Berri Community Preschool

Annual Report

2015

Report prepared by Katrina Papageorgios Director
Berri Preschool is a stand-alone preschool with the Berri Regional Child Care Centre located within 75 metres, connected by a safe walkway. Both agencies work co-operatively with each other to enable children to attend both facilities.

Berri Community Preschool is situated near the water tower, 100metres along the road which passes the side of the Berri Regional Child care Centre. The main building is over 50 years old and has large grounds. Facilities are continually upgraded and extended. The outdoor area boasts a large sandpit, a bike track, a rock water-course, a large cubby, a covered stage area, extensive verandas and shade areas and flower and vegetable gardens. The building is large and has a disabled bathroom, two activity rooms and a withdrawal room. The centre houses 2 interactive boards.

Our purpose is to work in partnership with families to provide high quality, responsive learning programs that have a positive impact upon children’s learning. Strong, respectful relationships are developed and fostered in a safe, secure and supportive environment, and children’s experiences and learning are engaging and build success for life.

A Pupil Free Day was used to do an audit of our site and set goals to ensure we are in line with the National Quality Standards. We need to actively work towards ensuring that our service adequately meets the requirements of the standards in relation to both site-specific policy and alignment of DECD policy with the seven Quality Areas.

2015 highlights included:
- Repainting of the cubby house
- Kindergym visits in term 3 & 4
- Barry Peters music program
- Heavy lifting program run by ECW’s
- ‘Special person’ day
- Mud day
- Book fair
- Installation of the swinging poles
- A very successful and well supported Obstacle-athon
- A fun excursion to the Museum interactive activities at the Town Hall
- Singing to the elderly at St.Catherine’s
- Successful End of Year Family Night to celebrate another great year
- End of Year Raffle with prizes donated by businesses in the local community
- A strong and committed Governing Council who achieved a great deal and were extremely dedicated
Quality Improvement Plan

Our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was developed in 2015 focusing on developing seven National Quality Standard areas. Desired outcomes were set looking at key elements in each of the areas.

**Quality Area 1: Educational Program and Practice**

**Key Improvements Sought:**
- Consistency, direction and children’s voice in curriculum decision-making.
- Devising a program, including outlines, is organized in a way that maximizes opportunities for each child’s learning.
- Consolidation, documentation and evaluation of ways we monitor and assess children’s progress and learning and how these are communicated to parents.

**Highlights and Achievements:**
A new programming format was developed and put into action in 2015. This new format had several elements including a daily programming ‘diary’ which was used by staff to record the daily learning program, weekly assessment tasks, links to the Early Years Learning Framework, and necessary administration tasks.
Specialty groups were formulated to focus on developing speech and language with specific children. Heavy lifting activities were created to develop gross motor skills with children. Perhaps the most significant change to our learning program came from the development of new observational recording proformas. We trialed the best way to do these, developing site specific proformas to best suit our needs, and after some frustrations believe that our observational record keeping is much improved. These observations, along with our interactions with the children, provided much information for the learning program. We were able to clearly demonstrate children’s voice in the program and connect their learning with individualized learning outcomes.
Future Directions:

- Changes to our grouping structure in 2016 may highlight a need to further develop and refine the programming format. Consistent groups of children, each day should bring even further coherence to the learning program.
- It is timely to finalise and review of the ways we monitor and assess children’s progress and learning and how these are communicated to parents.

Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety

Key Improvements Sought:
- Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child.
- Educators and staff members are aware of their roles and responsibilities to respond to every child at risk of abuse and neglect.
- Child protection program will be incorporated into the program for a term to make the children aware of their rights to be safe.

Highlights and Achievements:
The children planted and maintained a vegetable patch. A compost bin was used to collect all food scraps and a wormery was used to create fertilizer for our garden. The children enjoyed cooking using produce from the garden.
Healthy eating was promoted though different cooking activities. Children were encouraged to sample a different range of healthy foods.
Recycling was encouraged at the site with a container to collect fruit box containers.
Children learned about their Early Warning Signs and identified people they trust who they can get help from if necessary.
We had Police officers come in and talk to the children about safety and approaching a police officer when needed.

Future Directions:
Children will continue to expand our garden and plant new crops each season as required.
Our wormery will be maintained and kept viable to be used in our garden.
Children will be encouraged to continue recycling within our site.
Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Key Improvements Sought:
- Our outdoor and indoor spaces, buildings, furniture, equipment and facilities are maintained and well kept to be used for their purpose.
- Both built and natural areas are available for the children to use in the child initiated play.

