McArthur Park Kindergarten Annual Report 2011
McArthur Park Kindergarten

Preschool Director: Pauline Bosco
Region: Limestone Coast

Site Details
- Postal address: P.O. Box 687 Millicent 5280
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Statement of Purpose
At McArthur Park Kindergarten our core business is to provide a quality developmental and educational programme for preschool children, which caters for the individual needs of each child and enhances all aspects of their development in a safe, nurturing and active learning environment.

Our team is committed to the well being of each child and acknowledges the uniqueness of each individual. We are committed to the belief that young children learn best through play, therefore we strive to provide a safe, nurturing and active learning environment that promotes children’s engagement in a variety of learning experiences where they can explore, discover, collaborate and communicate.

The curriculum principles, practices and policies of the centre are inclusive and adhere to the principles of social justice, equity and accessibility. These are supported by our core values of Care, Respect, Optimism, Learning, Discovery

We are committed to developing positive relationships and working in partnership with all stakeholders. Through critical reflection we strive for continuous improvement and innovation.

Programs operating at the preschool
- Pre Entry: Integrated into the 6 sessions
- Sessional Kindergarten for eligible children: Eligible 4 year olds attend on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays with Universal Access commencing Term 3, 2011
- Lunch/Full Day Program available
- Preschool Support for children with additional needs available

Curriculum Framework: The new national Early Years Learning Framework ‘Belonging, Being, Becoming’ for children from birth to five years. We utilise the framework, which is a comprehensive guide to develop learning programs responsive to children’s ideas, interests, strengths and abilities and based on the vision of play-based learning that is engaging and builds success for life. The curriculum framework guides planning, reflective practices, assessing practices and learning outcomes.

Specific curriculum approaches: The Project Approach with inquiry based learning

2011 Staff Profile
Director PSD 1 (0.7) - Pauline Bosco
Teacher (0.7) Contract – Tracey Phillips
Early Childhood Worker (0.5/ 0.6) Contract – Suzanne Varcoe
Preschool Support Workers - Susan Krause and Belinda Smith
Currently no Aboriginal staff are employed at the centre
Highlights

- Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in the early years project
- Complete upgrade of the bathroom facilities (DECS funding)
- Complete upgrade of the office facilities (site funded)

Family/Community Involvement

We continue to have a high level of involvement with families and the community supported by our active focus on partnership and innovative ways to facilitate their involvement including:

- Debbie-Anne Nearmy (DECS Speech Pathologist) presented two valuable Talking Literacy workshops for parents to support language and literacy at home
- The Millicent Lioness Club donating $300 towards our annual children’s book subscription
- The Millicent Craft Group kindly donated a personal library bag for each child
- We hosted a Morning Tea Book Party to say thank you to the above organisations

- A ‘Night at the Museum’ - a twilight Kindergarten session to share the children’s learning with their families. The evening was planned in conjunction with Father’s Day to provide Fathers and other Parents/Carers to be able to be involved - 75% of families participated and provided very high levels of positive feedback. Staff transformed the Kindergarten into a museum with involvement from the children and parents/community including cooking rock cakes to sample on the night, knitting by Banksia House patrons to assist with a scarf for ‘Bruce the Brachiosaurus’ to stay warm during the Iceage and geology samples (rocks and fossils) from Millicent High School. The Kindy came alive to the roar of dinosaurs, a photostory featuring the children’s play and learning experiences, a cave with an excavation pit for children and families to explore as paleontologists with head torches erupting volcano experiments, crystal cave and geology samples, giant Box-a-saurus and T Rex skeleton, dinosaur rubbings, painting and construction. The ‘Hi 5ers’ acted as tour guides and shared facts about Brachiosaurus and the children shared their favourite dinosaur songs. The museum was a buzz with parents and children actively engaged together in the many learning experiences and sharing the joy and excitement together, with the children clearly enjoying sharing their learning with their family member(s) especially noted between boys and fathers.

