Solomontown Kindergarten’s Quality Improvement Plan 2015
## Service details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service name</th>
<th>Site context</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solomontown Kindergarten</td>
<td>Solomontown is a suburb on the outskirts of the town of Port Pirie, which is located about 220km north of Adelaide on the Spencer Gulf. The population of Port Pirie is around 15,000 and includes substantial Aboriginal, Italian, Greek and Filipino communities. Solomontown Kindergarten is a part-time Kindy, operating from Monday to Thursday, with a capacity of 38 children. We have a high indigenous enrolment of around 40% and a high percentage of our families are from a low SES background. Port Pirie has high lead levels in the environment as a result of the lead smelter operating here for the past 150 years. This can cause brain damage to children under five if appropriate measures are not taken to minimise exposure. All staff are aware of this and there are procedures and practices in place. There are seven educators at Solomontown Kindergarten comprising of four early childhood workers, two teachers and the director.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary contact at service</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lara Goodier – Preschool Director</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical location of service</th>
<th>Physical location contact details</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street: 1 Prince Street</td>
<td>Telephone: 8632 3800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburb: Port Pirie</td>
<td>Mobile: 0447 271 956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State/territory: SA</td>
<td>Fax: 8633 2576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postcode: 5540</td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:dl.6666.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au">dl.6666.leaders@schools.sa.edu.au</a></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approved Provider</th>
<th>Nominated Supervisors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary contact: Lara Goodier</td>
<td>Name: Lara Goodier, Rebecca Overstreet, Alison Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone: 8632 3800</td>
<td>Telephone: 8632 3800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile: 0447 271 956</td>
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## 2015 Operating Hours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opening time</strong></td>
<td>8:45am (even weeks only)</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td>8:45am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Closing time</strong></td>
<td>14.45pm</td>
<td>14.45pm</td>
<td>14.45pm</td>
<td>14.45pm</td>
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### Additional information about our service

- **School holiday dates**
  
  2015 School Term Dates:
  - **Term 1**: 27th Jan – 10th April
  - **Term 2**: 27th April – 3rd of July
  - **Term 3**: 20th of July – 25th Sept
  - **Term 4**: 12th of October – 11th of December

- **Administration Days**

  Mondays and every second Wednesday (odd weeks) staff are on site and available to answer queries.

### How are the children grouped at your service?

- **Echidna Room** – Solomontown Kindergarten’s mainstream program catering for children in their eligible year or pre-school.
- **Bilby Room** – Solomontown Kindergarten’s Inclusive Preschool Program operates with up to a maximum of 6 high needs children.

### The person responsible for submitting this Quality Improvement Plan:

Preschool Director and Nominated Supervisor – Lara Goodier
Solomontown Kindergarten’s Service Statement of Philosophy

Our philosophy has been inspired and guided by *The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia - Belonging, Being and Becoming.*

- **Belonging** acknowledges children’s interdependence with others (family, a cultural group, a neighbourhood and a wider community) and the basis of relationships in defining identities.
- **Being** recognises the importance of the here and now in children’s lives.
- **Becoming** reflects the process of rapid and significant change that occurs in the early years.

**Solomontown Kindergarten promotes social justice, equity and the rights of children, families and staff in the wider community**

IN RESPECT TO CHILDREN we believe:

- Children are valuable, unique and powerful human beings.
- All children have a right to quality and affordable early childhood education to maximize their potential and develop a foundation for future success.
- All children have a right to secure respectful and reciprocal relationships with educators.
- Young children learn best through play based experiences in which they are actively engaged with people, objects and representations.
- Children are competent and resourceful learners who are active contributors to their own learning.
IN RESPECT TO FAMILIES we believe:

- Families are children’s first and most influential educators.
- Learning outcomes are more likely to be achieved when early childhood educators work in partnership with families.
- Families come from a diverse range of cultures with differing practices, values and beliefs and these are respected and honoured by the preschool, staff and program.
- The staff can support families with their childrearing role.

IN RESPECT TO STAFF we believe:

- Educators have a valuable role as co-educators with children, families and communities.
- Educators will continually seek ways to build their professional knowledge.
- Educators value reflective practice, engaging in questions of philosophy, ethics and practice with peers, families and the community.

IN RESPECT TO THE PROGRAM we believe:

- The program considers the whole child and the interrelated nature of development and learning. It supports children’s social, emotional, personal, spiritual, creative, cognitive, linguistic and physical development.
- The program is developed in response to observations and documentations of children’s strengths, abilities and interests.
- Children need a flexible play based curriculum that provides for different learning styles.
- The program caters for important transitions, including from home to preschool and from preschool to school.
IN RESPECT TO THE ENVIRONMENT we believe:

- The environment should welcome children, families and staff and celebrate the diversity of cultures in our community.
- The environment should reflect beauty and aesthetic appeal.
- Preschool should provide a balance between a secure homelike space and a stimulating environment that encourages children to explore, solve problems and create and construct.
- The outdoor play space provides opportunities for an appreciation and respect for the natural environment and to promote children’s understanding about their responsibility to care for the environment.

