Hallett Cove
Karrara Kindergarten
Annual Report
2012
Hallett Cove Karrara Kindergarten is a large attractive kindergarten set within well-maintained and equipped grounds in Hallett Cove. It is well respected within the community and in 2012 approx. 25% of families had already had children enrolled in the past, many having experienced several different leaders and teachers at the site over the years. The majority of children go to the local government school and through this association the site has maintained a strong focus in the community. In 2012 we welcomed 2 new teachers, sharing a full time role to the kindergarten while the Leadership remained the same. The site enjoyed the stability offered by being classed as a “full time centre” for the whole year and aimed to consolidate this level of enrolments throughout the year and into 2013.

Again the focus has been on adding to a core group of committed families to support the decision making and running of the kindergarten. This year we have successfully managed the change over to working with the National Quality Framework and the new requirements as part of this and the implementation of Universal Access (15 hours of preschool). In addition we have laid the groundwork for the transition into the “Same First Day” policy which will see children exit during 2013 with no replacement until 2014. It has been a year of significant change.

Quality Improvement Plan

There were three main priorities set for 2012. Priority one and two were to focus on building children’s literacy competence and to develop respectful, reciprocal and supportive relationships within the kindergarten and the community. The third priority stemmed from the need to manage significant changes to kindergarten and focused on building staff capacity to continuously improve our understanding, practice and documentation in line with new regulations.

Priority 1 – Building children’s literacy competence.

Through a targeted curriculum children’s understanding and use of high level oral language (more complex words, longer and grammatically correct sentences and ability to retell stories) will develop within play. This will be transferred to their use of language in other settings, such as at home, and in reading and writing experiences. Children will also have the language to access play with others and to support others in belonging to the play.

Intended outcomes:

- Improvement in children’s understanding and use of high level oral language in play
- Strengthen inclusivity in learning experiences

Targets and Strategies:

- High level of involvement (Level 4/5) for all children in using language in play on the RRR Active Learning Environment Scales - Achieved
- Improvement in ALE used from term 2- term 4.-Achieved
- Term 2 and 4 self assessment data shows children can better articulate the role of literacy in their learning. Achieved

Children engage in play with others naturally at kindergarten and through this year we have encouraged the use of high quality and inclusive language to engage all children. While playing alone is certainly beneficial to learning, we found that the opportunity to discuss what is happening now, ask questions or reflect on problems with another person extends the kind of thinking and language used. This year we targeted certain vocabulary within play, often matching it to the theme or inquiry project or to support a child to get into the play to begin with. We specifically talked with children about the structures of language; eg words, sentences, sounds, letters, stories and retelling
as part of all learning experiences— from the blocks to the sandpit to the writing table. This was regularly formalized within group times and documented through our displays, examples in children’s portfolios and in their “kindy to home & back again” homework project. The “Reading Champions” homework project coincided with Bookweek and saw 87% of the enrolled children, plus a few siblings, reading books at home with parents, grandparents and siblings, recording their memories from these stories using pictures and words on Record Cards which were then displayed and celebrated in the kindy. We collected 157 records of stories read over a 5 week period. All children spoke about a book they had read for the project in front of the whole group and described what happened in it for others. This level of family participation shows dedicated and supportive involvement from families in our kindergarten projects and highlighted for all how partnerships between kindy and families can promote high level learning. [Quote from lilly may]