Quality Improvement Plan

IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

1. Improving Oral Language and Literacy

Target

1) All children will develop an increase in phonological awareness:
   1. Initial sounds - 80% of children will know initial sound for their name and recognize other initial sounds
   2. Rhyme - 90% of children will be able to recognize and match rhymes
   3. Segmentation - 85% of children will be able to recognize and clap out syllables in familiar words

2) All children will develop an increase in concepts of print
Key actions:

**Effective Teaching and Learning**
- Site Literacy Plan
- Utilising the ‘POP’ Principles with focus books across the curriculum
  1. Phonological Awareness
  2. Oral Language
  3. Print Knowledge
- High literacy focus with intentional teaching each morning to develop one of the three areas of phonological awareness – rhyme, alliteration, syllables
- Each fortnight we have focused on an initial sound to assist children in developing phonological awareness and print knowledge E.g. ‘m’ for Mum, magnet, monkey etc
  We have introduced letters in the order recommended by Jolly Phonics – beginning with the first six letters that appear frequently in three letter words
- Story tables have assisted in building children’s oral language in the areas of story narration with children retelling the story and demonstrating an understanding of the story sequence
- Shared Big Book experience with intentional learning to target the concepts of print
- Early Intervention to target children with additional needs including Speech and Language
- Support for Aboriginal students included 1:1 targeted support and small group work
- We are currently exploring setting up a Data base / scanner for library borrowing
- Children’s portfolios – Staff used anecdotal records and observations to record oral language development including language samples, narrative, story sequencing in socio-dramatic play, story tables, photo stories, planned questions / discussions

**Shared Leadership**
- Staff attended ‘Talking Literacy’ workshop focusing on developing emergent literacy skills – phonological awareness in a preschool setting. The workshop re-affirmed that our current focus on phonological awareness is highly appropriate and very valuable in building children’s literacy skills. The training was very informative and assisted in building upon teaching and learning practices and we also received valuable resources from the Speech Pathologists for initial sounds, rhymes and syllables.
- Staff worked with Debbie-Anne Nearmy ( DECS Speech Pathologist ) to organize a Talking Literacy workshop for parents to support literacy at home
- Seeking assistance from community groups; The Lioness club and Millicent Craft group

**Set Directions**
- Information for families on oral language and literacy – discussions, parent/teacher interviews, workshop, literature, concepts of print bookmarks
- Strategic Directions outlined and reported on at AGM and Governing Council meetings to provide information and seek feedback and parent involvement

**Make Data Count**
- Staff assessed and recorded children’s receptive and expressive language development using an Early Language Profile in their first term for early assessment and recording
- Staff reviewed and reflected on anecdotal records and observations to develop appropriate strategies to support individual children and worked with the Speech Pathologist.
- Staff shared children’s progress in the area of phonological awareness at parent/teacher interviews and have shared recommendations and strategies to support parents in working in partnership with staff to build these skills at home.
- Staff formally assess, monitor and plan for each child through Early Language Profile, Individualised Learning Plan, Phonological Awareness and Concepts of print checklists and report specifically on children’s phonological skills in the summative report.
Summary of progress towards our targets / achievements in 2011

Learner achievement data - Literacy outcomes:

100% (32 children including 8 children with additional needs - speech / language /global delay) made overall progress in their literacy skills in the 3 areas of phonological awareness.

75% (6 out of 8) children with speech and language needs improved to the level that they required a lower level of support at school or improved to a significant degree that they did not meet funded support for school.

2 Aboriginal children each made improvements in literacy; 1 student commenced school with positive transition to school and satisfactory literacy skills. (1 student still in eligible kindy year)

Phonological awareness

Rhyme
92.5% (30 children) had achieved recognition of rhyme level and in addition 92.5% able to work at production level on exiting preschool.
This was a 7.5% improvement on 85% of children for 2010

Initial sound awareness
77% (25 chn) had achieved recognition of initial sound level and in addition 46% (15 chn) demonstrated advanced levels on exiting preschool.
This was a 6% improvement on 71% 2010

Syllables
95% (31chn) had achieved appropriate syllable awareness
This was a 13% improvement on 82% 2010

Concepts of print
100% (32 children including 8 children with additional needs - speech / language /global delay) made overall progress in their concepts of print

Implications or recommendations for the future
Continue to link Professional Learning to strategic directions for whole of staff team
Continue to support parents in language and literacy development at home
Set up data base library borrowing system to support families reading at home
Continue Story tables to build narrative and storytelling skills
Continue planning and implementation of ‘POP’ Principles
Continue intentional teaching focus on phonological awareness and across the play based curriculum
Further develop focus on concepts of print and set up excel record keeping charts
2. Improving Numeracy skills - Spatial awareness

**Target**
All children will develop an increase in numeracy skills in the area of spatial concepts and terms. By the end of their 4th term at kindergarten 90% of children will demonstrate improved spatial awareness and terms as measured by numeracy base line data.

