



McKay Children's Centre Penola

McKay Children's Centre

2020 annual report to the community

McKay Children's Centre Number: 6525

Partnership: South East Coast & Vines

Signature

Preschool director:

Mrs Olivia Thomas

Governing council chair:

Meg Redman

Date of endorsement:

11 March 2021



Government
of South Australia
Department for Education

Context and highlights

McKay Children's Centre is an integrated site, situated in the Limestone Coast of SA. McKay offers three integrated programs: preschool, long day care and Out of School Hours Care including Vacation Care. The long day care and OSHC operate 50 weeks of the year and DfE preschool within the school term. DfE is the Approved Provider of the Preschool. The McKay Governing Council is the Approved Provider of the Long Day Care and OSHC.

McKay Children's Centre services local families from Penola and surrounding districts, such as Nangwarry and Kalangadoo.

In 2020, our site had 5 DfE employees and 15 Governing Council employees in the Long Day Care and OSHC programs. 2020 was the first year in a five year tenure for Director, Olivia Thomas.

In 2020, preschool operated three days a week, with children accessing the preschool program over a five day fortnight. Children are regularly enrolled in more than one program across the Centre. The 3 year old childcare program in the preschool room (on non-preschool days) continued to be popular with families. This program on a Monday and Friday helped support successful transitions to kindergarten.

Utilisation of the Long Day Care program varied greatly throughout the year as families, the community and the centre managed the complexities of a global pandemic. Learning in preschool moved online in late March and families were very receptive and engaged in the offerings on See Saw. An advantage was the increased involvement from parents and families as we all learned to adapt to the challenges. Operating as a not for profit business with a directive to remain open presented more challenges as attendances plummeted and the government announced free childcare. Fortunately, a successful application to receive Job Keeper payments meant that McKay was able to provide a sustainable service to the families required as essential workers. This also meant the retention of contracted staff in a difficult to staff sector.

The McKay staff and Governing Council remarkably then went on to manage the sudden passing of long time employee and friend Cate Mooney. Community support and professionalism of staff ensured that children and fellow staff were able to manage this crisis and continue to provide a service to the community.

We were very pleased to have children and families return to the centre as face to face preschool resumed as the immediate threat of Covid-19 reduced. Throughout this time we developed policies, increased hygiene requirements, limited visitors to our site and ensured ongoing health and safety to the children in our care.

Governing council report

2020 GOVERNING COUNCIL REPORT

2020 has been a challenging yet rewarding year for the McKay Children's Centre Governing Council. We welcomed Olivia Thomas as our new director (& kindergarten teacher) and my oh my what a start to the role Olivia had.

COVID-19 threw repeated unprecedented challenges our way, including almost full centre closure during early and later lock down periods. Olivia and all the staff navigated the storm with the utmost of professionalism, supported fully by the governing council through our many emergency zoom meetings.

The centre has financially operated well within its means this year and seen an unusual and unexpected profit off the back of COVID and the federal governments decision to provide free childcare for a period. This together with BAS concessions and various government cash boosts and grants has put us in a strong financial position at the end of 2020. This has been a welcome relief, where usually the balance between staff numbers, usage and fee's is a delicate one.

The year saw many of our long, long term staff members retire including Wendy, Ros and Jenny. We said a sad farewell to Cate who unexpectedly passed away. The centre for what might be the first time, closed it's doors as staff and families dealt with the enormous shock. It was amazing to see families only happy to quickly find alternative arrangements for children, and allow the staff the time needed to be together and grieve. We welcomed Monique Maney to the kindergarten team.

McKay's has seen an increase in children attending the centre with solid attendance across the board. The over 3's program was able to run in the kindy room on Monday's and Fridays, and the newly introduced 'bop & bounce', a program for babies was a huge success while it was able to run pre COVID. The vacation care was very well utilized both during holidays and pupil free days.

Fundraising went remarkably well with the team diversifying and finding COVID friendly alternatives, after the planned Bunnings sausage sizzle & arts festival 'art car' was cancelled. The wood chop was a great revenue raiser as was the chocolate drive, managing to raise over \$5,000. The governing council was pleased to develop the outdoor environment. The environmental committee were able to complete stage 1 of 2 works, including defining pathways, decking to mud kitchen area, new bridge and a general tidy up. We look forward to implementing stage 2 – the raised grass bed soon. I would like to thank the governing council members for their hard work in 2020. It all came hard and fast in 2020, with fundraising, working bee and meetings and you all rose the occasion and made it pleasurable and rewarding to be p

