Highbury Preschool
Annual Report
2015
1. CONTEXT

Preschool Name: Highbury Preschool  Preschool Number: 4622
Preschool Director: Marnie Hillier  Partnership: Modbury

Highbury Preschool is situated at the bottom of the Adelaide foothills. It is a picturesque setting, offering lots of opportunities to access nature, with koalas, kookaburras and a range of other birds frequenting the play area.

The site is co located with Highbury Primary School, with the Preschool being a stand alone centre. This year our data reflected our families were to be accessing eight schools, with two of these being DECD sites. Our community has become increasingly more transient in recent years, impacting upon our enrolments. Decisions made by families about which schools children will attend, has also played a vital role in the choices they have made about the preschools they wish to attend.

Our staff team had been relatively stable once again during the year. We had a large team consisting of a fulltime Director, three part time Teachers, and five ECWs, working within the different programs offered at the Preschool. During the year we had a staff member leave the team to pursue other career opportunities and we covered this position with existing staff to ensure continuity for the families and staff team involved.

Funded Occasional Care sessions have been offered at Highbury again during 2015, for children aged two years and above, with four sessions a week available. Each of these sessions allowed for up to three two year olds and five three year olds to attend, with two emergency positions also available. This has continued to be a very popular program, with our two year olds being able to access the program appropriately once a month and three year olds once a fortnight.

We have offered ten sessions of Kindy per week, allowing families to nominate the sessions they have required/preferred. Lunch Care has been charged for families attending for a six and a half hour day, with funds used to pay staff to supervise children during this time.

The enrolment numbers in the Preschool program were lower this year, so we were able to offer orientation visits for children beginning Preschool in 2016. All families were offered this opportunity, with approximately 98% accepting the invitation.

Highbury Preschool is a member of the Modbury Partnership, connecting sites within our local geographic area, including Preschools, Primary schools Modbury Special School and Modbury High. The leaders of the group meet regularly and we have been developing processes for teams to be able to work together on areas of improvement identified within the Partnership Strategic Plan and our site Quality Improvement Plan.

2. REPORT FROM GOVERNING COUNCIL

This year we experienced some challenges in being able to have a quorum at several meetings. We tried to be as flexible as possible in meeting the needs of the parent community in asking their preference for meeting days and times, working within the possibilities of what staff could offer and provide. Mid way through the year we decided to change the meetings to directly after school, with families being able to bring their children. This worked for the first meeting, then the second meeting of Term 3 had to be cancelled due to a large amount of apologies. This has impacted our ability to make decisions and to share information within this group in an effective way.

As a result of the changes in the meetings, our Governing Council Chairperson was no longer able to attend, but she felt that as the majority of families were in agreement with shifting the time, it was in
the best interests of the Governing Council to do this. This has meant that the Chairperson was unable to compile this report.

An email group was established with the Governing Council to enable us to correspond with each other, providing a method of being able to share important information when meetings had not been held. This is definitely an area we will be exploring further in 2016, to assess different ways of hosting meetings that meet people’s personal needs as much as we are able, whilst still adhering to DECD policies and procedures.

This year we have had a representative on the Highbury Primary School Governing Council. This has enabled us to share information across the campus, relevant for families planning to attend the school.

Our Twilight Barbeque was our major fundraiser for 2015. The Kindy children performed in a concert for the families, that has always been a highlight for everyone involved. We estimated that approximately 350 people were in attendance on this night. The Governing Council supported us in the set up and clean up and in assisting in managing stalls during the evening.

We sold tea towels with children’s artwork and DVDs of the Kindy concert as fundraisers.

3. HIGHLIGHTS 2015

There have been many highlights through-out 2015, many of which are detailed in other sections of this report. The main areas for us have been as follows:

- Renovations to the site under the National Quality Standards agenda.
- Strong development in the relationships between leadership and staff across the Preschool and School, focusing upon continuity of learning for children.
- On-going popularity of the Occasional Care program.
- Family Interviews involving two members of the teaching team of the centre, to further develop relationships with families and to share in information provision.
- Book Week dress up day.
- Inagural excursion to the Botanic Gardens Little Sprouts Kitchen Garden.
- Attendance by staff at training specific to nature play, supporting our focus upon further developing our play space.
- Our first time as participants in Highbury Primary School’s Sports Day.
- Accessing the library at the school.
- Focus upon nature...koalas in our environment, cockatoos, kookaburras, parrots etc,
- Living Eggs, Hatching Program
- Monarch butterflies
- Stick Insects
- Jack and Molly performances
- Life Education
- Access to Reading Eggs program for families

4. QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

At the end of 2015 the staff team reviewed our QIP to determine possible directions and improvements for 2016. Outlined below are some of the reflections we have made upon our progress in 2015 towards our improvement priorities, listed as of a high priority.

