Augusta Park Childhood Services Centre

Annual Report 2014
1. CONTEXT

Preschool Name: Augusta Park Childhood Services Centre  
Preschool Number: 6605  
Preschool Director: Sonya Gee-Davis  
Partnership: Port Augusta/Quorn

Augusta Park Childhood Services Centre is located on the outer edge of Port Augusta adjacent to other educational sites including Augusta Park Primary School, Remote and Isolated Children’s Exercise and Port Augusta School of the Air. There is great diversity in the local community related to cultural backgrounds, socio-economic status and family structures. Such factors influence the programs and intervention strategies in place at the preschool.

There were changes implemented at the beginning of 2014 to comply with the enrolment policy in relation to the Same First Day and Universal Access. Consultation processes occurred with both staff and Governing Council towards the end of 2013 to determine how sessions were to be delivered. Thus children within their eligible year accessed 15 hours in the form of two full days every week either option 1: Monday/Tuesday or option 2: Wednesday/Thursday (8.30am to 3.15pm) and one half day session (8.30am to 11.30am) alternate weeks depending on the option accessing. Lunch times were included as part of the preschool program. Those children eligible to access 12 hours of preschool accessed these in the form of two full days (8.30am to 2.30pm). Friday afternoons were used to conduct staff meetings, provide professional learning opportunities and the allocation of non-contact time.

The warranted staffing allocation at the beginning of 2014 included 1 full-time director, 1 full time teacher and 1 full time early childhood worker. The Universal Access and Early Literacy funding enabled the employment of additional educators to supplement the staff team. Through specialised programs such as the Preschool Support Program and Bilingual Support Program extra educators were employed each term.

At the conclusion of term 4 the preschool had 70 eligible enrolments (35 per session). 49 of these children completed their preschool education and 21 will continue. 37 children accessed some form of transition to preschool visits (2 hour session once a week over a six week period or negotiated attendance). The projected enrolment numbers at the commencement of 2015 is 58. The capacity of the preschool has been reduced from 35 to 30 per session therefore a total of 60 enrolments are permitted under the current standards.

2. REPORT FROM GOVERNING COUNCIL

Kimberley Cowey – Chairperson of the Governing Council

The 2014 Governing Council was elected on 12 February 2014. Seven members were elected, including the positions of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Governing Council had an average membership of six people, and met nine times throughout the year, including the AGM. This number also excludes one meeting which was postponed as there were not enough members to form a quorum. Throughout the year it was acknowledged by Governing Council that people found the thought of becoming a committee member daunting. With the aim of increasing member numbers in 2015, 2014 committee members will speak with new parents advising them of what is involved in being a Governing Council member, as it is paramount to support the running of the Centre.

At the beginning of the year Governing Council moved the engagement of Rowe Partners, in lieu of a Finance Officer. To significantly reduce some of the costs originally quoted by
Rowe Partners, the Treasurer and Director were also engaged to assist in the role of Finance Officer. This arrangement worked well and Governing Council appreciated the work done by both the Treasurer and Director.

An ongoing focus of Governing Council is fee collection and 2014 saw accounts well paid. Governing Council has implemented further strategies to improve fee collection in 2015. Governing Council also acknowledged that with increasing expenses, due to Consumer Price Index and losing the attendance grant, in 2015 the Centre will have less funding. To combat this issue, it was moved to increase fees for 2015. It also became evident that the Governing Council will have to apply for further grants and increase fundraising in 2015, and beyond.

Governing Council applied for the 2014 PIE Grant, which was unsuccessful. Upon requesting further feedback to put the Centre in the running for further grants, Governing Council has reapplied for the 2015 PIE Grant. Governing Council also signed the Centre up to the Daniel Morcombe Foundation to access their range of resources in relation to child safety.

Throughout the year Governing Council worked with the Director and the staff in relation to the successful compilation of the recipe books; picture plate fundraising; reviewing of extensions and approving various purchases including an Apple TV, WIFI Router, Epson XP-Multifunction All-in-one colour printer and a new display cabinet to relocate the turtles indoors afterhours (as they had again become subjected to Vandals).

Governing Council supported the two family nights, due to the two groups of students, this worked well and positive feedback was received from families who attended, and support was also given to the successful parent information sessions, for the new students starting in 2015.

Recognition goes to Office National, Port Augusta for sponsoring the printing and binding, which saw every student receiving a recipe book.

Thank you to the Director, all Staff, Volunteers and Governing Council members for your continued support throughout the year, which ensures students accessing the Centre are provided with an enriched educational experience.

The first Governing Council Meeting will occur after the AGM on the 11th of February and we look forward to welcoming the involvement of new families in the Governing Council.

