>	<p>The Centre tracks children’s language development and this indicates that the children with the targeted support develop their home as well as English languages. Community programs are a support for parents alongside their children.</p>
<p>Children's Centres for Early Childhood Development and Parenting Grant</p>		
<p>Briefly describe or list the community programs offered in 2021 which had a focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playgroup • Parent support • Transition to and from preschool • Any new programs or services not reviously offered. 	<p>Playgroups and activities Community playgroups Tuesday and Thursday Yarnin Time Playgroup Baby Playgroup Toddler Playgroup Bilingual Playgroup <i>Summer Open Garden</i> <i>Prams in the Park/Walk</i></p> <p>Parent and support group programs Circle of Security Parenting Program Bringing up Great Kids <i>The Garden</i> Multicultural Women’s Group Coffee and Chat CAFHS Early Parenting Group CAFHS Clinic Mindful Awareness Parenting Program Women are Strong, women do survive <i>From Strength to Strength</i> <i>Staying Attached</i> <i>Baby Fizz</i> <i>Uniting Communities Dental Clinic</i> <i>Indigo Women’s Legal Services</i> <i>Family Wellbeing Services – Baptist Care</i> <i>Money Matters – Uniting Communities</i></p>	<p>The Centre provides education and care programs.</p> <p>The list of programs represents site developed and delivered programs as well as those offered by partner groups. There are a mix of ongoing and short term programs.</p> <p>Where appropriate Centre staff and other agency staff work collaboratively to deliver a program.</p> <p>The Centre develops programs based on local assessment of needs, funding opportunities and approaches by partner groups and agencies.</p>