Highlights and Achievements:
The cubby house was repainted. The playground area was revamped and the yellow swinging poles were installed.
The natural play spaces outdoors were filled with fresh sand.
The vegetable garden was maintained each season.
A watering system was installed in the garden area.
An inventory of all resources was conducted and old damaged equipment was culled.

Future Directions:
- Maintain the vegetable garden and seek community support for donations of seedlings to plant in our garden.
- Add drippers to the garden along the existing watering line as needed when new plants are placed in the garden.
- Continue to purchase resources to further stimulate child initiated play through the interests of children.
Key Improvements Sought:

- Staff will work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills, to improve practice and relationships.

Highlights and achievements:

The staff have been directed to online articles for professional development in individual areas of interest. A full day conference at Barmera preschool on Numeracy and Literacy Indicators was attended by all staff.

Future Directions:

- Continue to offer training and development opportunities to all staff.
- Encourage collaborative learning amongst staff to share their knowledge with their peers.
Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

Key Improvements Sought:
- To ensure that children are supported to work with, learn from and help others through collaborative learning opportunities.
- Every child is able to engage with educators in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning.

Highlights and Achievements:
Throughout 2015 staff were conscious of this aspect of our Quality Improvement Plan, working day by day to ensure that they developed an in-depth knowledge of all children in their educational care.

Staff documentations of students voice in our daily diary helped us develop appropriate activities to nurture the interests and needs of the children in our site.

Students assisted the staff in interviewing visitors to our site and photos were used to extend the children’s interests in the occupations of our visitors e.g. plumber, postman, etc;

Feedback from parents when their children finished their time at preschool best describes theirs and their children’s sense of belonging at the centre. In their words...

“*It is a welcoming, positive and loving environment for children.***”

“Staff are fantastic, happy and helpful. A fun and safe environment!”

“There are lots of hands on activities. A great outdoors area. Staff are friendly.”

“It’s a fantastic centre with great staff. An excellent facility.”

“My child has learned a lot and grown so much since starting here. I thank all the staff for having such a positive influence on her and teaching her so much!”

Future Directions:
- Continue to nurture the children’s interest in workers who visit our site at different intervals.
- Visit locations in our local community.
Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

**Key Improvements Sought:**
- Links with relevant community and support agencies are established and maintained.

**Highlights and Achievements:**
Parents are an integral part of our service, and building and maintaining partnerships with them is just as important as building relationships with their children.

The students attended Kindergym in term 3&4 utilising the attendance grant we received earlier in the year. All students were given the opportunity to attend sessions at the Berri District Youth Club.

Support agencies including speech pathologist, disability coordinator and psychologist came in to observe students and provide relevant programs to assist students with needs. These agencies worked collaboratively with staff to ensure student’s needs were being met.

RAA safety checks were conducted at the site for parent’s convenience.

Students had visits from musicians, face painters, police which were all integrated into the program addressing student’s interests and needs.

**Future Directions:**
- Continue to invite parents who have skills to share into the site during 2016.
- Encourage the children to interview and discuss occupations of workers attending the site under staff supervision to nurture enquiring minds and develop their knowledge in local community workers.
Quality Area 7: Leadership and Service Management

Key Improvements Sought:

- Provision is made to ensure a suitably qualified and experienced educator leads the development of the curriculum and ensures the establishment of clear goals and expectations for teaching and learning.
- Administrative systems are established and maintained to ensure the effective operation of the service.

Highlights and Achievements:

Staff distributed the responsibility of programming and planning working collaboratively as a team each week. Judy Ingerson; as the main teacher, took on the role of writing the weekly program and displaying it for parent’s to view with input from all staff.

Policies and procedures were looked at made accessible to visitors upon request. Staff had input in reviewing and updating policies and procedures as needed.

The sites web page is being devised by DECD with information being provided from our site. This was initiated in term3 and finalized in term 4.

Future Directions:

- All preschool policies and procedures will need to be included in a policy review cycle to ensure that they continue to be relevant to our service. The induction processes and documents will need to be included in this policy review cycle.
- Further development of the website to ensure that it is up-to-date with all of the latest requirements and information will occur in 2016.
Intervention and Support Programs

The preschool has a multi-faceted approach to intervention and support programs to target children with specific individual needs.