### 3. HIGHLIGHTS 2014

Major highlights and achievements for 2014 include:

- Completion of the outdoor kitchen structure.
- Let’s Read packs distributed to approximately 50 children.
- Successful grant application through Olympic Dam Aboriginal Community Grant for the provision of cultural performances ($500.00).
- Involvement of Arid Lands and Friends to redevelop garden area with bush tucker plants.
- Implementation of Reflect, Respect, Relate (RRR) focused on Involvement Scale.
- Highly successful graduation ceremonies occurred over two nights (a total of 46 children and their families attended).
Throughout the year a high level of energy was focused on the development of children’s numeracy skills through the involvement in the Empowering Local Learners Project.

A belonging quilt was created as a focal point when entering the preschool. Each child and educator completed a drawing to represent ‘self’.

Three educators attended a professional learning opportunity provided by Lobethal Community Kindergarten centred on the Outdoor Learning Environment (Digging Deeper, Unearthing Authentic Outdoor Learning).

Two educators attended a professional learning morning with Professor Lillian Katz focused on implementing a curriculum through a project approach.

High attendance at information sessions held for parents whose children were transitioning into preschool term 4. One was held during the evening and the other on a Friday afternoon.

Visual representation of our philosophy in the form of a tree.

Natural materials being used to accentuate learning in both the indoor and outdoor environment.

The creation of a picture book to tell the story of our coloured Perspex wall at the sandpit.

Involvement of an Aboriginal parent to produce an example of how to represent identity on a small canvas. As a result each child completed a dot painting and two hand prints on a small canvas for an art display situated inside the preschool for the duration of the year.

Preschool recipe book produced involving families (each family provided a recipe) and children (each child completed a drawing). Office National sponsored the printing and binding of 70 copies.

Involvement in the Port Augusta Christmas tree festival (awarded first prize for the natural tree division).

An individual DVD was created for those children who completed their preschool education showing their learning journey.

The use of iPads to collect and collate evidence of children’s progress and learning.

(Appendix 1: Highlights and Achievements)

4. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Quality Improvement Plan was established at the beginning of the year to set the strategic direction of the preschool for 2014 in the seven quality standards. Review processes were set in place each term and as a result information was updated accordingly. The performance development process was closely aligned to ensure all educators were committed to achieving the key improvement areas identified.

The following report will outline key actions towards the priorities identified, including achievements and recommendations for 2015.

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice

A whole centre approach in place to improve children’s literacy skills including a focused approach on early writing, print knowledge, oral language, phonological awareness and focus vocabulary.
Key Achievements:

Throughout the year explicit strategies were in place to develop children’s literacy skills. These included early writing, print knowledge, oral language, phonological awareness and focus vocabulary. Children’s literacy learning and development was tracked and documented through various forms including learning stories, anecdotal records, running records and statements of learning.

There was a high focus on the provision of intentional teaching opportunities. The environment was set up to direct the learning to achieve the planned outcomes. Routines such as group time and lunch time had experiences planned. This information was documented through the program and planning cycle and reflected upon to make continuous improvements.

The curriculum delivery was centred on themes based on the interests and needs of children. Additionally, focus sounds were introduced and explicitly explored through meaningful and relevant experiences and activities. These were implemented following a developmental sequence as advised by the speech pathologist. Innovative practices were explored to captivate the interest and appeal of children such as a ‘Word Wall’ and ‘Mr Mug’. There was also a focus on the use of appropriate questioning when interacting with children to extend their thinking and language skills.

Through the newsletter and flyers a range of activity ideas were provided to parents to consolidate literacy learning and make strong links between preschool and home.

Recommendations:

- The development of a whole site approach to literacy learning.
- Familiarisation and implementation of the Indicators of Preschool Literacy.
- The use of the floor book approach to focus on the development of vocabulary and language skills.

A whole centre approach in place to improve children’s numeracy skills with a focus on Executive Functions.

Key Achievements:

There was a strong commitment and involvement in the Empowering Local Learners Initiative. This was centred on developing children’s executive functions: working memory, inhibitory control and cognitive flexibility through a focus on mathematics and numeracy. Through this a change of practice occurred particularly how numeracy activities were presented. Activities encouraged children to actively engage in exploring, problem solving and investigation. Resources were carefully selected with an emphasis on natural materials. Questioning was used to extend the thinking and understanding of concepts. Concept areas covered included number, shape, pattern and measurement. Program and planning reflected the explicit teaching experiences and activities provided to develop skills.

The provision of professional learning sessions occurred for educators centred on numeracy. This included a series of sessions focused on specific concepts. Information presented included a developmental overview, examples of appropriate practice and links to the Early Years Learning Framework.