We also used the Active Learning Environment Scales from Respect, Reflect, Relate to assess how well the kindergarten provided for high level language use for all children. By observing staff interactions and assessing their planning for children we were able to measure how well staff could guide and improve the language used by children so that they encouraged children’s questions and own ideas within play. Our goal was for the learning environment to be highly supportive and rated at level 4/5 and that there was improvement from term 2 data to term 4 data. In the process all 5 staff were observed in their interactions with 12 focus children. In term 2 the average was 4.0 and by term 4 this had improved to 4.6. We learnt from this that children benefit from learning language, certain language, to get into play with others before they can benefit from the fast and complex language used within play scenarios. This was most important for the quieter children or children with speech/ language difficulties. For our children with well-developed language they used new vocabulary and description words in play to support and include others, and to add to and expand on what they were thinking. This made the play more interesting and challenging for them and for the others they played with. In 1:1 conversations with adults and other children we saw that children could retell detailed accounts of things they had done or had seen. They transferred this ability to talking to the whole group, documenting scientific experiments and drawing and writing their own stories with a beginning, middle and end. Their confidence in using language, trying out new words and their interest in copying and writing their own words increased. In their self-assessments upon going to school, our older children referred positively to talking, reading and writing as part of their day life at kindy and that this was part of learning.

Our Curriculum has been varied and challenging for all children and through the following main focus areas we have seen children improve what they say, how much they say and how they use language to support their own learning and that of others. We have explored, “Friendships and social skills”, “Being well, living well, listening well- talking well”, “Messages”, “What if….”- imagination and prediction, “Let’s be scientists”-scientific investigations.

Moving into 2013 –

- Continuing our focus on improving children’s literacy competence through a focus on socio dramatic play, oral language, social skills and use of images and print.
- Developing new strategies to engage families in understanding the role of play in supporting language development.
- Explore an opportunity for working with a local school / speech pathologist around emergent literacy to develop staff skills and site resources for supporting older and more advanced children’s literacy needs within kindergarten (thinking towards 2014).

Priority 2 –

Relationships

Develop respectful and supportive relationships within the kindergarten and community to manage the change in circumstances and facilitate ongoing learning for all.

Intended outcomes:

- Assess and strengthen respectful, reciprocal and supportive relationships with children, families, staff and the broader community.
• Establish a culture of thinking and planning which reflects the needs of all members through its actions

**Targets and Strategies:**

• High level relationships (Level 4/5) are observed and measured using the RRR Relationships Scales between children and adults in the centre. - **Achieved**
• Data from term 2 to term 4 RRR Scales shows improvement in the quality of relationships between children and adults. - **Achieved**
• Assessment and reporting processes will enhance relationships between children, staff and families through the sharing of information - **Achieved**
• Parents are well informed about future changes and children’s learning needs agreeing met-**Achieved**

As we entered 2012 we knew it was a year of change and challenge and that for this to be successful communication needed to be clear, accurate, consultative and timely. Key to this being successful was involving families in as many ways as we could in the general running of the kindy, in generating ideas and in the governance and decision making processes through the AGM and the Governing Council. Therefore we continued our priority from 2011 to build relationships and draw the community into the kindergarten. We did this through many family events, home to kindy & back again projects, flexible session structure and a daily timetable that allowed for relaxed dropping off at the start of each session. We looked after our Playgroup by retaining it even after the changes to kindy session times showed a potential conflict and supported its sessions each week with teacher presence and by leading the grouptime experience. Our enrolments increased through the year hitting a 5-year high of 77 in term 4 which made this a vibrant and exciting place to be. This was mirrored in the learning that children demonstrated and in the high level of parent participation at events and on a daily basis within the kindy.

Parents continued to be interested in their children’s learning and we shared this information informally and formally with them. We have prioritized time at the start and end of every session to be available for parents to discuss learning and we aim to speak regularly with every parent- either in person or via email or phone. As a staff team we continued to focus on assessment and reporting processes which look at individual children’s needs, through the Individual Learning Plans and interviews, as well as photo documentation and work samples to show other areas of skill or interest. Our planning and assessment cycle includes feedback from parents which informs our planning for their child during their kindy year and this information goes with them to school as part of their Summative Report. This new report gives a clear picture of children’s goals and achievements during their time at kindy and also makes recommendations for continuity in their learning. This has expanded in 2012 to include feedback and conversations with reception teachers to improve our transition processes and help schools support children best in the early days of school. Parents have responded positively to the new process and 90% include their comments on Individual Learning Plans.

