



Ardtornish Children's Centre 2016 Annual Report to the Community



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education
and Child Development

Ardtornish Children's Centre Preschool Number: 4668

Partnership: Modbury

Name of Preschool Director:

Heather Fuss

Name of Governing Council Chair:

Amanda Schmidt

Date of Endorsement:

27/02/2017

Context and Highlights

Ardtornish Children's Centre is located next to Ardtornish Primary School. We offer a preschool program, occasional care program and parenting programs. We aim to provide families with a holistic approach to children's learning and wellbeing by offering a range of programs and support to suit the needs of our community. Many of our families also access Ardtornish Primary OSHC service and the Ardtornish Playgroup and we have developed strong links with these services. Most of our children have two adults at home, at least one of whom is in the paid labour force. In many of our families both parents work full time. We have a small number of single parent families. Our enrolments are becoming increasingly diverse in language and culture and we have increasing numbers of children working with additional support agencies. We have predominantly fee paying parents. We have had a fantastic participation in Governing Council this year with committed parents and an increase in the number of male family members involved. We had a small number of staffing changes throughout the year. One of the many highlight of our year was welcoming Natalie Jager as our new FSC. We welcomed 3 other new additions to our Kindy, our chickens. They have certainly been a highlight and have supported learning about life cycles, respect for living things and many literacy and numeracy discussions. Children have developed confidence interacting with the chickens among other disposition for learning. Special Visitors weeks throughout the year have recognised the role of children's families and other significant adults in their lives as part of their learning and wellbeing. We had many visitors come in to share and contribute to the children's learning journeys. These weeks have produced positive community engagement and feedback. The biggest changes have been stimulated by the Re-imagining childhood project, further details of which are provided in the next section.

Report from the Governing Council

The 2016 Ardtornish Children's Centre Governing Council was established on February 29, 2016 with new members being elected. Emma Edwards was elected as Secretary, Melissa Freebairn as Treasurer and myself as Chairperson along with several representative members to form our management committee.

The governing council convened twice a term to discuss upcoming news and events, budget items and to approve some exciting changes. A big thank you to all committee members and representatives for their time this year; from attending meetings and reviewing policies to helping serve pizza and drinks at our end of year art show.

Throughout the year, the students were kept busy with excursions, incursions, special visitors week, wheels day and vacation play.

In term three students participated in dance education with Dancify. Students learnt a range of dances and families were able to see their child's performance at the conclusion of the dance program.

Students visited Ardtornish Primary School through regular library visits, playing on the new junior primary playground and participating in the school's transition program during term four.

The most memorable event of 2016, would have to be the introduction of our three chickens and their famous chicken coop. We welcomed the chickens early in the year, watching them hatch, grow and graduate from living in a generously sized cardboard box to their custom built home. We'd like to thank the staff and parents for looking after the chickens on weekends and holidays while their coop was being built during the year. A special mention to Mel and her mum for their amazing work rehabilitating Hennypenny and her crooked leg.

2016 was a successful and busy year, once again, thank you to all committee members. I would like to wish everyone all the best for 2017, in particular the new Ardtornish Children's Centre Governing Council members.

Quality Improvement Planning

Our 2016 improvement priorities were children's learning and development, environmental sustainability and community involvement. Our most significant progress and achievements against these are as follows.

We began our participation in the Re-imagining Childhood Project. The Project challenged our team to reflect on our practices through a range of different lenses and make changes for improvement in line with our belief that children are competent and capable. Some of the changes we've made include significant changes to the physical environment. These changes have promoted engagement by providing children with more choice and opportunities to exercise their agency whilst being inviting and interesting sparking curiosity and creativity. The project has prompted further reflection on our philosophy statement which we will continue to reflect on in 2017. We've investigated the theory and value behind risky play, nature play and loose parts and have incorporated these into our pedagogy. This has provided children with increased opportunities to demonstrate a broader range of numeracy skills including spatial awareness (which educators explored during familiarisation of the numeracy indicators), be challenged physically and intellectually and develop executive functions such as impulse control. At the beginning of 2016 we changed the way we structure our Kindy sessions in order to support children to develop relationships for learning and for families to access the full 15 hours of Kindy offered. We noticed that children felt connected to their educators much earlier in the year and felt a much stronger sense of belonging to their small group which in turn supported their learning in all areas.