Recommendations:

- Involvement in the Empowering Local Learners (ELL) project.
To focus on extending children’s learning through appropriate questioning.

Preschool Director to attend Leaders Numeracy training to add value to ELL project.

Familiarisation and implementation of the Indicators of Preschool Numeracy.

To investigate practical ways of incorporating the RRR into practice.

Key Achievements:

As a staff team we explored practical ways of using the RRR Involvement Scale to reflect on practice. Each educator used the involvement scale to observe a focus child on three separate occasions. From this a summary of findings was presented at a staff meeting. Then suitable numeracy activities were planned based on the information collected. Activities implemented were filmed to capture the exchange of dialogue between educator and child. This footage was viewed at a staff meeting and constructive feedback was given pertaining to questioning and language used by the educator. In addition, we obtained a clearer insight into individual children’s numeracy learning and development. The focus child was tracked over the year to gain a greater picture of their numeracy, knowledge and skills.

Utilised Building Teacher Capacity funding ($1,418) to release staff to fulfill tasks associated.

Recommendations:

To continue use of the RRR Involvement Scale and mapping over the year.

Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety

Promotion of healthy lifestyles

Key Achievements:

Every day practices at the preschool reflected the importance of healthy lifestyles such as fruit times (morning and afternoon), participation in physical activities, healthy eating, hygiene and sun-safe practices.

The vegetable garden beds were utilised to grow vegetables. Some of the produce was used for cooking experiences. Children were actively involved in preparing garden beds, planting and caring for vegetables.

Friday activities provided regular cooking experiences for children to be involved in. The recipes selected were predominantly healthy. This enabled children to be actively involved in the process of cooking. Children were able to take a small portion of the finished product home with the accompanied recipe. This promoted healthy eating within the home environment.

The preschool’s newsletter was used as an avenue to promote healthy lifestyle practices.

Recommendations:

To utilise vegetable garden beds to plant seasonal vegetables.

To promote healthy lifestyle practices.

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

Installation of a platform area within the sandpit.
Key Achievements:

Educators researched ways to enhance the sandpit area to diversify the play opportunities for children. A visual display was set up to enable educators to share their thinking with others. Plans have been developed and approved by the Governing Council.

Recommendations:

- Sandpit redevelopment project to be actioned in 2015.

Installation of external clear blinds under veranda.

Key Achievements:

Investigated and sought advice regarding this project.

Recommendations:

- To be discussed further before actioning in 2015.

Curriculum focus on sustainable practices.

Key Achievements:

There was a high focus on embedding sustainable practices in the preschool's everyday operation. Such practices supported the practical implementation of sustainable practices within the home context for children and families. Friday activities were predominately centred on teaching children sustainable practices such as recycling, caring for the environment and living things.

Recommendations:

- To continue implementing a range of recycling practices.
- To increase the use of natural materials in curriculum delivery.

Curriculum focus on caring and contributing positively to our environment.

Key Achievements:

There was a strong curriculum focus on caring and contributing positively to our environment. Activities were centred on the garden areas and animals (fish, frogs and turtles). Arid Lands and Friends were accessed to assist in the selection of appropriate bush tucker plants. Plants were purchased and children assisted in the planting and watering. Friday activities were focused on implementing an array of activities to consolidate children's learning.

Recommendations:

- To plan and implement activities associated with the garden and animals.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

To actively engage families and the community in the preschool.
Key Achievements:

Information was provided to families through a range of means including Facebook, newsletter, flyers, notice boards and verbal interactions. These enabled the distribution of information in a timely manner.

Forums were held to involve families including graduations and information sessions, all of which were well attended and extremely positive feedback was received.

Parents and family members were actively involved in the preschool in various ways such as Governing Council, curriculum provision, gardening and fundraising. This created a strong partnership between educators and those involved.

Community involvement included an excursion to the library and organised visitors to the preschool included police and dentist.

Recommendations:

- To provide an excursion and have visitors each term.
- To identity ways of increasing involvement of families and community.

Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management

To provide to educators constructive feedback, direction, guidance and support on how to improve performance. Educators to reflect on their own practice.

Key Achievements:

A performance development process was in place for educators each term to exchange dialogue in relation to their work performance. This was highly valued by the preschool director and educators. The ePortfolio approach was introduced and will be further investigated in 2015.

Recommendations:

- All educators to set up an ePortfolio.

5. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The Bilingual Support Program supported 6 children for whom English was a second language. The preschool was allocated hours each term (term 1 - 36, term 2 - 18, term 3 - 36 and term 4 – 33). This enabled the employment of a Bilingual Support Worker to supplement staffing. The main focus was on developing children’s English skills and the implementation of culturally inclusive activities. This additional time benefited children’s learning and development particularly oral language skills.

