Preschool Annual Report 2010
Para Hills West Preschool: Location Number: 2651
Values: Care, Respect, Trust and Equity.

Context
Para Hills West is in the Local Government area of the Salisbury Council in South Australia.

Para Hills West Preschool is a category one preschool. This by definition means: The Preschool Category Ranking is a priority assigned annually to indicate the level of social disadvantage....there are three levels of ranking...category one reflects centres with the highest needs'. (Dept of Education and Children's Services, 2010). Additionally, the Australian Early Index of Disadvantage (AEID) identifies Para Hills West amongst the 20% of communities showing the highest percentage of vulnerable children.

Children largely transition to schools within the local community, including: Para Hills West, Para Hills and Tyndale Christian School.

During 2010, Para Hills Preschool had several changes in leadership. Such instability has continued over a five year period. In turn this has created a number of challenges for the Para Hills West Community. These challenges are related to:

- Governing Council,
- Long day child care (located next door to the preschool),
- Notification for possible reduced service from full time to part time, due to declining enrolment
- Staffing moral and parental confidence.

Governing Council & declining enrolments
Prior to the appointment of the preschool's current director, the Governing Council consisted of three members. All members initially did not understand their roles and responsibilities and had no connection with the development of key planning documents for the preschool. Immediate action was taken to provide members with 'user friendly' sets of roles and responsibility statements. These assisted members with the many planning meetings that continued throughout 2010. Governing Council members successfully encouraged other parents to become members, of which gave
strength to the campaign to maintain a full time service. Additional planning meeting occurred with regional staff, state office personnel and the site director. Governing Council members were kept informed of intentions prior to meetings, results of outcomes and follow up needed.

In 2011, the preschool successfully maintained full time status and is currently operating at full capacity. Hard work, commitment and increased skill levels of the Governing Council members have been essential to such achievement.

**Long day child care (located next door to the preschool),**
Para Hills West Preschool and Kester’s Road Children’s Centre are located next door to one another with a gate providing access. The preschool is a state government service and the child care a community based service. Such partnerships are complicated due to differing employee awards, work conditions and professional work cultures. Additionally there are two separate funding models that create inequities across both services, although both assets are owned by the Minister. Additionally this has contributed to difficulties in establishing collaborative relationships between services. Both directors have begun to work closely together due to the symbiotic nature of services. Regular formal and informal meeting occur on a daily basis, dual consultation with practice and policy review occurs and a parent representative holds a position on both services ‘Parent Committees’.

**Staffing**
Para Hills West Preschool has funding for 1.0 director and 1.0 teacher. The Preschool additionally employs an early childhood worker to support with administration. Additionally funding has been received to employ preschool support staffing and bilingual workers.

**Vision**
Our Vision statement has been developed with the staff team and the Governing Council. It states: Children will achieve high learning outcomes supported by early childhood professionals through a quality curriculum implemented in a stimulating play based environment where children are actively involved.

**Feeder Schools**
Children largely transition to schools within the local community, including: Para Hills West, Para Hills and Tyndale Christian School.

**Other Information**
Accessibility to public transport includes a bus stop at the front of the pre-school.
STRATEGIC PRIORITY
Literacy: Oral language

Target: All children in their fourth term to have progressed by two levels of the Teacher Rating of Oral Language and Literacy (TROLL) document, measured by the 1+1+1* model.

Strategies/Key Actions:
- Gather baseline data against TROLL (first term cohort)
- Discussions with the speech pathologist re: children in Accomplished Stage in first term – ideas for further language development
- Training and development – Oral Language
- Monitoring 1+1+1 children’s progress in specified weeks (Director)
- Focus on Rhyming

Report on Performance:
Outcomes indicate:
- One third of children are achieving target
- Two thirds of children are below target

Future recommendations:
- Continue to build on teaching and learning focusing on language and comprehension and ensure it is embedded into everyday practice.
- Continue to access staff professional development and resources with language comprehension focus.
- Continue to develop knowledge with speech pathologist supporting rhyme.

