

Aldgate Kindergarten Inc

2018 annual report to the community



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Aldgate Kindergarten Inc number: 4602

Partnership: Mount Lofty

Name of preschool director:

Bianca Stanbridge/Bridget Murphy-O'Neil

Name of preschool management committee chair:

Briali Bedson

Date of endorsement:

18-2-2019

Context and highlights

Aldgate Kindergarten had a very busy year, with 58 enrolments including several children with additional needs, and unexpected staffing challenges. Our teacher/part-time director Cathy became seriously ill at the beginning of term 1, and was unable to return for the rest of the year. Suitable replacement teachers and a new part-time director needed to be inducted. Long-term contract teacher Bridget suddenly became full-time, adding 0.4 director to her 0.6 teacher role. Several part-time teachers and Early Childhood Workers joined our team, and maintaining educator continuity and stability was a challenge. We are immensely grateful for the support from the preschool community, and the wonderful team of staff who worked at Aldgate in 2018. 2018 had many complexities, however we did not waver in our commitment to making a positive difference for children and their families. We continuously reflected on the effectiveness of our teaching practice, and explored different ways of collecting data to ensure no child was overlooked. We sought advice and support from experienced personnel or research when we were needing guidance to make changes. Educators worked hard on improving transition for children and families, both before and during their Kindergarten year, and before, during and after the child was enrolled at school. Our Quality Improvement Plan evolved over the course of the year. We sought feedback from the parent community, particularly the Governing Council who provided us with supportive but constructive ideas for further improvement. Bianca and Bridget were involved in an action research project titled "STEM Bridge", in collaboration with Aldgate Primary School. This project involved 6 preschools and 6 schools across the state (co-located - on the same grounds), aiming to improve the continuity of teaching and learning from Kindergarten to school using a STEM lens. It was an exciting project to be part of, and we will still be working on it in 2019. The strong sense of collaboration between sites is now embedded, with plans to formalise the transition process in 2019. The "Wirra" (patch of remnant native bushland) adjoining the Kindergarten was used as a consistent learning space for Kindergarten and school children and educators. Educational signage (using funds gained from an NRM grant) were installed after many months of planning and testing of the content of the signs.

Report from the preschool management committee

2018 was a year that tested the strength and resilience of the kindy staff. In the first week, a senior staff member was taken suddenly ill at kindy, which required urgent medical assistance. The incident occurred at the same time as end of day pick up and as I was there to collect my daughters, I personally witnessed each present staff member perform with such grace under pressure. Very quickly, and with an automatic intuitive response, the staff ensured there was someone looking after the children, someone on the phone to the ambulance and someone remaining with the ill staff member. A situation where panic could have quickly taken hold, was kept calm by the fact that everyone instinctively knew they had a job to do and they did it. Bianca was on a scheduled day off, but she dropped everything to quickly arrive at the kindy and assist her team. This, for me, showed what an amazing group of women are looking after our children every day and I was proud to be part of the Aldgate Kindergarten community that day. The Governing Council's year had a somewhat easy year, with existing policies only needing to be reassessed and fine-tuned. Socially, we had an amazing turnout for the Fine Art evening, which focussed on the children doing self portraits in ink. A lot of time was spent teaching the children to draw what they see and although some of the portraits looked a little inspired by Picasso, most were wonderful representations of how the children saw themselves. Nature play is a big focus of the day. Signs were designed and made to go in the Wirra to encourage involvement with nature, which are interactive through an app and have been strategically placed throughout the Wirra. Thankyou, Briali Bedson

Quality improvement planning

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice: We made some progress towards our goal of improvement in educator reflective practice, however we know we can do better in 2019. There will be further educator professional development in Learning Design and Reflection to continue to refine our assessment for learning documentation. Communication with the many parents of children who attended Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) or used other carers e.g. grandparents, to help with drop off or pick up was a challenge. Emails proved to be unreliable once again, even though addresses were checked for accuracy, and information sharing between parents and other carers was inconsistent. We began exploring other methods of communication, and will be trialling "SeeSaw" with 2019 families, while being mindful of privacy and our Cyber Safety policy guidelines. We made changes to our daily routine to incorporate "heavy work" and smaller group times to better suit the needs of the children.

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety: Risk assessments were reviewed. Secure fencing was installed around the perimeter of the "Wirra" to ensure children's safety, replacing the old wire fencing. There was continued focus on ensuring adequate supervision of children in the outdoor learning area by trimming bushes regularly, and checking all children were accounted for when we came inside for lunch. Additional staff were training in the Child Protection Curriculum, bringing the number to 3 educators who are qualified to deliver the Curriculum.

Quality Area 3: Physical environment. Sustainability continued to be a major focus on our every-day experiences. With new "Wirra" fencing we were able to spend more time engaging in conversation with children. The signage for the "Wirra" was completed, with art and design by Alice Duigan-Mussared and consultation with lecturers and students from Flinders University, as well as Rob Wallace from the Natural Resources Management (NRM). Each of the 5 interactive signs contain a QR code that takes users to our website. The content of these pages will be developed in 2019 and adapt as required to promote community engagement. More will be done to engage children and families in the Wirra and other local bushland areas e.g. Bandicoot trail, Aldgate Valley reserve.

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements. Educator continuity was difficult to manage. Parent feedback wondered if the "gap" between Monday and Thursday, and uncertainty of the educators, was unsettling. The "gap" also concerns staff - we will explore the possibility of changing the group structure in 2020.