The Re-imagining childhood project has also strengthened relationships with Ardtornish Primary school which has improved our joint practice in relation to transition to school and continuity of learning. We asked a number of the early years staff from the school to join our project team which has prompted changes in practice across both sites. (see also report to school)

One of the challenges that we faced with environmental sustainability was encouraging whole team ownership of responsibility. This has changed throughout the year with educators taking responsibility for waste disposal, garden care and chicken care and supporting children to engage with these experiences. We are much more conscious of waste and accessing sources of second hand or re-purposed items to resource the centre. In 2017 we aim to revisit our sustainability philosophy and action plan in order to identify and pursue further areas of improvement.

We have had increases in involvement in the centre from two key groups, dads and families with infants. Attendances at groups and programs run with these target audiences grew rapidly during 2016. We will investigate strategies in 2017 to continue to grow engagement with these groups. We developed an ongoing relationship with Can do for kids and further developed our relationship with Uniting Care Wesley Bowden. By doing so we have increased opportunities for local families to access additional services and programs. In 2016 we had exceptional governing council participation and attendance. We believe the key cause of this was a combination of the cohort of families and the way information about governing council was presented during our enrolment process. This group also had a large number of dads involved. Special visitor's weeks had good attendance rates by family members who expressed gratitude at being given the opportunity to come in and engage with their child's Kindy education. This also gave the centre staff many opportunities to discuss children's learning and make links between Kindy pedagogy and home learning.

Enrolment

| Year | Enrolment by Term | | | |
|------|-------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| | Term 1 | Term 2 | Term 3 | Term 4 |
| 2014 | 46 | 49 | 50 | 50 |
| 2015 | 63 | 61 | 61 | 63 |
| 2016 | 74 | 77 | 79 | |

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

Enrolment Comment

Our enrolment numbers have increased from 2015 and continued to increase throughout 2016. We had some minor fluctuations as a small number of families relocated throughout the year. Enrollments that occurred after the main intake at the beginning of the year were primarily due to families moving into the area or wanting to attend the Centre after enrolling at Ardtornish Primary. Our enquiry into the reason behind our increasing numbers has indicated that our relationship with Ardtornish Primary, our increasing numbers of enrollments in programs other than Kindy and positive community perception appear to be the main contributing factors.

At this stage we predict our enrollment numbers to remain stable for the beginning of 2017.

Attendance

| Year | Term 1 | Term 2 | Term 3 | Term 4 |
|-------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 2014 Centre | 93.5% | 87.8% | 88.0% | 94.0% |
| 2015 Centre | 88.9% | 88.5% | 88.5% | 81.0% |
| 2016 Centre | 94.6% | 89.6% | 88.6% | |
| 2014 State | 90.0% | 88.9% | 86.1% | 87.1% |
| 2015 State | 90.5% | 88.7% | 86.3% | 86.3% |
| 2016 State | 89.6% | 88.7% | 87.7% | |

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 Comment

We have maintained steady attendance rates throughout 2016 and have seen a slight increase from 2015. Feedback from families indicates that the reason for the increase is the changes that the Centre in conjunction with the governing council made to our session structure. Families in our context were finding it difficult to utilise half day sessions. We responded by restructuring our sessions to offer each child 2 7.5 hour days. We actively encourage regular attendance. Absences are mostly due to illness, family holidays or emergencies. Most families report absences and their reasons to the preschool. Prolonged absences that are not notified are followed up by Centre educators and where appropriate families are assisted to re-engage with the preschool program.

Destination Schools

| Feeder Schools (Site number - Name) | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1540 - Ardtornish Primary School | 91.5% | 95.0% | 92.2% |
| 1858 - Greenwith Primary School | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.3% |
| 6026 - Christian Brothers College - Junior | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.3% |
| 8027 - Pedare Christian College:Junior Sch | 0.0% | 1.7% | 0.0% |
| 8385 - Saint David's Parish School | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.6% |
| 8411 - Torrens Valley Christian School | 6.4% | 0.0% | 1.3% |
| 8421 - King's Baptist Grammar School | 0.0% | 1.7% | 0.0% |
| 8439 - Tyndale Christian School | 2.1% | 0.0% | 1.3% |
| 9402 - Sunrise Christian School | 0.0% | 1.7% | 0.0% |
| Total | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Destination Schools Comment

Most of our children go to Ardtornish Primary School which is co-located next to our Centre. We had a small number of children who went to private schools in 2016 and a small number that went to other public schools due to relocation of the family. We have a strong relationship with Ardtornish Primary school and continually work towards improving continuity of learning across our sites.

