



# Cowell Early Childhood Centre 2016 Annual Report to the Community



Government  
of South Australia  
Department for Education  
and Child Development

Cowell Early Childhood Centre Preschool Number: 6663

Partnership: Central Eyre

**Name of Preschool Director:**

Jacqui Finnis

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**Name of Governing Council Chair:**

Stacey Franklin

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**Date of Endorsement:**

10/3/2016

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## Context and Highlights

Cowell Early Childhood Centre is a part time Preschool within the Central Eyre Partnership, offering a full time integrated Rural Care Program (two worker model) for five days a week. Staffing for Rural Care includes 4 contract ECW2's and one contract ECW1 who offers inclusion support. The site is staffed by a Director (0.8) and ECW (0.5). This is a new team in 2016 – A first time Director and an ECW who has been there for 15 years. Preschool operates from 8:45 to 3:00pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays in weeks 2, 4, 6 & 8.

Cowell is a category 2 site with a capacity of 30. This year's enrolments started as 11 and decreased to 9 due to families moving elsewhere. Two children travel on the bus. We offer a transition program which occurs across the year providing the readiness for children's entry to school. This begins with visits from the receptions in term one and continues the rest of the year with alternating visits to the school and from the receptions for one lesson. In term 4 preschool children attend school for four morning sessions and two half days ending after the lunch period, this occurs on a Monday and Wednesday dividing the group in half to be integrated with the current receptions.

Playgroup began operating again in term 3 and operates once a week on Monday even weeks and Fridays odd weeks, this program is led by volunteers. Cowell has a growing population of young families and is located on the Eyre Peninsula; it is approximately 450kms from Adelaide and one hour south of Whyalla. Major industries for the town include Oysters, Aquaculture, Agriculture and nearby mining.

### Highlights

#### Parent/Community

This year preschool children have been involved in a range of community based excursions and visits to gain a broader understanding of their local community and services provided to develop their own sense of belonging. This has included; a visit from the ambulance and police as well as excursions to the local fire station, sea rescue and the local school aquaculture as well as visits to the community library throughout the year.

#### Programs

This year staff have been engaged with a range of training and development opportunities focused on Growth Mindset and the Literacy and Numeracy indicators - this has improved staff understanding around these areas and improved the way children's learning is documented across the centre.

## Report from the Governing Council

### 2016 Presidents Report

In 2016 we welcomed Jacqui Finnis as our Director, we also saw a new Governing Council Committee who were very motivated to fundraise for our Centre. Fundraisers held were:

\* Friday Night Draw at Commercial Hotel, Thermomix or \$2,000 cash – raffle, Gala Day Stall, Crazy Camel, Picture Products, Art Auction, Chalk for sale at Christmas Pageant and New Years Eve Market Stall.

The total raised this year was \$6,049.94.

This money went towards the purchase of 2 x ipads for staff to use to assist programs and new play equipment for the centre.

We saw a new shed built to add much needed storage space.

The committee held a working bee which saw enthusiastic parents overhaul the garden, storage shed, cubby house, edible garden beds, bark chips, and wooden equipment.

Playgroup utilized the Centre's facilities once a week with great numbers attending.

The Centre's Philosophy was updated as per the feedback received from a parent survey.

I would like to thank Jacqui, staff and Governing Council Committee who do an amazing job and put in a lot of effort to enable us to have a fantastic Centre.

Governing Council President

## Quality Improvement Planning

QA1 - 1: Improved understanding of the Literacy & Numeracy Indicators & Numeracy Improvement cycle. Staff attended targeted T&D around the Numeracy Indicators including a Portfolio day with Deb Lasscock & a session with Lisa Jayne O'Connor, attended by the Director. The preschool was involved in a Numeracy Inquiry project as part of the Central Eyre Partnership PLC which supported the implementation requirements for 2016. This saw preschool staff become more confident in using the Literacy & Numeracy Indicators in learning stories, own programming & setting up numeracy activities.

2: Growth Mindset strategies with children: A small group of staff attended a James Anderson's Growth Mindset training, which was then shared with all site staff. Staff have been working to change the questions we ask to children to improve intellectual stretch. As a result children are more confident in articulating themselves & prepared to take risks.

Recommendation: Extend & compliment this work through a focus on critical & creative thinking.

3: Establish observation procedures: Staff have been trialling different ways to record observations on children.

Recommendation: Continue working on establishing procedure/ systems to record observations, anecdotes for all children by conducting a range of site visits.

QA2 - 1: Healthy Eating: Healthy Eating Policy updated & reminders about healthy eating sent out in site newsletter with ideas for lunch box foods for families to send with their child. Children participate in the Eat a Rainbow program & fruit was also offered to children attending Rural Care. Children have enjoyed commenting on what food they bring.

2: Protecting children from harm/ injury

Director attended WHS training and resources were allocated to have two staff members in Rural Care support the Director in the creation of 'site suited' daily yard check. Corrective Action log and Risk Register created and used by staff.

QA3 - 1: Outdoor space: New soft fall was added to the swing area during a site Working Bee and the sandpit refilled.

Recommendation: Play area on side of building to be redeveloped to further children's learning and curiosity.

2: Sustainable practices

Children were involved with planting, caring for & harvesting produce grown at the Centre (peas, bean, tomatoes, strawberries and cucumbers). Children learnt about recycling & are responsible for correctly disposing waste in scrap food, recycling or plastic bins. A worm farm is in the process of being set up.

