

Cowell Early Childhood Centre 2019 annual report to the community



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Cowell Early Childhood Centre number: 6663

Partnership: Central Eyre 2

Name of preschool director:

Jacqui Finnis

Name of preschool management committee chair:

Kelsey Breakell

Date of endorsement:

26/3/2020

Context and highlights

Cowell is a small coastal community on the Franklin Harbour, on the eastern side of the Eyre Peninsula. The estimated population is 1500. It is 450km from Adelaide & 161km from Port Lincoln where our District Education Office is located. Major industries for the community include oyster farming, agriculture and nearby mining. The Cowell district has experienced prolonged drought in recent years that has impacted on farming and related industries - despite the economic consequences of the drought, the community pulls together and demonstrate a high level of resilience that minimises the negative impact on child and families.

Cowell Early Childhood Centre incorporates a part time Preschool, that operated for 2 ½ days a week during preschool/school terms, and a Rural Care program that operates for 5 days a week 50 weeks of the year. The Preschool is a standalone category 2 centre, staffed by a director (0.8), and an early childhood worker (ECW) (0.6). The care program is staffed by four ECW workers who rotate shifts over the week. Two of our workers have a Diploma in Education and Care and two are currently actively working towards a Diploma. Cowell ECC has a physical capacity of 30. The enrolments for 2019 included 11 preschool children and 23 children enrolled in care. There are 16 projected enrolments in preschool for 2020 and demand for care remains strong.

Our centre is immediately adjacent to the Cowell Area School and there is parking for parents and visitors at the side and front entrance of the Centre, with staff parking at the rear of the centre.

We have a fantastic school transition programme with is implemented across the whole year with the School reception class which is located in close physical proximity. The Preschool children also attend sessions at the Cowell Community Library. In the term prior to the child starting school, children attend school for 4 morning sessions on a Wednesday. The consolidation sessions then build up to the child attending 2 days until the end of lunch time in readiness for their entry to school following the holidays.

Upcoming preschool children are also invited to participate in 4 sessions of preschool in term four (2 morning sessions, 1 half day and 1 full day) to support them in building confidence and relationships with staff prior to starting their preschool year.

Report from the preschool management committee

What a start to 2019 we had with some new faces joining our committee we were excited to see what the year had in store for our centre.

With the new committee set we had a heap of new ideas for our centre, with changes and improvements happening everywhere from the completion of the new hill, tunnel and slide area, mud kitchens, tepee, extended deck on the cubby house for the kids to have hours of fun with new thing to play with and a change to the locks on the gates to ensure the safety of our children. We held a working bee in late October which saw our wonderful families help give the cubby house a new coat of paint and all the wood play equipment oiled and a number of other jobs around the centre completed, big thank you to everyone who helped.

With all the changes going on around the centre the committee set the wheels in motion to do some fundraising to help with all the changes happening. We were honoured to be able to do the Friday night draw at the Commercial hotel which is a major fundraiser for our centre raising \$1603.04. We also held a trading table and a Father's day raffle which boosted the fundraising with another \$1093 to add to the centre.

The end of the year ended on a sad note with the retirement for Vicki Elleway who has worked at the centre for the past 22 years she was an amazing asset to our centre. You will be dearly missed and we wish you all the best in your retirement Vicki.

A big thank you to all the efforts of the committee members, staff and volunteers in 2019 we can't wait to see what 2020 has in store.

Quality improvement planning

Literacy Improvement goal

1: Children's ability to verbally express their ideas is enhanced

All staff had a half day meeting on oral language where Director shared resources with staff about oral language development. Poster were put around the centre showing milestones for parents to see and updates were added to the newsletter. Rural care began completing oral language screens with every child. Tier two word focus in Kindy and oral language screens were conducted with every child twice over the year. Four staff completed training and development modules on assessing children's learning, part 1 and part 2. Four staff attended training with Karen Carson on oral language development. All staff participated in a visit to Tumbay Bay Kindergarten and Rural Care and shared what each team had been working on.

2: Phonological awareness – Maintain 100% of children achieving preschool domains and increase children's growth in producing rhyme and initial sounds. (Preschool)

PASM testing was recorded 3 times across the year. Term planners and fortnightly planners included areas for phonological development and growth and small groups were planned to develop these skills too. Data at the end of the year showed that every child had achieved preschool domains and initial sounds and producing rhyming words also showed positive growth. Three staff attended Phonological awareness training with Karen Carson.

QA 1; Educational program and practice; A program in Rural Care that is embedded into daily practice and is critically reflected on by the team.