From term 3 children were able to access an extra session of kindergarten under the Universal Access Policy. This provided us with additional funds to increase our staffing to have all three staff on the floor in every session. This was most important in reducing the child to adult ratio and promoting greater interactions between adults and children and supporting children’s interactions with each other. It also allowed us to offer total flexibility with session choice for families to support their needs for how they wanted their child to access their 15 hours. By listening to parents we established that having the ability to choose and then change kindergarten sessions as children get older were a priority for our families. Most families accessed the extra session and those who did not cited child care/ working as the reason. We continued to observe how children were coping with the new arrangement and were pleased to note that for many children who used to attend on 2 full days, the additional session allowed for their friendships to develop more closely.

We used the Relationships Scales from Respect Reflect Relate again this year to identify ways in which relationships could be described and assessed. As a new staff team we observed each other in our interactions with children. We observed all 5 staff’s interactions with 12 children and over 3 days to gain a snapshot of the quality of our interactions. We repeated this during term 4. Initial data showed that our relationships were at an average of level 4 (out of 5). On closer examination we were able to identify the areas we could improve and implemented a range of strategies to do this.
One approach we took was in preparation for our annual Art show where we work 1:1 with children to create a work of art. This year our focus was self portraits which created lots of opportunities for learning about people in general in the curriculum and also an opportunity for all children to have sustained talking time with an adult. At the art show parents were amazed at how much information we could share about every child, and their thoughts’ about their artwork, which was gained through conversation with them while they were painting.

In term 4 our data showed that our average was 4.6 and that all children were experiencing high level (level 5) relationships with staff on more than one observed occasion. We observed that scores on the relationship scales were much higher when more language was used by the adult (and therefore by the child as well). While we aimed to show high level (level 4/5) relationships with children in the sample we were most impressed with the improvement of individual relationships from term 1 to term 4 and our anecdotal evidence shows that this extends to the larger group as well.

Connecting the data from both scales:
Looking at this data and the data from the Active Learning Scales we observed that there was a very close link between how much language each child used, whether it was used within play or in a 1:1 interaction and the teacher’s ability to respond and extend that conversation to build a quality relationship. It supported our belief that:

• You need language to access the world- to get into play and to get into conversations with others.
• Plus you develop your language skills within play and within conversations.
• But firstly, and most importantly, access to conversations depended closely on the child’s relationships with an adult (child). That person’s ability to scaffold (extend/ stretch) the child’s language becomes very powerful in setting the child up to use language with peers.

We had a very large response to the Parent Preschool Survey this year which showed overwhelmingly that parents strongly agree with statements about how useful they find the information sharing in the kindergarten and that this affects their overall satisfaction with the service. Each term we had an 88% or above response to this survey from families leaving the kindergarten.

Moving to 2013
• Continue to reflect on the assessment and reporting methods used to allow for authentic documentation of children’s learning so that it provides ongoing information that informs planning and gives parents the information they need. Consider the sustainability of this for 2014 as all children exit at the same time.
• Continue to develop a closer connection with local school based around shared resources and learning opportunities which will intimately support transition for children between sites.
• Continue to focus on building relationships within the kindergarten by supporting the extra services we offer, eg playgroup, and being flexible to parents needs with sessions.
• Maintain open and honest communication with the community through the core of the Governing Council to manage the change to “Same First Day”.

Priority 3– Continuously Improve
National changes within kindergartens create opportunities for improvement and a chance to reflect carefully on past actions and decisions. It allows for active planning for the future.

Intended outcomes:
• Improvement in our understanding, practice and documentation of National Agendas
• Policies and practices reflect community values and children’s needs.