Improvement planning - review and evaluate

We have been continually very adaptable and flexible, changing our plans and strategies along the way as we learn more. This process has enabled us to seek help when needed and now have a very clear and collaborative plan moving into 2021. We are celebrating these successes as we review our year and the resilience that we have had as a profession, as a site and as a team. We have continued to build relationships, with a new site leader and 2 new teachers throughout the year. We have built on our culture of reflection, as a team and as individuals. Educators have reported a more sophisticated understanding of the numeracy processes of Sorting and Comparing. This is evidenced in an increase in documentation specifically in these learning areas. Our team continues to work toward providing more complex opportunities for children to extend their knowledge. This is the intent of the 'relaunch question' in documentation. This process (developed and refined at the Pupil Free Day) will allow for deeper thinking and continued conversations with children. The documentation of children's learning in the FloorBook has been refined as we have reflected on our practice throughout the year. We have changed our intent in recording children's understanding of the literacy and numeracy indicators. Moving forward, we plan to embed this evidence in our analysis of children's learning in the FloorBook (rather than a separate format). Educators have reflected and acted on feedback and conversations are now focused on deep analysis of learning through a range of lenses (eg Literacy, Numeracy). Educators are proficient but continue to create learning environments that provide opportunities for children to demonstrate their knowledge to ask questions, and to seek answers. Support from our ECL to link us with LID and Lorry was crucial. Lorry has worked as a critical friend and a teacher. She has been very responsive to our needs and starting from where we currently are with our understanding and practices around documentation and evidence of learning. Working with the same person from LID over a period of time has had the most significant impact on my learning and therefore ability to be the educational leader of our site. Our staff have improved their knowledge of the planning cycle and have been able to reflect on our collaborative practice in each aspect.

A new site leader, taking over from a caretaker meant that it has been a year for learning and less has been implemented than we had initially hoped in some areas. A pandemic, an integrated site and the death of a staff member have been significant challenges. We have overcome these challenges by being flexible, responsive and by keeping the children at the centre of our decision making. As a new site leader I consider my biggest challenge to be around learning the expectations of documentation and processes in the Early Years, as well as the fundamental complexity in all aspects of integrated sites.

We have worked with our PLC, LET, staff team and families to re shape our direction for 2021 and have set new goals and strategies. The next steps as we move toward our goals for 2021 are to; book in dates for additional support from Jane Lemon, research current perspectives on vocab development (Guidebooks, Best Advice Papers, Intranet). This will be facilitated through our PLC inquiry. We plan to engage in a project on Sustained Shared Thinking across all services (Long Day Care, Preschool and OSHC). This is intended to build educator capacity in allowing children to develop deep conceptual understandings. The second intent is to continue on our journey to build continuity and consistency of practice across all programs.

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2017	45	45	46	44
2018	27	29	29	29
2019	38	37	34	34
2020	26	N/A	24	24

NOTE: The data is based on person counts in the two week reference period each term. Excludes pre-entry.

Data Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Reporting and Analytics directorate.

Term 2 2020 data may not be available for all preschools.

Enrolment comment

Traditionally, enrolments fluctuate from year to year. This was an average sized preschool cohort for our community.

Attendance

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2017 centre	93.3%	86.4%	73.6%	86.3%
2018 centre	91.1%	80.6%	86.8%	86.3%
2019 centre	93.7%	94.1%	90.1%	96.2%
2020 centre	88.8%	N/A	84.2%	74.8%
2017 state	90.5%	88.2%	85.9%	87.2%
2018 state	90.7%	88.3%	87.0%	87.2%
2019 state	90.3%	87.4%	85.8%	86.4%
2020 state	89.3%	82.0%	84.8%	85.9%

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.

*Note: Term 2 2020 data may not be available for all preschools.

Attendance comment

Above attendance is based on average over the entire term.
 Covid -19 added complexities to attendance data but overall most children attended consistently. Absences were mostly due to general illness.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2017	2018	2019	2020
9059 - Mary MacKillop Memorial School	30.0%	23.0%	23.5%	8.7%
592 - Nangwarry Primary School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.7%
763 - Penola Primary School	69.0%	76.0%	76.5%	82.6%

NOTE: The data is collected in Term 3. It does not reflect actual schools enrolled in by exiting preschool children. Only schools that are a destination for 3% or more of students are shown.

Data Source: Site Performance Reporting System (SPER), Term 3 2020 collection.

Destination schools comment

The majority of children went on to enrol at Penola Primary School ((82.6%). 8.7% went enrolled in Mary MacKillop Memorial School and 8.7% returned to Nangwarry Primary School after attending preschool in Penola while the Nangwarry Preschool program was suspended due to low numbers.

Client opinion summary

The Preschool Parent Opinion Survey yielded a 50 % response rate with 12 parents replying. Generally responses were very positive with most responses falling in the agree and highly agree categories. 58 % of responses strongly agree that their child receives high quality teaching at our preschool.

Areas for growth have been identified as communicating with families and involving families in decision making in preschool and through Governing Council.

Relevant history screening

All educators and staff are required to have an up to date WWCC. Others who also have WWCC include visiting students on placement and regular volunteers, such as Governing Council members. We keep an up to date database of screenings and currently all Governing Council members have a clearance.

Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$20,000
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$7,571
Other	\$0

2020 Preschool annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2020 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	Educators were able to access ongoing Professional Learning on vocabulary development. This was achieved via a Professional Learning Community with Penola Primary School. This learning will continue into 2021.	Building this content knowledge has contributed to site improvement planning for 2021.
Improved ECD and parenting outcomes (children's centres only)	N/A	N/A
Inclusive Education Support Program	IESP funding was used to provide additional ECW hours. This time was spent completing speech and language screening tests for individual children. Children identified were then provided weekly speech and language program time both in play context and one to one in preschool program.	All children demonstrated improved articulation, conceptual understanding and language development.
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.