St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee
Minutes

28 October 2019

Our Vision

A City which values its heritage, cultural diversity, sense of place and natural environment.

A progressive City which is prosperous, sustainable and socially cohesive, with a strong community spirit.
1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ST PETERS CHILD CARE CENTRE & PRE-SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 JULY 2019................................................................. 1

2. PRESIDING MEMBER’S COMMUNICATION ........................................................................... 1

3. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE............................................................................................... 1

4. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE ..................................................................................................... 1

5. WRITTEN NOTICES OF MOTION.......................................................................................... 1

6. STAFF REPORTS................................................................................................................... 1

  6.1 DIRECTORS QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2019................................. 2

7. OTHER BUSINESS.................................................................................................................... 9

8. NEXT MEETING...................................................................................................................... 9

9. CLOSURE.................................................................................................................................. 9
VENUE: Staff Room, St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-school

HOUR: 5.32pm

PRESENT

Committee Members
- Cr Evonne Moore (Presiding Member)
- Cr Kester Moorhouse
- Ms Georgia Brodribb
- Mr Bill Fuller

Staff
- Sharon Perkins (General Manager, Corporate Services)
- Alice Parsons (Director, St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School)

APOLOGIES: Ms Monica Di Lernia

ABSENT: Nil

TERMS OF REFERENCE:
The St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee is established to fulfil the following functions:
- to provide feedback on the St Peters Child Care & Pre-School Centre’s Strategic Plan and Business Plan;
- to undertake general oversight of issues related to child welfare, programming and safety of the Centre; and
- to execute such powers as the Council may lawfully delegate to it.

1. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ST PETERS CHILD CARE CENTRE & PRE-SCHOOL COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 JULY 2019

Cr Moorhouse moved that the minutes of the meeting of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School Committee held on 22 July 2019 be taken as read and confirmed. Seconded by Mr Bill Fuller and carried.

2. PRESIDING MEMBER’S COMMUNICATION

Nil

3. QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Nil

4. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

5. WRITTEN NOTICES OF MOTION

Nil

6. STAFF REPORTS
6.1 DIRECTORS QUARTERLY ACTIVITY REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2019

REPORT AUTHOR: Director, St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool
GENERAL MANAGER: General Manager, Corporate Services
CONTACT NUMBER: 8366 4585
FILE REFERENCE: S/00913
ATTACHMENTS: A

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this Quarterly report is to provide information in respect to the following:

- Provide feedback on the Centre’s Strategic Plan and Business Plan prepared by Centre Management for the Child Care Centre.
- Undertake, under the direction of Council and on behalf of Council, the general oversight of issues related to child welfare, programming and safety of the Centre.
- To execute such powers as the Council may lawfully delegate to it.
- To do anything necessary, expedient or incidental to performing or discharging the functions of the Committee as listed in the terms of Reference or to achieving its objectives.

This report provides the Committee with a status report on the activities of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool for the quarter ended 30 September 2019.

BACKGROUND

The Centre has been in operation since 1976. The Centre is licenced to accommodate 105 children per day, however to ensure the high quality of care the Centre is known for is maintained, the number of available places has been capped at an average of 94 places per day and 98 places during the fourth Term. The Centre provides care for babies from six (6) weeks old through to children aged up to and including five (5) years of age.

The key activities completed during the Quarter ended September 2019, together with actions completed in previous Quarters, as required by the Centre’s Strategic and Business Plans, are included in the Discussion Section of this report.

RELEVANT STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & POLICIES

This report informs the Council on the St Peters Child Care Centre & Preschool activities and supports Council attaining:

Outcome 1: Social Equity: A connected, accessible and pedestrian-friendly community

Objective 1: Convenient and accessible services, information and facilities.
Strategy 1.2: Maximise access to services, facilities, information and activities.
Strategy 1.3: Design and provide safe, high quality facilities and spaces for people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities.

Objective 4: A strong, healthy, resilient and inclusive community.
Strategy 4.2: Encourage and provide opportunities for lifelong learning.
Strategy 4.3: Provide spaces and facilities for people to meet, learn and connect with each other.

The operations of Childcare Centres and Preschools are governed by the National Quality Framework. The Centre’s policies and procedures are reviewed and updated over a twelve (12) month to two (2) year period, in line with National Quality Standards and the Centre’s Continuous Review Policy.
FINANCIAL AND BUDGET IMPLICATIONS
Not Applicable.

EXTERNAL ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS
Nil

SOCIAL ISSUES
The Centre actively promotes a policy of inclusion for all children and their families.
The information provided in the report has no direct social issues which need to be considered.

CULTURAL ISSUES
Not Applicable.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES
Not Applicable.

RESOURCE ISSUES
Not Applicable.

RISK MANAGEMENT
Not Applicable.

CONSULTATION
- Committee Members
  Not Applicable
- Community
  Not Applicable
- Staff
  Not Applicable
- Other Agencies
  Not Applicable

DISCUSSION
Child Numbers
The Centre is licensed for a maximum of 105 children daily; however to ensure a high quality of care, the daily attendance numbers are capped at an average of 94 long day care places per day. Based on current staffing levels, the Centre has capacity for up to 28 under two (2) year old, up to 30 two (2) to three (3) year old and up to 36 over three (3) year old. The mix of the numbers per age group may change on as needs basis. The average number of children for which services were provided for the September 2019 Quarter is detailed in Table 1 below.
The Centre has sufficient staff to accommodate up to an average of 94 children per day, however due to an increase in the number of Child Care Centres, within the area and across the metropolitan area in general, the 2019-2020 Income budget is based on 90 places.

As detailed in Table 1 above, during the September 2019 Quarter, the Centre is meeting the desired capacity for the First Quarter.

As detailed in Figure 1 below, the March and June Quarters traditionally have low attendance numbers, however the Centre has been impacted by the influx of new Centres within the area over the past 18 months. As the new Centres have greater spare capacity and can more readily accommodate the preferred days of parents and carers or are better positioned to hold places for families who wish to commence care later in the year, this presents a challenge to maintain the budgeted occupancy across the entire year.

TABLE 1 – CHILD NUMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Child</th>
<th>Staffing Ratio</th>
<th>Number Allowed at the Centre (maximum)</th>
<th>Number of Children - Average for the Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Under Twos (2) (6 weeks - 24 months) | 1:4 | 12 | 11.44
| Emerald Room | | | 11.33
| Ruby Room | 1:4 | 16 | 15.46
| | | | 16.73
| Over Twos (2) (2 years to 3 years) | 1:5 | 15 | 13.18
| Aquamarine Room | | | 12.35
| Diamond Room | 1:5 | 15 | 15.44
| | | | 14.58
| Over Threes (3) | 1:10 | 18 | 16.30
| Amethyst Room | 1:10 | 18 | 16.75
| (3 years to 4 years) | | | 17.18
| Preschool | 1:10 | 18 | 18.46
| (4 years to 5 years) | | | 17.81
| Total | 94 | 90.28 | 90.55
| Budget | - | 90.00 | 90.00
| Number of sessions where 90 children attended for the quarter | 39 days out of a total of 65 days | 58 days out of a total of 60 days
| Average attendance – Year to Date | 90.28|
To minimise impact, rostered days off (RDO) are scheduled for the days where the attendance numbers are low, thereby reducing the need for casual shifts to cover rostered days off.

**Educator to Child Ratios**

The Centre is required by the National Quality Standards to maintain a minimum Educator to Child Ratio at all times. The minimum Educator to Child ratios are detailed in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Grouping</th>
<th>Educator to Child Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-24 months</td>
<td>1:4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 months – 36 months</td>
<td>1:5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37 months to 5 years</td>
<td>1:10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Figure 2, due to the lower than expected enrolments, the Centre has exceeded the minimum child to staff ratios for the March 2019 and June 2019 Quarters. For the September 2019 Quarter, the Centre has only exceed the minimum child to staff ratio in the Over three year old age group.

**FIGURE 2: STAFF TO CHILD RATIO**

**Staffing**

To ensure that the Centre meets the required staff to child ratios, the Full-time Equivalent Educator positions required are:

- Under 2's 7.00 FTE
- 2 - 3 years 6.00 FTE
- Over 3's 4.00 FTE

To ensure the ongoing continuity of care, during periods of staff absences, the Educators are sourced from within the casual staffing pool. Not only does this ensure that children are cared for by familiar Educators when their primary care givers are absent from the Centre, it ensures that operational costs are maintained, as there is less reliance on engaging temporary contract staff through temporary contract labour hire agencies to cover absences.

As shown in Figure 2, the staff numbers have been relatively steady. The Centre has total 29 employees, which consist of three (3) support staff comprising of the Centre’s director, administration and cook staff, twelve(12) full-time Educators, five (5) part-time Educators and eight (8) casual Educators, with one casual educator resigning during the September Quarter.
Currently there is one (1) full-time vacancy. Where possible the vacancy is back filled through additional casual shifts or part-time staff increasing the number of days worked. Recruitment for the vacancy will commence upon the finalisation of the 2020 enrolments.

Universal Access to Early Childhood Education

Funding can be claimed for every four (4) year old child who remains at the Centre in the twelve (12) months prior to full-time schooling and has access to fifteen (15) hours of preschool services, providing the child is not accessing a preschool service from another external service, such as a Department of Education Preschool or Kindergarten.

For the year-to-date period to September 2019, the Centre has received $2,117, under the Universal Access Scheme for the children utilising the Centre for the pre-school service. The funding has been used to offset the salary costs of the Early Childhood Teachers.

National Quality Standard

Staff practices, policies and procedures are continually reviewed in line with the new National Quality Standards and a Quality Improvement Plan has been completed. The Centre has undergone a round of Rating and Assessment. The Centre received an overall rating of ‘Meeting’ under the revised framework.

The seven (7) areas identified under the National Quality Standard are:

- Educational program and practice
- Children’s health and safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing arrangements (including the number of staff looking after children)
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership and service management

The Centre has been rated as ‘Meeting’ the standards set under the revised The National Quality Framework which came into effect on 1 February 2018, having met all of the forty (40) of the elements.
Under the National Quality Standards, the Centre is required to be reviewed annually. In preparation for the Annual National Quality Standard Review, the Centre’s Director and Educational Leader have been benchmarking with other Centres to share knowledge and gain ideas.

Since the initial ratings and assessment, the Centre has:

- continued to implement an inclusive program, with aim is to create safe and inclusive environments for children with disabilities and additional needs;
- investigated the introduction of a variety of excursions; and
- continued to critically reflect on and improve Centre practices.

In addition, the courtyard, next to the kitchen has been transformed into a suitability focused yard, with raised garden beds, a compost bin and a worm farm, for projects relating to protecting our environment.

**Work Health and Safety**

In line with the long term Veteran Tree Management Plan that was presented to the Committee at its meeting held on 25 February 2019, the second phase of “Gum Tree” safety management plan, which includes the re-inspection has been completed. It should be noted that following the inspection, no further pruning is required. The next scheduled inspection is June 2020.

**Networking Activities**

**Karoonda East Murray Council**

The Council’s General Manager, Corporate Services, was approached by the Chief Executive Officer of the Karoonda East Murray Council for some advice and assistance as the finalise the opening their own local Child Care service. The General Manager, Corporate Services assisted the Council staff with interviews for the recruitment of the Service Co-ordinator, Qualified Educators and Assistant Educators. In addition, the General Manager, Corporate Services along with the St Peters Childcare centre & Pre-school Director visited the new Centre to provide feedback on their environment and to provide assistance with key information regarding the National Quality standards to ensure the Karoonda East Murray Centre received its final service approvals. In addition, an invitation was extended to the Service Co-ordinator, which was accepted to visit the St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-school to spend time with Director to discuss the industry expectation and the National Quality framework and the Centres Educational Leader to discuss the Early Years Learning Framework.

Following the appointment of the Qualified Educators, the Service Co-ordinator had a follow up visit with two (2) Qualified Educators, who spent a couple of days working on the floor, alongside our Educators to gain a working aspect of a Childcare Centre. This has been a valuable experience for all involved, which allowed our Centres Educators to demonstrate the foundations of Early Childhood Education and expanding their professional networks.

**Ratings & Assessment Case Study**

In August, the Centre was approached by Ms Sue Emmett from Flinders University to participate in a case study for ACECQA with respect to the Ratings and Assessment process. The Centre was selected as it was one (1) of fifteen (15) Centres Australia wide which improved their rating, and one (1) of only two (2) Centres in South Australia which achieved an improvement in its Rating following the second assessment. The report and research undertaken largely focused on Quality Area 1: Educational Programing and Practice and Quality Area7 Governance and Leadership, with the emphasis being on how the Centre found the Assessment and Rating process, where we used the initial Rating and Assessment to make improvements and the approach adopted to implement those improvements. Ms Emmett was present at the Centre for two (2) days at the Centre, interviewing the Centre’s Director, Ms Alice Parsons, and the Centres Assistant Director, Ms Michaela Gardner and the Centres Educational Leader Mr Konstantinos Dalianas and undertaking observations of practice within the Service. This was a great opportunity to network while demonstrating the high quality Early Education Childcare Service provided by the Council and the staff of the St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-School.
Strategic Plan

The Centre’s Strategic and Business Plans have been approved by the Committee and the Council. The Centre’s Business Plan established Key Result Areas/Targets. The achievement of the outcomes up to September 2019, are contained in Attachment A.

OPTIONS

Not Applicable.

CONCLUSION

The St Peters Child Care Centre & Pre-school is recognised as a leader in the provision of high quality child care. It is expected that this will continue. The Centre on average for the September quarter has 90 children accessing the service on a daily basis, with an expectation that this will increase throughout the year. Despite the increase in licenced places the Centre continues to maintain a waiting list for 2020, with a significant proportion of these referrals coming from word of mouth.

COMMENTS

Nil.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received and noted.

Mr Bill Fuller moved:

That the report be received and noted.

Seconded by Ms Georgia Brodribb and carried.
7. OTHER BUSINESS
   Nil

8. NEXT MEETING
   Monday 24 February 2020

9. CLOSURE
   There being no further business the Presiding Member declared the meeting closed at 6.20pm.

Cr Evonne Moore
PRESIDING MEMBER

Minutes Confirmed on ___________________________(date)