Targets and Strategies:
• High level of engagement by all staff in reflection on key areas of the Quality Improvement Plan.- Achieved
• Documentation will be completed, available and referred to.- Achieved
Areas needing improvement are routinely identified to fine tune work and prioritize. - Achieved

This year we continued to use the Early Years Learning Framework to plan for, document and assess children's learning. We continued to embed the principles of Belonging, Being and Becoming from this Framework in our planning and to relate that to everything we do. In addition, the National Quality Framework outlined 7 Quality Areas to be addressed through our work and we spent the year examining these closely to establish a shared understanding of what was required. There has been a significant amount of work done to understand this fully. We continue to work towards addressing every aspect of this document, however we have achieved much during this year. Critical to this has been the development of the Site Philosophy which combines the wishes of our community with the desired learning outcomes in the Early Years Framework and the regulations and priorities set out in the National Quality Framework. It is a working document, living almost, which gives specific details about the why and the how of what we do, in addition to overarching belief statements. It will be published early in 2013 for the whole community.

Moving to 2013

- Examine the effect of Same First Day on curriculum development and assessment and reporting processes. Prepare for this.
- Continue to address all aspects of the NQF
- Embed the Philosophy in our practices and continue to ensure it meets the needs of continuing and new families.
- Use available funds to address ongoing physical issues within the kindergarten- bathrooms, kitchen space, outdoor learning area- fences, to improve learning outcomes.

Events and Achievements in 2012

- Community Events each term: “Breakfast at Kindy” (55 parents), Grandparents day lunch and Bookweek celebration (88 chn/adults), Art show (140 chn/adults), End of year Picnic and Obstacle-a-thon. (194 chn/adults)
- AGM Movie and Popcorn night
- Reading Champions Project (Home to Kindy Project)- completed by 87% chn
- Garage Sale
- Excursion to see Patch Theatre to see A Lion In the Night
- Excursion to the Art Gallery and Marshmallow Park
- Excursion to Perry Barr Farm
- Visits to and from Hallett Cove East Primary School
- Regular interaction with native animals borrowed from the Nature Education Centre.
- Successful transition of 2 new staff members to the team.
- Election of a governing council of 14 people representing community members, playgroup and past and current families.
- Implementation and improved use of the Early Years Learning Framework and Respect, Reflect, Relate to plan for, assess and improve learning outcomes for children.
- Continual Improvement in our planning, assessment and reporting process which optimizes ongoing learning and supports transition to school.
- Successful management of centre budget to maintain a high quality learning environment, support staffing levels and also to facilitate large outdoor development.
  - Key purchases- Big books, TV and trolley, DVD books, maths materials, role play adjuncts, new cupboards and shelves, gardening and cooking equipment.
- Upgrade of the outdoor area as per 5 Year plan (all site funded)
  - Key purchases- sandpit boxes, rebuild amphitheater, new swings, new sand and softfall.
- Consultation with families and implementation of Universal Access.
- Implementation of National Quality Framework.
- Preparation for first intake of children to kindy in line with the “Same First Day” Policy.
- Gradual increase in eligible enrolment from term to term- leading to new benchmark for staffing to include a 0.5 Early Childhood worker funded by DECD. Savings in ECW salary were passed onto families in reduced lunch care fees.
- Increase in size and regularity of Playgroup families.
Increased contact with local feeder school, main Independent School, and local feeder child care centre.
Appointment of Director for 5 years at full time.

Intervention and Support Programs

13 Children accessed services from Speech Pathology, within DECD and privately. All children from this group were part of 1:1 support programs as well as involved in small group work around targeted goals. These small groups also included children with advanced language skills to act as models, promote social play and to develop positive relationships between individuals. As a result the children with language difficulties generalized their newly developing skills rapidly, within a social context, which was then supported through play in the wider kindergarten. Their ability to access play (by using language or signs) created positive opportunities to use that language with others which then helped to improve their language further.

Report from Governing Council

2012 began smoothly despite the change in teachers, with both Molly and Lesley quickly finding their feet and bringing their own set of skills and personalities to the staffing team. Once again, term 1 began with communication as a top priority, with kindergarten families asked to provide feedback about the kindergarten. Parents welcomed this opportunity to be involved, with a high number of fantastic responses (seen later in this report), acting both to reinforce priorities as well as set goals for the year.

