



# Dernancourt Kindergarten

## 2022 annual report to the community

Dernancourt Kindergarten Number: 4613

Partnership: Modbury

Signature

Preschool director:

Mrs Natalie Stormonth

Governing council chair:

Alison Soininen

Date of endorsement:

27 February 2023



Government  
of South Australia  
Department for Education

## Context and highlights

Dernancourt Kindergarten is a full-time stand-alone kindergarten located in an established area within Highbury. Not being specifically linked to a school site results in a broad community base of families accessing different schools and a very well attended playgroup.

Staffing at the site consisted of a full-time director Natalie Stormonth, two permanent .5 teachers Leanne Fleet, Catherine Meyer and three part time early childhood workers/support staff Kerryanne Uglesic, Debra Edwards, Laura Visentin. The Universal Access funding continued to enable two day sessions 8.15am – 3.45pm. This enables the continuation of playgroup and time for staff to meet regularly to program, attend PD and run transition programs (early entry focus).

The kindergarten has a strong volunteer group with families contributing in various ways. This includes the Governing Council, leading fundraising events, yard maintenance, and support at transition programs, cleaning, and administrative tasks. This year we were extremely fortunate to have three volunteers Grace Caruso, Tracy Bland, and Kelly Plant commit to regular weekly or fortnightly days. This enabled us to plan and have specific roles allocated to support our administration load. Having their involvement also provided family perspectives and valuable input with the daily running of kindergarten.

A significant change to the enrolment process occurred with the introduction of a mid-year intake. With a high interest from families to attend the kindergarten, our registrations of interest for start of year surpassed places available. This led to a delay in offers being made and impacted some of our previous processes surrounding information sessions and transitions. The staff team came up with some alternative approaches for these to occur with welcome packs and a prior to term 1 start, 2023 'Stay'n'Play session.

The year was filled with enormous opportunities for growth by both children and educators. The children stretched their thinking and thought flexibly and interdependently utilising loose parts, nature play, and a visit to Morialta Conservation Park. A deep dive into our music curriculum led to higher engagement levels of children resulting in, broader and improved oral language skills, reading and writing opportunities, and use of patterns demonstrating mathematical understandings.

Our inclusion of indigenous perspectives continued to develop. We were challenged by our learning through the Koori Curriculum. Learning spaces intentionally reflected current and historical Aboriginal perspectives. We made valuable links with the broader community establishing pen pals from other Aboriginal lands to learn and connect with. This included regular correspondence and a traveling mascot 'Jumparoo,' visiting the children.

We were extremely fortunate to work alongside Marra Dreaming artists Raylene and Tom, to create a beautiful Aboriginal mural to represent our site, location, and values. Each child, staff, (and even some family members) followed the artist's instructions to learn the dot painting technique contributing to the overall completion of the mural. It was promptly mounted on the wall, taking pride of position at our site entrance.

Links with our wider community continue to be a priority with our site hosting and funding a Nature Play session during the school holidays. We utilised the reserve (our forest) next door and invited Nature Play SA to run the event. This was extremely successful and an exciting way for families to reconnect and engage with the community after a long period of restrictions. Furthermore, we extended invitations for our local families to become part of a committee to establish a Community Garden.

High expectations of our team has resulted in each staff member achieving growth towards their personal goals. Highlights include guest speaking at the State Leader's Day leading a Master Class session and our teacher Catherine Meyer winning a director's position 2023.

# Governing council report

On behalf of the 2022 Dernancourt Kindergarten Governing Council, I would like to thank Natalie and her wonderfully dedicated staff of team and educators for making the Dernancourt Kindergarten a warm, encouraging, nurturing, inclusive and fun place for our children to learn and explore. From the first moment you step inside the gates, you feel welcome, and have a sense of belonging. The children are so lucky to have such an amazing outdoor space to enjoy all year round!

The children were provided with many opportunities to learn and develop. The Music Club was a big focus for the children, using music and visual arts to explore patterns and movement. The children were exposed to different types of music allowing them to develop skills such as problem solving, logic and sequencing. Learning through music allowed the children to express how they were feeling and communicate their thoughts through music.

Social skills like cooperation, taking turns and sharing were built, and development of hand eye coordination, balance and spatial awareness were learnt. The tinkering table was another fantastic way for the children to develop hand eye coordination and problem solving skills while working with loose parts.

The teaching staff continue to demonstrate life skills not only through formal education but also through everyday acts. Whether they're playing sports with the children, or carrying out domestic chores, the children are constantly learning through demonstration and involvement. A prime example of life skills was demonstrated when the kindy had an unwelcome visit from a brown snake. Despite some natural fears, the staff were fantastic instructing the children, and ensuring their safety in a prompt and professional manner. Despite some children's imaginative stories of teachers wrestling and wrangling snakes, a professional was called in to handle the situation!

The child protection curriculum ensured the children understood how to keep safe and understand what is appropriate and inappropriate and how to understand and recognise their feelings. Dernancourt Kindergarten endeavors to provide the children with opportunities to learn about Australian Aboriginal culture. Acknowledgement of Country is recited daily while Aboriginal art adorns the kindy walls. The children were also fortunate enough to have Trent Hill from Wilma Country in WA as a special guest. He taught the children about Aboriginal artefacts, told stories, and took the children on an imaginative journey through Kurna Country from 300 years ago.

Another highlight was having Raylene and Tom from Marra Dreaming help the children paint an Aboriginal mural which is proudly displayed on the outside wall of the kindergarten. This year, the children were excited to have Jumperoo visiting from Dharug Country in NSW. He was a mascot that travelled between kindergartens interstate with the children sharing stories and artwork.

The sandpit area was redeveloped in 2021 which provided the children with an amazing play area. We thank all who were involved in its planning and construction.

The kindy was lucky enough to receive a grant from Woolworths Land Care which is going towards a new neighbourhood garden. The children created fliers and did a letterbox drop in the surrounding streets while work started clearing the area. This will be a lovely way for the community to come together.

An important part of the kindergarten is the community. The governing council were able to host a variety of events throughout the year which allowed the kindergarten community to come together. This included a kindy park day where families could meet and get to know each other, as well as a fun day at Morialta nature playground.

Our fundraising committee was busy throughout the year organising wonderful events including election day BBQs, Mother's and Father's day stalls, Kyttons Easter fundraiser, our fun Disco night and camp fire night.

Further demonstrating the strength of the family and community spirit was when families came together to raise money for past student, little Asher, who is currently going through a significant health battle. It was so heartwarming to see families come together to donate toys, puzzles, books, and money for Asher's family.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Catherine for all her hard work and dedication to the Dernancourt Kindergarten. I know her departure will be felt by the team. Congratulations to Catherine who has been appointed Director of The Lady George Kindergarten. I am certain she will embrace this new position. They are very lucky to have her.

On behalf of the families, I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to Natalie, Leanne, Deb, Catherine, Kerry-Anne, Laura and Grace. You have all been so nurturing and supportive and made 2022 a fantastic year.

Ali Soininen  
Governing Council Chair

# Preschool quality improvement planning

This year our quality improvement focus was on increasing children's capacity, confidence, and dispositions to recognize, identify and use pattern. We chose to use music as the conduit to scaffold and intentionally plan for patterning experiences. Our plan of action included educators accessing PD with MEFO G.Freer, and supportive resources. Documentation of children's current numeracy knowledge and understanding informed decisions for future learning for each child. The Reflect, Respect, Relate tool provided baseline data and informed future actions for planning learning. Ongoing conversations with families, GC updates, and mid-year interviews enabled transference of learning between home and kindergarten. Educators used this as an opportunity to share with families the deep learning behind music experiences. This supported families to scaffold the learning with some parents sharing their own expertise with the group.

Educators prioritised the curriculum to be delivered in a range of ways to maximize all children's access and participation. Children worked in small, and whole groups as they were introduced to patterning techniques. The educators used daily routines and play based experiences to scaffold mathematical language in response to children's ideas and thinking. Through deep reflection and rigorous conversations, the staff team were able to identify key factors critical for success. Patterning experiences needed to be child-led, playful, available in a variety of genres, invitational, and built upon children's prior knowledge, experiences, and curiosity. Experiences had to be fluid enough to provide multiple entry levels, and skills. Another key factor for success was educators having a clear definition of what they were looking for.

Whilst we knew this was a key element for success, it also presented some challenges. The team came with varied levels of knowledge and experience. Using resources, research, knowledgeable others and Gaby's expertise, we built our own capacity. Communication was vital to ensure everyone was consistent, including student teachers and TRTs.

This is what we noticed as success: children engaged in a range of patterns musically, creating growing patterns and recognising patterns within a range of musical genres. They created their own patterns through language, beat and rhythm. This was evidenced in play, as they made up songs to support their play. We observed children deeply engaged in sustained play, re-visiting their work, and leading their own interests such as large-scale painting responding to music with actions/painting techniques/interpretive dance, and spontaneous music creating using loose parts. Children constructed instruments, experimenting in free music play recording sound waves as observed on IT. Children experimented with song at the story tables enacting various play themes whilst singing storylines. Children linked beat to syllabification of their names utilizing tapping sticks. Children made and verbalized their observations of different instruments and melody lines while listening to recordings such as Peter and the Wolf. Children spontaneously created their own patterns with language, playfully chanting and creating rhymes. In targeted group activities, children demonstrated an ability to participate and hold a beat accurately the majority of the time.

Moving forward for 2023 we will continue to embed music throughout the curriculum. There will be intentional song and music selection to support the curriculum. We will explore links between read 'alouds' and music. Music will remain playful, accessible and fluid. The Preschool Position papers will support the ongoing development of all staff including a new team member.

## Enrolment

Year	Enrolment by Term			
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2019	61	61	58	58
2020	62	62	61	63
2021	64	65	64	67
2022	55	58	54	54

NOTE: The data is based on person counts in the two week reference period each term. Excludes pre-entry.

Data Source: Preschool Data Collection, Data Reporting and Analytics directorate.

Term 2 2020 data may not be available for all preschools.



# Attendance

	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
2019 centre	95.5%	96.7%	95.2%	86.6%
2020 centre	95.5%	78.5%	95.9%	94.2%
2021 centre	96.9%	89.2%	95.3%	93.1%
2022 centre	96.8%	70.6%	84.7%	99%
2019 state	90.8%	88.2%	86.8%	87.6%
2020 state	89.8%	83.6%	86.2%	87.2%
2021 state	88.6%	86.5%	88.6%	85.6%
2022 state	84.9%	79.8%	80.3%	77.5%

Based on attendances recorded in the two week reference period each term. Data for eligible enrolments as described in the department's Enrolment policy.

Attendance rates may differ to previous reporting with the transfer from calculations based on deemed attendance to actual attendance using booked hours divided by attended hours.

\*Note: Term 2 2020 data may not be available for all preschools.

## Attendance comment

All children attended kindergarten throughout term 4. Attendance was regular with children accessing most of their school transition days on the Fridays (non kindergarten days). Those that were absent due to school visits on kindergarten days often returned for the remainder of the day.

Covid-19 impacted attendance throughout the year. With a heightened awareness of keeping children away if unwell, families were vigilant in keeping children home with any sign of a cold. This did at times reduce attendance in comparison to previous years, however despite this, attendance did remain quite high.

With the opening of borders and international travel, we did experience some families taking extended holidays to reconnect with family abroad.

The mid-year intake to school impacted our enrolment numbers for the second half of the year with 6 children leaving to start school. We were fortunate to pick up a couple of new families relocating into the area.

## Destination schools

Feeder Schools (Site number - Name)	2019	2020	2021	2022
8032 - Cedar College	5.7%	0.0%	8.1%	3.0%
982 - Dernancourt School	35.9%	20.4%	0.0%	30.3%
8419 - Good Shepherd Luth Sch - Para Vista	3.8%	0.0%	5.4%	6.1%
8003 - Heritage College Inc	3.8%	3.7%	5.4%	6.1%
596 - Highbury Primary School	5.7%	9.3%	29.7%	21.2%
8385 - Saint David's Parish School	0.0%	3.7%	5.4%	6.1%
1100 - Surrey Downs Primary School	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%
1154 - Thorndon Park Primary School	1.9%	3.7%	0.0%	3.0%
8411 - Torrens Valley Christian School	20.8%	16.7%	21.6%	18.2%
474 - Trinity Gardens School	0.0%	3.7%	2.7%	3.0%

NOTE: The data is collected in Term 3. It does not reflect actual schools enrolled in by exiting preschool children. Only schools that are a destination for 3% or more of students are shown.

