PRESCHOOL NAME : Tumby Bay Kindergarten

Location Number : 6670

Tumby Bay Kindergarten is an integrated Preschool and Rural Care (Long Day Care) service. We provide a high quality educational program and believe that play is the way children learn and make sense of their world. Our curriculum scaffolds children’s learning in all developmental areas and follows the interests, strengths and needs of both the individual and the group.

“Our core business is to provide quality preschool education to the children of Tumby Bay and districts to help each child reach his/her potential “

Staff

Preschool :

0.7 – Director
0.5 - Teacher
0.2 - ECW
Support Worker – hours allocated termly

Rural Care :

ECW 2 staff provide Long Day Child Care Monday – Friday – 8.00 a.m. – 6.00 p.m.

Playgroup Co-Ordinator – 3 hours per week.

Site Improvement Plan – 2009 – 2011

Our Site Improvement Plan is made up of Three Year Strategic Improvement Directions :

Priority Areas

1) Focus on Learning – Learners will be able to actively engage in the curriculum

Strategies :

• Early years literacy and numeracy plans to raise skill levels / improve curriculum.
• Provide language rich learning environment to develop literacy levels and oral language skills.
• Assess children’s development via observation and assessments.
• Weekly staff meeting’s to programme for individual children and reflect.
• Provide Literacy and Numeracy kits for Transition children.
• Collect data from School Entry assessment of children after first term at school.
• Focus on visuals as part of routines for all children and as a behaviour management strategy. T and D for all staff.
• Implement computer program.
• Assess Gross motor skills and program for individual children.
• Refer children with identified needs for Preschool Support.
Actions:

- A literacy and numeracy quilt is sent out to the children in their 1st and 3rd term of kindergarten each term to assess improvement.
- Drama is one aspect of our literacy plan and stories/songs are acted out. We have a different focus each term and all children are involved.
- Children are observed and assessed in their 1st and 3rd terms of kindergarten to pinpoint areas of their development to program for.
- We used our numeracy quilt as a focus for planning based on info provided in feedback from numeracy quilts as a focus for our planning in conjunction with MLATS curriculum.
- Literacy and Numeracy kits borrowed weekly by Transition children.
- Carmen Davis employed to implement weekly computer program. Children’s skills documented to assess improvement over the year.
- Implemented Locomotor skills program and collected data on children in 1st and 3rd terms to assess skills and plan activities.
- As part of Early Years Literacy Plan we produced resources based on children’s experiences e.g. learning stories, photo stories and displays.
- Promote a language rich learning environment through conversation, music, songs, action songs, family book and drama.
- Children with identified needs are referred for assessment and specific Speech/ Language programs and Behaviour Management programs implemented.
- Quiet reading – to develop book handling and emergent reading skills.

Achieved-

- We tracked 8 children to assess improvement in literacy and numeracy knowledge using literacy and numeracy quilts – Literacy knowledge in these children improved by 9% over their time at kindy. From 78% to 87% - Numeracy knowledge improved by 17%. From 58% to 75%. We are pleased with this as it shows improvement in both literacy and numeracy levels but particularly numeracy which was a focus for us this year.
- Collected photos, photo stories, learning stories and activities of children’s mathematical and literacy understandings for profile books, parent interviews, displays and presentations. Photos attached.
- Literacy and Numeracy packs well received – comments included “Good because we can do the activities as a family “ “Gives Dad something special to do with the kids”. Children looked forward to what the kit they would get next week and parents would say how much they were enjoying a particular kit during the week.
- T and D on Levels of Questioning with Carly Littlewood – February 2010.
- T and D on visuals with Carly Littlewood – July 2010. Using visuals has been a focus this year firstly as part of a program for special needs children and was extended to involve all the children.
- Drama has increased children’s confidence and oral language skills enormously. Evidence of this is that children are organising themselves to act out stories/songs in their free play. Photos attached. We observe that children are developing imagination and skills to express themselves in dramatic play experiences. Learning stories attached.
All children were involved in the computer program and we collected data on 10 children over the year to assess improvement. Our results showed that all children gained in confidence and enjoyed using the computer more as a result. We also assessed mouse skills and select/navigating games. All children needed a lot of help in term 1 and by term 4 they had all improved their mouse skills. 3 children had improved but still needed some help with selecting options and 7 had good selecting/navigating skills. This program has been valuable and we plan to continue next year. Feedback from parents has been positive saying they are happy their children’s skills have improved so much and that they are getting the opportunity to use computers at kindergarten because they don’t all have access at home.