**Key actions:**

**Effective Teaching and Learning**
- Site Numeracy Plan
- Numeracy activities targeting spatial concepts and terms with intentional learning – planned activities, games, songs/rhymes incorporating spatial awareness.
- Spatial skills have been incorporated through daily teachable moments in play and also intentional teaching; following instructions/creating structures/ music and movement.
- Staff plan explicit teaching of children’s spatial awareness and concepts are incorporated with problem solving activities e.g. “Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall’
- Early Intervention to target children with additional needs
- Support for Aboriginal students included 1:1 targeted support and small group work
- Information for families on numeracy skills
- Spatial terms are incorporated across the curriculum and children are encouraged to use the correct terminology for a variety of spatial concepts e.g. top, bottom, over/ under, next to, in front, behind, around.
- Concepts are incorporated with climbing circuits and fun and fitness activities.

**Make Data Count**
- Staff assess and record children’s spatial awareness utilizing the Early Years Assessment
- Children in their first term assessed to identify areas to further develop. Children reassessed at end of their second term to monitor/assess/plan and fourth term
- Numeracy quilt base line data
- Staff have included reporting on children’s spatial skills in the children’s summative reports.

**Summary of progress towards our targets / achievements in 2011**
Learner achievement data – Numeracy outcomes:
100% (32 children) made progress in their numeracy skills with spatial awareness as recorded on the numeracy quilt for numeracy skills and appropriate language as measured by numeracy base line data for spatial awareness – utilizing the Early Years Assessment (spatial sense).

**Spatial Awareness** - 100% (32 children including 8 children with additional needs - speech / language /global delay) made overall progress in their numeracy skills in the priority area of spatial awareness as follows:
- 100% children achieved the first two levels utilizing the Early Years Assessment (spatial sense).

2 Aboriginal children each made improvements in numeracy; 1 student commenced school with positive transition to school and satisfactory literacy skills. (1 student still in eligible kindy year)

**Implications or recommendations for the future**
Continue numeracy focus on spatial awareness and explicit teaching
Continue to utilise numeracy quilt to monitor and record children’s numeracy skills.
Develop a higher focus on the concept of number and pattern work as this was identified as an area of need based on data from the numeracy quilt, observations and reporting
Further explore the ‘Big Ideas in number’ program in partnership with NPPS
3. Improving Well-being: Emotional Resilience

**Target**
Children develop a sense of well-being and build emotional resilience to foster positive social skills and relationships

By the end of their 4th term at kindergarten 90% of identified children demonstrate improved social skills as measured by the Early Childhood social skills checklist

**Key actions:**

**Effective Teaching and Learning**
- Staff have continued to provide support for targeted children needing assistance in the area of emotional resilience by ensuring additional 1:1 support and small group work.
- Using visual strategies to support children in daily routines, play sequences, independence and social skills
- Targeted intervention to build social play skills
- Staff utilised the Box full of feelings resource to assist children in identifying their emotions and the emotions of others
- Staff implemented the Child Protection Curriculum
- Explicit teaching with the “You Can Do It!” social skill program supported target concepts of getting along and emotional resilience. Explicit teaching assisted in developing well-being and positive social skills and relationships with others.
- Social skills transition program

**Shared Leadership**
- Staff engaged in professional learning with ‘Respect, Reflect, Relate’ through attendance at The Early Years Forum, staff meetings, reading and discussions.
- Developing home links to support learner outcomes including informal discussions, daily feedback and parent teacher interviews; supporting parents in working in partnership to develop children’s well-being and emotional resilience and building social skills

**Make Data Count**
- Staff utilised the Respect, Reflect, Relate – Well-being Observational Scales
- Utilize baseline data and systems for assessing and monitoring children's social skills – utilizing Early Childhood social skills checklist (from Child Psychologist, Melanie Townley)
- During school transition visits the staff provided information to the school teacher on individual children starting in the next intake and provided access to the children’s portfolios and comprehensive summative reports.

**Summary of progress towards our targets / achievements in 2011**

100% (32 children) further developed their emotional resilience and positive social skills.
- 14 chn benefited from some targeted intervention. The main area of concern was building emotional resilience and conflict resolution skills to develop positive social play skills with their peers
- 90% of children commenced school having developed a positive level of emotional resilience and positive social skills.
- 3 chn commencing school would benefit from further support/development.

