



Annual Report 2019 2020

Executive Summary 2020

Deniliquin Children's Centre Inc

An incorporated association. Incorporation # Y023509

A community managed early childhood service provider Provider # PR-00003911

Location

362-3710 Whitelock St

Deniliquin 2710

Services

Deniliquin Preschool- SE00007099. 49 licensed places

Deniliquin Childcare Centre- SE00007098. 55 licensed places

Deniliquin Mobile Service- SE00014785. 25 licensed places (operating in Pretty Pine, Blighty, Wanganella, Wakool & Bunaloo)

Deniliquin Toy Library

Staff

10 casual staff (educator & support)

23 part time staff members (including 8 support staff) and 33 full time staff

Families

198 active families (49 mobile, 93. preschool, 96 childcare)

Children

295 children (77 mobile, 93 preschool, 125 childcare)

Utilisation rates at 30/6/19

Mobile- 44%

Preschool 95%

Childcare 96%

2019-20 Management Committee

President- Jo Burn (GM review steering committee)

Vice President- Eliza Eastman

Secretary- Cathy Bliss (GM review steering committee)

Treasurer- Sophie Pisasale

General Committee

Hayley Purbrick (GM review steering committee)

Amber Farley

Jen Laird

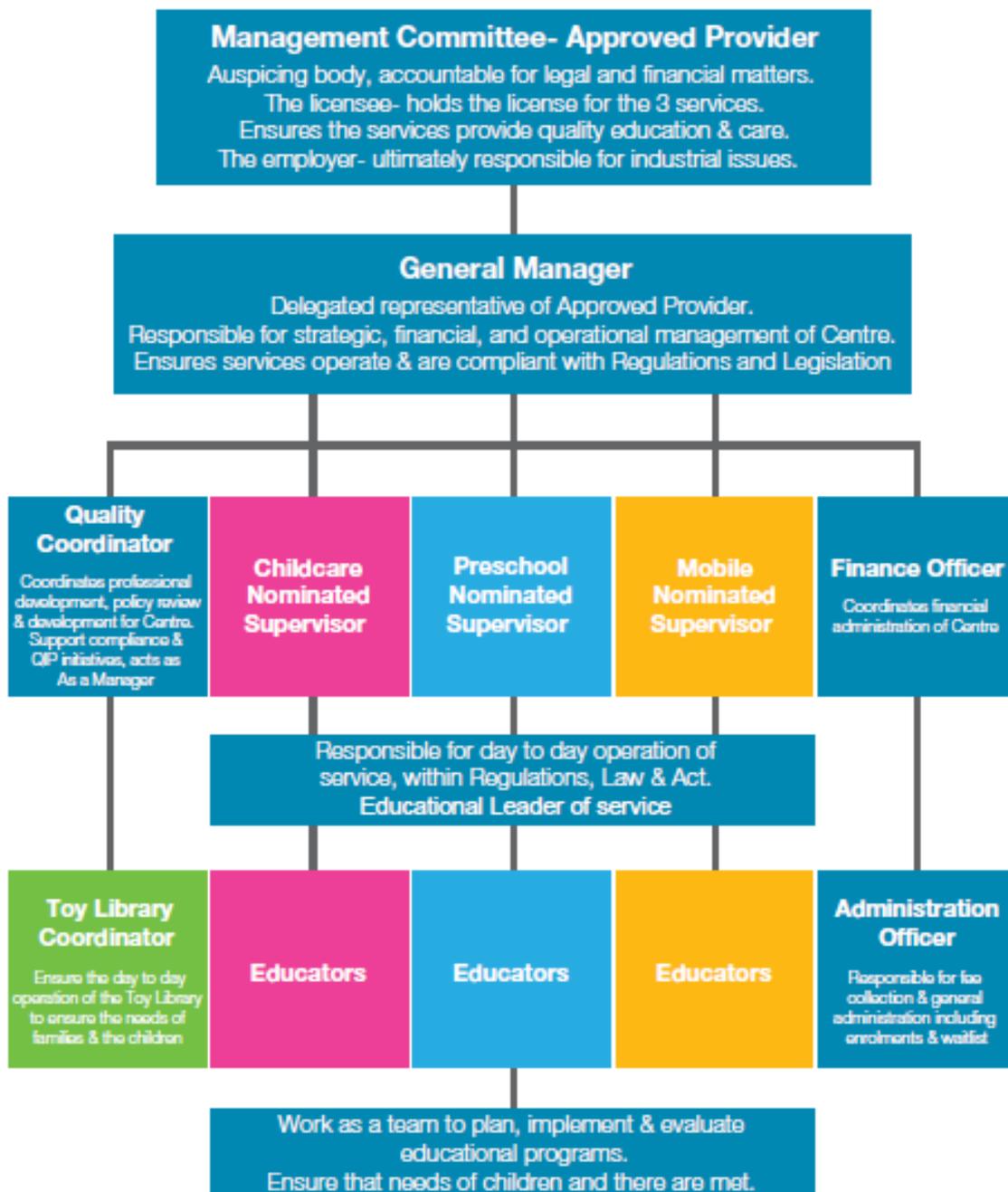
Michelle Siena

Emily Small

2019-20 Organisation structure



Deniliquin Children's Centre





DENILIQVIN

Children's
Centre

Our Vision

Educating rural children from the mind and heart

Our Mission

To create safe, happy, stimulating environments in rural communities where children are supported to reach their potential and learn life long skills

Our Values

Nurturing

We care for and help the development of children, families and educators in our Centre

Empathy

We have the ability to understand and share the feelings of others

Joy

To be in our Centre creates feelings of great pleasure and happiness

Inclusion

A diversity of people feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and can contribute their perspectives and talents at our Centre

Integrity

We are honest and have strong principles

Passion

We have an intense enthusiasm for the work of early childhood education

Our Philosophy

We know that children who are nurtured to grow and learn will be the richness and beauty we all wish to see in the world.