Quality Area 1
Standard 1.1.3 To develop centre routines promoting positive outcomes for children.

Our focus for this was upon relationships for the first Term and in observing the needs, interest etc of the group of children. We made a decisions to limit the amount of time spent in large group times to allow more free play, particularly involving our outdoor environment. We identified some issues with this for children only attending the afternoons and still felt at the end of the year this was an area we
did not have quite right and it would therefore need more attention in 2016. This would be the case anyway, with an entirely new group of children with different strengths and areas for exploration.

**Standard 1.1.4 To develop manageable systems related to the Same Start Day intake for reporting to a large group of families at the same time.**

During this year, we have focused upon developing manageable systems. We feel we made significant progress in this area, with further improvements for 2016 planned.

Interviews were offered for all families at the beginning of Term 2, to share and further develop Individual Learning Plans for children, outlining their individual learning directions, whilst promoting open communication and relationship development. Kate and I were both involved in all of the interviews so we could share information in a more transparent manner. It also proved to be more time efficient.

Portfolios were further refined to include children’s voice and with a focus upon quality rather than quantity.

Our cycle of planning has had a strong emphasis, with connecting learning directions with possible lines of development and reflection. We have developed and implemented systems for recording information that has been for all Educators to use and access. This will need some refinements to be more user friendly in 2016. This included the introduction of a Reflection Book and Floorbooks for documenting aspects of learning.

Statements of Learning were revised to a double sided sheet, still containing all of the necessary information. Families were provided with a feedback sheet to provide us with unstructured thoughts about the format of the report and especially reflections of their child’s learning journey. As a team we felt this was the most valuable feedback we had received from families in relation to providing us with constructive information.

**Quality Area 2**

2.3.3 Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are clearly documented, with common understandings about roles and responsibilities existing within the team.

We spent time as a team discussing our existing processes and then simplified these. The children and staff practiced the procedures multiple times each Term to ensure all Preschool children and many of our Occasional Care children, had had the chance to be involved.

During the year we completed a mandatory procedure for DECD requiring more specific information about where we would evacuate to if we had to physically leave the site. We liaised with Highbury Primary School about this to ensure we would be in the same location as them for safety reasons, as well as peace of mind for families who may have children across both sites.

**Quality Area 3**

3.2.1 Outdoor and indoor spaces are designed and organised in ways that ensure appropriate and effective implementation of the program and allow for multiple uses.

This connected with reviewing our routines to encourage children to have a more balanced access to outdoor play time. This has been a positive improvement to learning, as evident in the children’s behaviours and levels of participation and engagement.

The staff team attended training on nature play run by Nature Play Australia and from this invited Simon from a private business focusing specifically upon nature play, called *Climbing Tree* to begin the process of developing a concept map for our play area. He visited once and had committed to returning before the end of the year, but due to an unprecedented workload, has yet to complete the design.

As a team we have focused specifically upon developing agreements with the children about risk benefits, involving safe and unsafe play, considering possible outcomes for specific types of play. This has become embedded in our language and centre routines with the children.
3.3 **To implement sustainable systems to support long term care of our environment.**

This connected with our focus upon upgrading our play area, to include drought resistant plants. We applied for a Coles grant to support us in developing some small garden beds and soil to plant vegetables with the children.

3.3.1 **Sustainable practices are embedded in service operations.**

During 2015 we attended a Wipe Out Waste session at Highbury Primary School and have been working with the school on supporting the systems they had already developed around reducing landfill. This included the introduction of Grow Bins provided by the Tea Tree Gully Council, accessing the green waste recycling and utilising the cardboard recycling bin accessible to us. The Grow Bins were also supplied by the Council for families living in the Tea Tree Gully Council District. We discussed with the children what kinds of things could go into these bins and why some things could, whilst others could not.