**Implications or recommendations for the future**
Continue well-being focus and supporting children’s interactions with peers in social play as staff engagement was a significant factor in supporting children in developing positive social skills
Continue work with ‘Box full of Feelings’ as this program supported children’s understanding of their emotions and the emotions of others
Continue working in partnership with families to develop shared strategies and sharing success
Continue implementation of Child Protection Curriculum
Further develop incorporating the ‘You can do it’ social skill program incorporating all five areas; confidence, getting along, persistence, organisation, resilience
Better utilise baseline data and systems
Review site Behaviour Support Policy
Review and further develop school social skills transition program
SITE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS
The site review was undertaken using the self review tool: Level 2 Scan and using the DIAf Level 4 Rubrics: Performance Indicators for Make Data Count, Shared Leadership and Set Directions.

**Strengths:** Focus on learning – learner achievement and well-being needs identified as the basis of decisions with strategic directions – high expectations exist for all learners including effective intervention and support for learners to achieve success.

Improvement in strategic directions achieved in the areas of literacy, numeracy and well-being / social skills

Attend to culture – positive learning and workplace supports learners, staff and community to experience success and work with enthusiasm, commitment and energy. Processes in place to build culture and morale, redress concerns and address issues

Data management – improved data collection systems for assessment for learning including Learning stories, Phonological Awareness and concepts of print

Spatial skills checklist based on Early Years Assessment – Spatial sense assessment criteria

**Areas for improvement:** Share Leadership – particularly in the area of building ‘Leadership is shared with strategies and processes to build the leadership capacity and density of the site and individuals

Set direction – particularly in the area of collaboration with all stakeholders, to ensure higher level of communication, monitoring and evaluation of planning processes with higher levels of stakeholder improvement

**Evaluation**
The review indicated an improvement in the area of data management and areas identified for 2012 include Shared Leadership and Set Directions as we progress towards National Quality standards

**Implications for future planning and implications:**
- Continue data management systems, review and monitor
- Develop strategies and processes to build the leadership capacity and density of the site and individuals – schedule regular time table for staff meetings inclusive of ancillary staff continue shared professional learning
- Set direction with increased collaboration with parents and Governing Council in preparation for NQS – review vision, values, philosophy statement, quality improvement plan
I would like to take this opportunity to thank outgoing governing council members who dedicated their time, Crystal Muir as our treasurer and Dannii White as the secretary since the resignation Anne Zalme.

I would also like to acknowledge the parents whose children have moved onto school and the parents who supported the governing council by attending the meetings. In 2011 we saw the opening of the new bathroom. Even though there was a delay do to asbestos and the children has to use port-a-loos, it’s an upgrade and was greatly needed and appreciated. We invited past governing council Chairpersons who where in involved with the planning of the bathroom as well as Chris Sheldon from Adelaide.

After that it was decided that work needed to be done to the staff office. Renovations where done to make the office more functional. And for as hard as the staff works they need a workable space.

In term three our children where entitled to more hours under the Universal Access Initiative. Parents are given options on 2.5 days a week or 5 full days within a fortnight.

The Lioness club donated $300 for book and also together with Millicent Craft Group has made Library bags for the children. They where invited to a morning tea as a thank you. With this we have been try to get the kids to borrow more so we are going to get a barcode system in place this year.

We did well on our Easter raffle last year $427 and $333 with the bulb drive. Unfortunately I wasn’t at the Christmas concert since Sam was only pre entry, but we raised $544 with the Christmas raffle.

Term 1 fundraising is still under way are the Easter Raffle.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Pauline, Tracey, Suzanne, Belinda and Susan for being dedicated to the children's’ education and the improvements to the Kindergarten. They are always gaining further knowledge and learning new methods to give our children the best possible start to their future.

I have enjoyed my involvement at McArthur Park Kindergarten and how much work is put in to our child’s education. Thanks to Pauline for inviting me to a information session about the National Quality Framework that DECD is putting in place.

Kristie Mitchell

2011 Governing Council Chairperson
2011 Average Attendance = 30.3
2011 Average Enrolment = 33

McArthur Park Kindergarten continues to have stable enrolment and attendance on average.
Fluctuations in enrolments tends to be due to birth rates and transience of some families.

Average Regional Attendance over past 3 years = 92%
Average Attendance at McArthur Park over past 3 years = 92.4% slightly above regional average.

We have a small number of ATSI enrolments 1-2. These students have regular attendance when not impacted by medical needs.
McArthur Park Kindergarten has had an increase in students from Non English Speaking Background since term 4, 2010 with 1-2 students enrolled. These students have an Indian culture background. They comprise the minority of our enrolments with 2 out of 35 students in Term 4 2011.