Preschool support is utilised – Support Worker has good ongoing communication with and has regular visits from DECS Speech pathologist and Disabilities Co Ordinator.

We have observed from our quiet reading sessions that children are developing book handling skills, learning to read the pictures and develop a sense of story.

The Locomotor gross motor program has given us information to plan for individual children. From these results we have implemented activities that we observe are increasing skills and children’s confidence. Excursions to the Gymnastics centre have also given us the opportunity to collect data.

It is difficult to see if we are improving from the School Entry Assessment data because results vary greatly dependant on skill levels of children being assessed. We found that from Term 2009 – Term 3 2010 that exploration level was up 15% but more children were at inquiry level in 2009. So do we conclude that overall level has gone up over a year? From Term 1 2010 – Term 3 2010 we found that the same number of children were at the higher inquiry level but less at exploration level and more were still at awareness level. We will continue to collect data but wonder if this shows results will depend on children tested and not a general trend.

2) Attend to Culture – A learning centred workplace culture of trusting, respectful relationships will be promoted and celebrated.

**Strategies:**

- To develop positive relationships with families and a program that is inclusive of all families.
- To develop social skills – to enter and exit play and use appropriate social and emotional language.

**Actions:**

- Started to use new Parent Opinion Survey that was developed in consultation with Governing Council in 2009.
- Learning Newsletters on what children are learning at kindergarten and what parents can do at home.
- Promote Parent Interviews as a chance to work together to extend their children’s interests and develop their children’s skills at kindergarten and at home.
- Use Reflect, Respect and Relate wellbeing observation scale to assess children’s social skill development.
- Baby Bounce music program implemented at Playgroup.
• Healthy Lunch day every term to promote healthy eating as part of accreditation as a SRER centre and continuation of our involvement in Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Project in 2009.
• Literacy and Numeracy Packs and Family book to involve families.
• Photo stories of children involved in activities at kindergarten and on excursions are displayed on TV in sign area.

Achieved:

• New Parent Opinion Survey covers all the relevant areas with half the number of questions and more parent friendly language. Also has section to put 2 things they liked about the centre this year and 2 things that could be improved. This will give us feedback on where we can improve. We sent out surveys to 27 families and had 20 returned which is a higher return rate than using the old format. Benefits are the comments we are getting after each question and the comments on what we could change. It has reinforced to us that the way we program is relevant and inclusive of families. A suggestion has been to have a more formal interview for parents starting kindergarten particularly first time parents which we will start next year. Attached is an example of our new Parent Opinion Survey.
• Learning Newsletters included Children learn through play, What is literacy?, Cooking is fun, Why is music and movement important for our children? Feedback was positive – comment “children learning through play is a great philosophy” “gave me ideas to do at home” “helped me understand what literacy actually means.” Plan to survey parents. See attached examples.
• 90% of parents took advantage of the opportunity of having a parent interview. Gave them a chance to talk about any worries they may have about their child’s development and what they could be doing at home. We planned what we would work on and what activities they would do at home. It is a valuable way to exchange information.
• We observed 4 children every term over the year using the wellbeing observation scale. We focussed on initiating and engaging in play, social initiative – attracts children, negotiates, receptive, responds to others. Also coping skills, cooperation and assertiveness. Our evidence showed that all 4 children’s scores were 50% higher at the end of the year than the beginning. We conclude from this that their social competence improved markedly over the year. We plan to use RRR to assess social competence again next year. An added gain is that it gave us a chance to observe many other children at the same time.
• Baby Bounce program to stimulate development through music and dance was run at Baby Playgroup sessions 3 times a term. It was well supported by parents and feedback was positive – parents enjoyed interacting with their children during the sessions and appreciated how valuable it was.
• Observations from Healthy Lunch Day show that in 1st term there were 2 children who didn’t make a sandwich but in terms 2 and 3 all children were involved and trying new foods and by term 4 came back to have 2 and 3 sandwiches. We ate carrots, beetroot and broadbeans out of our garden prepared by the children. Parent feedback was they were eating foods they would not eat normally and children asked them to buy the same ingredients to make sandwiches at home. Newspaper article and photos attached.
• Literacy and numeracy pack feedback is stated previously. Also comment in parent opinion survey was “take home packs are good so I know where my child is at e.g. counting, letters”.
• Photo stories on TV in sign in area have been valuable to show parents e.g. the activities children were involved in at the gymnastics excursion and the bike track at the Children’s Centre. Children often watch them when they arrive in the morning and really enjoy looking for themselves in the story.

3) Quality Assurance:

Strategies:

• Work collaboratively to ensure all staff share responsibility for continuously improving the quality of teaching and learning.

Actions:

• Continue to implement the Continuing Improvement Plan from accreditation in 2008.
• Prepare for Validation in October/November.
• T and D on the Early Years Framework – develop a program using new Framework.
• Learning Stories as part of planning for individual children.
• Increase programming skills and knowledge of staff.
• Annual Performance Management for permanent staff and implement probationary reviews for contract staff.
• Review practices and routines of extended sessions with 2 staff.
• Staff to study to become qualified.
• Involve and inform parents.
Achieved:

- All policies have been reviewed and/or updated. Developed new Safe Sleeping Policy and a Snake Policy. As part of updating Induction process we developed an induction handbook for staff. Parent Handbook developed for Enrolment Pack.
- As a staff team we looked at each Quality Area to identify the areas we wanted to improve, discussed strategies and how we planned to achieve them. This involved timeframes, who was responsible and resources needed to achieve our aim.
- T and D as a staff team in March on Early Years Framework. Programme format developed using EYLF. Documentation and planning for individual children is a priority and have developed format we are trialling.
- All children have Learning Stories as documentation of learning and are used to plan to extend their play/learning. Also developed a checklist to assess children’s skill levels. Examples of Learning Stories attached.

- Staff accessed Early Childhood Conference, Connecting Communities workshops and Child Care Leaders meeting’s. Staff meeting’s are a time where staff share knowledge from T and D and discuss articles / journals. Staff visited Cummins Rural Care service and Cleve Rural Care service. Plan to utilise Early Years Assessment Tool from Gowrie as a staff team in 2011.
- A formal process for Performance Management is valuable in conjunction with ongoing daily conversations and has given staff specific goals. Have had initial conversation for Probationary reviews and will set goals in February.
- Have met with staff re practices during extended sessions. Discussions about working as a team, communication and practices to provide quality care.
- We have three permanent staff – two have a Diploma and one has Cert 3 with the intention of starting a Diploma in 2011. One staff member who has a Diploma has updated her qualification this year. Three of our contract staff have completed Cert 3 this year.
- One staff member has done OHSW level 1 training this year which involved a week in Adelaide. It has given us information to reinforce and assess our practices.
- Examples of our newsletters show we are sharing our philosophy and practices so together with families we can provide quality care for their children. See attached newsletters.
2.0 Required Data Analysis

2.1 Enrolment

Our enrolments started high, were lower in Term 2 but increased to very high by Term 4. We were able to offer a Pre-Entry session for the first 3 terms but not in 4th Term as we were on maximum numbers for the size of our building. Next year numbers will stay very high and we will be unable to offer Pre-Entry. We have started extended sessions for Rural Care with 2 staff and up to 13 children. We also have a waiting list for Rural Care.

2.2 Attendance

Attendances are lower than the two previous years. This reflects the fact that enrolments were a little lower but also absences are due to illness. We are always informed if the children will be away.

2.3 Parent Opinion Survey

Using the new format developed last year we sent out 27 surveys and got 20 back. All the responses were agree which is pleasing but the real value to us was comments parents made after each question. It also gave them an opportunity to let us know if there is anything they would like to see changed. Have mentioned previously a change that was recommended. This new format gives us valuable feedback to provide a quality program for children and families in our centre. Parent Opinion Survey attached.

Governing Council Report

In 2010 the Tumby Bay Kindergarten Governing Council had an average membership of 12 people with the average attendance being 8 over a total of 8 meeting’s. This year governing council worked with the Director and staff, and after much discussions our planned extensions to the Rural Care area got underway. DECS are contributing funds and they have been made possible as well by a grant from Community Benefit SA. Preliminary plans have been drawn up so next year will be an exciting time seeing it all come to fruition. This year we fundraised to buy a new stove and have achieved our goal. The new stove has been purchased and installed. Fundraisers have included a living plant fundraiser, T Shirts, Photo books and a snake repeller. We sold enough snake repellers to be able to purchase one for the kindy. Kindy numbers are high and proves to have a high attendance rate. It is a very busy place on kindy days. It has been a busy year and we are looking forward to next year and all the exciting changes taking place.

Katish Carr
Chairperson