We ventured into new territory going on our first ever excursion to the Botanic Gardens, Little Sprouts Kitchen Garden. Here the children learnt about worm farms, composting, planting seeds, herbs and vegetable gardens and insects that can be found within the garden. This was a very rewarding experience and one we will continue to pursue in 2016.

**Quality Area 4**

4.2.2 **To improve documentation related to performance management processes.**

This is an area we had discussed and informally implemented, but remains as a high priority for 2016. Offering ten sessions of Kindy per week made it very challenging for us to integrate staff meetings with all team members except me as the Preschool Director, being part time. This also created challenges for performance management processes.

**Quality Area 6**

6.3.2. **To work as a team to come to an agreement on what continuity of learning means to us. Establish stronger connections with feeder schools to explore this concept.**

This was an area we spent a significant amount of time on in 2015 and will continue to develop in 2016. Some of the strategies that led to improvements in this area included:

- Regular meetings with the Principal of Highbury Primary School.
- NEP meetings.
- Opportunities to meet with several members of the leadership team of Highbury Primary School to discuss the specific needs of children, to support in planning for school.
- Working directly with the reception teachers, including developing our own regular visits across the sites, from Term 3 2015.
- Involvement in Highbury Primary School’s Sports Day.
- Accessing the school library on a weekly basis.
- Making connections with the Australian National Curriculum and the Early Years Learning Framework, through making connections involving numeracy.
- Conversations at our Partnerships meetings, where continuity of learning has been identified as a priority for improvement.

**Quality Area 7**

7.1.2 **To improve induction processes for staff.**

Progress has been made in this area through the development of a buddy system within the staff team. This involved having a connection with others in the event of an absence at a staff meeting, or if further discussion on specific topics has been required.

Developing systems of maintaining certificates and in making relevant information readily available to staff was also implemented as a means of making information transparent.

DECD policies have been made accessible to staff as they have been issued to the site, particularly involving appropriate use of social media, Code of Conduct, NQS requirements, DSCI Clearances and RAN training.
**Improvement directions for 2016:**

- To begin processes for reporting to the Literacy and Numeracy Indicators.
- To further develop reporting practices with families.
- Continue to explore and develop ways of documenting our cycle of planning for individual children.
- The site to purchase the Skoolbag App to support in communicating with families in a more efficient way and accessible way.
- On-going focus upon developing our yard, to increase opportunities for nature play.
- To employ an Accountant to manage our finances.
- To embed formal performance processes within our practice.
- To actively promote our site and services.
- To continue to explore our understanding of continuity of learning and to continue to build opportunities relating to this across the Highbury Campus.
- To explore and further develop our understanding of executive Functioning Skills, Dispositions and Growth Mindsets, whilst challenging Intellectual stretch for all learners.

Our staff team attended a training day presented by our Early Years Consultant on the Literacy and Numeracy Indicators. Our partnership funded attendance at this training.

The funding our site was allocated was used on supporting staff in attending training provided by the Primary Maths Association focusing upon implementing the Numeracy Indicators and where to begin. This also included an introductory session to mathematical language.

5. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Due to the small amount of children allocated Preschool Support, I am not able to comment on this for risk of identification. I am able to state that all children accessing funded support made progress with the allocation provided, with one child moving from severe speech needs to moderate.

Once again, due to the very small amount of Aboriginal learners at the site, I am unable to comment in this area. Funding allocated was used to employ an Educator to provide additional support to our Aboriginal learners, within the existing curriculum.

The site has funded a staff member for various hours each day, to support a range of children identified as benefiting from support, but not being eligible under the Preschool Support allocation. Children’s articulation was screened by staff, using the Speech Link online screening tool. Information was provided to the families of children where specific sounds or programs were identified, to support them in working at home with their children.
Highbury
Preschool

Annual Report
2015

Context

Org Unit No: 4622  Preschool Director  Ms Marnie Hillier
Preschool Name: Highbury Preschool

Student Data

Enrolments

Figure 1: Enrolments by Term

Total Enrolments 2013 - 2015
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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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

Our enrolments have declined during 2015 as we have found our community to be increasingly more transient. Several families had enrolled at multiple Preschools, then made their decision about attendance, based upon what they could be offered. We also believe the opening of a wonderful new Children’s Centre at Ardtornish, offering Occasional Care for over and under twos to have impacted families that may have previously enrolled at Highbury. Dernancourt Preschool has also been increased to a fulltime site, all providing multiple opportunities for children and families to access a range of preschool programs.

