



Augusta Park Childhood Services Centre

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Augusta Park Childhood Services Centre

Annual Report 2015



Government of South Australia

Department for Education and
Child Development

1. CONTEXT

Preschool Name:	Augusta Park Childhood Services Centre	Preschool Number:	6605
Preschool Director:	Sonya Gee-Davis/Linda Miley	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.

The 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 2015 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 extra educators were employed each term.

At the conclusion of term 4 the preschool had 58 eligible enrolments (30 maximum per session). The projected enrolment numbers at the commencement of 2016 is 49 with eight additional eligible enrolments starting by term 3, 2016.

2. REPORT FROM GOVERNING COUNCIL

Kristine Kotz – Chairperson of the Governing Council

The Governing Council came together at our AGM on 11/2/15, where members were elected to fill the committee's positions. Throughout the year members have held regular meetings with the Preschool Director and Teacher to discuss fundraising, maintenance, Work Health and Safety, Director's reports, Treasurer's reports and developments. It was clearly evident this year that without Governing Council members we cannot continue to make/approve decisions for the preschool. We did not meet a quorum at one meeting this year, due to low attendance of members. This resulted in decisions being carried over to the following meeting.

It has been a busy year with many staff changes. We have seen Director Sonya Gee-Davis leave and take a new position as with Results Plus at our local DECD head office. We expect to see her return in 2016. We welcomed Linda Miley into the current role of Acting Director. Full time teacher Heather Cargill went on maternity leave at the end of term two and will return in term one of 2016. Her replacement has been Sandra Wittwer.

Throughout the year Governing Council has approved the purchase of new outdoor play equipment, replacement of a new entrance door, the fitting of an outside external blind and

the sandpit redevelopment, which is a great outdoor play area for all to enjoy. The centre has also purchased two cellular iPads for educators to use as a learning aid.

Fundraising has been a strong topic with tea towels, toy catalogues and picture plates proving to be very popular with over 70 orders having been made. An application was also submitted for the 2015 PIE Grant, which was unsuccessful. We reflected on the amount of work that goes into these grant applications and our lack of success for the previous two year's submissions and have decided to focus our energies on fundraising activities instead.

Staff were involved with the Port Augusta/Quorn Partnership Early Years Conference day. Book Week and 'Day for Daniel Morecombe' activities were also celebrated during the year. The Acting Education Director for the partnership came to visit the centre and introduced himself. He was very impressed with the site and said, "This site is a treasure". A film crew also came to the centre in 2015 to interview staff about the Empowering Local Learners project, and view the learning environment and numeracy learning.

We are very proud of everything the centre has achieved and been involved with throughout 2015 and hope families have enjoyed their time at the centre. Thank you to Linda Miley, Sonya Gee-Davis, the Educators and Governing Council members for all of their support throughout the year. We hope 2016 is another successful year of learning and helping the children grow.

Kristine Kotz

Chairperson

Augusta Park Childhood Services Centre Governing Council, 2015

3. HIGHLIGHTS 2015

Major highlights and achievements for 2015 include:

- Completion of the sandpit redevelopment with a new cover and platform area and new storage boxes.
- 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.
- Participation in the National Simultaneous Book Week in May.
- Celebration of Book Week reading the shortlisted stories and dressing up as favourite book characters.
- The interactive music and dance performance by Barry Peters.
- Visits from CFS and the dental health nurses.
- The use of iPads to collect and collate evidence of children's progress and learning.
- Simon Hutchinson from 'Climbing Trees Consultancy' visited the site to run a loose parts and nature play session with the children and staff.
- Vegetable gardens were emptied and refilled with new vegetables planted for use in cooking.
- A compost bin was established and used for children's scraps.
- Children helped to make some mosaic fruit pictures displayed outside the centre.
- Natural materials being used to accentuate learning in both the indoor and outdoor environment.

- Successful fundraising events including making picture plates, centre tea towels and the toy fundraiser.
- 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.
- Highly successful graduation ceremonies occurred over two nights (a total of 46 children and their families attended).
- Involvement in the Port Augusta Christmas tree festival.
- An individual DVD was created for those children who completed their preschool education showing their learning journey.

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 2015 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 2016.

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. Routines included strategies such as word walls, sharing books, questioning and listening strategies, and children signing in on the whiteboard each morning. Focus books were used to enable children to make links to texts, make connections and use higher level thinking to answer questions.

There was a focus on the provision of intentional teaching opportunities. Real life settings with props and play scenes were regularly set up to encourage engagement and the development of oral language. Staff began to use the indicators of preschool literacy in identifying and recording children's learning.

Small group literacy sessions occurred each day for 20 minutes later in the year. This gave educators more regular and focussed time to spend focused time with children. The curriculum delivery was centred on a planning cycle based on the interests and needs of children.

Recommendations:

- Implementation of the Preschool Literacy Indicators in 2016.
- Continuation of the focus book and floor books to record children's thinking.

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:

- Continued involvement in the Empowering Local Learners (ELL) project.
- To focus on extending children's learning through appropriate questioning.
- Preschool Director to attend Numeracy Improvement training.
- Implementation of the Preschool Numeracy Indicators.

To investigate practical ways of incorporating the RRR into practice.

Key Achievements:

Each educator completed four observations on a focus child. Information was presented at staff meetings. From this information numeracy activities were planned, delivered and evaluated. Educators continued to track their focus child's numeracy development.

Recommendations:

- To continue use of the RRR Involvement Scale and mapping in 2016.

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. Children were actively involved in preparing garden beds, planting and caring for vegetables. Healthy eating was a focus with children identifying and sorting foods as every day, sometimes and occasional foods. Vegetables from the garden were used for cooking activities. A variety of healthy fruits which the children may not have been familiar were used for taste testing.

Friday activities provided regular cooking experiences for children to be involved in. The recipes selected were predominantly healthy. 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 with reminders about healthy diet, sun safety and dental health reminders.

Recommendations:

- To utilise vegetable garden beds to plant seasonal vegetables.
- To continue to promote healthy lifestyle practices.

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

Redesign of the sandpit area.

Key Achievements:

Installation of a platform area within the sandpit, new sandpit cover and storage boxes. Installation of an external clear blind under the verandah area.

Recommendations:

- Further additions to the yard with extra stumps and stepping stones.
- Children assisting with the watering and care of gardens and plants.

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. All activities and actions to focus on being more sustainable.

Recommendations:

- To continue to identify ways of embedding recycling practices within all aspects of the preschool environment.
- 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).

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 newsletter, flyers, notice boards and verbal interactions. These enabled the distribution of information in a timely manner. A numeracy day was held at the end of 2015 in conjunction with the Smith Family (Whyalla) to increase family understanding of numeracy in the home. Parent information sessions for transition children were well attended. Two graduation sessions were held in November and were successful with very positive feedback given to

staff. Community involvement included an excursion to the library and organised visitors to the preschool included fire brigade and dentist.

Recommendations:

- To provide an excursion and have visitors each term.
- To identify 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 2016.

Recommendations:

- All educators to complete an ePortfolio.

5. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

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 – 10, term 2 – 18, 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.

6. STUDENT DATA

6.1 Enrolments

Figure 1: Enrolments by Term

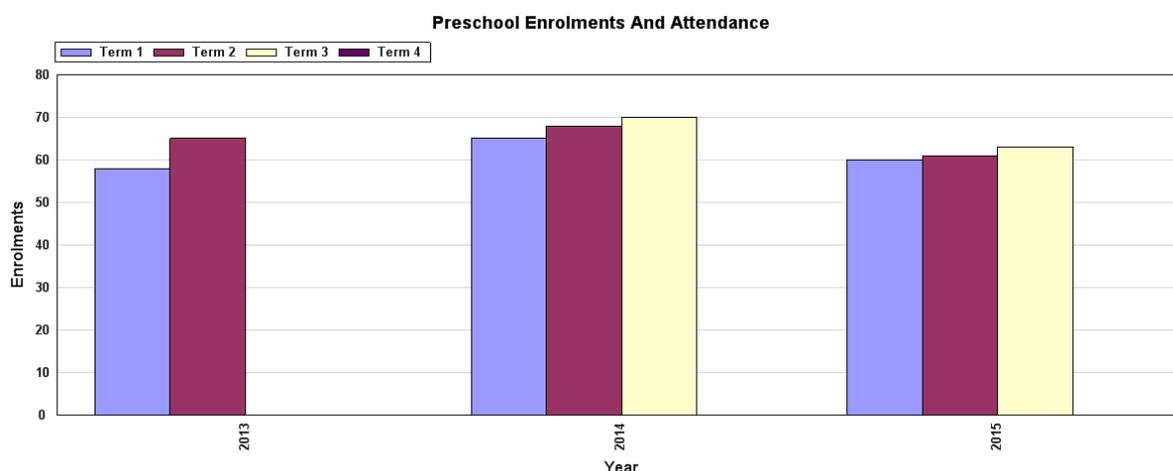


Table 1: Enrolments by Term

Enrolment by Term				
2012	68	73	75	68
2013	58	65		
2014	65	68	70	
2015	70	60	61	63

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

For 2015 the capacity was 30 to comply with standards. The projected enrolments for 2016 indicate an enrolment of 57 including 16 Indigenous children enrolled.

6.2 Attendance

Figure 2: Attendance by Term

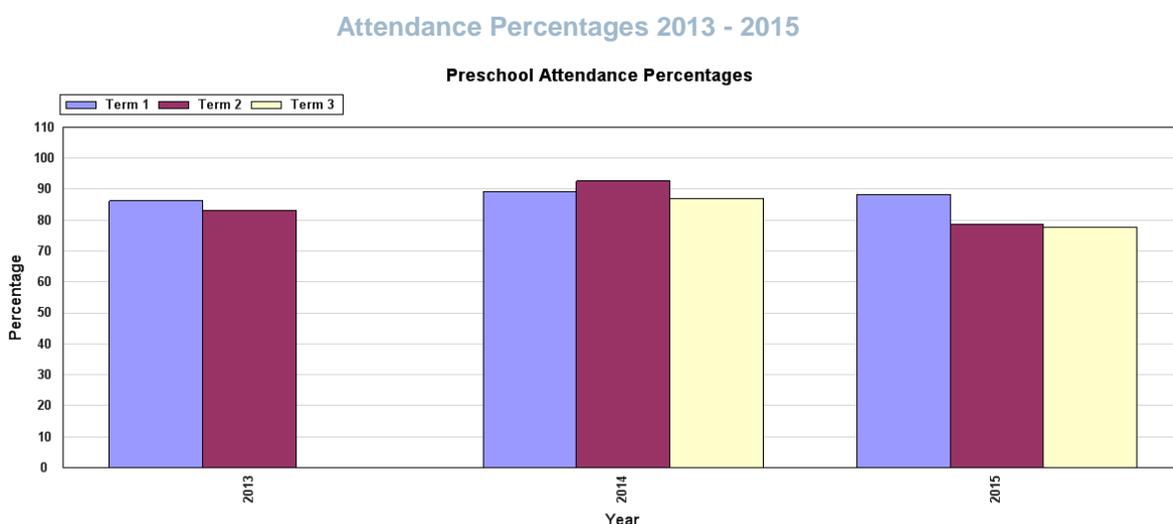


Figure 3: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Attendance by Term

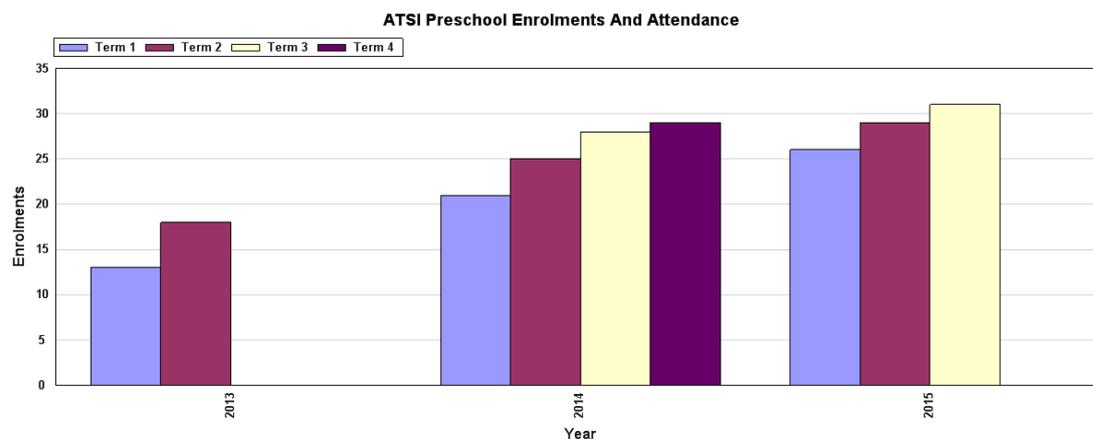


Table 2: Attendance Percentages 2013 - 2015

Attendance Percentage				
Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2013 Centre	86.2	83.1		
2014 Centre	89.2	92.6	87.1	
2015 Centre	88.3	78.7	77.8	
2013 State	88.7	88.0		
2014 State	90.0	88.9	86.1	
2015 State	90.5	88.5	86.3	

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 lower than usual with unusually high rates of sickness being the possible cause for non-attendance in term 3. There were also a number of family reasons for lower attendance rates. Indigenous enrolments and attendance were higher in 2015 than in the preceding three years.

6.3 Destination – Feeder Schools

Table 3: Feeder School Percentage Data 2013 - 2015

Feeder Schools				
Site number - Name	Type	2013	2014	2015
0355 - Port Augusta West Primary School	Govt.	23.5	12.5	26.9
0679 - Willsden Primary School	Govt.	2.0	4.2	
0990 - Augusta Park Primary School	Govt.	60.8	50.0	46.2
1481 - Stirling North Primary School	Govt.	3.9	10.4	3.9
9122 - Caritas College	Non-Govt.	9.8	22.9	21.2
0483 Wilmington Primary School	Govt.			1.9
Total		100.0	100.0	100.1

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

78.8% of children have enrolled to attend public schools in comparison to 21.2% private. The main feeder school is Augusta Park Primary School (46.2%) however there has been a slight decrease in comparison to last year's results. There has been a marginal decrease in the number of children enrolled in Caritas College. Port Augusta West Primary School enrolment numbers have significantly increased, more than doubling for the 2016 school year.

7. CLIENT OPINION

Refer to Appendix 1 for the full summary report on the Opinion Surveys completed for 2015. The Parent Opinion Survey was distributed to a total of 51 parents whose children completed their preschool education at the conclusion of 2015. A total of 17 responses were received.

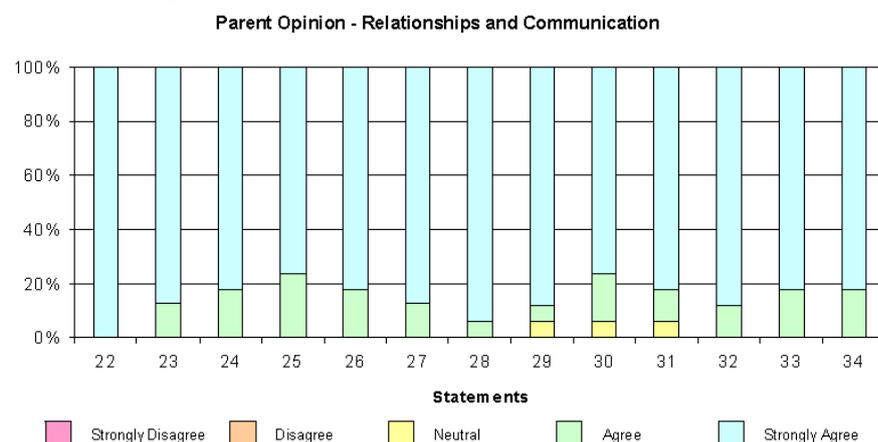
Quality of Teaching and Learning:

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Responses
1	I think my child receives high quality teaching at this preschool.	0%	0%	0%	12%	88%	17
2	My child's teachers know what my child can do and what he/she needs to learn.	0%	0%	6%	13%	81%	16
3	This preschool has the expectation that children will learn.	0%	0%	0%	6%	94%	17
4	Teachers are enthusiastic in their teaching.	0%	0%	0%	12%	88%	17
5	I am satisfied with the learning programs offered at my child's preschool.	0%	0%	0%	18%	82%	17
6	My child's teachers clearly inform me about the learning program.	0%	0%	6%	18%	76%	17
7	My child's teachers make learning interesting and enjoyable.	0%	0%	0%	6%	94%	17
8	Teachers at this preschool really want to help my child learn.	0%	0%	0%	24%	76%	17
9	The preschool has an excellent learning environment.	0%	0%	0%	6%	94%	17

The ratings received in this area were predominantly 'strongly agree'. The highest percentage (94%) was for a number of areas including statements on expectations, interesting and enjoyable learning and an excellent learning environment.

Support of Learning: The ratings received in this area fluctuated predominantly between 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. The highest percentage (94%) in the 'strongly agree' was 'My child is happy at this preschool this year,' and the lowest (76%) 'My child is motivated to learn at this preschool' up from 54% in 2015.

Relationship and Communication:



The ratings received in this area fluctuated predominantly between 'strongly agree' and 'agree', with 100% of parents surveyed affirming that they feel welcome at this preschool. The lowest two areas (76%) were 'I am given opportunities to have a say in matters about this preschool' and 'This preschool provides opportunities to discuss my child's progress.'

Leadership and Decision Making

No.	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Responses
35	This preschool is well organised this year.	0%	0%	0%	12%	88%	17
36	I have confidence in how the preschool is managed.	0%	0%	0%	6%	94%	17
37	I believe there is effective educational leadership within the preschool.	0%	0%	0%	12%	88%	17
38	The preschool seeks parents' opinions about educational programs.	0%	0%	6%	35%	59%	17
39	I am given the opportunity to be involved in the preschool's educational activities.	0%	0%	0%	41%	59%	17
40	The preschool is always looking for ways to improve what it does.	0%	0%	0%	24%	76%	17
41	Parents are invited to participate in decisions about their child's education.	0%	0%	6%	29%	65%	17
42	Parents have the opportunity to be involved in the development of school plans through the Governing Council.	0%	0%	0%	18%	82%	17
43	The preschool includes parents and community in decision making.	0%	0%	6%	24%	71%	17
44	Overall, I am satisfied with the preschool's planning.	0%	0%	0%	6%	94%	17

The highest percentages (94%) in the 'strongly agree' were '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.
- To consider a parent interview session with teaching staff mid-year to provide feedback on children's learning and development.
- To provide ongoing support for families to attend Governing Council and have input into decision making and involvement in educational activities at the preschool.

8. ACCOUNTABILITY

Copies of Criminal History Screening were obtained from all educators at the preschool. Human Resources records were monitored to ensure compliance. Additionally, the Governing Council ensured all committee members, cleaner and gardener had Criminal History Screening completed. Such practices will be implemented for 2016.

9. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Refer to Appendix 2 and 3 for end of year financial reports including:

- Balance Sheet
- Profit and Loss