Solomontown Kindergarten
Annual Report
2013
At Solomontown Kindergarten we aim to provide a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment for preschool children. Our program is based on the individual needs and interests of the children and is play based. We plan, assess and report using The Early Years Learning Framework: Belonging, Being, Becoming.

Solomontown Kindergarten offers 5 full day preschool sessions per fortnight to eligible children. We also offer pre-entry and early entry sessions. We provide Preschool Support to children who require it.

Our Governing Council has been strong in 2013. We have had around 10 members who have been a great support to the staff and preschool this year. They are very committed to the improved learning outcomes for all children.

This year we continued to run our Inclusive Preschool Program, our “Bilby Room”. This program caters for up to 6 children with disabilities or high support needs and the program has an appointed Teacher and Early Childhood Worker.

In 2013 our staff were:-

**Director**– Nicky Cominos (0.6 Terms 1 & 2) Cammie Noonan (0.6 Terms 1 & 2)

**Teachers**- Angela Hamlyn (0.6 Terms 1 &2) regular teaching support from Kelly Cretan and Marg Wright

**Early Childhood Workers in mainstream ‘Echidna Room’**– Leonie Giancaspro (0.6)

**Teacher in IPP ‘Bilby room’** – Phaedra Hellier (0.6)

**Early Childhood workers in IPP ‘Bilby room’** – Kylie Heinrich (0.6)

**Preschool Support Workers**- Deanne Waldhuter, Andrea Whittaker, Alicia Denton, Megan Simounds and Kylie Kaushke

**Aboriginal Early Childhood Worker**- Tash Blad
Quality Improvement Plan

Quality Area 1: Educational program and practice:

Key achievements:

At Solomontown kindergarten we use the Early Years Framework to inform the development of a curriculum that enhances each child’s learning and development. Educators at Solomontown are focused, active and reflective in designing and delivering the program for each child.

Early Years Learning Framework

At Solomontown Kindergarten our program is supported by the Early Years Learning Framework: being becoming and belonging. Our program is based on learning through play with a stimulating learning environment and Intentional teaching opportunities.

Our play-based program at Solomontown allows children to make choices. Activities are open ended and allow for many entry levels. We value relationships and routines and see routines as learning opportunities. We aim for high levels of engagement and reflect on the success of this and review practice regularly.

Each child’s current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are consistently incorporated and actively drive all aspects of our program. In order to inform our programming we collect and use a variety of methods to collect data. These include:

- Language screening
- Basic Skills checklist (on entry and exit)
- TROLL data
- Profile books linking learning experiences and work samples and photos to the EYLF
- Anecdotal records that are collated
- Photos and videos
- RRR assessment scales (this year we focussed on the Active Learning Environment Scale)
- Individual Learning Plans for all ATSI, GOM and children on preschool support
- Support services reports (e.g. Speech, behaviour and OT)
- Verbal feedback is collected from children about their interests through group time discussions and brainstorms and also more informally during their play

At Solomontown kindergarten general information about the program for children is available to families. We inform families of our program through:

- Newsletter
- Centre Displays
- Profile books
- Summative report on exits
- Informative posters
- Text messages
Oral Language

Early literacy development is a crucial component or of daily work. Oral language is the foundation of learning to read and write and is therefore a priority of our learning at Solomontown Kindergarten.

- TROLL (Teacher Rating of Oral Language and Literacy) was not used successfully this year however will be recommended that it continues in the future to inform staff of oral language growth.
- Staff programmed group times which focus on developing children’s oral language.
- Support for children with oral language delays was given in a range of ways depending on their needs. Children had access to the following support services; speech pathology, preschool intervention funding to provide one on one support, DECS funded support and SERU provided resources to support oral language development.
- Staff were assessed and then reflected on their practice using the Respect, Reflect, Relate observation scales. The observation focused on the Active Learning environment and it was pleasing to see a notable improvement throughout the year moving from a score of 2.8 to 3.96.

Next Steps for Educational Programming and Planning in 2014:

- Continued focus on Oral language
- Our Centre TROLL target is that all children will increase an average of 2 levels from entry to exit.
- Include an oral language/literacy/numeracy goal into each Child’s individual learning plan
- Developing small group times in which oral language can be focused on in a way appropriate to individual children’s needs.
- Profile books need to be more readily available and referred to by staff for family viewing and engagement. I recommend changing to ‘scrap books’ instead of folders as the folders are quite ‘fragile’, limit what can be put into them and Children’s access to them.
- Staff, Caregiver and Child ‘chats’ to discuss individual goals and programming for each child. Staff to have focus children to build relationships with the children and families, providing a stronger connection between Kindy and home.
- More information about the Centre program to be displayed and communicated in profile books.