Highbury Primary Schools enrolments have been decreasing steadily and as families have made other choices about schooling, this has frequently impacted their decisions about the Preschool sites their children attend.

6.2 Attendance

Attendance

Figure 2: Attendance by Term

Table 2: Attendance Percentages 2013 - 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Term 1</th>
<th>Term 2</th>
<th>Term 3</th>
<th>Term 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013 Centre</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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: Figures have been revised for previous years, using integer deemed attendance not decimal.

Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Management and Information Systems

Our attendances have been consistent with previous years. Illness obviously plays a great role in absenteeism, as does family holidays outside of school holiday periods.

### 6.3 Destination – Feeder Schools

#### Feeder School Percentage Data

**Table 3: Feeder School Percentage Data 2013 - 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeder Schools</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0419 - Athelstone School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0596 - Highbury Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>79.0</td>
<td>82.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0973 - Paradise Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0987 - Mawson Lakes School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1154 - Thorndon Park Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8006 - St Francis Xavier's Regional Cath Sch</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8027 - Pedare Christian College Junior Sch</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8031 - Sunrise Chrstn Schl Prds Campus</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8032 - Cedar College</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8385 - Saint David's Parish School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8411 - Torrens Valley Christian School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8421 - King's Baptist Grammar School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9013 - St Francis of Assisi School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9055 - St Joseph's Memorial School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9058 - St Joseph's School - Payneham</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9082 - St Joseph's School - Tranmere</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9088 - St Pius X School</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9115 - Prescott Primary Northern</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>99.9</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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
This year the families attending our Preschool have been exploring multiple options for schooling, other than the site we are co located with. For many of them they have reported personal reasons for these decisions.

This data reflects the information recorded on the initial enrolments for Kindy, not necessarily where children end up attending.

6. CLIENT OPINION

This year we decided the time frames provided to encourage families to access the surveys online did not meet the needs of our community. Families were provided with a hard copy to complete. Half of the preschool community were invited to complete the survey, with nineteen returned.

Some of the comments from the surveys were as follows:
“Governing Council meetings are very welcoming and all suggestions are welcome.”
“The teachers are fully aware of our child’s development level and make every effort to improve and encourage this.”
“My son has built strong relationships with all of the carers, which makes preschool a safe and happy place for him to attend.”
“It was great to hear my child had a preference to do writing instead of play and had the support of teachers to do this!”
“It’s great that no matter what is going on that the kids have consistency with the same teachers/carers and that they are not affected.”
“Thanks for allowing both of my kids to have a great kindy experience!”
“My children have had separation issues at Kindy and the staff handled it with care and respect.”
“3rd child at the preschool. No issues at all and have seen much improvement in resources and facilities.”
“Highbury Preschool staff are very approachable. They helped through-out the year in putting in strategies to help my daughter with anxiety problems. They were great I feeding back to me about my daughter’s behaviours.”
“We love Highbury Preschool. Our three children attended during the years of 2008, 2012 and 2015 and the staff, management of the preschool, the organisation, service and values of Highbury Preschool are second to none!”
“We have been very happy with all of the teachers at the preschool and both my children have enjoyed their time.”
“We believe that this is one of the best preschools in our area and feel both our children have benefitted greatly and are ready for school and have loved their kindy.”
“The teachers and staff have been very supportive of the boys learning. The boys are always excited to see the new things set up for that week of Kindy.”
“Very happy with Highbury Preschool.”
“Highbury Preschool is a fantastic place for children to learn. Well done and thank you to all the staff for their hard work. Much appreciated.”

The comments reflect the satisfaction of the families, especially related to the relationships we have established with children and families. This has supported our strong site focus.

7. ACCOUNTABILITY

We were audited for Criminal History Screenings in March 2015. All documentation was provided to the auditor at this time. All Educators have a current DSCI clearance, with copies of these maintained on site. An Excel spreadsheet has been documented to record expiry dates of these, to enable us to ensure they are maintained appropriately.

Our cleaner and Governing Council members all had current DSCI clearances, with records kept onsite. The Preschool funded these for Governing Council members.

Copies of clearances were also provided from an agency involved in the transition program to Highbury Primary School. Copies of these were retained by the site.
8. FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Our End of year Profit and Loss Statement has been included as an Appendix to this Report. Copies are available upon request.