Data Source: Site Performance Reporting System (SPER), Term 3 2022 collection.

## Destination schools comment

In 2022 a total of 57 out of 59 children will start school.

Families have enrolled their children at a total of 20 various schools. New schools include Rose Park Primary School and Surrey Downs Primary School.

Of the 57 children attending school 65 % will be at non-government schools, and 35% Government. The majority of these will attend Dernancourt R-7 School, Highbury Primary School, and Torrens Valley Christian School.

## Family opinion survey summary

Families are given multiple opportunities to provide us with feedback throughout the year through various forums. This includes start of year phone calls, surveys, written feedback, social media, communication apps such as Dojo, and open communication and discussion opportunities with educators and groups eg/Governing Council.

Recent client opinion data was collected through an end of year survey. All of our families received these, with a total of 30% returned.

The kindergarten has developed their own survey, based on the Departments Parent Opinion Survey, the Site philosophy and National Quality Standards. The survey was developed to be user friendly by all families accessing the service.

Overall, the results were very encouraging and supportive. On a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, families expressed a high level of satisfaction with the majority of responses within 'agree to strongly agree'.

Examples of questions include: I feel confident that the preschool are aware of, and respond to, my child's individual needs and interests.

Written feedback was both encouraging and informative. Examples of comments include: "we as a family have felt supported, included and listened to", "impressed with how well all of the teachers work together as a team", "even though my child has a primary teacher, all of his teachers have taken the time to get to know and support him", and "the outdoor area is beautiful and encourages play and learning", "the culture, facilities, and teachers are of the highest order, kindness, expertise and care."

Suggestions by families included, "the first social events held for the year could include families rather than being child only events", "more individual posts of children on Class Dojo". The educational team will discuss these topics further. Midyear interviews were held at the end of term 2. The majority of families took up the opportunity to meet with focus teachers with others opting for online/phone interviews. Educators and families felt this was an effective way to discuss achievements, concerns and set future goals for the children.

## Relevant history screening

All staff, contractors, work experience students, preservice teachers and volunteers undergo a DCSI Child-related employment screening before commencing. All teaching staff are approved through the Teacher's Registration Board of South Australia. Approval letters and certificates are filed with all police screens entered into a data base for quick reference and secure recording. Families are offered to undergo an extensive volunteer induction process alongside neighbouring schools or kindergartens within our partnership, or the online volunteer training course. All staff have updated the latest RRHAN-EC requirements. All educators and volunteers have shared their vaccination status with line managers as of December 2021.

## Financial statement

Funding Source	Amount
Grants: State	\$546,000
Grants: Commonwealth	\$0
Parent Contributions	\$22,090
Other	\$2,765

## 2022 Preschool annual report: Improved outcomes funding

Improved outcomes category (where applicable to the site)	Briefly describe how the 2022 funding was used to improve the relevant department's standard of educational achievement outcomes (where applicable):*	Outcomes achieved or progress towards these outcomes:
Improved outcomes for numeracy and literacy	Funding this year supported the building of staff capacity to deliver a music-based curriculum to support numeracy and literacy learning. Educators attended professional development with the MEFO Gaby Freer and Playful Numeracy workshops. Site based training also supported the development of our PQIP goal with patterning experiences encompassing both numeracy and literacy experiences. This resulted in child led, inquiry-based practice, whereby deep learning and improved children's outcomes was evidenced.	Educators are delivering high quality numeracy and literacy learning experiences with confidence. As a result, learning and growth has been evidenced by all children.
Inclusive Education Support Program	Support levels were high throughout 2022. These were supported by both Preschool support funding, extensive and site funding. Release of staff to collaborate with outside services, primary schools, special educators, families, and NDIS services have supported learning outcomes and wellbeing of children and families. Two independent services regularly attended the service to work with children through NDIS, further making recommendations for support staff and teachers to work on with the children.	Optimal support provision for children receiving extensive support was achieved with clear goals, partnering with outside support services, families, and additional staff.
Improved outcomes for non-English speaking children who received bilingual support	NA	NA

\* The department's standard of educational achievement is defined as children and young people progressing and achieving at or above their appropriate year level.