Quality Area 2: Children’s health and safety

Key achievements:

Each child’s health has been promoted through:

- Environmental Health termly hand washing program
- Daily relaxation session
- The Dusty and Rusty show emphasizing Lead awareness and safety
- Sun smart policies are in place and we adhere to “no hat no outside play”
- The program has many sensory activities programmed to assist in children’s ability to self-regulate
- We were able to get the environmental health center to return to the Kindy clean the carpets during the summer holidays, reducing lead exposure for the children.
Healthy eating and physical activity has been embedded through the program by:

- Including Healthy Cooking each week
- Environmental Health run an “Eat a Rainbow” healthy eating session each term
- Nyrstar provide the Centre with milk, cheese and fruit for morning snack time
- Our outdoor learning environment provides for physical challenges, engagement and physical activity is also incorporated every day through group time dances, games and combat time.

Each child is protected as staff:

- Regularly practice and review emergency procedures
- Completed updated 2013 Responding to Abuse and Neglect training
- Educators are vigilant with their supervision at all times
- Regular hazard reviews and safety inspections are undertaken and reviewed
- Daily grounds inspections are done each morning to ensure the safety of the outdoor areas.
- Staff are well informed of supervision ratios and work together to ensure these are maintained.
- An improved medical form was implemented for clearer record keeping.

Next Steps for Children’s Health and Safety in 2014:

- Lunch supervision roster to be reviewed
- Staff to engage in updated first aid training
- Investigate ways to support families in making healthy food choices for their families.

Quality Area 3: Related sections of the National Law and National Regulations

Key achievements:

The design and location of our premises is appropriate for the operation of the Centre as:

- We have continued to review policies and practices to ensure we are meeting National Quality Standards
- Nyrstar undertake weekly cleaning of the outdoor environment to reduce lead exposure

The Solomontown environment is inclusive, promotes competence, independent exploration and learning through play by:

- Creating both quiet and active learning spaces are provided with the new, challenging climbing equipment and trampoline or quiet sensory area of the bilby room.

Solomontown Kindergarten takes an active role in caring for our environment and contributes to a sustainable future through:

- Promoting looking after our garden and helping to water plants daily
- Children have been composting and developed a worm farm.
- Children are encouraged to recycle daily.
Next Steps for National Law and National Regulations in 2014:
- With the support of the Environmental Health Centre we are looking into which foods are ‘safe’ to be planted in our kindy vegetable garden.
- Extend our Aboriginal cultural awareness and our natural environments

Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

Key achievements:
At all times the Centre has maintained educator-to-child ratios and qualifications requirements are maintained at all times. All staff participated in training and development to further build the capacity of the centers educators. After experiencing an unusually high number of critical incidences staff worked on reflective practices to better improve Childrens engagement, supervision and safety. Lunch times are appropriately supervised and all staff are ‘on the floor’ unless it is a scheduled break or administration release time. After implementing these and engagement strategies there was a dramatic reduction in the number of critical incidences at our Kindergarten.

Next Steps for staffing arrangements in 2014:
- Regular Performance Reviews to be conducted in 2014
- Teaching staff will participate in PLC (Professional Learning Communities) including a training day in Term 1.
- Staff are due to update their first Aid training in 2014.

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children

Key achievements:
Respectful and equitable relationships are developed and maintained with each child and each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships with other children and adults through the following:

From 2012 data we aimed to increase social skills and involvement of children with the center’s curriculum during 2013. We collected data in the form of Active Learning Environment Scales (Respect, Reflect, Relate). We aim for our relationships with children to be responsive, respectful and promote children’s sense of security and belonging enabling them to explore the environment and engage in play and learning.

From analysis from the Australian Early Development Index (AEDI) data Emotional maturity was the poorest domain for Port Pirie early childhood development, which is another reason relationships development, resilience and social skills building is a priority for Solomontown Kindergarten.