Comments:
- The preschool has two core teachers, sharing a 0.6 & 0.5 workload.
- During term three the first core teacher was absent 9 out of 10 weeks with unscheduled leave. A new replacement teacher was allocated by Human Resources. Considerable time was invested with induction, orientation and relationship establishing.
- During term fourth the second core teacher was absent 7 out of 9 weeks due to injury. A second replacement teacher was allocated by Human Resources. Again, considerable time was invested with induction, orientation and relationship establishing.

Site priorities were low priority due to the placement of two new core teachers.
Planning For Improvement: Development of a Site Improvement Plan

- Analysis of site review:

With support from a Regional Consultant – Para Hills West Preschool staff has begun the process in using the ‘Five Element’ cycle for improvement. During a full day site closure the Regional Consultant initially involved the whole site staff in conducting an ‘Environmental Scan’, thus giving a starting point in identifying where deeper analysis for improvement was most needed. As a site staff team the site now has two specific principles (from the nine DECS principles of Improvement) and analysis the associated rubrics over the past two terms. Focus on Learning and Continuous Improvement rubrics have been the entry point for a cycle of improvement. Consequently the Site Improvement Plan along with the site Vision and Values where rewritten with all staff and Governing Council involvement.

Feedback from staff and the Governing Council was of a high level of satisfaction when involved in planning.

- Self Review process undertaken – Environmental Scan conducted

Outcomes:
- Site Improvement Plan (SIP) and Values & Vision with site staff team rewritten
- Meeting with Governing Council to undergo local consultation with new Values and Vision
- Consultation with Governing Council in relation to informing new SIP
- Meeting with speech pathologist – compiling a teaching resource to support children’s development in ‘Rhyme Judgement Skills’.
- Entry to phase two of the Northern Adelaide Region Comprehension Focus
Aboriginal Education & Employment Strategies:
The preschool trained and employed a new staff member that identifies with the contemporary Aboriginal culture.

All Aboriginal children have an Individual Learning Plan in collaboration with families.

All children are involved in 'Aboriginal Cultural Studies'.

2.0 REQUIRED DATA ANALYSIS

2.1 ENROLMENT

Term 1 = 38
Term 2 = 30
Term 3 = 39
Term 4 = 46

Projected for 2011

2.2 ATTENDANCE

Term 1 = 33
Term 2 = 31
Term 3 = 34
Term 4 = 40

2.3 PARENT OPINION SURVEY

25% of families were randomly surveyed in five areas. Results indicated:

Area One - Quality of Teaching and Learning
- Majority of surveys indicated Strongly Agree

Parent feedback:
- Absolutely excellent teaching and caring staff
- A wide range of subjects have been covered by the preschool. My child has learnt things that I did not know. My child has enjoyed learning at this preschool

Area Two - Support of Learning
- Majority of surveys indicated Strongly Agree

Parent feedback:
- I would like to see a higher quality of learning materials available for kids but I realise that this is very difficult due to low levels of education funding
- Excellent support through tough times

Area Three - Relationships and Communication
- Majority of surveys indicated Strongly Agree

Parent feedback:
- Excellent communication. I am well informed.

Area Four – Leadership and Decision Making
- Majority of surveys indicated Strongly Agree

Parent feedback:
- Organisation was affected by the three changes of directors this years
- I believe the preschool would benefit from stability in leadership (= long term contracts). Since my other child began here in T4 2008, we have had four preschool directors which I think is unacceptable for staff, families
and government funding. The staff I think, do a wonderful job considering how unsettling this change is.

- Always trying to improve everything.

Area Five - Satisfaction of Service

- Majority of surveys indicated Very Satisfied

It is important to note that one family surveyed identified areas of concern, specifically relating to feedback on their child’s progress, behaviour of other children, access to the program information and suggestions relating to fee collection. The preschool has taken on board the suggestions and is currently working hard to improve the outlined concerns.

2.4 FINANCIAL REPORTS

Funds expended against site priorities

The sites targeted improvement funds were spent in line with the allocated budgeted. In 2011 the preschool will undergo its annual financial audit, of which will highlight any discrepancies and provide recommendations.

- Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss – held on location

- Financial Commitments Report – held on location