The Governing Council remained strong in 2012 with a number of continuing parents as well as some new faces. There was much to discuss, including the integration of Universal Access, fundraising events, a number of site improvements and ongoing communication with families. This interaction with the kindy families enabled the Governing Council to make decisions about session hours and availability which appealed to our community. As a result, the eventual change to the 15 hour access went smoothly, with the kindy able provide the continued flexibility in sessions so valued by our community.

With a successful year of fundraising in 2011, the kindy has been able to make a number of site improvements during 2012. This has included the addition of a new slide, an improved amphitheatre and the purchase of new toy storage for the sandpit. These changes have greatly improved the natural look of the external space which is highly valued by both children and families. These facilities are also greatly enjoyed by our playgroup, an important feeder group for our kindy. The success of playgroup encourages families to enroll their children into the kindy and the increased access to kindy staff during playgroup hours has also supported this. It is great to see the playgroup numbers remaining strong in 2012.

The Governing Council once again managed to achieve their fundraising target for 2012 with a number of successful events. The ever popular Art Show and Garage Sale not only generate funds but are also great opportunities for the wider community to come and visit - or get involved - at our kindy. Continued success was also seen with the Easter bakery fundraiser, Cadbury fundraising, Bunnings BBQ, Art Calendars and recycling efforts. It is wonderful that our kindergarten is so well supported.

2012 has seen the youngest of our children pass through the kindergarten. Despite their different characters and capabilities, the kindergarten staff have always attended well to the educational, social and emotional needs of our boys. It is with an element of sadness that we will soon be leaving the kindergarten to move on to school. However, we are able to make this transition in the knowledge that our children have been able to grow and develop in an incredible learning environment. It has been an absolute pleasure to work alongside the staff and be involved within the fantastic community that is Hallett Cove Karrara Kindergarten – Thank You.

Jo Marnes
Chairperson
Student Data

Enrolments

This year full time enrolments have steadily increased from term to term plateauing in the 50s. Our continued strategy to promote the kindy by word of mouth and our decision to offer a different session and fee structure from our neighboring kindy has met the needs of many in the community. As with each year the term 4 cohort is inflated as this included those children who may already be 5, but are not able to attend their non government school until the January of the following year. Our average for the year is 52, which is 9 more than 2011 and 2010. Our pre-entries appear to replace the existing number of children with a slight overall increase. This average allows us to manage the size of the sessions without any being over crowded. This allows parents to choose between half and full days and choose between quieter and busier sessions as we can be flexible with our ECW funding.

Attendance
### Attendance Percentage

<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>2010 Centre</td>
<td>87.8</td>
<td>88.9</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Centre</td>
<td>94.9</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>95.5</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Centre</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>90.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 State</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>88.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 State</td>
<td>89.9</td>
<td>89.1</td>
<td>88.4</td>
<td>89.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 State</td>
<td>87.4</td>
<td>85.9</td>
<td>84.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We have maintained an excellent attendance level this year with no less than 90% in data weeks, and often more in other weeks. We have very strongly promoted the need for children to attend regularly and the implications of this for their learning as well as for our ongoing staffing levels. The families have listened to us and have ensured their children attend regularly throughout all the year. The number of families using a full day has also supported this strategy as attendances for the morning generally mean attendances in the afternoon.
## Feeder Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site number - Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0640 - Hallett Cove School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6.8</td>
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<td>0668 - Paringa Park Primary School</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1053 - Hallett Cove East Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td>67.3</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>54.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1056 - Woodend Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1492 - Hackham East Junior Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1537 - Sheidow Park Primary School</td>
<td>Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8014 - Woodcroft College Inc</td>
<td>Non-Govt.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8016 - Southern Montessori School</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8091 - Westminster School</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8266 - Mercedes College</td>
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<td>8284 - Our Saviour Lutheran School</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8311 - St Aloysius College</td>
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<tr>
<td>8418 - Sthn Vales Christian Community Sch</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8456 - St Martin de Porres School</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9007 - St Peter's Woodlands Grammar School</td>
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<td>1.9</td>
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<td>2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9009 - St Teresa's School - Brighton</td>
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<tr>
<td>9014 - St John the Apostle Catholic School</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>9402 - Sunrise Christian School</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td>99.9</td>
<td>99.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Hallett Cove East Primary School continues to be our main feeder school and we promote this school within our community. The next largest group attended St Martin de Pores Catholic School which is nearby. Individuals who attend other government schools have chosen our kindergarten for its physical appeal, general feel and the flexibility we offer for choosing sessions.
Client Opinion

