Holden Hill Kindergarten
Annual Report 2010
Kindy Context 2010

Holden Kindergarten is a 0.5 centre, offering sessional preschool, pre-entry, occasional care and playgroup. We have a high focus on Oral Language and Phonemic Awareness skills for all children attending our service. As we have a number of children who have English as a second language we support their understanding of our culture and communication systems by literacy development. We also use our environment to educate children in the sustainability of our world.

Core Values: Inclusion of all families in the support and education of their child/ren is a high priority. We value respect for all people and expect everyone using the centre to support our approach to respecting each individual coming into the service. This approach allows for the individual learning needs of all children and their families.

Specific curriculum approaches: High focus on individual achievement using defined learning outcomes, using the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia “Belonging Being and Becoming”.

Joint programmes/special curriculum projects: We regularly connect with Dernancourt Primary Schools to include our children with a Reception/Year 1 class as a means of a buddy system in preparation for transition to school.

Staff Profile for 2010: 0.5 Director, 0.5 Teacher, 0.5 ECW, 0.21 ECW (Occasional Care), Preschool Support Worker (hours as required).

Occasional Care: This is a funded program for children over 2 years of age. Two sessions of occasional care are offered each week, on Monday and Wednesday mornings, integrated within the preschool program.

The Program:

The program at Holden Hill Kindergarten has improved throughout 2010. There has been an improvement in the planning cycle, which came about after the Preschool Conference on the new framework “Belonging, Being and Becoming”. Staff conversations and critical reflection brought about changes to the way we program to be able to delve deeper into learning outcomes. This resulted in having a refined Term focus on only 2 outcomes, a narrower approach, with opportunities to intensify our program. This enabled staff to continue to reflect on the Principles and Practices that relate to each outcome, and to program strategies on a fortnightly basis, creating links that are closer to children’s needs, interests and focussed around centre priorities/plans.

The kindergarten program also incorporated multiple visits to the Dernancourt JP School, making connections with a Reception/Year 1 class, and improving transition. Each term, the kindy children went to the school for a visit, and each term, the school buddy class came to kindy for a visit. All of the children enjoyed these visits, and it also helped to build better relationships amongst the staff and the two sites as well. In addition, the staff at Holden Hill Kindergarten were involved in a joint staff meeting at the school, sharing practice around the Northern Adelaide Regions focus on Comprehension.
Core Business for 2010

Learner Achievement Data:
In 2010, clear and documented processes were put in place for all staff, particularly in relation to observational records and data collections for our Site Improvement Plan. This will enable all staff to have a clear direction in relation to collecting data and increase accountability. As a part of this process, tools, such as TROLL and a phonemic awareness screen, as formal data on children’s learning, complimented with data on sharing time, general observations and parent comments/feedback.

2010 Priorities/Targets:
1. Oral language:
   - For 100% of the focus group of children to have demonstrated improvement in their questioning by 2 levels over the 2010 year.
   - For 100% of the focus group of children to have shown improvement in their oral language development over the 2010 year to the ‘well developed stage’ using the TROLL assessment tool.

2. Phonemic Awareness:
   - For 100% of the focus group of children to have demonstrated improvement in their phonemic awareness development, achieving at least 75% using the Phonemic Awareness screen.
   - For 100% of the focus group to have shown improvement in their sound articulation, achieving at least 85% of sounds correctly articulated (at least 75/89).

During term 1 2010 the staff team at Holden Hill Kindergarten undertook professional development to increase our knowledge and skills in the areas of oral language, emergent literacy and phonological awareness, and site plans reflected our commitment to raise the profile of these areas within the kindergarten and to increase children’s skill levels.

Oral Language: During March 2010 base-line data relating to children’s levels of oral language and literacy was collected. The data looked at children’s ability to: initiate conversations, communicate personal experiences, ask questions, use pretend/imaginary talk, understand rhyme, use varied vocabulary, speak clearly, follow instructions and understand and respond to questions.

Our target of 100% of children to be in the well developed stage was almost met, only one child just missed out on reaching the target, but was almost there.

In relation to sound articulation, all children that were tested met the minimum of 85% accuracy by the end of 2010.
This data relates to a teacher rating given to the same group of first term kindergarten children. The initial scores (converted to percentages) ranged from 30% to 80% when taken in March and when re-rated in November showed a gain of over 40% with scores ranging from 64% to 100%.

**Phonological Awareness:** During March 2010 a focus group of children entering their first term of kindergarten were screened for phonological awareness. The test used was developed by Stephanie Mallen (DETE 1998) for use with Early Childhood teachers and looked at the children’s ability to segment sentences into words, provide rhyming words, blend syllables, segment syllables, identify initial sounds, produce multisyllabic words, repair sentences (language) and recognize letters. Staff concerns about the perceived difficulty of two areas (sound blending and reproducing sound sequences) meant that the test was modified to give a score out of 40. The scores were converted to percentages and ranged from 10% to 92% which reflects the diverse mix of backgrounds and abilities of the children and families.