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children. Our improvement outcome was to better support children to develop the ability to regulate their own behaviour and respond appropriately to the behaviour of others. We introduced the "What's the buzz?" program, with plans for more educators to be trained. The program offered consistent explicit teaching through social stories. A reception teacher at Aldgate Primary was also trained, with school leadership also keen to up-skill other educators. OT support and training was very useful and important in 2018.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and the community: working with families to support children's transition was a huge focus for improvement. This included transition to Kindy and to school. An intensive focus on families with English as second language, and developing trusting relationships with families.

Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management: Termly QIP reviews helped with planning. Yearly planner is needed for 2019.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2015	44	45	47	45
2016	48	46	46	50
2017	38	39	39	41
2018	58	58	61	61

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

Enrolments were near capacity this year after a smaller number of enrolments in 2017. Several children transferred into the area during the year but warranted staffing enabled us to accept these enrolments. Three children departed the Kindergarten prior to or during term 4 due to moving house or change in circumstances.

Attendance

Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2015 centre	92.4%	90.0%	79.7%	87.9%
2016 centre	86.7%	92.4%	88.8%	88.9%
2017 centre	93.9%	87.3%	82.2%	84.6%
2018 centre	86.1%	90.9%		
2015 state	92.4%	90.2%	87.8%	88.5%
2016 state	91.1%	89.6%	87.9%	87.9%
2017 state	90.6%	88.8%	86.7%	87.7%
2018 state	90.8%	88.7%		

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

Attendances at Aldgate in 2018 were either close to or above the state average. Impacts on lower attendances in term 1 were noted as "rest days" and inability to attend due to family holidays. Several children took longer to transition from home to Kindergarten due to separation anxiety. Also noted that children who were unable to ever attend Friday kindy sessions should have had their booked hours adjusted, so that the system didn't record them as absent on the Fridays. This affected our percentage of attendances for booked hours.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2016	2017	2018
0176 - Heathfield Primary School	0.0%	8.0%	1.0%
0210 - Aldgate Primary School	80.0%	61.0%	84.0%
0285 - Mount Barker Primary School	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%
0301 - Mylor Primary School	1.0%	8.0%	3.0%
0396 - Scott Creek Primary School	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%
0413 - Stirling East Primary School	1.0%	5.0%	0.0%
0636 - Bridgewater Primary School	5.0%	2.0%	5.0%
8007 - The Hills Christian Comm Sch -Verdun	3.0%	2.0%	1.0%
9079 - St Catherine's School	3.0%	0.0%	1.0%
9096 - St Michael's Lutheran Primary School	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

NOTE: The data is collected in Term 3. It does not reflect actual schools enrolled in by exiting preschool children.

Source: Data Source: Site Performance Reporting System (SPER), Term 3 2018 collection.

Destination schools comment

In 2019 children will go on to attend 6 schools. The percentage of students who will attend Aldgate in 2019 (80.8%) is the highest it has been since the relocation of the Preschool on to the site in 2007 (41% - 2008) Many Kindergarten families are utilising the school's OSHC. Mylor's percentage is lower than in 2017, and of note those children have siblings already at the school, as do the children who will go to Bridgewater, Hills Christian & St Catherine's. The small local schools might like to consider how to they could entice our playgroup families to tour their schools prior to their child starting Kindergarten.

Client opinion summary

Unfortunately, only 4 out of 60 families completed the opinion survey this year. However we sought feedback in other ways and will include that information in this summary. The respondents of the survey gave very positive feedback with either agree or strongly agree responses. Once it was discovered that there were only 4 respondents, honest and constructive feedback on the Quality Improvement Plan was sought from Governing Council members. Council members were very positive in their feedback about the effort put in by the entire staff team during a challenging year, however they also reinforced the staff team's concerns in areas that could be improved. This feedback has all been incorporated into the draft 2019 Quality Improvement Plan.

We have been grateful for the support of our entire Kindergarten community this year, particularly the Council members who were privy to "behind the scenes" and whose feedback was much appreciated.

Relevant history screening

Volunteers on our excursions were expected to have relevant history screening, and if they did not have it we submitted the application for them. University student Hayley Schroeder also required relevant history screening which had been undertaken by the University of SA.

Financial statement

	Funding Source	Amount
1.	Grants: State	\$442,171.25
2.	Grants: Commonwealth	
3.	Parent Contributions	\$48,737.00
4.	Other	\$2111.80

2018 Preschool annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2018 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	An additional student free day for professional development in Learning Design and Moderation using the Preschool Indicators of Numeracy and Literacy. Vikki attended "what's the buzz?" social skills training to help us better support the development of children's social skills. Poor social skills lead to children not being able to access the curriculum in its entirety, and miss out on learning. This also makes it more difficult for educators to observe and document children's skills and understandings, and plan the next steps for their learning.	Training in LDAR helped educators to begin to refine their Assessment for Learning documentation. With a smaller staff team in 2019, this work will continue from term 1.
Improved ECD and parenting outcomes (children's centres only)	Funding was used to either backfill or employ an additional educator to work with children with disabilities. Additional funding was sought during the year for children with suspected ASD with behavioural issues that impacted on the staff and other children. Funding was used for Occupational Therapist professional development.	Children with diagnosed or suspected disabilities were well supported with additional staffing and adult support to aid their development. All children made progress.
Improved outcomes for children with disabilities	N/A	N/A
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	N/A	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.