Annual Report 2015

“Nothing without joy”

L. Malaguzzi
In play children often engage in problem solving, test out ideas, ask questions and build new understandings.

Taking the time to do nothing brings everything into perspective.
“Creative people are curious, flexible, persistent and independent with a tremendous spirit of adventure and a love of play.” Henri Matisse.

Play is the beginning of knowledge.

“Friendship is the only cement that will ever hold the world together.” Woodrow Wilson
"I am more interested in arousing enthusiasm in kids than teaching facts. The facts may change but that enthusiasm for exploring the world will remain with them for the rest of their lives."

Seymour Simon.

1. CONTEXT

Preschool Name: Pooraka Community Kindergarten  
Preschool Number: 2656

Preschool Director: Anne Michael  
Partnership: Montague

Pooraka Community Kindergarten offers a preschool year to children aged between 3 and 5. This centre is part of the Department of Education and Child Development. The centre is located independently in a beautiful part of Pooraka, adjacent the Lindblom Reserve alongside Dry Creek. We have a large yard with several mature trees and lots of space. This placement of the centre and the large linear park that surrounds it, gives the Kindergarten a bush feel.

Pooraka Kindergarten is a small centre, 2015 Staffing comprised of a full time Director and Teacher. Both staff were new to the centre and the partnership this year. 47% of children attending the service in 2015 had a home language other than English. Our community is diverse: Vietnamese, Arabic, Lebanese, Afghan, Indian, Japanese, Tongan and Burmese families contributing to a rich cultural mix. Six children identify as Aboriginal, some of whom under DECD policy, started the preschool as young as 3 years. The index of disadvantage which guides staffing for this centre is 1.

Enrollments for 2015 started small with only 28 children but 10 “walk-ins” in the first two weeks set a trend that saw our numbers peak at 50 in term 2. It is pleasing to see this year even more children enrolled and with the higher numbers an increase in staffing. Links with the local schools and child care are made wherever possible to assist families who seek education and care services.

2. REPORT FROM GOVERNING COUNCIL
3. HIGHLIGHTS 2015

As both staff were new to the site, the community and the partnership, we took the opportunity to embark on an ambitious program of self-assessment and review that encompassed every aspect of the centre, its policies, processes, resources and facilities. This allowed us to familiarize ourselves and focus our priorities- based on creating a service that operated at the highest levels of professionalism and expertise to deliver a high quality educational program. This claim was tested in term 2 as we faced the National Quality Assessment and Rating process. Rating levels within the process range from: Significant Improvement Required/Working towards NQS/Meeting NQS/Exceeding NQS. It is with pride and in recognition of the hard work done by the staff as a team that Pooraka Community Kindergarten was rated “Exceeding National Quality Standards. At all Levels”.

Other Key achievements and highlights include:

- Staff, parent and children all contributed in the development of the Kindergarten Statement of Philosophy. Starting with a call for each family to identify a “rock solid Value” from which our philosophy rooted itself and grew.
- Wi Fi system installed at the Kindy.
- New outdoor shed planned and constructed as part of a storage restructuring.
- New library system created and all books catalogued
- A donation process was implemented. It resulted in 35 new books gifted to the kindergarten by families at the end of the year, in appreciation and memory of their time with us. This not only acknowledges the value of books and early literacy, it and builds stronger links with community past and present but our library grows as well!
- Active involvement in the Montague partnership including collaboration of all sites, shared staff meetings around numeracy indicators and outcomes.
- Staff commitment to DECD Results plus program which explores learning processes and challenges teachers to work to achieving a “plus” for every student in learning outcomes. Achieving Intellectual stretch has been chosen by the partnership as one of our focus goals for 2016.

- Big improvements to our outdoor play space – water course was built for the digging patch, Term 3 saw 35 cubic metre’s of soft fall (a small mountain) delivered and spread out by 5 volunteers to cover our entire outdoor space.
- We created a fantastic kitchen garden made scarecrows and planted and cooked vegetables and herbs as well as lots of flowers. We even made a fairy garden!