IN RESPECT TO THE COMMUNITY we believe:

- We must strive to be a centre of excellence for early childhood education within our community.
- We provide a central link to information and support services within the wider community.
- We are part of the wider community and encourage relationships with community organisations, local council and schools.
- Children, families and staff are encouraged to value and respect the diversity in the wider community.
**Strengths**

### QA1. Educational Program and Practice

- Play based curriculum designed to allow children to make choices. Children are empowered to make choices and solve problems to meet their needs.
- Activities are open-ended and allow for many entry levels.
- Program is predictable; every day follows same sequence but is flexible to allow for teachable moments and supporting individuals' engagement and learning.
- Each child's current knowledge, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation for our program. We include a child inspired learning section as a vital part of our program.
- Targeted small groups for intentional teaching.
- We understand that routines are learning opportunities e.g. independent toileting, correct hand washing and healthy eating habits.
- Children are encouraged to help keep play-spaces tidy and contribute to packing up at the end of session.
- Information is gathered on children i.e. parent interview, pre-entry screening, speech and language screening.
- Social skill learning is highly valued and planned for at our site through ‘PALS’ and Protective Behaviour Curriculum. Educators have a strong focus on children’s sense of belonging and ability to work with their peers.
- Children’s photos and artworks are displayed in our centre; we value the process and accept the product.
- Staff use positive language to encourage children to engage in activities and respectful relationships and support children’s efforts, assisting and encouraging as appropriate.
- Children with additional learning needs have specialised resources and extra staff support.
- We liaise with Speech Pathologists, Regional Support Services, CAHMS, CAYHS and any other agencies as required.
- Staff are consistently aware of and responsive to children who may require additional support, assistance or attention.
- Aboriginal children are supported by offering early entry, our Aboriginal Education Worker and the inclusion of Aboriginal culture in our learning program.
- All Children have Individual Learning Plans.
- Staff program using the Early Years Learning Framework in a continuous cycle of daily reflection, evaluation and further planning.
- Our program and curriculum are focussed on children being active learners, engaged in exploration, inquiry and dramatic play that is self-directed.
- Educators support children’s learning by scaffolding experiences to extend their skills and interests from the known to the unknown in small steps that promote their independence and self-confidence.
QA2. Children’s Health and Safety

- Environmental Health hand washing programs are actively promoted and hand washing prior to eating is enforced, which is especially important due to lead levels in Port Pirie.
- Staff adhere to hygiene practices when toileting children.
- As a part of the Port Pirie “TLAP” (Targeted Lead Abatement Programme), children are provided with a selection of fruit, cheese and milk for morning tea.
- Stickers are provided for children’s lunchboxes to encourage and educate parents about healthy lunches.
- Daily playground checks are undertaken and new learning environments are risk assessed by staff.
- Physical activity and relaxation are programmed for on a daily basis.
- OHS is included in weekly staff meetings.

QA3. Physical Environment

- Facilities are designed to provide many different learning spaces; both active and quiet spaces, and indoor and outdoor spaces.
- Staff programming plans for the participation of each child.
- Children participate in recycling and composting practices.
- The physical learning environment is inclusive.
- Children involved in the Inclusive Preschool Program have their own room and the flexibility to move into the main area of the Kindergarten when desired.

QA4. Staffing Arrangements

- Communication between DECD, the director, educators and staff is respectful, professional and guided by the service’s code of conduct/ code of ethics.
- Educators respect and value the diverse contributions of their colleagues and this is evident in their interactions with each other.
- All new staff members and visiting agencies are made to feel welcome and given clear induction information clarifying their role and expectations within the sight.
- Extra staffing has been budgeted for from site funds to allow for better supervision and quality engagement in the outdoor learning environment.
- All staff have relevant qualifications as a minimum.
QA5. Relationships with Children

- All staff are great at acknowledging positive choices that children make in managing their own behaviour.
- Spaces, resources and routines are arranged to minimise times when children are likely to experience stress or frustration (e.g. group time we have sensory fidget toys, wobble cushions and weighted resources).
- Educators at Solomontown are good at pre-empting potential conflicts or challenging behaviours by monitoring children’s play and supporting interactions where there is conflict.
- All staff are patient, gentle, calm and reassuring when children strongly express distress, frustration or anger and we guide children’s behaviour in ways that are focussed on supporting children to develop skills to self-regulate behaviour while preserving and promoting children’s self-esteem.