Respect Reflect and Relate -Involvement Scale: Data was collected by an independent educator paid for 2 TRT days, the data was analyzed by staff and changes were made to practice to improve child involvement and engagement.
### Active Learning Environment Scale Data Summary Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Signals</th>
<th>Data Collection 1</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>low</td>
<td>medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>Sensory and physical play</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exploratory Play</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social play</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pretend/symbolic play</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Learning Dispositions</td>
<td>Curiosity</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communicability</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purposefulness/persistence</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Openness/risk taking</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activity</td>
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<td>Cooperation/collaboration</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflection</td>
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<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mean Setting Score**: 2.8 | 3.96

### Data Analysis:

The initial data showed that we needed to provide more opportunities for **sensory play, cooperation/collaboration, reflection and pretend and symbolic play**. After reflective discussions we put in place the following:

- More sensory activities throughout the environment
- Increased the change in activities
- More higher order activities available to extend play
- A variety of new, interesting materials to prompt creativity and investigation
- Staff had regular discussions of the role of the educator and the importance of engagement and participating, “being present”, in children’s play to scaffold and extend the quality and complexity
We were very happy and proud of the improvement of the data throughout the year. The children’s increased levels of engagement in learning activities, was also echoed in the reduced number of critical incidences recorded. While the data did indicate a dramatic improvement, staff are committed to continual improvement and will continue to work towards improving reflection, pretend/symbolic play and social play in 2014.

**Next Steps for relationships with children in 2014:**
- Active Learning Environment Scale in 2015 to continue to inform for future directions
- Continued work on behavior interventions and collaborative work with support personnel
- Children to engage in ongoing collaborative projects that involve research, problem solving and shared decision making
- Investigate the possibility of developing a Kindy Facebook page to support the engagement of families.

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**Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities**

**Key achievements:**

Respectful supportive relationships were developed and maintained at Solomontown Kindergarten in 2012 through:

- Continued use of a mobile phone and have used this to keep families up to date with current happenings and reminders. We have also used sms pictures of the children happily engaged in activities
- We are aware that many of our families experience literacy challenges so we have attempted to have many visual displays around the Centre and display many photos and send these home regularly
- We have attempted to make Solomontown more welcoming to our Aboriginal families; embracing and promoting Aboriginal culture.

“At Solomontown Kindergarten we would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land and pay our respects to the Elders both past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Indigenous Australians”

- We have also developed a mentoring link with ATSI students from Solomontown Primary School
- We continue to employed Tash Blad out of Centre money as our Aboriginal ECW to assist us to better support our Aboriginal families and work towards increasing attendance

Families are supported in their parenting role and their values and beliefs about child rearing are respected demonstrated through:

- We have Centre displays about community services and resources to support parenting and family well-being
- Staff are approachable and have redirected many families to other support agencies
- Toileting plans have been developed when needed in collaboration with families so we can support their work at home
- ILP’s involve parental feedback and input
- Families are encouraged to come in an participate in our program
Solomontown Kindergarten collaborates with other organizations and service providers to enhance children’s learning and wellbeing as seen by:

- Our Inclusive Preschool Program has seen us form many and varied additional partnerships to previous years. Solomontown kindergarten’s current partnerships with outside organizations and service providers include the following network:
  - DECD support personnel; speech pathologist, psychologist, hearing coordinator, disability coordinator and interagency behaviors coordinator
  - The Briars and other IPP centers supporting our IPP program (we hosted visits by staff from Bains Road and Elsie Eye)
  - SERU came and did training on Autism and visual supports
  - Community Health – speech pathologist, physios, Occupational therapists
  - Environmental Health – hand washing and healthy eating
  - Nyrstar – fruit and nutrition program, tree planting and regular site cleaning and the Dusty and Rusty Show
  - CAYH visits
  - Visiting Dental Program
  - Feeder schools
  - Uniting Care Wesley
  - Learning Together at Home staff visit and promote services
  - Pediatricians
  - TAFE SA – we have hosted many students on placement in 2012
  - Orana have our contract for monthly gardening maintenance
  - Our transition program has been reviewed through the Port Pirie Partnership and connections with Solomontown Primary continue to strengthen.

Next Steps for Partnerships with families and communities in 2014:
- Increased attendance is going to continue to be a target in 2014, investigating transport options for ATSI children and those in our IPP will continue.
- Survey families on what they feel would support attendance and making them and their children welcome in the center

Quality Area 7: Leadership and Management

Key achievements:

Effective leadership promotes a positive organizational culture and builds a professional learning community at Solomontown kindergarten through:
- With the change in director mid 2013 Nikki and Cammie worked together to ensure a smooth transition. As a new director to the center I made it my priority to get to know children, staff and families, to ensure they are feeling welcome, safe and happy in our center.

