

TORRENS VALLEY CHILDREN'S CENTRE



- **Preschool**
- **Child Care**
- **Playgroup**

'quality education and care in a nurturing environment'

Phone 8389 1335



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Torrens Valley Children's Centre

2020 annual report to the community

Torrens Valley Children's Centre Number: 4619

Partnership: Torrens Valley

Signature

Preschool director:

Ms Jayne Cook

Governing council chair:

Danielle Morris

Date of endorsement:

3 March 2021



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of South Australia
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Context and highlights

The Torrens Valley Children's Centre is a Department for Education (DfEd) rural integrated children's centre, offering a DfEd preschool program during school terms and a long day care program that runs five days per weeks, 50 weeks of the year. We are nestled in the beautiful north eastern Adelaide Hills township of Gumeracha. Our community of learners is drawn from our local community and neighbouring communities of Forrestone, Kersbrook, Birdwood, Lobethal and Mt Pleasant. Our centre has continued to offer a high quality, engaging learning program for children aged 0 -5 years of age in 2020. Whilst the year threw up many challenges & uncertainties for all, our staff team have been professional and flexible and our parents understanding and accommodating with respect to changes/adaptations that have been necessary in order to provide a safe, positive and engaging learning environment for our children.

Our 2020 highlights include:

- Our ongoing commitment to providing high quality education and care programs that are inclusive of all learners, including those Kindy families that engaged in "learning at home" programs, saw our children continue to be engaged in and progress in, their learning. In Kindy, in particular, we noticed our children developing strong dispositions towards resilience, autonomy & independence in their learning - perhaps in spite of the restrictions placed on the capacity for family's to access and participate in the program.

- Our child care program continues to be a highly sought after commodity and we have continued to see long and unprecedented waiting lists for all ages on all days.

- Our Kindy outdoor redevelopment dream which began in early 2019 became a reality in October 2020!!! we have replaced and extend our large decking area at the top of the yard to make it far more suitable and aesthetically pleasing learning space that both children and staff have enjoyed being in! Our new viewing deck on one of our sloping embankments has become the place to "chill and chat" with friends over a book or drawing or two. We also added a platform/deck to our enormous sandpit which has provided the children with an alternative learning space in that area, and created some much needed, functional storage space for their loose parts and tools etc.

Governing council report

Last year was not the year of normality, we returned from a stressful summer break, it was not the year of playdates, not a year for parent volunteering or reading a book in the classroom, it was not a year of certainty for education, for teachers for childcare workers or for the families and children.

Last year was a year of working with no plans at times, making quick decisions, a year of thinking outside the square, a year of being absolutely inclusive whilst being distant, our kids learnt so much rhythm signing songs while washing their hands

Yet the governing council found ways to meet via email and by sitting with our chairs in one of the largest circles that any of us have ever sat in. We were determined to ensure that with all the chaos and change and uncertainty we wanted to provide a place for our children that was a safe place, a place that curiosity is encouraged, finding fun and creating friendships, a place that learning is exciting and also that learning is different for each person.

A major successful outcome that the governing council have been a part of has been:

- The outside kindy areas have finally had a few really big projects that included that decking around the big tree, a great decked quiet, creative space and the sandpit has a fantastic deck around it.

They were more of the big projects for the year, we did have a lot of smaller successes and good purchases for the centre overall, with the centre being in a good financial position.

It was really interesting reflecting over the past year here at the centre, overall I am really grateful and proud of all the staff here, there would have been a time for them feeling unsure if going to work was the right thing to do, but they did and they made sure that all our children have been able to come to the centre and with such huge efforts to ensure our children were safe and healthy. I'd like to applaud Jayne our Director and all of the Childcare and Kindy Staff for the great work they achieved last year (clap)

Lastly, I would like to finish with extending an invitation for parents to join the governing council. It is now my time to finish here now my children are all at school, I have been part of the centre for 8 years and have been on the governing council for 7 years. I've thoroughly enjoyed being on the committee, I often haven't been able to come in to cut fruit or volunteer in class but the centre can't operate without a governing council so making myself available for meetings is just as important for the centre to run so I feel quite good about volunteering this way. Being on the committee has concreted my confidence in the centre and the staff.

Improvement planning - review and evaluate

A major priority for improvement learning during 2020 has centred on supporting children to develop their number sense. This included developing educator capacity to understand children's number sense progressions in order to build on and extend their learning. Using an observational tool at regular intervals across the year to analyse, track & monitor children's increasingly deeper learning in number we noticed growth for every child from beginning to end of year. Particular growth was noted with respect to counting collections accurately, including 75% of children now demonstrating "trusting the count" and subitising collections of up to 5 objects. 13 out of 16 children also demonstrated the skills of comparing quantities of more or less with accuracy by end of year. We believe that our intentionality around providing opportunities for children to go deeper into number concepts has become embedded into our teaching and learning program, as evidenced in our pedagogical documentation, including planning/programme, observational data, and assessment & reporting.

In 2021, we will continue to build on our previous work around number and have identified our learning priority as "Improving children's capacity to apply and represent their numerical thinking in variety of contexts"

Our second Improvement Priority/Learning Improvement Goal centred on supporting children to develop strong foundations for reading success through developing and extending their vocabularies. One of the strategies that was crucial for growth for children was the introduction of our "Book Club". This involved a weekly structured learning time, where all children borrowed a book and were involved in conversations around books. These were documented and revisited, in their individual Book Club Journals" across the year. The second high yield strategy was an educator increase in intentionality around developing curiosity in words, through targeted provocations whenever books were read - "if you don't know what a word we are reading means, please ask" Observations of children's involvement/thinking around this were documented over the last two terms, with growth evidenced in the number of children who responded to the provocation increasing as well as the number of children who offered explanations of tier 2 & 3 words that they heard both during book reading and during everyday conversations with peers and adults.