We recognise that it takes a village to raise a child.

We embrace children's sense of awe and wonder as well as their individuality and we encourage them to care for others and the world around them. We aspire to maximise participation in our services through active involvement in our community, exercising a culturally responsive approach that welcomes everyone and a deep commitment to advocate for the value of early childhood education. We respect and acknowledge the diversity of first people across communities and we value their contributions.

Our village believes:

- Children are capable, joyful and inspirational
- Families are to be respected as the foundations of children's learning
- Educators are passionate, caring and responsive
- Our wider community is vibrant, knowledgeable and robust

Freedom to play, explore, learn and be adventurous is at the core of our curriculum.

The wide-open plains of Deniliquin and surrounding country communities, on the land of Wamba Wamba and Perrepa Perrepa people, is where we call home. Our natural landscape is one of farming, shaped around the rivers and lagoon. Natural learning environments in all-weather are celebrated.

We hope childhood is a time for happiness where each child feels valued, capable and confident that their voice will be heard.

Responsive relationships where children are supported and guided resonate within our services. We value reflection, authenticity, partnerships and children's inspiration to develop a sense of belonging.

We believe education is *'the kindling of the flame, not the filling of the vessel'* (Socrates)

Knowing that children learn best through play, we take a collaborative, holistic and intentional approach to our work.

Generations of children and families have grown through their participation in our multiple services. We understand that when early learning is relevant and meaningful, it unlocks the potential of our community.

We instill a love of learning, giving each child the opportunity to reach their full potential.



Presidents Report –

Completed by- Jo Burn

2019/2020 has been a year that none of us anticipated or expected. To find ourselves still in the middle of the global pandemic COVID 19 has been incredibly arduous and has at times usurped a lot of energy from everyone associated with our Centre. In the early days (particularly during April and May 2020), simply keeping up with Federal Government announcements affecting our services was a daily task and our administration team lead by our dedicated General Manager Felicity Michael kept abreast of all developments and ensured families were kept informed of changes. Later in the year we then found ourselves following the New South Wales Premier's advice regarding border closures and travel restrictions. We are extremely appreciative of the calm and composed way in which our entire team focused on providing advice and childcare services of the highest calibre to our families. Well done to everyone. Felicity Michael was particularly outstanding during the height of the pandemic, providing continuity and reassurance to staff and families every day.

Our centre was able to support families employed in essential services during the pandemic with continual provision of high quality, play-based learning programs during the entire year. Our creative and innovative team also provided all families opportunities for remote and home learning experiences, which strengthened our relationships with our children, families and community. The dedication displayed by our team to keep themselves safe and healthy whilst continuing to engage children in meaningful experiences was beautiful to witness. Several staff members showed great dedication during this period to continue their studies as well. Silver linings ...

We have sourced funding to improve our facilities – new fencing and stronger screen doors at childcare provide a safer environment and there has been significant thought and development to improve our outdoor learning areas of our childcare and preschool precincts. The mobile team are now able to prepare their venues for children more quickly with a new leaf blower!

We would like to express our most sincere thanks to our entire leadership team who have steered the organisation through this tumultuous period beautifully. Donna Crane, Tammy Cairnduff and Heidi Plant – we are so lucky to have your compassionate leadership qualities and we must also thank Melanie Penglis and Kellie Stubbings for the commitment they displayed during their time in their leadership roles and continue to display. Kellie Crossley continues to provide policy and procedural support of the highest quality. We are so lucky to have her.

The Management Committee is dedicated to steering the organisation through its next change – converting our organisation from an incorporated association to Company Limited by Guarantee. This is planned to be a major focus during 2021. The Management Committee will continue to provide exceptional financial oversight and governance of the organisation we are all so proud to serve. I would like to formally thank the 2019/2020 committee for their time, commitment, passion and vision - Vice President Eliza Eastman, Treasurer Sophie Pisasale, Secretary Cathy Bliss and committee members Hayley Purbrick, Jennifer Laird, Amber Farley, Michelle Sienna, and Emily Small. COVID 19 has shown that we are able to effectively conduct monthly meetings remotely – this has been another silver lining from COVID 19 and we are hopeful that future committees will continue this practice. It has been lovely to see younger children popping up on Zoom!

Jo Burn

President- Management Committee



General Managers Report

Completed by Felicity Michael

2019/20 has been a year of achievements and challenges.



Progress in Strategic Goal Areas

To be recognised for high quality, play based learning programs in safe, natural and inclusive environments

We are on a journey of continual improvement. Undertaking the Assessment and rating process is a key part of this process. Both the Preschool and Childcare services undertook A&R in 2019 which has resulted in many changes and improvements. The Mobile service has now moved under the National Quality Framework, and we anticipate will undertake Assessment & rating in the next 12 months. Our processes for compliance and quality improvement have also been developed as a part of this process. We now have a coordinated schedule for gathering data about quality across all services, which has input from both educators and families. This includes compliance audits, audits of other key quality areas and satisfaction surveys of families and employees. These inform quality improvement goals. Results of compliance and other audits are reported to the Management Committee in monthly reports and the Quality Improvement Plans for each service are updated and endorsed by the Committee on a quarterly basis.

Development of our physical environments continues with over \$34000 spent in 2019-20 on improvements to the environments for our children. Department of Education Quality Learning Environments funding was sourced for fences for the verandas for the infants rooms at childcare, installation of high strength screen doors for all of the classrooms and new outdoor tables and a garden plan. In the preschool playground this funding was used for replacement of shade sails and a new high density fence along Hardinge St.

Department of Education Drought Funding enabled us to secure a new shade sail for the childcare playground, installation of drinking bubblers and wash area in preschool and a satellite phone and leaf blower at Mobile. A Stronger Communities grant from the Edward River Council enabled us to install a mobile phone repeater at Pretty Pine Hall, to increase the safety of this venue.

Educational Program and practice have been at the core of our work in 2019-20. A review of the policy and development of a suite of tools, which incorporates training for educators who are implementing it has resulted in greater consistency across services. It also has increased the communication for assessment of children's learning and the learning cycle to families. This procedure and tools are being trialled in 2020.

To build strong and collaborative relationships with children, families and communities

August saw the completion and opening of the Community Hub as final stage of our redevelopment project. This involved the redevelopment of the old childcare centre into a hub to house all of the admin team, a meeting room and the Toy Library by B Green constructions. The hub allows greater collaboration between services and support staff and also provides a welcoming environment for families to visit, feed or change their children while accessing our services. This was highlighted as a need in the strategic plan. The increased traffic has been of benefit to the Toy Library memberships.

COVID 19 has been challenging for the Deniliquin Children's Centre, as well as our community. The March lockdown resulted in only essential workers accessing our services. The Federal Government announced Free Childcare from April to June 30 to ensure families didn't withdraw their children. This was followed by the NSW government announcing the Free Preschool package which was in place for Term 3 and Term 4. Attendance during this time dropped- with average attendances in April in Mobile 4%, Childcare 38% Preschool 27%. The Centre was able to access Jobkeeper until July. The Management Committee were keen to ensure that as well as supporting families, we were supporting our workforce. Changes to leave were put in place, and staff supported to work from home if possible (admin) and that staff who chose to stay home were able to do so. Opportunities for remote and home learning experiences were also developed, with activity packs developed and distributed to all families both in hard packs and digitally. Storypark was used to communicate children and families who were at home- with group times and stories and craft activities shared. We also used this time of low numbers for all staff to undertake professional learning. Obviously, Hygiene and Infection control are the priority. Hand sanitiser, handwashing and physical distancing have all become embedded practices during this time. A risk assessment developed in March and has been revisited each month. Border restrictions caused changes to service provision and staffing, particularly for the Mobile service.

Bushfires in January had an impact on our service with smoke affecting air quality. Processes were developed to monitor air quality and change service provision based on this.

To be an employer of choice that supports a motivated and qualified team

Leadership development was a key focus for the organisation. All Position Descriptions were reviewed in 2019. These incorporate Key Performance Indicators and the organisation values. In each service, the focus has been on developing a “distributed leadership” model based on the preschool service and current research in Early Childhood leadership, where the Lead Educators direct the operation of the room, under the mentoring and guidance of the Nominated Supervisor. Training in March for all Lead Educators and Assistant Lead Educators resulted in key skill development and goal setting for these leaders. We also invested in ongoing mentoring for our Educational Leaders/ Nominated Supervisors to support these lead educators with Early Childhood consultant Catharine Hydon. A trial of a separate Educational Leader and Nominated Supervisor was established in the childcare centre in January. Mel Penglis stepped into the Educational Leadership position and Donna Crane the Childcare Nominated Supervisor position on secondment. Kellie Stubbings did a wonderful job filling in as the Nominated Supervisor at the Preschool for 6 months.

To be a well governed, financially sustainable, value driven organisation

Numbers at each of our services have grown over the past year, particularly in our newly expanded childcare centre. Occupancy in the childcare centre increased from 86% (av. 43 children per day) in June 2019 to 96% (av. 48 children per day) in June 2020 and in the Mobile service from 28% (35 children per week) in June 2019 to 44% (55 children per week) in June 2020. Preschool remains stable at around 95%.(av. 42 children per day) This is a credit to the leaders and educators of these services who have worked to develop the relationships and trust of families and children.

To help support this increased number of children and families, we have reviewed our admin processes and employed an additional 12 hours of admin support per week.

Fees have not been increased since July 2019, and for much of 2020 they were at \$0 (due to government COVID initiatives). The admin team have also focused on improvements in debt recovery processes.

NSW Fair Trading has recommended that we change organisation type from incorporated association to Company Limited by Guarantee. The Management Committee have resolved to move ahead with this process, with the aim of completing the migration by June 30 2021.

The Management Committee have undertaken annual governance training in March.

To be a community leader in environmental sustainability

Each service continues to have sustainability projects as part of their quality improvement plans. This year a Sustainability Week gave educators the opportunity to plan experiences for and promote the initiatives being undertaken in their service.



Quality Coordinator report- completed by Kellie Crossley



Service Overview

Supporting quality and compliance across all services by building capacity of the Nominated Supervisors and providing tools and support is integral to the role.

Service focus for the year-

All services rolled over the organisation quality improvement goals from 2019, which made sense as continued progress against these goals was required. Support and resources have been provided to each of the Nominated Supervisors to help them make progress.

Policy and Procedure development with a minimum of two policies and related attachments reviewed and development each month.

Preparation for the Assessment and Rating visit at both Preschool and Childcare- involved mock assessments and compliance audits.

System/s improvement to ensure continuous improvement and achievement towards business plan strategies.

Covid-19 planning and review of hygiene and infection control in March/April was also been a focus

Highlights for the year-

Educational Program and Practice -A new Educational Program and practice policy and procedure was developed, through extensive consultation with the Leadership team and support from Catharine Hydon. Tools were developed to support educators to program and document children's learning. In addition, organisational training was rolled out to support the educators. The tools and procedure have been trialled during 2020. Feedback from Lead educators has been positive so far.

Position description review-Early child hood educator position descriptions were reviewed and renamed to include the organisation values and Key performance Indicators (KPI's). This process provided greater role clarity around roles and responsibilities.

Policy and procedure review – The review cycle has been improved, with careful consideration of what policies require extensive consultation versus time spent rolling out the policy to ensure a more effective use of educator time. The system changes always require work in the background to support the policy.

Community involvement-

Rural Fire Service (RFS)- Provided support and advice with the development of the new Bush Fire Policy for the organisation which was timely due to the fire danger in early 2020.



Service Report for the Preschool Service

Completed by: Donna Crane/Kellie Stubbings Nominated Supervisors



Service Overview

The Deniliquin Preschool is a meeting not-for profit service offering a high-quality preschool program to children aged 3-6 years in the local and surrounding area. Our service offers 2 separate age groups to cater to the developmental needs of specific ages. We are a two-unit service, each room consisting of up to 22 children. Each room's program is delivered by a 4-year trained early childhood teacher, a diploma qualified educator, and two assistant educators. We operate 40 weeks of the year, offering a 7.5-hour day 8:15-3:45 and families have access to our APSC program until 5:15pm every afternoon. Our high-quality program consists of both child initiated, and teacher led design. Our service in collaboration with Dysons offer a bus service to and from preschool for our rural children.

Magpie Room- Monday/Wednesday Young 4s, Tuesday/Thursday 4/5s, and Friday due to lack of 3-year-old enrolments has been a young 4/5 group.

Magpies 57 children M/W 22 T/Th 22 and Fri 22

Pelicans Room- Monday/Wednesday 4/5s, Tuesday/Thursday 4/5s, Friday 4/5s (third day)

Pelicans 41 children M/W 20 T/Th 20 and Fri 20

Total 98 children

APC care current children enrolled Mon - 11, Tue/Thur - 12, Wed - 12, Fri - 8

Each group consists of the same children and educators. This provides children with consistency to build relationships and reach quality outcomes in the program.

Service focus for the year

QA1: Educational Program and Practice

To make the program and practice more responsive to children and available to families.

We have committed to embed the new tools in the Educational Programming and Practice Policy and Procedure which was rolled out to the organisation at the beginning of this year. There are 10 tools in total which assist all educators to follow each child's planning cycle twice across the year. Lead Educators have completed a Program and Practice survey about the tools to gather feedback

QA2: Children's Health and Safety

Embed healthy lifestyles into the minds of children and educators.

As part of our commitment to embed healthy lifestyles all educators completed munch and move training. We are embedding the munch and move principles into our daily routine and the fundamental movement in our outdoor program. We conducted the sustainability audit as a team and looked at our service and what we do to actively contribute to sustainable practices and outcomes for children, families, and educators at preschool. Something that we all recognised and were immensely proud of that is embedded at preschool is the vegie gardens the children have been enjoying investigating and caring for our garden. Children have also been taking home some of the produce to share with their families. We have embedded sustainability monitors in the program with the lights monitor and water monitor.

Educators from Preschool, along with childcare and mobile attended a training in February with Marc Armytage on Risky play. Educators said that it challenged thinking around risk taking. He challenged ideas around risk and how that contributed to children's development. Educators that attended shared some of the thought-provoking ideas with other educators Preschool hosted STEPS, State wide Eyesight Pre-schooler Screening The Steps program is an initiative of NSW Health and offers all 4 years old children free vision screening.

All staff completed COVID-19 infection control online training which covered the fundamentals of infection prevention and control for COVID-19.

QA3: Physical Environment

The outdoor environment meets the needs of the children, educators, and the community.

We had a working bee to clean out and organise the shipping container and shed so as allow greater access to resources for children in the outdoor program. New Bubblers, a washing station and new shade sails has been installed in the outdoor yard. A New sandpit was installed in the in the pelican yard and the children have been enjoying the larger space in the Pelican yard with the extension with the new fence The magpie children are enjoying more indoor/outdoor time engaging in their learning environment with the magpie veranda extension. Through the PDR process it was recognised that we would like to do something with the back yard off the staff room, ideas were seating, sensory/bush tucker garden, sensory path, water fountain.

And to move the fire pit This has been added to our Quality Improvement plan Outdoor project plan to assist in creating a calming and intentional learning space for educators and children.

QA4: Staffing Arrangements

Develop an engaged and quality team.

Lead educators attended training with Catherine Topics included, effective communication/ understanding different personalities and your own, having tricky conversations with staff and families, effective delegation, dealing with conflict and organisation and time management

Educators mentioned that they found the training highly informative and engaging. The training centred on being a leader and the different styles of leadership. At the training Catherine asked everyone to think of something that challenges them and turned it into a goal, throughout the training we reflected on our goal and came up with actions to achieve the goal in the future. These goals and actions became part of our PDR goals.

Throughout the PDR process educators elected a training which complemented their professional goal. All educators have now completed this training and are implementing actions into their practice.

All educators completed an Employee engagement survey. This gave us feedback on how educators felt about expectations, supports, opportunities and professional development. All responses recognised that they felt supported, had opportunities to learn and grow and that educator wellbeing and self-care was important

QA5: Relationships with Children

We will be responsive, reflective, and engaged with every child.

The family profile tool and child profile tool we have been able to get a better understanding of each child's interests, strengths, challenges, and emerging skills. which help drive the program and children's goals. Through our commitment to the Educational Programming tools we have been implementing higher end Childrens Education and care. We are allowing our children to be more actively involved in their program with the introduction of sustainably champions and room projects.

QA6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities

Develop and maintain respectful partnerships with family and community.

We welcomed over 50 families to our meet and greet night. We had a sausage sizzle and provided an opportunity for our children to become familiar with their room, educators, and peers before the child came the next year.

Families also attended a Family information night start this year where the NS and the teachers presented to families an outline of their child's preschool year, benefits of play-based learning and an opportunity to ask questions.

Families completed a Family satisfaction survey to give us feedback on how supported and informed of their child's learning and development they were 100% of families surveyed said that the environment is welcoming and interesting and felt supported during COVID-19.

We are working with the Edward River Art Society to implement 2 projects in our outdoor environments. These will be double sided mural panels that will be attached to the fence along the lagoon walk and the painting of murals onto our shipping container. The shipping container and shed has been painted grey in preparation and we are scheduling a meeting with the ERAS to discuss ideas that educators have come up with.



QA7: Governance and Leadership

Develop effective systems at DCC that build professionalism and a high-quality service.

This Year there was a leadership change at Deniliquin Preschool. It was the start of a Leadership mentoring program Donna went to Childcare as Nominated supervisor and remained Educational Leader of Preschool and I was appointed acting Nominated Supervisor at preschool. This was an opportunity to build the skills, knowledge, and professionalism of Leaders under the guidance of Donna and the leadership Team I also received mentoring with Catharine Hydon

I am very thankful for the opportunity to be mentored by these exceptional Leaders Donna, Felicity and Kellie. My knowledge and understanding in effective management as nominated supervisor has deepened and grown. Donna made the decision to stay at childcare and with that Heidi Plant has now been appointed as Preschools Nominated supervisor and I look forward to supporting her as her 2IC

Highlights for the year

1. Assessment and Rating Visit

We undertook our assessments and rating visit on the 31st July. Overall, it was a rushed and unpleasant experience that left us all feeling a bit overwhelmed as it was not what we expected or anticipated. I feel that we put our best selves forward on the day and presented a QIP that represented our service and the distance that we have travelled. Our overall rating is meeting the National Quality Standards although we had several standards that were exceeding the national quality standard.

2. Vegie garden show entry trophy

The preschool entered a basket of fresh produce into the Deniliquin show that had been grown in their vegetable garden. The basket of preschools produce was that outstanding that we received the Frank Fisicaro Memorial Trophy for most outstanding exhibit. With the prize money that was collected more seedlings were purchased to plant with the children into the vegie gardens.

The preschool enters artworks every year and this year entered produce out of their extremely successful embedded vegetable gardens.



3. Mathoura Station Excursion

The preschool magpie children 5-year-old group had an opportunity to see a huge paddock of wheat on their amazing excursion to Mathoura Station. This was organised as in the learning program the children had been growing their own wheat which stemmed from a child's interest. The children also had the opportunity to learn about other farm



activities such as shearing sheep and looking at old farm machinery and had a look at what was left of an old blacksmith's shop The bus trip was quite a hit too.



4. Maintaining relationships with families and educators and Health and safety during covid-19

With the COVID-19 outbreak, the preschool team sent out videos of storytelling and group times as well as home learning packs for the children and families who were choosing to isolate. This helped to keep the children and families engaged and provide some normality to being isolated, for them to see they are still a valued part of our Preschool family even if they are choosing to stay at home. We already had embedded important hygiene and safety practices at preschool, but these have been reflected on and strengthened in this time. Both Families and educators though the survey have responded that they felt supported in this time.

Community Involvement

Over the years we have supported many charity events together but because of Covid-19 this has restricted the amount of community activities we have been able to participate in. This has had to look differently so as we could still participate. We have still celebrated Mother's Day, PJ and crazy hair week for Asthma foundation, and a parent came to Preschool to read us a story in French. We also participated in the National Simultaneous Storytime 2020. National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS) is held annually by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). Every year a picture book, written and illustrated by an Australian author and illustrator, is read simultaneously.

Before the outbreak we had ST George Bank Dragon come and visit and we held Father's Day/Footy Colours Week: where we celebrated our dads and special people through lots of fun activities and raised awareness and funds for kids with cancer. We look forward to being able to actively participate in community events in the future.



Service Report: Deniliquin Child Care Centre

Completed by: **Donna Crane/ Melanie Penglis, Nominated Supervisors**

Service Overview



Deniliquin Child Care Centre is licensed for 55 children per day, five days per week. Our operating hours are 8am-6pm. Our Centre comprises of four rooms:

- *Puggles (0-1)* – 9 children, four educators. Total current enrolments- 16 children.
- *Possums (1-2)* – 11 children, four educators. Total current enrolments-23 children.
- *Joeys (2-3)* – 14 children, four educators. Total current enrolments- 26 children.
- *Wombats (3-6)* – up to 19 children, 4 educators Total current enrolments- 36 children.

We currently have a total of 101 children with permanent enrolments at the service and cater for the care and education needs of 88 permanent families within the local and surrounding communities. We also offer casual care to families who access the Preschool Service, and the Mobile Child Care and Preschool Service. Of these families, at least 5 children are consistent casual enrolments over the School Holidays, who have either accessed the service in the past or have siblings who attend the Child Care Service.

The Deniliquin Children's Centre employs twenty-three educators as primary educators within the Child Care Centre. In 2020 we have supported 4 cert 3 trainees, 4 diploma trainees and 1 school-based trainee.

Service focus for the year

QA1: Educational Program and Practice-*Make program and practice more responsive to children and available to families.* The leadership team reviewed the educational program and practice policy and developed an in-depth procedure and a set of tools for all educators to be able to better understand and contribute to the cycle of planning. 12 months was dedicated to the new tools and procedure and will be reviewed by the leadership team toward the end of 2020. Lead educators were asked to reflect on the tools and procedure via a survey, which focused on the functionality, layout, and language of the documents. Overall, more educators have a clearer understanding of the cycle of planning and how to contribute to children's documentation. The simple layout of the observation tools has allowed more educators to learn how to record observations and intentionally link the learning to the EYLF.

QA2: Children's Health and Safety-*Embed healthy lifestyles into the minds of children and educators*

We have continued to embed excellent systems in our Kookaburra kitchen, Kellie Crossley has continued to support Debbie in providing a healthy and delicious home cooked menu each fortnight for our children and educators. We ensure every child who requires a modification to their diet, such as food allergy, intolerance, or modification has a plan in place for the Kookaburra kitchen staff, educators and families.

In 2020 we introduced a Work Health and Safety Officer in each service, their role is to oversee and coordinate with the nominated supervisor on WHS systems such as emergency evacuations, risk assessments, risk identification and maintenance, first-aid audits, logging of safety checklists, hygiene schedules, incident, injury, illness and trauma records. This role is vital to ensuring compliance systems are regularly maintained and implemented. Felicity has been an amazing support to our WHS reps this year, coordinating regular meetings, trainings, and mentoring.

QA3: Physical Environment-*The outdoor environment meets the needs of the children, educators, and the community.*

We have a steering committee overseeing an Outdoor Project Plan that will ensure that our outdoor environment will become a space that evokes wonder, curiosity, and adventure for our children. Currently we are aspiring to have a bike track, swings, larger softfall area, hill/mound, music wall, a cubby and mud kitchen area and extra shaded areas for play. Already we have achieved an outdoor dining area, planted trees, erected a shade sail, had the Garden Planner come with a drone to take aerial images to support our planning.

QA4: Staffing Arrangements-*Develop an engaged and quality team*

We have undergone many staffing changes over the last year, with maternity leave, new trainees, and leadership change. We have undertaken a new PDR cycle; educators have attended an online professional development webinar and set actions into their PDR plan. I feel educators are engaged and feeling supported in the workplace even throughout a global pandemic. This was reflected in the 2020 'educator satisfaction survey'. We will continue to grow and support each educator through their PDR goals and have begun to offer allocated time at each team meeting for all educators to complete their reflection and update their actions.



QA5: Relationships with Children-*We will be responsive, reflective, and engaged with every child.*

Relationships with children are the foundations of each educator's practice. It is in evidence in educators work with children. The new program and practice tools support all children to be more holistically represented in our programs and planning cycle. We are engaging children in each step of the process. Children's voices are evident in their learning, the program, the room goals, and projects. The data from the child profiles drive individual outcomes for each child. Lead educators are using the tools in a respectful and meaningful way for all children and are supporting all educators to be actively contributing to children's learning and documentation.

QA6: Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities-*Develop and maintain respectful partnerships with family and community.* We were well on our way to embedding greater opportunities to be actively involved and seen in our community, we had scheduled quarterly excursions, booked our special person's celebrations, sought permissions to get out and around the block and then Covid-19 pandemic hit! This pandemic has altered not only our service but our community as a whole! Our way of living and being has shifted, but through our relationships with families and our community we have continued to be able to provide high quality outcomes. We supported our families through up to date and accurate information, we supported both educators and children to stay at home if that was their choice, we adjusted our way of programming and sent home educational and fun packs for children to access whilst they were in isolation at home, we found ways to connect through Storypark and over the fence, we maintained a safe environment for children, families and educators to attend, we had an action plan in place to ensure this occurred every day. All this would not have been possible without trusting relationships and excellent support from our GM, QC and Management Committee.



QA7: Governance and Leadership-Develop effective systems at Deniliquin Children's Centre that build professionalism and a high-quality service

We separated the roles of Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader. February 2020 brought great change within our leadership team as I went into childcare as the full-time Nominated Supervisor, Melanie went into the role of Educational Leader 4 days a week and Kellie Stubbings acted as the Nominated Supervisor of the Preschool. This was a mentoring and support plan for 6 months to build the capacity of leadership and to define the roles of NS and EL. This model brought as many challenges as it did rewards and ultimately cemented lasting changes of the leadership team. In this time, we have worked on many system changes Transitioning children, rosters, outdoor supervision, hygiene and infection control, regular audits just to name a few.

Highlights for the year-

1. Changes to leadership model

Defining the roles of the NS and EL are bringing greater outcomes to all stakeholders. The opportunity to have Catherine Hydon's mentoring for the Educational Leaders is proving to be so beneficial and will bring even greater outcomes for educators, programs, children, families, and leadership.

2. Embedding new program and practice tools

The confidence the tools are bringing to educators and the outcomes to children's learning are amazing. They are bringing clarity to our work and enabling educational leaders to identify gaps and supports required.

3. Maintaining relationships with Orana during Covid-19

Our children and educators reached out to one of our closest neighbours during the first wave of Covid-19. Our Wombats children painted pictures and hung them on the fence as messages of hope and friendship. In return the residents would hang their paintings and messages. The joy this brought not only the children, but the community was beautiful. The residents would wave from the verandah and the children would wait eagerly by the fence everyday for any sought of communication. We will continue to connect to Orana and



the residents and are so looking forward to the day that we can do it in person.



4. Community Involvement Relationships have remained the foundations of our service.

Our community involvement in 2020 has been limited due to the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic. We were still able to display our children's artwork at the local annual show in March, we had the St George Dragon Visit, we had to postpone many of our family celebrations such as grandparent read to me week, mother's day. We also had to cancel our annual Cupid Undie Run team and Can assist high tea but we will put them back on the agenda for next year.





Service Report: Deniliquin Mobile Children's Service

Completed by: **Tammy Cairnduff** – Nominated Supervisor



Service Overview –

The Deniliquin Mobile Children's service is privileged to educate children in rural and remote communities surrounding Deniliquin. We currently service Pretty Pine, Blighty, Wanganella, Wakool and Bunnaloo, providing childcare and preschool, running five days a week to meet parent's needs.

Our staff comprises of an Early Childhood Teacher, 3 x Diploma, a Diploma in training and a Certificate 3. The team of dedicated educators prepare equipment and resources, travelling daily to our communities providing unique and interesting educational experiences tailored for each individual child.

Our Mobile community consists of 58 permanent children, 17 casual children across all venues from 42 families. We are funded through

- NSW Department of Education Preschool funding
- NSW Department of Education Long Day Care Funding
- Department of Education and Training (Commonwealth) Community
- Childcare Fund viability Funding
- Department of Education and Training (Commonwealth) Child Care Subsidy

Service Focus for the year

Program/Documentation –

Story Park continues to be an amazing tool for us to communicate to our families, having a tool that captures their child's learning and being able to get that to the families on the day, receiving feedback on their child's learning and also being able to receive notification about children's emerging interests and routines to inform our curriculum.

We have implemented and had training with new tools that were created to support educators in achieving a child's full learning cycle with quality outcomes. The new tools have assisted us in planning for the children's current and future learning and how it communicates children's learning and progress.

Development of our Preschool program and infants program with the help from our professional development, parent feedback and the teams reflective practices has allowed us to organise it in ways to maximise opportunities for each of our children's learning and development with focus on play base learning. The mobile team this year has been inspired with how the program is going and the families positive feedback but more importantly the children's engagement with them contributing their voices on ideas, interests and knowledge.

Practices -

This year has seen the implementation of a new and revised Educational Program and Practice Policy to ensure children's learning and development are guided by the learning outcomes of EYLF. Many hours of work went into this document to support educators to effectively implement the cycle of planning to enhance programs and practices. We continue to embed a responsive program to all stake holders. (Quality Area 1)

Embedding into our program children's health is still a major goal for Mobile. Each staff member on Mobile has undertaken Munch and Move training with certain educators championing this area of children's education. We have experiences on every program now for the education of children's healthy eating along with hygiene activities, teaching children about germs, hand washing, nose-blowing, and coughing. We have had great experiences with our bush walks and scavenger hunts and recently during COVID times (as all our playground areas at services were locked down), going back to some old fashion favourites with ball games being a hit and at the top of the list. (Quality Area 2 & 3).



From reflection for our Personal Development we are committed to becoming proficient with using our PDR tool to its maximum. We are using it as a mentoring program to support staff in acquiring new skills from the goals they have set. All staff have completed a personal webinar on topics related to their PDR with actions to move forward growing their professional standards with new knowledge and skills. (Quality Area 4).