Client Opinion Summary

We collected family opinion data utilising both our own internal survey and the DECD online parent survey. We had a total of 33 response for our internal survey and 6 response from the DECD survey. We had an overwhelmingly positive response from families indicating there understanding and appreciation of the Centre and the programs and services offered.

Our internal survey had 3 key areas including Physical standard, Educational Standard and Staff/Family Relationships. Under physical standard 22 out of 33 responses scored 5/5 in all areas. The comments provided indicate that families are very satisfied with the presentation of the physical environment and the number of opportunities it affords children, many describing the space as inviting. One response was "I work in childcare and your facility is one of the best I have seen.

For Educational Standard 30 out of 33 response scored 4/5 or above in all areas. The comments provided indicate that families are very satisfied with the way the program is designed based on children's individual interests and wellbeing. Families value and understand the importance of nature play and experiences designed to promote continuity of learning. One response was " We were pleasantly surprised to learn that some activities have stemmed from my child's input. The educators are doing a fantastic job of engaging with kids and following their lead/learning interests."

Staff/Family relationships had 21 response 5/5 and a further 7 responses 4/5 in all areas. There were very few comments in this area however many of the comments about centre strengths related to relationships with staff including "Staff are highly engaged and dedicated. Relationships with families and staff form quickly and are encouraging and friendly". We will utilise the suggested areas for improvement in our reflective practices and development of our QIP for 2017.

DECD Relevant History Screening

Through our induction process and procedure, the Director ensures that all staff members, students on placement and volunteers meet the requirements of having a DCSI clearance. We have also ensured that all visiting performers and contractors have either DCSI clearance, teacher registration or have been cleared through Spotless (Facilities Management). All police checks or other appropriate documentation are sighted by the Director or her delegate and a copy is kept on site to ensure we are meeting all the requirements.

Financial Statement

| | Funding Source | Amount |
|---|----------------------|------------|
| 1 | Grants: State | 605,232.84 |
| 2 | Grants: Commonwealth | 72,370.66 |
| 3 | Parent Contributions | 50,933.60 |
| 4 | Other | 10,841.32 |

2016 Preschool Annual Report: Improved Outcomes Funding

| Improved Outcomes Category (where applicable to the site) | Briefly describe how the 2016 funding was used to improve the relevant DECD Standard of Educational Achievement * outcomes (where applicable): | Outcomes achieved or progress towards these outcomes: |
|--|--|---|
| Improved outcomes for numeracy and literacy | <p>I/We purchased new big books, relocated and updated our book learning space incorporating space for adults and children to share stories, borrowed live exhibits from the nature education centre, purchased dramatic play props, worked with the little big book club and lets read and updated our literacy kits.</p> | <p>Increases in literacy abilities based on individual learning styles and strengths as reported in statements of learning with reference to literacy indicators.</p> |
| Improved ECD and Parenting Outcomes (Children's Centres only) | <p>In 2016, 16 services provided 253 Family and Community sessions an increase of over one third of those offered in 2015. We responded to our three key areas with up to three weekly baby playgroups, two successful Circle of Security Programs and fatherhood and infant playgroup. Parent surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction.</p> | <p>Learning goals and progress toward them varied depending on the children's individuality. All children made progress with positive feedback for families and support services.</p> |
| Improved outcomes for children with disabilities | <p>All children with additional support had one on one session's with an educator who guided them through learning experiences that were planning in consultation with support services. Resourcing was also allocated to develop tools to support the children. We had the highest number of children with additional and complex health needs that the centre has had since opening and some resourcing was allocated to ensure that their wellbeing was being provided for.</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
| Improved outcomes for children with additional language or dialect | <p>N/A</p> | <p>N/A</p> |

* The DECD Standard of Educational Achievement is defined as children and young people progressing and achieving at or above their appropriate year level.