There is a commitment to continuous improvement:
- While recognizing our current strengths, skills and abilities, our staff continue to work with an improvement focus. We utilized the skills of Jane More, Tania Cagney and Tanya Davidson for guidance, to ensure we were always striving for best practice.

Administrative systems enable effective management of a quality service:
- In 2013 we implemented the same first day policy and worked with the Port Pirie Partnership to develop a community wide transition program.
- Staff participated in performance development opportunities.

Report from Governing Council

A sincere thank you to all Governing Council members, parents and friends who supported our kindergarten in 2013 - these included:

Chairperson – Tash Blad
Treasurer – Rachael Lunsmann
Secretary – Mary Bateman
Director – Cammie Noonan
Staff Rep – Leonie Giancaspro

Committee Members- Stuart and Maria McDougall, Felicity Woods, Chantelle Phillips and Sam Hunter

This year we have achieved a great deal around the Kindy and have had many great learning experiences for the children in both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. The staff have been committed to increasing engagement of both the children and families and developing strong partnerships with families and the wider community

Highlights:
- Dino Dig – seen on TV and in the newspaper. Was a great experience for the children and positive publicity for the Kindy.
- Pajama Day
- St. Marks trip to their agriculture center.
- Pre-entry morning tea
- Welcoming two new members to the governing council during Term 4; Chantelle and Sam.
- Purchasing new, challenging climbing equipment.

Recommendations for 2014:
- Recommend another meet and greet morning tea.
- More regular excursions and outings.
**Student Data**

**Enrolments**

**Figure 1: Enrolments by Term**

Total Enrolments 2011 - 2013

![Enrolments Graph]

**Table 1: Enrolments by Term**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
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</table>

Based on person counts in the two week reference period each term. Excludes pre-entry.

Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

**Attendance**

**Figure 2: Attendance by Term**

Attendance Percentages 2011 - 2013

![Attendance Graph]

**Table 2: Attendance Percentages 2011 - 2013**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
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Page 10
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011 Centre</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>83.7</td>
<td>78.4</td>
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<td>69.8</td>
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<td>80.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013 Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011 State</td>
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<tr>
<td>2012 State</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>84.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013 State</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>88.0</td>
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</table>

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 1: Figures have been revised for previous years, using integer deemed attendance not decimal.

Note 2: Data for Term 3 and Term 4 2013 will not be reported. It is not comparable with previous years due to the transition to the Same First Day enrolment policy for preschools in 2013 creating a break in series.

Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems
### Table 3: Feeder School Percentage Data 2011 - 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeder Schools</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0357 - Port Germein Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0363 - Port Pirie West Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
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<td>0406 - Solomontown Primary School</td>
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<td>84.2</td>
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<td>Govt.</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
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<td>0980 - Airdale Primary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>8360 - St Mark’s College</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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<td>100.1</td>
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</table>

Based on the percent of children currently enrolled who will attend school in the following year, where the expected school is known. Due to rounding totals may not add up to 100%.

Source: Term 3 Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

### Client Opinion

Throughout the year staff have remained open to feedback from families. The major ways feedback has been provided is through the Governing Council meetings and parent/staff discussions.

Parent Opinion Survey was given to all families. 6 surveys were returned.

In all categories the most significant number of responses was in the ‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’ bracket. It is unfortunate that we did not get a larger number of surveys returned so our data is dubious. We feel that the survey is overwhelming for many of our families who have lower levels of literacy, it would be more positively received if there were only one or two questions in each area, worded in a simpler format, fitting on one sheet.

Feedback comments included:

- We have found all the staff to be supportive and positive when communicating about our child
- Staff regularly inform us of our child’s achievements and their goals for programing to best support his learning.
- All staff communicate clearly. The Kindy as a whole provides many opportunities and options to communicate about all areas concerning our child and the Kindies activities.
- The Kindy has been very proactive in seeking ways to make staff more accessible to families and to be flexible to meet the needs and concerns raised by families.
- You are all doing a wonderful job
Next Steps for growth in parent opinion survey in 2014:

- The staff of Solomontown Kindergarten remain open to parent comment and feedback throughout the year.
- Staff to find innovative ways to seek feedback from children and families.

Acknowledgments and Thanks

2013 has been a huge year with many fantastic achievements. I would like to acknowledge all of the hard work invested by staff, volunteers, Governing Council, families, and district office personnel.

Cammie Noonan

Preschool Director

Financial Statement