This year we surveyed the families in a variety of ways including the Parent Opinion Survey. We had a terrific response with 49 out of 55 being returned. Below is a summary of the results. In addition, we surveyed families twice specifically about learning and outcomes, through children's Individual Learning Plans 1 and 2 which required adult feedback and suggestions. We also gathered data about people’s satisfaction with current session options and their wishes for the introduction of Universal Access. Throughout the year we recorded any anecdotal feedback, both positive and negative, and acted on this.

Things the Parent Opinion Surveys conveyed that are done well at Hallett Cove Karrara Kindergarten include:

Teaching and learning:

All the staff understood (my child’s) strengths and weaknesses and helped to build where needed.

So pleased with my child’s year at kindy and the quick pick up of her special need to get the support she needed.

Great teachers and learning experiences. My child has really grown in her capacity to learn and develop. Very pleased.

Excellent Kindy. We are very happy with the standard of care and education at Karrara Kindy.

The quality of teaching and learning is extremely high and we were very happy with the preschool.

The teachers are good at setting goals and steps towards achieving them. All teachers are enthusiastic and patient. The teachers want to be at the kindy which is very important to me.

The staff at the kindy can be commended for the high quality of teaching and learning experiences they offer children.

We have been thoroughly blessed to have such fantastic teachers to guide and prepare our children for school. Their teaching style is to be commended.

Student support:

(My child) can be shy with adults but hasn’t been pushed into doing more than the teachers think he needs to do at each stage and its very comforting to know that support him growing.

My child was very very happy at this preschool.

Support is offered and given in a warm, caring manner.

There is great structured support at Karrara, although extra resources would always be welcome and I am sure they would be put to good use in this preschool.

Relationships and communication:

The staff are wonderful and welcoming. They go out of the way to inform me about how (my child) is doing in certain areas.

This kindy has a great community feel to it with lots of parents help.

Excellent. The staff are kind, helpful, approachable and easy to talk to. They were supportive of my child and knew his personality well.

The kindy has an “open door” policy. Communication is clear and ongoing.

Two way communication about what’s happening at kindy is a strength here.

The friendly nature of the staff members here make it easy to approach anyone about an issue or ask questions. Messages are always followed up and passed on.

Great parent community- I could be involved and people were friendly.
Leadership and staff:

Maddy is amazing. So well organized and so eager to get everyone involved. I have no hesitation in recommending the kindy to anyone.

We were only at Karrara for one term but from this short time I did see and experience excellent leadership by the director and a very good team spirit. Great work!

This is a fantastic preschool and we feel very lucky that our child went here. The staff are friendly, professional, approachable and great with the children. I commend this kindy.

The director has strong leadership skills. She can define a plan with consultation and implement it with confidence.

A great friendly team with great leadership.

Things the parent surveys conveyed that could be improved: some have been acted on already.

- A formal interview process.
- More and different ways for families to be involved.
- Copies of the program to be sent home via email.
- More opportunities to formally discuss progress
- Ongoing focus on high quality materials
- Variety of information about services in the wider community.
- Keep a range of communication styles about what’s happening in the kindy.
- Redecorate/ renovate the bathroom and kitchen

Financial Statement

This can be presented on request to the Director.