QA6. Collaborative Partnerships with families and communities

- Staff actively develop their professional knowledge and skills. When working in partnership with children, families, communities, and other services and agencies, staff continuously strive to find equitable and effective ways to ensure that all children have opportunities to experience a sense of personal worth and achieve learning outcomes.
- Staff have clear processes for referring children to DECD support services and also outside agencies.
- Solomontown Kindy has an effective working relationship with the Environmental Health Service.
- Staff are involved in CDU meetings.
- At Solomontown Kindy we as educators recognise and respond to barriers to children achieving educational success. In response we challenge practices that contribute to inequities and make curriculum decisions that promote inclusion and participation by all children.
- We have an Inclusive Preschool Program on-site where children with additional needs demonstrate a sense of belonging and comfort in the service environment, trust and confidence in staff members and participate and engage in group experiences.
- Educators at Solomontown work with families, other professionals, therapists and specialists to ensure the environment and routines are adapted appropriately to facilitate the inclusion of children with additional needs.

QA7. Leadership and Management

- The current Director is in place for the next five years so longer term strategic planning can commence.
Areas for Improvement

QA1. Educational Program and Practice

- Our Daily Routine is displayed but parents are not aware of it. This was identified during Governing Council AGM this year.
- The need to include parents more in the planning cycle – we have a space for them in our daily reflection journal but parents are not contributing.

Strategies:

- All children have jointly constructed individual learning plans to support their learning.
- Planning and reviewing of the learning program occurs fortnightly and daily reflections relating to interactions with children are completed by all staff to further guide planning cycle.
- Child inspired/directed activities are valued as an important part of the program. We will continue to refine and improve processes for ensuring information about every child forms the basis for our program.
- Children's learning journeys are documented through learning stories, photo displays and work samples.
- Parents are encouraged to contribute to programming through Facebook, the Kindergarten's daily reflection book, informal discussions with staff and at parent/teacher meetings. Staff to reflect on other ways to inform families of the program.
- More information about the Centre program displayed and uploaded on our website.

Measures of success:

- RRR Data.
- Program reflections.
- Records of learning in profile books and displays around the Kindy.
- Self-review of NQS achievements and progress throughout the year.
- Parent survey.

Progress notes:
QA3. Physical Environment

- Some wooden equipment is due to be replaced.
- Shade over sandpit needs replacing.
- More physically engaging outdoor environment required for some children.
- Sustainability focus could be improved and strengthened.

Strategies:

- The sand in the sandpit will be replaced and a cover for will be installed to reduce lead contamination by term 2.
- New sun safe shade for sandpit installed by term 2.
- Continued focus on sustainability and raising children’s awareness with composting, worm farm and proposed visit to recycling depot to gain a deeper understanding of these processes for both children and staff.
- Focus on creating safe natural play spaces for the children by seeking input from families; staff undertaking research; further training for staff and implementing agreed improvements by term 1 2016.
- Review routines to determine whether children's needs are being met in regards to rest, play, stimulation, quiet times, eating times and physical activity.

Measures of success:

- RRR engagement on Active Learning Environment scale.
- Accepted as a Sunsafe Site.
- Program reflections.
- Self-review of NQS achievements and progress throughout the year.
- Parent survey.

Progress notes:
QA6. Collaborative Partnerships with families and communities

- Attendance rates are not in line with Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) priorities.
- Informal feedback from parents regarding last year’s transition program was disappointing.
- We have a perceived low profile in the Community (informal feedback from staff and families).

Strategies:

- Staff to commit to continuous improvement and striving for best practice.
- Develop respectful supportive relationships with families and support agencies.
- Continue to implement strategies to support increased attendance with a goal of achieving the DECD target attendance rate of 93%, such as ECW contacting families when their child has not attended for two days; referring families to support agencies when required; home visits.
- Establish a Solomontown Kindergarten Facebook Page to connect with families as most families are already interacting on this platform.
- Strengthen our transition to school program by collaborating with schools and families to determine desired results then providing information to Pirie Partnership.
- Alert media to our community based activities.
- Utilise community noticeboards.

Measures of success:

- Attendance data.
- Self-review of NQS achievements and progress throughout the year.
- Parent survey.
- Featuring in local media (tv, newspaper, radio, community notice boards).

Progress notes:
QA7. Leadership and Management

- Solomontown Kindergarten has had a period of high Director turnover resulting in required updating and streamlining of some administrative processes.
- Archiving process and storage could be improved.
- Filing process and storage could be improved.
- Philosophy Statement needs to be updated to reflect current staff.

Strategies:
- Review current archiving process and revise to ensure it is in line with DECD policies.
- The Centre’s Philosophy Statement updated through a consultation process with the Director, staff and community.
- Director to complete leadership training.
- Continue with NQS Self-review process.
- Staff to commit to undertaking appropriate training in administrative processes.
- Arrange purchase of storage units for archive material and move to Airdale Primary School Archive Storage Site.
- Allocate administrative time on Admin Days to update office filing system.

Measures of success:
- Business Manager completely up-to-date by end of term 1, 2015.
- Archives stored securely off-site by 2016.
- Office files updated and securely stored by end of term 1, 2015.
- Self-review of NQS achievements and progress throughout the year.

Progress notes: