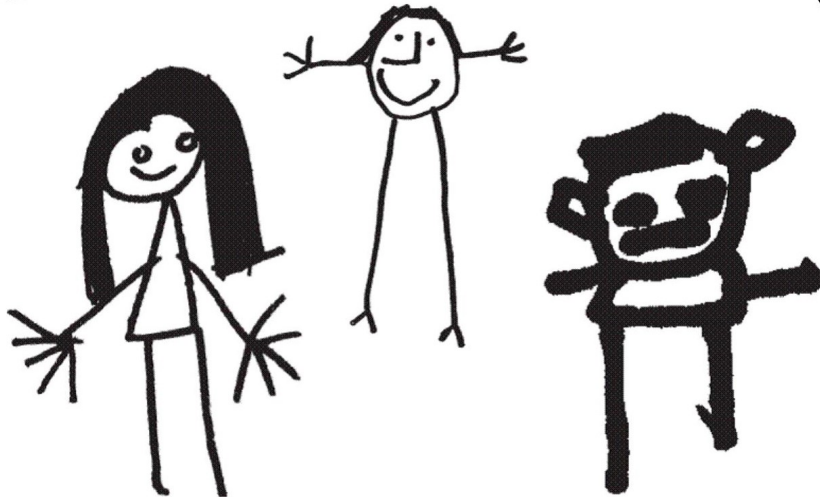


# Quorn Kindergarten



# Annual Report 2015



Government of South Australia  
Department for Education and  
Child Development

## Context

<b>Org Unit No:</b>	6660	<b>Preschool Director</b>	Mrs Nicole Downing
<b>Preschool Name:</b>	Quorn Kindergarten	<b>Partnership:</b>	Port Augusta/Quorn

Quorn Kindergarten has an enrolment capacity of 30 children and operates 3.5 days per week; incorporating 2 x 2.75 hour Occasional Care sessions on Tuesday and Thursday mornings and 1 x 2 hour Playgroup session on Mondays mornings. The group of children enrolled at Quorn Kindergarten in 2015 were comprised of 50% Aboriginal children and 15% non-English speaking backgrounds. In 2015, 100% of students transitioned to Quorn Area School. Quorn Kindergarten and Quorn Area School have developed a strong transition to school program that spans over a 10 week period and incorporates transition visits by the individual students, visits as a group to the reception class, the school/community library and a visit from the reception class to the kindergarten where the class teacher has an opportunity to meet with the parents. We believe this extended transition program offers the best possible outcomes for our students and we will look to strengthen this process in 2016.

## Highlights for 2015

2015 was a significant year for Quorn Kindergarten with a number of big issues being addressed throughout the year.

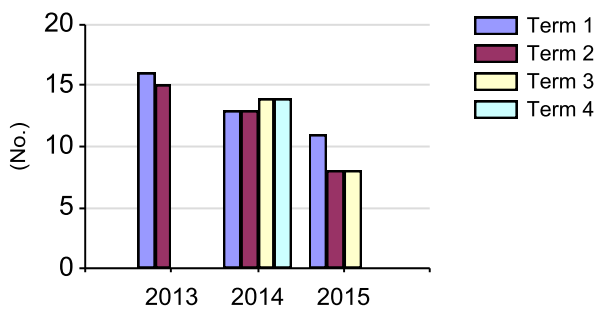
Quorn Kindergarten received a long awaited \$765,429.70 refurbishment in the first half of 2015; with major works being undertaken on the inside of the buildings and a focus on the facilities offered by the building. Major works were undertaken on the Kitchen, Bathroom Facilities and Office Spaces. The building now has quality spaces reflective of the need for facilities meeting the National Quality Standard. This project has been in the making for the past 3 years and was a top priority for Leadership and Educators in the Quality Improvement Plan since 2012. The project was a considerable amount of work for the Director (being on maternity leave and returning half way through construction), educators and families. Meaning there many volunteer hours from all involved to help relocate the kindergarten programs twice in the year. All the hard work was well worth the amazing outcomes of the project and improved Education and Care for the young children of our town.

The completion of the refurbishment project was celebrated on November 5th 2016 with the Minister for Education and Child Development, Hon Susan Close MP, conducting the official opening. We had a number of state and local government representatives in attendance, as well as members of the Quorn Community. The celebration was an excellent opportunity to recognise the considerable work done by the DECD Project group and A&G D'Orazio Builders, as well as the funding from the Government of South Australia that made the project possible. The Kindergarten's Director, Nicole Downing, took the opportunity to present a couple of awards at the opening. Mrs Nancy Murray was recognised for her 38 years of service to the Quorn Community through her work as an Early Childhood Worker at Quorn Kindergarten from 1977 to 2015 (and running). Our second recipient was Mrs Abbie Rowney was presented with the Minister for Education and Child Development's Volunteering Award for Outstanding Service to Quorn Kindergarten for her role as Governing Council Chairperson for 2014/2015 and the numerous hours she has volunteered during her time in her role as Chairperson.

Leadership within the Kindergarten have also had to tackle the reduction of enrolments into the kindergarten programs due to families being effected by jobs in Leigh Creek, Alinta Energy (the closing of Port Augusta Power Station) and various job cuts in the mining industry. There has been considerable brainstorming and investigations into opportunities for Quorn Kindergarten to keep the centre viable for the future.

## Student Data

### Enrolments



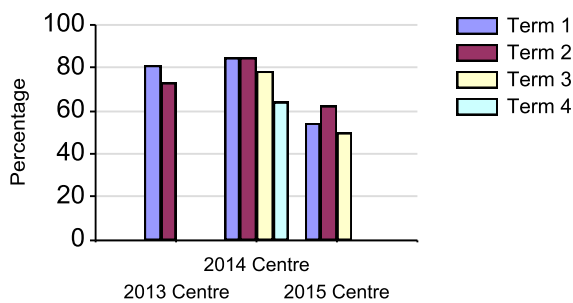
Enrolment by Term				
Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2013	16	15		
2014	13	13	14	14
2015	11	8	8	

Table 1: Enrolments by Term

Figure 1: Enrolments by Term

**Comment:** Table 1 shows that there has been a steady decrease in children enrolled at Quorn Kindergarten over the past 3 years, and a reduction in numbers again in term 2. The reduction has been due to significant job losses in our area with majority of families being employed through the mining sector (particularly Leigh Creek) and Alinta Energy.

### Attendance



Attendance Percentage				
Year	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2013 Centre	81.3	73.3		
2014 Centre	84.6	84.6	78.6	64.3
2015 Centre	54.5	62.5	50.0	
2013 State	88.7	88.0		
2014 State	90.0	88.9	86.1	87.1
2015 State	90.5	88.5	86.3	

Table 2: Attendance Percentages

Figure 2: Attendance by Term

**Comment:** Attendance was poor across the board in 2015 and was significantly impacted by 4 chronic non-attenders; 3 of which had relocated without informing the kindergarten and remained on our records. Attendance was supported through home visits for Aboriginal Families and making regular contact with the parents/caregivers when absences were noted each day.

### Feeder School Percentage Data

Feeder Schools				
Site number - Name	Type	2013	2014	2015
0793 - Quorn Area School	Govt.	100.0	92.3	100.0
9122 - Caritas College	Non-Govt.		7.7	
<b>Total</b>		100.0	100.0	100.0

Table 3: Feeder School Percentage Data 2013 - 2015

**Comment:** 2015 saw 100% of students transition to Quorn Area School from our Kindergarten. We are hoping this is the start of a new trend and hoping that the continued work between the school and kindy around transition will continue to foster the movement between local schooling opportunities. However, the closing of the Outside School Hours Care service at Quorn Area School could impact on numbers in the years to come.

## Parent Opinion Survey

Families were very supportive of the Parent Opinion survey in 2015 and we had 10 responses returned from families using our services. This is over double the number we had returned in 2014. Leadership has incorporated all feedback in to the Quality Improvement Plan for 2016 and will hopefully see improvements in the Parent Opinion Surveys in 2016.

### Quality of Teaching and Learning

This area received fantastic feedback from Parents with 90% 'agreeing/strongly agreeing' on the quality teaching and learning that is happening at our site. We had a small number of parents that felt 'neutral' about the high quality of teaching, the teachers know what my child can/can't do, an expectation that my child will learn, satisfaction of the programs being offered and informing the parents of the program. To combat these 'neutral' responses, Educators (as a team) have made it priority to make contact daily with each family and share a highlight from their child's day. The team have also made it a priority to review how the program is shared with families and how their child's learning is recorded and shared as well.

Quality of Teaching has been a key aspect of focus for Leadership, with the kindy's teacher participating in the Empowering Local Learners project in 2016 to develop the teacher's capacity of building children's executive functioning skills, improve reporting and recording of learning and sharing the learning with other Educators on site.

### Support of Learning

Parents appeared happy with the support we are giving their children with their learning and development whilst in our care. 1 out of 10 parents noted a 'neutral' response to the questions involving the support of their child if they had special needs. We can only assume that this response is 'neutral' as we do not have children in our care this year that have special needs or are receiving support funding from DECD. There is, however, area for improvement with advertising and promoting support agencies within our area for families. This will be addressed in 2016 with more information being made available to families enrolled in our programs.

### Relationships and Communication

This is the area that received the highest responses in 'agree/strongly agree' with +90%. Educators at Quorn Kindergarten pride themselves on the relationships we have built with the Community and our Families. It is important to note that there were individual 'neutral' responses to ten questions, focusing on communication between families and the service. This has been noted in previous years also and leadership are aware that communication methods need to be reviewed regularly to ensure they are meeting the needs of the changing clientele. Educators are looking at more effective ways of keeping parents informed about their child's learning and providing opportunity for two-way conversations about the child.

### Leadership and Decision Making

With the site's Leadership consisting of the Director (who also holds the main teaching role), the responses in this section will be used to inform the Director's Professional Development Plan for 2016. Responses to the questions in this section are highly encouraging with 87% being the lowest positive percentage, a 17% increase from previous years. There are two areas for significant consideration for 2016; Firstly, we will be looking at the organisation of the centre. This is particularly important as the Director has returned from maternity leave and has been spending the later half of 2015 finding her feet as a working mother - It will be a strong focus for Nicole (Director) to find a balance between work and family commitments so that we can continue to provide quality programs to families and to ensure quality of leadership for the site and staff.

Secondly, Governing Council will continue to advocate for all families accessing our programs, particularly placing priority on promoting Governing Council membership to families from Playgroup and Occasional Care as it is important that we have voices from all facets of our program helping make the decisions for our children's future.

## Intervention and Support Programs

Quorn Kindergarten have continued to provide targeted Language Groups to children identified as needing additional support with language and speech development, as well as behavioural issues. Language Groups are run twice per week and actively engage all children in attendance on the day. In previous years the group would target 4-5 children but due to decreasing numbers of children attending the preschool program, we decided to broaden the involvement in the group as we were having attendance difficulties and felt all children would benefit from the targeted approach. The children selected to be involved in this targeted approach struggled to attend to the whole 20 minute session and session times were adjusted accordingly to suit the child's readiness to attend to such an intensive program. Slowly the children were building their ability to attend and engage in the program and we had fantastic results for each of the children. All were able to attend to activities for longer, the quality of work and concentration on tasks were higher, social interactions were more positive with problems being more readily sorted through conversation rather than physical means. The biggest change staff noted was the increase in vocabulary and the correct use of words in daily conversations and interactions, with children often finding creative ways to include new words into conversations. One child was fascinated with the word concentrate (as he heard this word frequently) and once he had learnt the meaning and how we use the word, he used it often with other children at the writing table and was even noted to tell his teacher to 'concentrate' on the task they were doing rather than talking to other children.

A considerable amount of support, programming and funding was also provided for our non-English speaking student and her family. The support provided saw significant outcomes achieved for the child, with confidence growing daily and a significant increase in conversations and use of English in these conversations and interactions with others. To see such growth in a child over the course of 2 years is fantastic and helps to reinforce and support the decisions we make for individual children and the learning opportunities we provide for children and their families. Special thanks needs to be extended to Nancy Norris and Sunethra Coulthard in their intensive support of this child and their family during their time in Occasional Care and Kindy. Their dedication is truly appreciated by Leadership.

## Governing Council Report

### **Quorn Kindergarten Governing Council Chairpersons Report 2015 Abbie Rowney**

Where to start for the year 2015 with the new upgrade on the Quorn Kindergarten building being finished. It is so nice to walk in and see how far it has all come now the kids are back in there and settled in, The new bathroom and kitchen facilities are just wonderful and are a lot easier to use, not only for the staff but the children as well.

With the new upgrade complete; it is time to focus a bit more on the front and back garden, which is what we plan to do in 2016.

Having playgroup at Quorn Kindergarten on Mondays and Occasional Care on Tuesdays and Thursdays is a great way for the children to start getting familiar with the kindy environment.

Governing council 2015 fundraising for Quorn Kindergarten had a focus on our annual Christmas and Easter raffles, both being greatly supported by parents and the community. We also sold show bags at the Quorn Show and ran a Pastie Drive, both of which we have done for the past few years and have been fun days with kindy staff, parents and family pulling together to get the job done.

Nicole Downing, the Quorn Kindergarten director, has finished her 4th year of her 6 year contract. She is doing a fantastic job for the kindy, and none of this work would have gotten done without her.

On behalf of the members of the Quorn kindergarten Governing Council, I would like to thank the staff for the lovely care and respect they have given to our children and the partnership they have extended to the families and carers at the kindergarten.

Abbie Rowney  
Quorn Kindergarten Governing Council  
Chairperson

## Quality Improvement Plan

### QA 1: Educational Program and Practice

Goals	Progress
A routine allowing flexibility if families wish to talk with an Educator about their child.	Morning routine has been made more flexible with extended un-interrupted play time. This frees up educators to greet parents and discuss any concerns they may have about their child.  Also allows for educators to provide feedback to families.

### QA 2: Children's Health and Safety

Goals	Progress
For Business Manager (BM) to become part of the regular schedule of work for leadership.	Nicole met with the Partnership WHS Officer to seek support in accessing BM and instruction on how to use effectively.  WHS was being effectively managed on a regular basis by the end of June 2015 and has continued successfully through the remainder of 2015.

### QA 3: Physical Environment

Goals	Progress
Redevelopments needed to make spaces purpose built.  New disabled toilet included in redevelopment plans.	Redevelopments in progress in December 2014 and concluded in June 2015. Redevelopments have significantly improved the use of the spaces and has ensured that the kindy are now meeting the National Quality Standard and no longer needing exemption due to aged facilities. Disabled toileting/hygiene facilities were also included in the redevelopments.

### QA 4: Staffing Arrangements

Goals	Progress
Educator handbook updated with relevant information and documents.	No progress has been made on this goal in 2015. It is disappointing and has been made a priority for 2016. This is particularly important in case of change in leadership with current director's contract ending in 2018.

### QA 5: Relationships with Children

Goals	Progress
Children and families can see their lives outside of Kindergarten reflected within the centre.	No progress has been made against this goal. Educators are looking at creative ways to display photos, etc as there is little available wall space.

## QA 6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Community

Goals	Progress
A new transition to school process is developed to ensure continuity of learning.	A draft transition to school policy and procedure has been developed between all sites within the Port Augusta/Quorn Partnership. This is being adopted in 2016 and becoming process for the 2016 school year.

## QA 7: Leadership and Service Management

Goals	Progress
Quality Improvement is seen as an important part of every Governing Council and team meeting, being placed on the agenda as a regular item. QIPs are reviewed also during these meetings.	The organisation of meetings and record keeping from these meetings has been adapted to ensure quality improvement is being discussed. 2016 will have significant improvement on this goal as a rigid timeline and process will be in place to ensure work/life balance for the director.

*This Annual Report has been presented and endorsed by Governing Council on Thursday 17th March 2016.*

**Nicole Downing**  
**Quorn Kindergarten Director**

**Abbie Rowney**  
**Governing Council Chairperson**