- As part of our philosophy statement of “growing powerful learners,” we encouraged the children to explore and take charge of our environment by creating their own spaces to play. Cubbies were very popular. The provocation was simply, “how do we construct something that will be big enough and strong enough for all of us?” Staff deliberately did not give advice/assistance wanting children to struggle to work out the answers themselves. Children endlessly designed; problem solved, tested, constructed, re built, negotiated and reviewed their work. Here are just some of the fantastic finished products.
In term 1 as part of learning about ourselves and our identity we visited the art gallery and spent the morning learning about how artists use different techniques in painting to tell stories about their subjects. We were able to construct a “Me” box and fill it with images, objects and even scents that expressed our own identity. Sharing not just the objects but the reasons we chose them was fascinating!

Every child had the opportunity after this excursion to take home a “me box” and choose three things to share with their friends. This oral language presentation was very popular and extended for nearly two terms allowing children to gain confidence to express themselves in front of large groups but also to experience and demonstrate respectful listening.

In term 1 we found the children’s physical skills and motor development were lagging behind the ACEP standards and so we wanted to specifically teach each motor skill and give children an opportunity and motive to practice these. So in term 2 we accepted the Premier’s “Be Active Challenge” and for 4 weeks challenged the children to do half an hour of exercise every day. Parents wrote the children’s activities on slips of paper and after they were shared with the group they were displayed on recording sheets. All the families enthusiastically got behind this activity. Everyone had at least one contribution most children had several a week and some children were so active they needed 3 sheets of paper to display them! We learnt how to run, hop, jump and roll. Every week we walked to the oval to use our skills and by the end of the program we were all proud to wear our medals.

Community liaison continued with the Salisbury Council. Every term the library would visit us to read books and an activity around a theme. The children enjoyed these activities and for some of them it was their first introduction to the institution of the library.

Concern about stray dogs led to a program about dog safety and the council dog inspector was happy to visit and teach us about how to behave around dogs. We invited families to send us a photo of family pets (Both real and Toy) made posters telling us how they took care of their pets.

We formed a close connection with the Rotary Club of Regency Park. These wonderful service men not only supplied a BBQ and cooked 200 plus sausages for our open day “come and try Kindy” they came back and helped us cook a BBQ for our End of year Concert/ Celebration Night. They were instrumental in organizing the donation and construction of 2 large raised garden beds and the soil to fill them.

In term 3 we celebrated the opening/christening of our new “Rotary Garden” by having an open day at Kindy one Saturday morning. We invited all kindy families and siblings plus all those enrolled to start the following year, to spend the morning playing at kindy. We finished
the event by unveiling the two scarecrows (named Bunnings and Jeffery after the companies who donated our gardens and soils) declared the gardens open and topped it all off with a free BBQ. We had over 100 attending!

- Sustainability program. We are aware we are lucky to be situated in such a perfect environment with the linear park and creek wrapping around our kindy. So we take the responsibility of teaching children to be sensitive to and respect their environment very seriously. Not only do we follow the seasons in the garden and vegetable patch, we teach the children about conserving water, recycling our waste and befriend the council workers who maintain our park. The children became very protective of our park and would regularly collect and comment on any litter. We monitored the wildlife especially the birds and one highlight was watching a dove build a nest and raise 2 babies in one of our trees.

- We spent a lot of time learning about the little creatures who share our garden and play space and in term 4 we observed silk worms and tadpoles’ lifecycles; much to the fascination of children, parents and even grandparents.

- The council supports the Kindergarten in leasing a small portion of our yard (along the park) to us for a minimal rent and Council workers maintained and pruned our trees this year. Considering the age and size of the trees it is comforting to know that they are under the care of an experienced arborist to ensure safety for us and optimal tree health.

- Term 3 saw us embark on an ambitious program of visiting and exploring Pooraka Primary School. Over 4 visits we spent time meeting staff, students, all the rooms and resources playground and oval as we learnt about school. Parents commented on the confidence this program gave the children as they started their transition process.