**Feeder Schools**

Children generally transfer to the following schools from this preschool:
Newbery Park P.S. and secondly St. Anthony’s Catholic Primary School.
Over the last 3 years enrolment to Newbery Park PS has declined
2009 – 70%  
2010 – 60%  
2011 – 55%
Enrolment to St Anthony’s Catholic PS has increased
2009 – 30%  
2010 – 40%  
2011 – 40%
Enrolment to Millicent North PS has increased
2011 – 5%

Implication / Recommendation/ Suggestions: Work in partnership with Newbery Park to review this trend and develop support processes to increase enrolments, Newbery Park to develop parent information package, market programs/achievements to Millicent community.
We had 10 Parent Opinion Surveys POS reports collated from electronic responses in 2011.

We have an additional 8 Parent Opinion Surveys on hard copy that did not get linked to electronic responses. These responses were very positive across all areas.

The Parent Opinion survey indicated 100% level of satisfaction with agree and strongly agree across the areas:
- Quality of Teaching and Learning
- Support of Learning
- Relationships and Communication
- Leadership (4 neutral responses)

The highest response of strongly agree was in the area of Quality of Teaching and Learning.

Parent comment was positive across all four areas including relationships, learning, support, responsiveness, communication, community involvement and leadership.

Parent comment was negative in two areas – feedback from a parent re healthy eating and DVD viewing which conflicted with messages given to parents re healthy eating and physical activity and feedback from a parent re day meetings limiting working parents attendance.

Neutral responses from one parent re questions relating to parent opinion and opportunities for parents in decision making.

**Implications or recommendations for the future**

Continue effective teaching and learning practices with Project Approach inquiry based learning and focus on strategic directions leading to quality learning outcomes and targeted support.

Review Healthy Eating and Physical Activity focus – improve parent communication to ensure parents have correct information on which to base their perception – as parent perceived high level of biscuit baking however healthy eating also involved fruit platters, vegetable slice, soup, rice cake/ salad toppings etc – biscuits and cakes were introduced to promote home baking vs prepackaged sweet snacks. Document DVD time as this is not always a daily practice – communicate alternative active play and reason for DVD viewing when provided.

Review Governing Council meeting times to enable greater opportunities for working parents to attend.

Continue to communicate / promote parent involvement and decision making re informal discussion, creating opportunities, surveys, newsletters, displays, meetings.
We commenced Universal Access at the start of Term 3. Sessions have been filled to capacity, however families have been able to be allocated their first preference. The majority of families chose the option of accessing 5 full days per fortnight.

The provision of 15 hours, in the first three weeks initially, impacted on child attendance and wellbeing with a high number of parents reporting that their children were tired and more prone to illness. It was noted by staff, that it was evident some of the younger children in particular grew highly tired towards the end of the Kindergarten week. We reviewed our daily routines and practices to best cater for individual and group needs, including reintroducing a relaxation time mid afternoon to support their well-being. This worked successfully to improve children’s levels of engagement and well-being. Overall Universal Access has had a positive effect on children’s attendance and well-being, especially for ‘at risk’ families through providing additional access to quality care and education with positive feedback from families.

Universal Access has had a challenging impact on staff well-being with an increase in children accessing lunch care as part of a full day. Lunch care continues to be a challenging issue in regards to adequately providing staff with a twenty minute lunch break. A lunch break was supported through a lunch care fee to fund an ECW for Lunch care on Tuesday and Wednesday. This was made possible by employing the Preschool Support Worker for half an hour lunch care as an extension of their contract. We were unable to fund Lunch care on Thursday due to the requirement of an ECW contract being a minimum 3 hours.

Financial Statement

Financial Management systems: EDSAS Company 7 at Newbery Park Primary School, with finance officer Guido Cozzi

Financial audit report was positive with a satisfactory report. We have been fortunate to receive ongoing support from our centre Treasurer (Crystal Muir) and parent Tarsh Riley with weekly banking/receipting etc.

General ledger Profit and loss for 2011 outlines Total revenue: $189,074.46

Total expenses: $237,126.90

Surplus or (Deficit) funds: $48,052.44

Deficit of funds is accounted for in 2011 Budget due to planned expenses including site funded projects. However included in this deficit is an additional loss of $6003.12 in teacher salaries – this loss in budgeting is due to confusion with roll over of staffing and introduction of Universal Access with additional staffing above allocated funded staffing. We are working with Heather Bannister to ensure the prevention of over staffing in the 2012 budget. On a positive note the additional staffing ensured a positive transition to Universal Access with all staff teaching for the full six sessions of preschool.
Appendices

Annual financial statement, (EDSAS profit and loss)

Parent Opinion Survey

Powerpoint presentation slides