Recommendation: Continued Nature Play/Sustainability focus

QA4 - Staff inductions: New staff had an induction to site using an updated checklist

Recommendation: All staff to be completed induction at the beginning of the year.

2: Staff qualification

All ECWs working within Rural Care have completed their Diploma qualifications.

QA5 Orientation visits: All new families to the centre are taken on a tour of the site & given the opportunity to bring their child into the centre with them for a visit. This has given staff the opportunity to develop relationships with children prior to commencing care.

QA6 -1: Communication with families: Newsletters were developed with an area by both Rural Care & Preschool & sent out to families every 3 weeks. Communication programs we made available for parents in both areas of the centre & updated weekly so parents can see what their child has been working on. Parent opinion survey recorded positive feedback around centre communication.

2: Enrolment Information: Children's enrolment pack of is fully updated and given to families at preschool transition. Also ready to go for new enrolments.

QA 7 1: Philosophy: Discussed with staff & GC, draft was sent out to families for feedback. Then taken back to GC & is now displayed in centre.

## Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2014	18	19	19	19
2015	20	20	20	20
2016	11	10	10	

Based on person counts in the two week reference period each term. Excludes pre-entry. Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems.

## Enrolment Comment

Enrolments at the beginning of the year were 11 and decreased to 9 at the end of the year due to families moving away for work. Compared the last two years enrolments have also been lower, this could have been impacted by families moving for work opportunities. However, we are they will be increasing to 16 in the upcoming year.

## Attendance

Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2014 Centre	94.4%	89.5%	78.9%	89.5%
2015 Centre	95.0%	95.0%	95.0%	80.0%
2016 Centre	100.0%	90.0%	100.0%	
2014 State	90.0%	88.9%	86.1%	87.1%
2015 State	90.5%	88.7%	86.3%	86.3%
2016 State	89.6%	88.7%	87.7%	

Based on attendances recorded in the two week reference period each term, and calculated to an average unadjusted daily attendance (deemed attendance). Attendance percentages are based on the calculated deemed attendance (integer), divided by the number of enrolments. Excludes pre-entry. Note: Figures have been revised for previous years, using integer deemed attendance not decimal. Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems.

## Attendance Comment

Attendance this year has been higher than the last two years and continues to be higher than the state with a fantastic result of 100% in term one and three. Absences recorded are usually due to illness or holidays and parents usually inform the centre of any planned absences.

We have been working to improve attendance by providing children with certificates for perfect attendance and updating parents on Friday sessions through the use of the notice board.

## Destination Schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2014	2015	2016
0735 - Cowell Area School	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	100%	100%	100%

## Destination Schools Comment

Data shows that children that attend Cowell Early Childhood Centre predominately transition to Cowell Area school, which is located on the site next to the preschool. Variable data includes two families who moved throughout the year and will start school at different schools within the state.

## Client Opinion Summary

60% of responses were returned with most answers being agree to strongly agree. This was an improved response from 2015 with more positive feedback provided over all areas of the program. Comments were very positive and included; staff persistence and willingness to work with children, children enjoy attending preschool and feel supported, parents feel comfortable approaching staff and staff are invested in the preschool and the children.

### Quality of Teaching and Learning

Generally 83 - 100% agreed or strongly agreed about the quality of teaching and learning offered within the site with 17% feeling neutral around three areas within this. To improve in this area over the year staff planed for the needs of individual children through writing ILP's and term focuses have been sent out in newsletters.

Recommendation: Continue to send overviews in newsletters and change the layout of the learning environment on a more regular basis.

### Support of Learning

Responses were generally positive with only two statements showing neutral feedback. One area that received 33% neutral response was focused on the preschool have information available support agencies within the community.'

Recommendation: On the arrival of new families are given a tour including the area in which support agency information is located.

### Relationships and Communication

Responses proved mostly positive with four statements showing neural feedback. One area that received a 33% neutral response was focused on 'I am encouraged to be involved in the preschool in all kinds of ways.'

Recommendation: Invite parents to join in on more areas of the program.

### Leadership and Decision Making

Eight of the ten statements were positive with 1 disagree about been given opportunities to be involved in educational program.

Recommendation: Invite parents into the centre to share knowledge and on excursions.

## DECD Relevant History Screening

All staff employed in the centre on a permanent, contract/casual or relief basis have a current DCSI History Screening clearance. Copies of these documents are kept electronically and in paper form.

## Financial Statement

	Funding Source	Amount
1	Grants: State	\$414,082.16
2	Grants: Commonwealth	-
3	Parent Contributions	\$2,865.00
4	Other	\$17,946.87

## 2016 Preschool Annual Report: Improved Outcomes Funding

Improved Outcomes Category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2016 funding was used to improve the relevant DECD Standard of Educational Achievement * outcomes (where applicable):	Outcomes achieved or progress towards these outcomes:
Improved outcomes for numeracy and literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All staff attended a Training and Development session on the Literacy and Numeracy Indicators.</li> <li>- Director attended a session focused on Numeracy Indicators</li> <li>- Preschool staff worked on a Inquiry Project focused on Numeracy Indicator - I measure and compare my world.</li> <li>- Resources were bought to support Numeracy Development in the site; this included sand play and water play equipment with a focus on measuring.</li> </ul>	Progress towards outcome achieved with 2017 to include a focus on Literacy.
Improved ECD and Parenting Outcomes (Children's Centres only)		
Improved outcomes for children with disabilities		
Improved outcomes for children with additional language or dialect		

\* The DECD Standard of Educational Achievement is defined as children and young people progressing and achieving at or above their appropriate year level.