The Preschool Support Program was in place each term to support individual children with special rights. A total number of children supported each term included: term 1 – 14, term 2 – 17, term 3 – 19 and term 4 - 19. This enabled the employment of additional early childhood workers to supplement staffing. Individual plans were developed each term to outline the desired outcomes and the specific activities and approaches to be implemented. There was a high focus on the provision of one on one support time, small group activities and working closely with the speech pathologist. Due to the number of children having continence plans an educator was timetabled to oversee this each day.
The preschool was allocated Aboriginal 3 year old Family Literacy Program funding ($4,868) and Family Literacy Focus funding ($20,842). This enabled the employment of additional early childhood workers and a teacher to support the development and implementation of effective literacy strategies.

### 6. STUDENT DATA

#### 6.1 Enrolments

Figure 1: Enrolments by Term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on person counts in the two week reference period each term.
Excludes children transition into preschool.
Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

The assigned capacity is 30 children per session however a variation was approved for the year to accommodate 35. The enrolment figures gradually increased over the year to reach full capacity (70). For 2015 the capacity will remain at 30 to comply with standards. The projected enrolments for 2015 indicate 59, hence 1 vacancy.

#### 6.2 Attendance

Figure 2: Attendance by Term

Table 2: Attendance Percentages 2012 - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Attendance Percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012 Centre</td>
<td>91.2</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>91.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 Centre</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 Centre</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2012 State</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td>85.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 State</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 State</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 children transition into preschool.

Note: Figures have been revised for previous years, using integer deemed attendance not decimal.

Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

Attendance percentages each term were higher than the previous year’s results. Term 2 and 3 were higher than the state average. This is very pleasing results as systematic improvement strategies were in place each term to consistently follow up on irregular and non-attendance. This was made possible by the allocation of Attendance Improvement Initiative funding ($19,201). The aim is to continue this more targeted approach in 2015.

### 6.3 Destination – Feeder Schools

#### Table 3: Feeder School Percentage Data 2012 - 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site number - Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0355 - Port Augusta West Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0679 - Willsden Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0990 - Augusta Park Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1481 - Stirling North Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9122 - Caritas College</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the percent of children currently enrolled who will attend school in the following year, where the expected school is known. Due to rounding totals may not add up to 100%.

Source: Term 3 Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

77.1% of children have enrolled to attend public schools in comparison to 22.9% private. The main feeder school is Augusta Park Primary School (50%) however there has been a decrease of 10.8% in comparison to last year’s results. There has been a significant increase in the number of children enrolled in Caritas College (13.1%). There is a slight increase in the enrolment numbers represented for Stirling North Primary School and Willsden Primary School. Port Augusta West Primary School enrolment numbers have decreased by 11%.

### 7. CLIENT OPINION

Refer to Appendix 2 for the summary report on the Opinion Surveys completed for 2014.

The Parent Opinion Survey was distributed to a total of 51 parents whose children completed their preschool education at the conclusion of 2014. A total of 13 responses were received.
Quality of Teaching and Learning: The ratings received in this area were predominantly ‘strongly agree’. The highest percentage (92%) in this rating was ‘I think my child receives high quality teaching at this preschool and the lowest (46%) ‘My child’s teachers clearly inform me about the learning program’.

Support of Learning: The ratings received in this area fluctuated predominantly between ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’. The highest percentage (92%) in the ‘strongly agree’ was ‘This preschool provides a safe and secure environment’ and the lowest (54%) ‘My child is motivated to learn at this preschool’.

Relationship and Communication: The ratings received in this area fluctuated predominantly between ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’. The highest percentage (92%) in the ‘strongly agree’ was ‘The staff always listen to what I have to say about my child’s development and needs’ and the lowest (62%) ‘This preschool assists the development of my child’s personal and social skills’.

Leadership and Decision Making: The ratings received were in ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’. The highest percentage (92%) in the ‘strongly agree’ was ‘This preschool is well organised this year’ and ‘I have confidence in how the preschool is managed’. The lowest percentage (50%) ‘I am given the opportunity to be involved in the preschool’s educational activities’.

Recommendations:

- Process to be implemented to ensure all parents have the opportunity to provide feedback. This will also provide a more accurate representation of data to reflect on.
- To discuss as a whole staff team actions to address the areas identified as having the lowest percentages.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

Copies of Criminal History Screening were obtained from all educators at the preschool. Human Resources records were monitored to ensure compliance. Risk management process was in place for one permanent early childhood worker until the approved documentation was received. Additionally, the Governing Council ensured all committee members, cleaner and gardener had Criminal History Screening completed. Such practices will be implemented for 2015.

9. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Refer to Appendix 3 and 4 for end of year financial reports including:

- Balance Sheet
- Profit and Loss