Inspiring conversations with children during play has embedded a responsive and meaningful building of trust over our Services and engaged the children's voices for their learning opportunities following along their interests, with our revisit programs. Leaders on Mobile have utilised inclusion support for personal development along with growing skills to be more equipped to ensure all children's rights are being heard and implemented daily. (Quality Area 5)

Collaborating in partnership with community and families, we finished the last half of the year with the engagement of Karen Wilson for Cultural training which has helped us with our project of storytelling, giving us knowledge and advice which we have embed this year into our program. COVID times has stopped us having family functions and events, which we will aspire to continue with, after the world returns to some stability. While we have been waiting for this the Mobile team has been connecting with families and community through Story Park, videos, zooming and we are currently compiling a Community/Family Folder with information on the wider community, needs of families, needs of children, how to access and utilise resources (Quality Area 6)

From the end of last year and the start of this year the Mobile Service has been preparing for Assessment and Rating where we had the opportunity for an authorised officer come out and visit the service to support us in this process. Through this process we developed an action list which together we have worked through putting in place more detailed venue management plans, defining roles for Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader as they are the same person, clear routines for staff at venues, detailed risk assessments for children/staff/families health and safety and audits for relationships, sustainability, indoor and outdoor. (Quality Area 7)

Highlights for the year



We have had some amazing experiences on Mobile over the past 12 months which the team presents in inviting and engaging ways, this is incredibly inspiring for all stakeholders. The children across all services went crazy about creatures in the ocean, which at the time we didn't have much in the ocean way on the truck except for some loose parts play and iPad technology. The next week the team had put together an amazing program with a full aquarium, the children were blown away, their faces, their questions, their participation was over whelming to see as an early childhood teacher. Mobile has created many incredible play and learning spaces this year which all have been highlights for the team.

We welcomed Wanganella to our Mobile Family at the start of 2020 and the community could not have been more welcoming. We have built wonderful relationships with new families and members of the community. The children have an amazing playground and hall to learn and grow in. We are spoilt at Wanganella through the friendship we have made with "Simo" the General Store/Post Office/Tavern owner, who brings the team over take away lunch sometimes, this being our only venue we don't have to make and take our lunch with us. We continue to build new relationships with the community at Wanganella and our service is growing all the time.



During COVID times the children's interest turned to nature and everything that was in their immediate environment.

Mobile has the amazing advantage of being in wide open spaces where there are no people to come into contact with. We had a great time investigating nature through bush walking and our scavenger hunts. These experiences the children worked together to navigate through their lists and find items while bush walking, sharing joy in their discoveries of their ever-changing landscape. Having these opportunities to offer bush walking on Mobile is always a highlight and such a privilege.

Community

Mobile has built great relationships over the past 12 months with inclusion support. We have been working with Kurrajong in providing strategies for best practice for the inclusion of every child attending Mobile. We have also finished our Cultural training with Karen Wilson who educated us story telling which we have embedded into our program and she continues to support us with valuable resources and knowledge.

Throughout the year the Mobile team has participated and hosted a range of community gatherings. Footy Colours Day celebrating the football finals, Father's Day which was very well attended by families sharing in a hotdog and outdoor games. It is great to see everyone come together at these events, feeling connected to their community and you can really feel a sense of belonging participating alongside the children, families and friends. Even though we have had to scale down events with COVID from the start of this year we have worked hard to stay connected with our families, videoing story book time for the children also asking for input from our families to create programs.



Service Report for the Toy Library

Completed by: **Penny Gallpen**



It has certainly been an unusual year for our Toy Library. After settling into our new space, we welcomed members to be able to come in and play and enjoy our full catalogue of toys. The doors were then closed for two months (due to COVID-19) while we waited to be allowed to reopen to the public with strict hygiene and safety protocols in place. Some of our members have enthusiastically returned to their usual borrowing routines, whilst others have decided to stay away for the time being. Our DCC Services remain the largest borrowers of our fantastic resource and are doing a great job of ensuring our toys are clean and safe for all users.

Opening hours remain the same for week days being 11.5 hours over 3 days. Members are able to access the service outside of these hours with the help of Admin staff and this is being used frequently. We are currently unable to open Saturday mornings as this is reliant on volunteers and is not practical during this time.

At the end of June we had 49 financial members:

23 Duty Members

20 Non-Duty Members

6 Group Members

There are 12 families on the Occasional borrowing list who have borrowed in the last 12 months. They pay a \$10 fee per borrow and are usually grandparents during holiday periods or parents wanting to borrow larger toys for a birthday party.



There are 31 families in the New Parent's Group. Facilitated by Intereach, the new Mums and Bubs are given an overview of our service and receive a voucher entitling them to their first borrowing for free. They are sent a periodic email as a reminder of the value of the Toy Library if they feel they would benefit from joining as their child develops. The response from this group has been positive and quite a few have used their voucher or joined as members. We were able to host two groups before the COVID-19 shutdown. The meetings are now via messenger and parents are invited to come in and view our facilities in their own time.

The main areas of focus for the past year have been:

- 1 Return all remaining toys from storage and find the best fit for them in the new area. Have also added some toys previously owned by Mobile Service so all services may now have access to them. Have been rearranging some shelves and areas for better flow and fit as all toys have returned.
- 2 Have created new category labels to display for members to see toy range and make it easier to locate by colour coding. Have also made new labels and sub-categories for shelving. The use of colour dots within the Beginner and Puzzles sections for developmental stages makes finding appropriate toys easier.
- 3 Changing the returns system so that all toys go to into the returns cot. As many toys are borrowed outside of Toy Library hours, this enables me to keep track of toys and pieces, ensure labels and computer are up to date and accurate and make sure toys are put back in the correct area where they can be found easily.



This allows the Toy Library to run more efficiently for all users.