In 2015:

- 19 children received support for speech and language through preschool support programs, working one-to-one and in small groups with an Early Childhood Worker, working on individualized programs to target their speech and language needs. These programs continue to demonstrate results with all children showing improvement in targeted areas throughout their time at preschool.
- We offered early entry to 12 ATSI students. By increasing the amount of time these children spend at preschool we aim to better provide for their developmental, behavioral and cognitive needs.
- There was 1 child who received bi-lingual support.

Report from Governing Council

We have come to the end of yet another a busy year the Berri Community Preschool, or as we all affectionately still know it still as “Berri Kindy”.

With the support of our preschool families and staff we have been able to fund raise approximately $5,000.00 in total this year from the baked goods sale, People’s Choice Credit Union raffle, Book Fair, Obstacle-a-thon and Christmas Raffle.

As is often the case government funding never seems to be “quite enough” and these fund raisers are important to meet the cost of those “extras” from additional play equipment to general maintenance.

This year we have been able to use funds to replace part of the back fence, upgraded the irrigation system, painted the cubby house and revamped the playground area. Such work is essential to ensure that our children have the best facilities and environment to learn and grow that we can provide.

I would like to sincerely thank our preschool families and the Berri Community who have kindly and supported the preschool by donating gifts for raffles and otherwise supporting these events.
This year saw a significant change to the preschool with Allayn e Frankel going on leave in Term 4 and Katrina Papageorgios taking on the role of Acting Director in Term 4. I have enjoyed working with both Allayn e and Katrina. They are both experienced teachers and leaders dedicated to the care and development of our children. I would like to thank both Allayn e and Katrina for their efforts this year.

I would also like to sincerely thank all of the teaching and support staff for their hard work and dedication. They have made my year as Chairperson a very easy one. It has been a pleasure to work with them on the Committee but also as a parent.

I would also like to thank and acknowledge the efforts of all of our Governing Council members. This year, Tahya Fear was our Secretary and Jordan Dinning our Treasurer. I certainly recommend to each parent that they consider joining the Governing Council. It is a rewarding experience to be involved in the Kindy from the “other side” of the school gate and is a wonderful chance to be actively involved in our children’s education.

I hope you all have a happy and successful 2016 school year.

Dimitria Dale.

<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>2013</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2015, with the implementation of the Same First Day all students started together at the beginning of the year.
We had some ATSI students begin part way through the year when they were eligible to start.
Some of the local Independent and Catholic schools had a mid-year intake so our numbers were down from term 3.
Attendance

Centre attendance figures are collated and calculated from defined reference week periods each term. The table below shows the percentage of attendance each term over the past three years. Again in 2015 we had varied attendance figures throughout the year.

Figure 2: Attendance by Term

![Attendance Percentages 2013 - 2015]

The table below shows the comparison of attendance percentages against the state average for all preschools. Historically, the attendance at Berri Community Preschool has been consistently below the state average. We were given a grant to improve attendance in 2015 and these funds were put towards taking the children to Kindergym in terms 3 and 4.

<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>2013 Centre</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 Centre</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>87.9</td>
<td>81.2</td>
<td>85.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 Centre</td>
<td>92.9</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 State</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 State</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>87.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015 State</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>88.5</td>
<td>86.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site number - Name</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0153 - Glossop Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0274 - Monash Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0376 - Renmark Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0532 - Berri Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0678 - Loxton North Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8334 - St Joseph’s School - Renmark</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8457 - Rivergum College</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9008 - Our Lady of the River School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9085 - Christ the King School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9101 - Loxton Lutheran School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The children attending Berri Community Preschool transitioned to ten different schools in 2015.

The transition program between the preschool and schools varied but involved a minimum of 3 visits for each of the children with varying lengths of time for each site.
Parent surveys were distributed to 45 preschool families in term four of 2015. Of these 45 surveys, 15 were received completed. The survey results represent the opinions of 33 % of our preschool families attending at the time. The response rate in 2015 was higher than the response rate of previous years.

The results of the 2015 Parent Opinion Surveys continue to reflect that parents are generally pleased with the centre as a whole. Preschool staff should be congratulated in their efforts to provide quality educational programs for children in their care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel welcome at this preschool</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff at this preschool are approachable</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child is happy and settled with staff, and talks positively about them</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My child is learning and developing new skills</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have sufficient opportunity to talk about my child’s progress (informal discussions, profile books)</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that my child feels safe, secure and supported in their learning at this preschool</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that the facilities and equipment at this preschool are of a high standard</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe that the learning program at this preschool is responsive to my child’s needs</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have opportunities to be involved in the preschool (governing council, fundraising, excursions, special activities, etc;)</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>