In 2021 we would like to build on our work around developing communications /conversational skills with children as part of a project with our speech pathologist "buy-in" across the year. This will include documenting, analysing and planning implementing targeted interventions to extend all children's communication skills across the year. This will include building educator capacity to engage in sustained shared thinking/quality conversations and capture these through observational documentation

Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2017	17	22	22	19
2018	31	30	31	32
2019	27	28	28	30
2020	19	N/A	16	19

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

The centre had an average of 65 families enrolled using one or both of our services regularly throughout the year. The Kindy program experienced quite low numbers throughout the year, with 3 children joining us as part of the funded early entry program in term3 & 4 to take the total enrolment s to 19. There were 10 families who used both the Kindy and Child Care programs (in various capacities (i.e. Before and/or After Kindy Care, on non-Kindy days or a combination of both). We continued to have a substantial waiting list for child care places on each week day, the majority being under 3 years.

Attendance

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2017 centre	94.0%	93.7%	86.3%	98.1%
2018 centre	94.2%	94.1%	78.5%	88.5%
2019 centre	94.4%	91.1%	88.6%	99.4%
2020 centre	86.8%	N/A	86.2%	88.6%
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

In ongoing consultation with our community, our Kindy program (15 hours) continues to be delivered as 12 hours, over 2 full days in term's 1 & 2 and as 18 ours, over 3 full days in term's 3 & 4. This model continues to be highly effective as evidenced in our consistently higher than state average attendance rates.

In response to the varying impacts of the COVID19 pandemic, such as changing employment conditions, parents choosing to keep children out of care and the Federal Govt's 3 ? months of free child care initiative, our Child Care program attendances fluctuated throughout 2020. We began the year with a Full Time Equivalent (FTE) attendance rate of 19 per day and ended the year with an FTE of 23.

Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2017	2018	2019	2020
547 - Birdwood Primary School	50.0%	30.0%	28.6%	50.0%
162 - Gumeracha Primary School	27.0%	33.0%	39.3%	31.3%
204 - Kersbrook Primary School	22.0%	26.0%	25.0%	18.8%

NOTE: The data is collected in Term3. 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), Term3 2020 collection.

Destination schools comment

Over 90% of our children moved on to one of our local schools, Gumeracha, Birdwood or Kersbrook at the end of their Kindy year, with two children opting to attend private schools out of our local area. School choice is very much reflective of where our families live. The Kindy team have continued to work closely with colleagues from our main feeder schools, both at a Torrens Valley Partnership level and as part of our ongoing Local Early Years Educator Network, where leaders and reception teachers engage in collaborative dialogue to inform and support best practice and continuity of learning for our children and families.

Client opinion summary

With restrictions in place around Parent access to the site throughout much of 2020, it was extremely important that we not only provide parents with as much information about our programs & policies/procedures as possible as well as provide many opportunities to provide more formal feedback around these.

Kindy:

The Parent Opinion Survey is one of the ways we engage with our Kindy families in order to gain feedback around our preschool program. It involves parents providing feedback by answering a series of questions relating to four different areas of Kindy. In 2020, 7 out of a possible 16 families provided feedback by agreeing/disagreeing with a series of statements that related to four different areas of their kindy experience. The results are as follows:

- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements relating to the Quality of teaching
- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with comments relating to Relationships and communication, with one parent providing the comment "the Kindy have proved very detailed reports".
- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements relating to Support of learning – with only one question under this area being unanswered by one respondent as neutral – my child would receive support for an additional need
- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with statements relating to leadership and decision, with only two questions in this area being answered by a parent as neutral.

Other targeted areas that we formally collect feedback from families throughout the year included:

- Orientation & Settling In - all Kindy families during term 1 and new families who begin child care during the year.
- Assessment & reporting Processes - as Progress reports are given to families during the year including the opportunity to have a Kindy Parent: Teacher conversation face to face or via phone call.

These sources of feedback, along with informal conversations, provide valuable information to us from which to build on processes and practices that are effective and identify those areas we need to streng

Relevant history screening

Processes exist across the centre to ensure that all employees have current DCSI Criminal History clearances or the new Working with Children checks as from expiry of DSCI ones. Copies of these are kept in staff records at the front desk, with reminders issued to staff when screenings are three months from expiration. At that time employees are now encouraged to self-initiate the DHS screening process. As our Governing Council/Management Committee is the employing authority for all child care staff, it is mandatory that they also have a current Working With Children Check.

Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$355,869
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$10,565
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	Used to engage in PD involving going deeper with number sense - understanding numeracy progressions and how to support next steps. This also involved building capacity around using the NUMICON resource as a key strategy. Literacy PD involved developing capacity around building capacity re: developing children's vocab	Evidence collected across the year indicated progress for all children, including our 1 Aboriginal child re; number sense.
Improved ECD and parenting outcomes (children's centres only)	N/A	N/A
Inclusive Education Support Program	Our IESP funding gran 4 hours per week of ECW preschool support hours In 2020 the funding was used to support 3 children identified as having significant speech articulation difficulties and one child referred for behavioural support intervention.	3 speech children made progress with 1 child having case closed by end 2020. Our other child was able to transition more successfully
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.