During 2015 the kindergarten supported school provided placement for an ATSI student from Deakin University to do a 25 day placement as part of her 2nd year teaching degree. Although it is a big commitment we believe that the best learning comes from being able to practice and refine your craft with others and not from lectures at university. To that end in term 2 we opened the kindy to Physiotherapy students, from Adelaide universities as well.

4. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice. Our aim for this area fitted under 4 headings Philosophy/Programming/Restructuring /Documenting -Tracking progress

Being new to the centre we wished to create a philosophy statement that reflected the values and priorities of the staff children and parents and the community. Our process was based on a commitment to engage families in all stages of this philosophy so the finished statement was something we all “owned.” Educators took as their model the Enngoori processes which originate from Mithaka country and decided on a visual representation to engage and include the many ESL families. Our vision is growing Powerful learners. Firmly rooted in the rock solid values parents have shared with us, our service philosophy grows like the trees that surround us. Its strong trunk is formed by the 4 core principles found in EYLF: 1/ trusting relationships 2/Communication, 3/ high expectations, and 4/ a positive learning environment. The canopy grows and spreads out to encompass the important values and aspirations staff and parents have for children. This is constantly growing as parents continue to add “leaves”. The learning journey from “seedling to full grown” philosophy took about 7 months and it was fantastic to see parent involvement at every stage. The information we gathered from our "Identity webs” and “Rock Solid Values” gave us rich information about children’s cultural and interests and formed the basis for much of our planning for the year. We plan to follow a similar process this year.

Programming. It is important to create a system of documentation that records learning journey against the Curriculum(EYLF ) that was fast, effective and shares the information quickly for staff and parents. With only 2 staff we wanted to learn about how different centres responded to this challenge. As Giosi, our teacher was in her first year of full time teaching we felt this was the ideal opportunity to look deeply into the processes and systems other sites used for programing and evolve something that work well for us. She embarked on a program of focused visited to all sites within our partnership as well as several others and reported back at staff meetings. We also worked building connections between Para Hills West Preschool with a shared staff meeting . Our EYC Laurian spent part of both closure days with us helping us refine our focus and then design a program system that worked. The result is something we are cautiously proud of. It can break down when we get too busy and documentation gets left behind but all staff are becoming more proficient and confident that this is something that will work for us.

Documenting -Tracking progress. Staff are deliberate and thoughtful in assessing and recording children’s learning continuously as part of an ongoing cycle of planning documenting and evaluating. At the beginning of the year we created systems for ILP’s, documenting children's skills and knowledge and offering parent meetings to allow us to co-construct a series of goals and priorities for individual children. We tracked
children’s skill levels in listening and following instruction, fine and gross motor and planning skills in week 3 of every term and this gave us lots of data to then form the nucleus of future programming. Parent feedback about this record taking was extremely positive and many commented how helpful it was to see the progress their children had been making.

Restructuring: With any move to a new home there is a large need for restructuring and familiarization. Our goal was to increase staff efficiency by developing systems and practices that freed staff from “housekeeping” tasks thus allowing them to increase time spent with children. Better storage systems mean staff become aware of the resources we own, it allows for targeted programing of activities, ease of access and so less preparation time. As a result of this we clearly identified the need for improved storage and working with the governing council and the FM designed and commissioned a new shed and compactus. This process was over by May however the shed was not built until week 8 term 4! The rest of the process will finish in 2016. We look forward to more efficient and effective preparation and more time spent with children as a result of this.

Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety
Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury. In 2015 all policies were re written and approved. WHS issues around storage (as discussed )led to planning for a new shed and compactus and reorganization of office space created a safer more efficient work area for staff and visitors.

Quality Area 3: Physical environment
Children are supported to become environmentally responsible and show respect for the environment. Sustainable practices are embedded in service operations. See highlights

Quality Area 4: Staffing arrangements
4.2.2 Educators work collaboratively and affirm, challenge, support and learn from each other to further develop their skills and to improve practice and relationships. Being new to site and processes of a two staff centre we needed to identify and refine processes, systems and routines that match our philosophy and teaching style and values. We actively and consciously made time for reflection and team building.

Networking within partnership sites occurred an individual/ staff team and leadership level. This was shared at staff meetings. Connections with Para Hills West have begun but as the demands of the year grew we became more insular. This will be a QIP focus for 2016. Both sites have a lot in common and thus offer opportunities for peer learning.

Beginning teacher funding allowed Giosi- a first year teacher opportunity to deepen her knowledge and experience moving from provisional to fully proficient teacher .TRB

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children
5.1.2 Every child is able to engage with educators in meaningful, open interactions that support the acquisition of skills for life and learning.

Better programming processes led to better creation and delivery of programs. Children voice is heard and parents share observation’s that support this. Comments demonstrate this happened…. “Thank you for the love and respect you have shown E this year….” “Thanks for the care and understanding you have shown X. I don’t think he would be ready for school without you both.” “You have helped me so much this year as I have learned to “let go” of L. I can see her as a school girl with confidence because of your care and understanding”

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
Parent’s voice is heard and they have many opportunities to contribute to planning and to offer feedback about program. Our new program system facilitates this. As does our philosophy. We have had wonderful support from the council the local rotary clubs, the church group that let us hire their bus. The connections we built with Pooraka School over a term of visits- learning about school environment and culture, were all valuable ways of becoming imbedded into the community. We look forward to building on this positive start.

Quality Area 7: Leadership and service management
There is a commitment to continuous improvement that is demonstrated in all aspects of the Kindergarten. The work and philosophy of the staff is geared to self-assessment and uses reflection and review to ensure we
are always focused on achieving the highest standards. We have processes in place across all levels of service delivery that are purposeful and systematically reviewed to ensure their relevance and efficiency. It is an important aspect of my role as a leader, to create and maintain a culture that enables this atmosphere and to assist staff are supported to perform at their best. This includes performance review processes for all staff, twice a year as well as providing opportunities for professional development and maintaining work life balance.

**<A report on how funding was used to support the familiarization of the Literacy and Numeracy>**

This year saw the staff start to familiarize themselves with the literacy and numeracy indicators. The Result Plus training lead to further learning with numeracy modules. We created a whole site numeracy and literacy plans. As part of this process Staff undertook a community survey of numeracy understanding as well as a site audit. Results of this showed the community had little concept on the complexity of numeracy (beyond counting) and the staff team lacked confidence in unpacking the language of the indicators. We lacked a clear and cohesive definition of numeracy and while we collected data systematically there were no specific numeracy goals for children, nor were we tracking their progress across the indicators. There is a long way to go but the first steps have been taken and we now have a site identified set of priorities and plan.

Leaders met once a term to discuss this but still couldn’t agree on a common approach within the partnership although we came close. I feel there was still ground to cover. “Maths is everywhere” books were purchased for each site and these form the basis for future focused study.

We attended 2 Shared staff meetings unpacking the numeracy indicators. Staff commitment to improving numeracy saw both staff attend Anne Baker training. We also spent a lot of time exploring and trialing different ways of recording numeracy learning. This is exciting and we plan to refine this in 2016.

**Making learning visible was a major challenge this year.** Not just to staff, but to families and students themselves. We designed posters that allowed us to identify the indicators and learning processes that occurred during different activities. This was a positive step addressing our confidence in unpacking and using the language of the indicators and deserves more attention this year.

Finally we chose developing powerful learners as a pedagogical change to generate shift in teacher thinking and learning. The big change our staff team initiated, was developing a risk management program where the children were supported to think critically and independently determine the level of risk each hazard in the play space offers them. This higher order thinking process is challenging our understanding of children’s abilities as over the period of a year we saw a lift in their problem solving and thinking skills as well as the skill with which they were able to communicate this. I am pleased at the ways we applied this in our outdoor area with our safety assessment and the building of cubbies. It is now up to us to find ways to extend this learning into the inside learning areas in 2016.

As the photos illustrate there is ample evidence of the numeracy and literacy learning operating in our daily program. The challenge for educators is to become more aware of opportunities to engage and extend children in numeracy learning and to develop their own skills in generating and sustaining intellectual stretch and a growth mind set.
INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Two children required significant learning support and both transitioned to school with NEP’s. One child has significant health and learning needs and was supported by Novita. He worked with their speech therapist and OT at Kindy every fortnight. This allowed us to work alongside these professionals and improve our skill and knowledge to the benefit of all.

The second child was diagnosed with severe language delay as well as a severe language disorder. By the end of the year we were able to see huge improvements in his communication skills, improving his engagement and self-confidence. Although there has only been a small shift in his language skillset, the changes to his behavior and attitude meant he was far better placed to progress within a normal classroom learning environment.

By term 2 we had identified that communication/language and speech development was a significant area of need for many of the children at Pooraka. We referred a further 7 children to the speech therapist and 1 received behavior support. We were also able to use the skills of Elsa Kyriacou (social worker) and Mark Ageus (ATSI support worker) to assist two of our families with home visits offering parenting and practical help with financial advice and support agencies and grants.

In addition to this, we identified 14 children as needing extra support to build and consolidate vocabulary and employed an ECW half an hour a week for a term to trial a vocabulary enrichment program. I am keen to continue this work but the weakness lies in creating a program that has enough rigor to direct the ECW to confidently work independently. Another challenge lies in finding a worker with the right set of skills to run it.

Bilingual Support Program

Traditionally our community has a highly diverse mix of cultures and languages and 2015 was no exception. 47% of our children use languages other than English at home and many have limited vocabulary and grammar. It is unfortunate that the funding for bi lingual support is so restricted. Even with this diverse (over 12 different languages and cultures ) community we received no financial support in term 1. (Although we had submitted our list of ESL children before the due date.) Only 1 session a week for term 2 and a total of 7 sessions a week for the 19 weeks that make up term 3 and 4. This is extremely frustrating. Nearly half our families at one stage were ESL and at least 1 child was category 1 (the highest priority ) having both limited English and developmental and communication needs. Another had only been in Australia a month, and several might have been born in Australia but had very little access to develop English and extremely low levels of comprehension and vocabulary. This was extremely difficult and hard decisions had to be made around where the support was directed.

It would have made a significant difference to these children if we could access Bi lingual workers who could support us to communicate not only with children but also their parents. It is a reflection of these political times that funding for programs such as this is severely reduced. In recognition of the level of need in term one and two the kindy paid for the services of an interpreter for enrolment of a Burmese family (new to Australia ) and we "topped up" the funding for a bi lingual worker however this produces questions of equity and could not continue for more than a term.
**ATSI Children**

2015 saw a high percentage of children identifying with an ATSI background. Three children were able to start kindergarten early (three year old program). Regular attendance was a major hurdle with 5 of the 6 families. One family had 4 country funerals that resulted in long absences from Adelaide. Some were highly transient moving from family home to rental to relatives and back again. Several also experienced family breakdowns and all had financial troubles. We decided to waive the fees of all these families (a big financial impost for the centre) as it was more important for the children to attend than pay fees. This helped a little and we stayed in touch with 5 of our families. Two return this year. The third - due to relationship breakdown is now living with auntie and attending another centre. This regular monitoring and communication, while time consuming, was considered an important component of building positive relationships. Keeping in touch by ringing to follow up non-attendance kept us “in the loop” and more importantly sent the message that Kindy attendance was valued. In my opinion it helped keep the families and children engaged in the Kindy community. The next step is to increase attendance.

5. **STUDENT DATA**

**6.1 Enrolments**

The data shows that the pattern of enrolments is consistent across the three year span. Although numbers were at an all-time low at the beginning of term 1 2015, this can be attributed to the changes in staffing. At the end of 2014 all staff left or retired (including the director who had been in the position for 11 years.) It is natural that the apprehension about this change would influence numbers. As you can see enrolments climbed dramatically and by the beginning of term 2 we had 50 families enrolled. The dip in term 3 is due to normal levels of transience three families moved homes away from the area and one child started school (in an independent school)

**6.2 Attendance**

Attendance has also stayed consistently the same across the years. It is a concern that the DECD average figure of 88.6% is far higher than our yearly average. The centre staff have worked hard to lift this figure. In 2015 we committed to spending time and staffing resources to personally following up any family who’s child missed more than a week. This meant we had to employ and ECW for a minimum of an hour a fortnight to contact and document the information. However it did give us a picture of illness and family problems across
the community and allowed us to support some families. (re directing AEO and social workers) We also discovered some families were not sending their children because they could not pay the fees. Discussion with the Governing council meant we waived these fees as it was more important the child came than we were paid.

We discovered that it was the same cohort of families that constantly did not attend (Often because of family issues) and this distorts the average. If you take these out of our figures we find attendences are consistently high- around 95%.

Another finding was the system of rosters meant children attended two consecutive days and if they became ill they tended to miss the entire week. After a poll of our 2016 parents we changed the roster to giving the children a day off between sessions. It will be interesting to see if this affects attendance figures.

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6.3 Destination – Feeder Schools

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As you can see, for a small site we send children to many different schools. This makes developing a transition program extremely difficult. Every year at least a third of our students head off to small non government schools in ones and twos. Communication with everyone involved is extremely difficult.

To ensure we support all transition, in 2015 we embarked on an ambitious program of learning about school culture and environment. We can’t have contact with all our feeder schools so we concentrated on developing a positive relationship between the kindy and our biggest feeder school Pooraka.
Primary. We visited weekly for a month popping into classrooms, meeting staff and looking at the facilities. All our learning was recorded in a floor book that was available for families to take home and share. We observed how empowering this program was, as children revisited Pooraka Primary and planned what they were to learn about the following week. Parents and school teachers alike commented on the confidence this familiarization program gave children and we will build on what we learnt to make this program even more effective next year.

We also felt that we needed to revisit the transition progress into the kindy. To this end we changed the roster of our Friday sessions in term to afternoons to allow for two groups of new students to experience two introduction Kindy sessions each (over 4 weeks). This allowed parents and children to meet and staff had an opportunity to start to build connections with our new students. To facilitate this process we revamped the preliminary enrollment process with a new format and provided follow up letters and emails to confirm details. We organized a parent information night in week 2 term 4. This was well attended and allowed us to answer parent queries and provide practical information and support about starting kindy. All new families were sent a welcoming email (or letter) the week before Kindy started- reminding them of days/ sessions /times and what to bring. Parent feedback shared with staff showed this was appreciated.

6. CLIENT OPINION

Each year we offer a parent satisfaction survey which invites anonymous responses to four main areas of our work. Teaching and learning, support of learning, relationships and communication and Leadership. The following graphs represent the less than 50 % of families who participated in the survey.

It is pleasing to see the high percentage of families strongly agreed that the quality of teaching and learning was high. The highest satisfaction response was to the statement, “My child’s teachers know what my child can do and what he/she needs to learn.” 86%. This is a reflection of our strong program of tracking children’s progress across the year and sharing it with families. Parents report they have faith in staffs commitment to helping children grow into powerful learners. (78% stating Teachers at this school really want to help my child.) 72% also report positively about the quality of the learning environment and the programming (make learning interesting and enjoyable.)

Parent comments were:
I am so pleased with Pooraka Kindy. It has been an amazing experience for my child.
I am very happy with the structure at Pooraka kindy. The staff are lovely and treat the children with respect. My child loves coming to Kindy.
They are not pushed to learn but do so through fun play.
Very Friendly, approachable and have a love for children
My child has learnt a lot since being at Kindy, counting, writing, shapes.

