

Quality Area 7: Governance and Leadership

We have worked towards a collaborative culture as part of a professional learning community in which educators believe that quality improvement and high expectations for teaching and learning are a result of ongoing involvement and participation in professional learning experiences and reflective practice. Research and knowledge gathered through professional development is shared both within the team and extended early years networks to improve pedagogical practice.

The Greenhill South Partnership Early Years Network represents teachers and educators from each kindergarten. Over the course of the last 3 years our educators were part of a learning inquiry facilitated by Deb Lasscock, Project Worker in the Flinders Centre for Science Education in the 21st Century School at Flinders University. The focus this year was on 'digging deeper' into STEM and 21st Century Teaching and Learning. This inquiry approach to learning allows children to develop the transferrable skills such as: creativity; collaboration; critical thinking; communication; citizenship and character; all can be utilized each day at kindergarten and are integral to lifelong learning.

Governing Council

The Governing Council is a body of volunteer parents sharing joint responsibility along with the Kindergarten Director, for the governance of the Kindy. In addition, the Governing Council's role is to manage the Fundraising initiatives and further community involvement at the Kindy. Successful fundraising and community events in the 2018 Year have made it possible to add further improvements to the Kindergarten environment and buildings, along with increasing the level of resources available to the Kindy. Some of the money raised from fundraising this year have include the installation of a roof over the mud kitchen area and the extension to our front veranda. Our fundraising events are only successful because of the ongoing support we receive from the staff, children and families at the Kindy, along with the hard work of the Governing Council members. We raised a total of \$6,300 from the proceeds of our Sport's Day, Family Breakfast, Celebratory Tea Towels and the Community Tree. The Governing Council have created a perpetual fundraising initiative based on a "Growing Community Tree" which will provide students (past and present) with the opportunity to leave their mark at the Kindy forever. The children can create an individual named drawing which is laser-etched onto a leaf motif which is then added to a 'tree' located on the building wall. Each year the tree will grow as more students move through the Kindergarten. We are very proud of this initiative and look forward to seeing the tree grow in future years!



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Annual Report 2018 Summary

Highlights

2018 was another busy, exciting and eventful year at the kindergarten. Some of the highlights for the year include:

o Gardening Program: Rebecca Mumford, our resident gardener, led the children in learning more about seasonal fruits and vegetables through 'hands on' experiences in planting and harvesting processes. In addition, the children enjoyed creating soil; learning more about the indigenous significance of bush tucker and cooking with some of our produce throughout the year.

o Nature Education Program: Through the borrowing of animals from the Nature Education Centre, the children experienced interacting with many native animals such as lizards, frogs, turtles, hermit crabs, hopping mice and even a rabbit while learning about related habitats and survival tactics. Engagement in live lifecycle experiences was supported through the Henny Penny chick hatching program and through the nurturing of silkworm eggs and Monarch caterpillars. The children observed the metamorphosis of these creatures as they grew and transformed.

o Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Awareness and Learning: Our ongoing commitment towards building children's cultural competence in indigenous cultures saw the embedding of Indigenous perspectives within the curriculum in terms of the Kaurua welcome each morning; art activities using materials and processes akin to Indigenous artists and engaging in cultural learning sessions with Trent Hill, an Aboriginal educator and storyteller. In Term 2, the children enjoyed an excursion to the Botanical gardens where Trent Hill guided us through the Australian Rainforest. The children learnt about the traditional uses and the significance of the trees and plants used by Aboriginal people.

o Health & Wellbeing: Healthy bodies make healthy minds that support productive learning. Early in the year, Gemma Morath, a former parent, presented a talk to the children on healthy eating and the importance of eating a rainbow of foods. Supporting resources were shared with our families to help in the partnership towards healthy living. Regular relaxation and breathing exercises are incorporated in the daily routine and further consolidated through yoga workshops each term with Karen Gunter from the Yoga Garage. Yoga picture card handouts were shared with families to help continue the practice at home.

o Partnerships with Families & Communities: Our Annual Sport's Day in May and Family Breakfast in September helped bring our kindergarten families together in a community spirit. Parent involvement in the curriculum saw a paramedic mother and father talk about their profession; a mother supported the children in a science experiment; mother and father taekwondo instructors supported the children in a taekwondo session and many parents shared stories with the children in various languages such as French, Portuguese and Chinese. Our Walk-a-Mile Fundraiser for the Hutt Street Centre to support homelessness and participation in the Spring Garden Competition for the Burnside Council were just some of the ways that a sense of connection with the community was strengthened and promoted.

o Sustainability: Fostering a sense of responsibility in terms of being environmentally conscious and socially aware has always been an integral part of the curriculum at the kindergarten. This learning was supported in many ways such as: planting, harvesting and maintaining our vegetable garden; guiding children on how to sort their rubbish at kindy each day; encouraging families to practise more 'nude food' packaging for snacks and lunch in order to reduce landfill; having nude food days in Term 3 to then become an embedded practice in Term 4; engaging in art experiences using natural and found materials rather than processed materials; re-using old packaging in making and engineering projects; collecting soft plastics to give in for recycling; using primarily only natural materials for ornaments, craft and decorations at Christmas time.

o Transition to School: Following on from the initiatives in 2017, to provide additional opportunities for the children in their transition to school was continued in 2018. Working in collaboration with the Reception teachers at Linden Park Primary School (LPPS), in addition to their formal Orientation Visit to the school in Term 4, the children experienced other opportunities to familiarize themselves with the school. These included walks as a kindergarten group to the school library and to the playground; an informal visit to the Reception classes wherein the kindergarten children were able to sit in and experience a class in session and visits by the Reception teachers to the kindergarten to meet and greet the children in Term 4 before their school start. In Term 3, the Reception teachers and the kindergarten teachers collaborated in jointly presenting a School Readiness Information session for parents and care-givers.

National Quality Standards– Achievements & Improvements

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice

Following on from 2017, we used the Phonological Awareness Skill Mapping (PASM) tool to track and monitor each child's oral language development to inform timely intervention using the 3-Wave Model for additional support, growth and development. Accompanying data on each child's executive functioning (EF) and dispositions at the time of screening was also collected to inform how these skills influence the more holistic learning approaches of children. Literacy and Numeracy planning, implementation, documentation, assessment and reporting continued to be an integral part of both planned and incidental play experiences. Following ongoing whole site professional development on a Partnership level across Terms 1, 2 and 3, on enabling 21st century dispositions for learning and shaping children's thinking through a Science, Engineering, Technology, Maths (STEM) lens, we have been engaging in an inquiry into 'How do we Stimulate Thinking Exploring Minds in fostering increased levels of confidence and risk-taking in children?'. Through this inquiry we have been focussing on building cognitive flexibility within both educators and children on problem-solving; taking risks; trying something new; productively failing and learning from mistakes; persisting when faced with challenges and first attempts are not successful; working to a plan and modifying plans and being confident to have a go when something is challenging. Following review of educator focus groups at the end of 2017, smaller groups this year have enabled educators to gain an in-depth holistic understanding of their focus children allowing deliberate, purposeful, and thoughtful pedagogical decisions and actions.

Quality Area 2: Children's health and safety

Healthy eating practices were promoted in a range of ways: a previous parent shared their expertise on nutrition and healthy eating with the children and families were provided related resources such as the Australian Guide to healthy eating; an Eat a Rainbow Brochure

and web links to other relevant information. The language of Restorative Practices and the Child Protection Curriculum were incorporated into the everyday curriculum to support the children in recognizing and expressing their feelings and emotions surrounding the importance of feeling safe and secure.

Quality Area 3: Physical environment

Children's learning, development and wellbeing is strengthened by a stimulating and challenging environment in which there are abundant opportunities to learn and discover through play. The continued upgrade of the front veranda included: extending the veranda entrance to provide an extra play space for the children to play by providing sun and rain protection and additional new zip track blinds. The mud kitchen is a popular play space for the children so a bamboo roof over the mud kitchen was added to provide a cooler area for the children to play in the warmer months.

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements

The planning and preparation of detailed staff rosters indicating inside and outside time support; group time support; focus group details and lunch time helps to facilitate the continuity of care and positive transitions for children at all times. The funding of additional staffing to support high quality standards of teaching and learning is evident in all aspects of the curriculum including: small focus groups; targeted intervention strategies; additional staffing over the lunch time; Greenhill South Partnership professional network meetings. Due to the high demand for enrolments an effective administration system is required to respond respectfully and fairly to the community needs. Following the DECD funded trial in 2017, further funding was received for a Bilingual Playgroup which was operated in Term 3 and Term 4 with a team of educators.

Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children

The data collected from additional information questionnaires provided to families at the time of enrolment helped to gather supporting information such as: the dominant language spoken at home; eating habits - vegetarian/halal; days in other care settings when not at kindy - grandparents/childcare to inform differentiated planning and practice. The word 'community' and the concept of a culture of community learning and participation was gradually embedded into the daily curriculum in order to support increased levels of collaboration and peer mentoring amongst the children.

Quality Area 6: Collaborative Partnerships with families & Communities

Ongoing involvement and participation by families in the curriculum was maintained through information sharing in the form of two information nights on the 'Play Curriculum' and 'School Readiness' respectively and through newsletters, information handouts and follow up resources relating to the curriculum such as gardening tips; healthy eating links; yoga cards and images for practice at home and, information about nude food ideas and practices. Continuity of learning between the kindergarten and school continued to be consolidated through meetings and information sharing between educators from both contexts ensuring effective dialogue towards shared priorities.