Staff discussed past site visits photos seen from other Centres.6.2.2019 – Whole staff meeting. Discussed planning ideas using information from other seen programs including the Kindy program currently being used at the Centre. Looked at which bits would be useful and some adaptations that could be made. Created a template to begin using as part of program and continually reviewed this each term at Buddy up meetings

QA 3: Physical Environment – provision of open-ended / natural play opportunities (3 year plan 2017 - 2019)

Survey was sent out to all families in March to collect parent voice on what they would like to see in the yard. In 2018, plans were put in place for the construction of a new hill area featuring a hill, tunnel, side, rockery and plantings. This area was erected in January 2019. A large wooden wheel was converted into a relaxation space with planter boxes added to the side, so that children could grow a range of herbs to use in their cooking play experiences. The cubby house received an extension of a decking area off the side to increase the play opportunities and space offered in the much loved space. A large new walk-through tee-pee was constructed and added to the outdoor space to provide another nook for play. The mud pit area received a new water pump and two mud kitchens to help teach children sustainability for our natural resource and a range of wooden logs and pipes were added to the space for loose parts play.

QA 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities - For parents to feel that they can have input into programs for their children and their feedback is sort.

Goal was discussed with Gov Council at end of 2018 meeting. Parent permission forms were updated to include photos on our private Facebook page to allow families being able to see what their child is up to. Kindy and Rural Care Parent photo book was updated include program (rather than separate book). In Kindy, a photo of the weekly program was sent home to bus families each week to ensure all families have access to this document. Rural Care asked for feedback on communication cards and reviewed the process which will now change in 2020.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2016	11	10	10	9
2017	16	16	16	16
2018	16	18	18	20
2019	11	11	11	

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

Enrolment numbers continue to fluctuate each year, although remained steady across the year. Numbers in 2020 are expected to again show a positive increase to 15.

Attendance

Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2016 centre	100.0%	90.0%	94.0%	100.0%
2017 centre	91.3%	95.0%	98.8%	97.5%
2018 centre	95.3%	90.0%	86.2%	90.0%
2019 centre	100.0%	96.2%	92.5%	
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

Attendance showed a positive improvement from 2018 and continue to remain above that of the state average each term.

Absences recorded are usually due to illness or holidays and we find that our families are generally quite good at informing the centre of any planned absences.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2016	2017	2018	2019
735 - Cowell Area School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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

Data shows that children that attend Cowell Early Childhood Centre predominately transition to Cowell Area school, which is located on the site next to the preschool.

Client opinion summary

72.7% of responses were returned with responses proving to be very positive with most answers being agree to strongly agree. This showed that 7 out of the 10 families who received the survey completed it. This was a slightly lower response rate than the previous year although returned responses were similar.

Quality of teaching & Learning

83 - 100% agree to strongly agree overall. 100% agree to strongly agree that their child receives high quality teaching at the preschool, teachers know what children can do & what they need to learn, teachers are enthusiastic about learning, are satisfied with the learning programs. 14% were neutral about that they are clearly informed about learning program.

Support of Learning

83-100% agree to strongly agree overall for this section With 100% Agree to strongly agree children have access to quality material, their child is happy at the preschool, their child would receive support if needed & the preschool is safe and secure. 14% disagreed that the preschool changes its programs & activities to improve achievement.

Relationships & Communication

43-100% strongly agree to agree about the support of learning offered within the site with 100% strongly agree to agree they feel welcome, there is a broad variety of information about the preschool, children from all cultures and backgrounds are treated fairly & parents are encouraged to be involved in many ways. 57% were neutral or disagreed that they receive helpful information about their child.

Leadership & Decision Making

68-100% agree to strongly agree overall. 100% agree to strongly agree parents have opportunity to be involved through governing council. 29% disagreed that the preschool seeks parent opinions on programs & 42% are neutral that the preschool involves parents in decision making.

Data shows a theme for parent involvement and communication strategies to be improved.

Relevant history screening

All staff employed in the Centre on a permanent, contract/casual or relief basis have a current DCSI History Screening clearance. Copies of these documents are kept electronically and in paper form.

Financial statement

	Funding Source	Amount
1.	Grants: State	\$430,494.16
2.	Grants: Commonwealth	0
3.	Parent Contributions	\$2,830.00
4.	Other	\$14,360.58

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	Literacy Improvement Goal was identified at the site. Staff attended training to further develop professional learning 1x staff - Attended Literacy Summit 3x staff - Attended Phonological Awareness training with Karen Carson 4x staff - Attended Oral Language training with Karen Carson	Staff developing an improved understanding of the developmental milestones of oral language.
Improved ECD and parenting outcomes (children's centres only)	N/A	
Improved outcomes for children with disabilities	Additional support time was allocated to children who required additional support with their learning	Children benefited in their learning by able have 1:1 learning support time
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	N/A	

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