There 5 responses that are neutral, this means they neither agree or disagree. It is hard to know how to interpret this answer but it could be related to the low level of English of many of the respondents.
who were not sure of the language of the question. (As you can see from the one comment in this area. To be very true I don’t know much about learning activities in Pre School. I think it is happening but communication is very less.) This is something for us to focus on next year.

Support of learning relates to whether families feel their child is happy at kindergarten, the level and type of help given to children, presentation of materials, staff responses to children, understanding and expectations of behaviour, having a sense of pride in learning. Again the majority of respondents strongly agree many agree but there are 6 neutral responses. Parent comments....

“Thank you for your hard work and support for our daughter. It’s really proved she learn a lot and how good work you done to her.”

“Pooraka Kindy Rocks”

“A big thank you to all staff for the love and support you have shown E this year and the professionalism and diligence with which you have all performed your duties.”

“I have not seen much appreciation to child by teachers. Maybe it happens but not communicated to us.”

The last comment was followed up by staff. This is a case of shooting the messenger. We had concerns about this child’s language and development and worked hard to share with parents the strategies to support her. Unfortunately although we averaged 1 formal meeting a term and several “lie in wait ambush” chats, especially in the middle of the year, parents were not happy with staff and have interpreted this to mean we did not appreciate their child. Their dissatisfaction is responsible for many of the neutral (and 1 dissatisfied) responses we were given.
Talking to parents about their children remains a core business activity for staff at Pooraka Kindergarten. We invited parents to attend parent teacher style chats like the model of school parent teacher interviews in term 1 and term 4. This was done in many ways over several weeks - personally, at governing council meetings, in newsletters and with large posters on the gate. The number of parents that took this opportunity was less than half. As a response to this we started to capture parents at the end of sessions as a staff team we are confident that we shared information and asked for feedback with all families many times over the year. The issue seems to be that the very informality of this process means that parents don’t realise how often we do this or they forget, unless they have an issue with us. Relationships and communication are vital and parents also want this but we need to explore other ways to let parents know we want this too. Again our diversity and language barriers might be contributing:
Staff is really good and active. But more communication may help to improve.

The role of the director to lead the improvement planning and inform the parent community about issues of learning and service delivery is a major responsibility. Creating a culture of shared interest and spreading the word about important initiatives takes more time than is often available and relies on effective communication strategies. Being new to the site and the community meant I was learning everything first hand and as the year unfolded my skill and knowledge improved. I look forward to
2016 when a deeper understanding of what works and is effective will lead to better understanding and involvement of all families.

The one “disagree” was from the parent we discussed earlier and on reflecting on our management of this situation I would not change our approach and I do not believe anything we did would have softened their opinion that their daughter was flawless. We are not here to simply affirm how special children are but to support and direct their learning and development and sometimes we need to share information that parents might find uncomfortable.

Parent comments:

“I would suggest that it will be much better if my child has more hours at kindy”
“We love this preschool, the teachers are fantastic. My child loves coming and she has learnt a lot”
“Much better environment, manager and staff than previously experienced a few years ago with my first child”
“Thank you for making my daughter S very happy at Kindy”

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

In April, 2015 the site was audited to assess compliance with the DECD Relevant History Screening regulations. Report recommendations included suggestions to change recoding and documentation systems and these processes have all been updated and now comply. The report noted the pending clearance for governing council members and cleaner and pointed out they should not be working with children until the documentation arrived. This was already happening and the delay was due more to the back log of forms that DCSI were processing rather than issues at a centre level. All personal information and child records are already stored in lockable drawers within the office but as a result of this audit staff decided to add an extra level of security by having a lock put on the office door.

8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Grants: State</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Student attendance grant $19300</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Grants: Commonwealth</td>
<td>UA $.44500</td>
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<td>3 Parent Contributions</td>
<td>Fees paid $11800</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Other</td>
<td>Bank interest $900</td>
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> Rounded to nearest $100
The End of Year Profit and Loss Statement has been included as an appendix>