Subsequent re-testing was done in November and the results for those children we were able to track over the 8 month time period ranged from 52% to 95%. Initially this group scored in a range from 22% to 80%. When averaging these scores, it shows an increase of over 30% with a final average score of 80%. Relating to our target of 100% of children reaching 75%, only 8 out of the 12 children did so, however, all children did make huge gains as illustrated in the graph. It is worth noting that of the target group of children, 4 are from non-English speaking backgrounds and it was within this group that the most significant gains were made ranging from 28% to 58%!

With the target regarding levels of questioning, the staff decided not to collect data on this area due to the amount of work we had already put in to collect all the other data. It was too high a work load to do this as well. Therefore, we have no data to indicate improvement except anecdotal evidence from observations. During sharing time each week, we did observed children making good improvements in being able to ask and respond to questions appropriately, at different levels.
These excellent results reflect the enthusiasm and dedication of the staff, and the willingness of the parents to engage with and support this literacy focus.

Comparing the information contained in the two bar graphs it is evident that there is a strong correlation between individual scores relating to phonological awareness and oral language and literacy scores. The data also shows significant gains in these learning areas for all the children in the sample group. Detailed reports have been given to the individual families, and feedback has been very positive.

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Enrolments and Attendances

The data shows that enrolments have declined over the last 12 months, which is probably linked to the multiple changes in staff which can be off-putting to families. We hope that staff stability will be able to slowly reverse this trend in the future. The introduction of Occasional Care should help to boost enrolments as we reach out to more families in the community via this program. It is anticipated that Occasional Care families will stay on at the centre for sessional kindergarten when they reach 4 years of age. Currently, enrolments for sessional kindergarten in Term 1 2010 are 28 Children, 2 of these children will be starting kindergarten in week 6 due to mid term school intakes.

So, in summary, what did we do?

- Involved parents by keeping them informed about our literacy/phonological training
- Made new resources (singing alphabet cards, initial sound goody bags, alphabet fishing game, beat patches etc)
- Sang lots of songs
- Had a “read-a-thon” for the whole month of August (630 books were read)
- Invited the public library over for a visit for Book Week
- Made books together
- Shared stories with the local reception class
- Made letters out of playdough
- Did lots of writing in our special writing and drawing books
- Did complicated science experiments and used long words
- Clapped syllables and words and made connections to beats in music
- Played rhyming games
- Used Sharing Time to focus on a letter of the week
- Introduced a regular small group time with a literacy focus
- Used Dramatic play and props to promote vocabulary development
- Had a lot of fun! 😊
**Aboriginal Education**

We only had one Aboriginal Child for most of 2010. He attended regularly and apart from some speech articulation errors, to which he is getting preschool support and hours for, he is a capable learner and a valued member of our kindy community.

We are also fortunate to have a staff member, our part time ECW and Support worker who is of Aboriginal origin. This helps us to be able to ensure that we are on track with being able to support our Aboriginal family.

**Enrolment and Attendances:**

Holden Hill Kindergarten does have children attending who do not have English as their primary language. In 2010, we had 5 Punjabi speaking children, 2 who spoke Dinka and 2 Arabic speaking children in attendance. We only had one Aboriginal student enrolled, who attends regularly. Occasional Care has been very successful this year, with 29 enrolments on file and operating at capacity each week.

**Enrolment and Attendance Data:**

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**Feeder Schools for Holden Hill Kindergarten**

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<td>% to Govt Schools</td>
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**Governing Council 2011**

The Governing Council met regularly, twice each term throughout 2010. The 2010 year started with 11 members, and had an average attendance of 9 each meeting. Major decisions included:

- Policy Development – Fees Policy, Healthy Eating and No Nuts Policy, Sun Safe Policy,
- Cleaner contract for 2010
• Creation of a specific outside play area for Occasional Care including sand pit
• New Shade over climbing area
• New rain water tank
• New vegetable garden
• Changes to sessions in 2011 (to two full days)
• Changes to playgroup, only operating during term time plus a new receipt record for playgroup fees to maintain accuracy and eliminate the previous errors in money banked for playgroup
• Organisation of new kindy hats with logo
• Fundraising events were planned each term
• Family Night BBQ was organised for the end of the year celebration

The Annual General Meeting was held on Wednesday 16th February, 9.30 am.

Site Self Review:

In 2010, staff looked at the areas “Attend to Culture”, “Listen and Respond” and “Focus on Learning”. Staff conversations around these areas supported the graphing of where we saw that we fit in these areas using the rubric. We are very pleased with where we are in these areas and plan to improve throughout 2011. The centre is undergoing Validation on November 22, 2011.

Planning for Improvement in 2011

• Discuss and revise the site improvement plan in 2011 with oral language and phonemic awareness maintaining a priority. This will connect with the Northern Regional Improvement plan around comprehension.

• Advertising the kindergarten and its programs to boost enrolments. Discussions will be had with staff and Governing Council about a plan to achieve this in 2011.

• DIAf Self Review (scheduled for November 22nd 2011): This will be a whole staff team approach, including Occasional Care and will be a comprehensive look at what we do and how we can improve, focusing on one area in detail, and other areas as time permits.