Annual Report 2010
**Contextual Statement and Reflection**

Seaford Rise Children's Centre (SRCC) and its sister centre, Seaford District Community Children's Centre (SDCCC), offer a range of services across 2 sites which are situated approximately 2 kilometres apart. The centres share a Management Committee (Governing Council) which meets twice a term at SRCC during which the 3 directors, Pre-school, Childcare and OSCH, and the committee members discuss the issues and future directions for the 3 services.

The current catchment of SRCC and SDCCC are the suburbs of Seaford, Seaford Rise, Seaford Meadows and Moana, all of which are in the 5169 postcode. However, due to the new Seaford Meadows suburb's proximity to Seaford Kindergarten, many families from Seaford Meadows are choosing to enrol there. The 5169 postcode covers approximately 15 square kilometres on the outer southern coast of the Adelaide metropolitan area. Its population density is more than double that of the entire larger local council area. SRCC also receives enrolments from McLaren Vale, Aldinga, Hackham and Port Noarlunga South.

**Highlights for 2010:**
- Site closure for EYLF training and development
- Urrimbirra excursion
- Louise Porter (Psychologist) workshop at SRCC for staff and parents
- Wheelathon on 3/6/2010
- McDonalds Camp Quality Puppet show at SRCC
- Hairlairious Hair day
- Patch Theatre Excursion
- Fundraising Evening Art Show
- We visited the Asian Expo at Seaford Rise Primary School
- Animal Capers came to kindy
- We finally spent our Water Grant money on snazzy push down taps in the children's bathrooms!
- Delta Dog came to kindy
- We hosted 3 work experience students over the course of the year
- CAFHs' screenings every term
- 3 day time end of term celebrations in term 1, 2 and 3, and a night time family picnic for term 4
- Teaching the children the Australian National Anthem throughout the year, which they sing beautifully at each end of term celebration!
- The instigation every week of Music Monday, during which we teach children dances, and Drama Wednesday, during which children get a chance to role play various stories
- My co-director, Lisa, bringing Business Manager up-to-date, and organising our new website
- The categorising of our Library is approximately half done—a big job!
- Our activity room was cleaned out and is now a usable room
- We have decided to minimise our fundraising due to the extra work it causes parents and our overworked staff. We are raising the kindergarten fees instead
- Our shed extension has finally happened!!! Now I just need to get our vegetable garden and the concreting around the shed completed.

**Category Ranking and Staffing for 2011**

Category ranking is a priority assigned to each preschool to give an indication of the degree of social disadvantage and geographical isolation a centre may have. Our category ranking for 2011 has changed from a 2 to a 1, which means that our child:staff ratio will now be 1:10 rather than 1:11, which is a positive for our centre. According to the Data and Education Measurement Unit, this change is due to a higher school card complexity at our feeder schools. Our category ranking has been regularly changing since 1996, and it can depend on the ranking of other centres which therefore impacts on where we are ranked.

Due to a decrease in our enrolments and attendances, our ECW allocation has been reduced from 1.5 FTE to 1.0 FTE.
**Strategic Direction 1: Children are effective communicators**

**Intended outcomes**
- Children interact verbally and non-verbally to express ideas and feelings, and understand and respect the perspective of others

**Targets**
- The “Blue Group” (children starting school in Term 1, 2011) will improve by at least 2 intervals in their verbal and non-verbal interactions by the end of Term 3, 2010, as measured by the centre developed effective communication continuum.

**Indicators of success**
- Children engaging in enjoyable interactions using verbal and non-verbal language through:
  - listening and responding to effectively to peers and adults
  - using language to express themselves effectively in a range of contexts and purposes

**Strategic Actions**
- Provide varied opportunities for children to listen, respond and express themselves:
  - to a range of children and adults
  - within a variety of contexts and varied purposes

**Outcomes**
- Of the 23 children in the target group, 5 already used effective communication strategies. The remaining 18 all improved in at least one area of communication development (i.e. looking at, responding to, and initiating speaking). 4 children improved by 2 intervals, 5 children by 3 intervals and 1 child by 4 intervals.

**Implications for the future**
- Continue to make a priority improving the communication skills of all the children at the Kindergarten.
- Use the 3 Rs Wellbeing Scale in Term 1 in 2011 as this enables a site to obtain a mean score, (a score of 3.5 is considered to be the lowest acceptable score which is indicative of a supportive environment) through observing children's interactions with the educators and other children. We will then revisit the Wellbeing scale in Term 4, with the expectation that we will have improved our initial score.
- Implement “PALS Social Skills Programme—Playing and learning to socialise” on a yearly basis.
Strategic Direction 2: Children interact effectively with others

Intended outcomes
- Children show social initiative by co-operating successfully as a group.

Targets
- The “Blue Group” (children starting school in Term 1, 2011) will improve by 2 intervals in their entry skills and their ability to maintain play by the end of Term 3, 2011, as measured by the centre developed effective interaction continuum.

Indicators of success
- Children interacting happily/positively in an inclusive manner through using entry skills successfully and successfully maintaining play

Strategic Actions
- Provide varied activities for children to develop entry skills and skills to maintain play
- Implement “PALS Social Skills Programme—Playing and learning to socialise” on a yearly basis

Outcomes
- Of the 23 children in the target group, 12 already used skills to interact effectively while playing.
- Of the remaining 11 children, 2 children improved by one interval on the ‘maintaining play skills’ continuum only.
- The remaining 9 children improved on both the ‘entry skills’ continuum and the ‘maintaining play’ continuum.
- Of these 9, on the ‘entry skills’ continuum 1 child improved by 1 interval, 4 children improved by 2 intervals, and 4 children improved by 3 intervals.
- On the ‘maintaining play skills’ continuum, 5 children improved by 1 interval and 4 children improved by 2 intervals.

Implications for the future
- Continue to make a priority improving the effective interaction during play of all the children at the Kindergarten.
- Use the 3 Rs Wellbeing Scale in Term 1 in 2011 as this enables a site to obtain a mean score, (a score of 3.5 is considered to be the lowest acceptable score which is indicative of a supportive environment) through observing children’s interactions with the educators and other children. We will then revisit the Wellbeing scale in Term 4, with the expectation that we will have improved our initial score.
- Implement “PALS Social Skills Programme—Playing and learning to socialise” on a yearly basis
PALS Social Skills Programme—Playing and learning to socialise

One of the strategies we used to ensure we made progress with both of our strategic directions was to purchase and implement an excellent programme titled “PALS Social Skills Programme—Playing and learning to socialise” with which we taught the children constructive ways to solve problems that arise in social situations. The programme consists of ten sessions, each focusing on a particular skill. One skill builds on another so that the programme gradually progresses to the more complex skill required for competent social interaction. The skills taught are:

1. Greeting others
2. Taking turns: talking and listening
3. Taking turns at play
4. Sharing
5. Asking for help
6. Identifying feelings
7. Empathy
8. Overcoming fear and anxiety
9. Managing frustration
10. Calming down and speaking up

Each week we sent out parent information sheets to encourage parents to support and practice the skills at home with their child. At the end of the term, I provided a parent feedback sheet via the children’s pockets, and 12 surveys were returned.

The first question asked, “What was the most helpful/useful social skills handout for you as a parent and why?” Parents could tick as many of the boxes as they liked.

Parent comments:
- “One of the handouts talked about issues that are small to an adult are actually big issues for a child. I was teaching my son not to worry about these problems as they were trivial but now I have learnt that I must teach him to solve these problems as this will help him cope with the big issues later in life.”
- “Taking breaths—we reminded our daughter to use this skill when frustrated with her brother.”
- Re: managing frustration handout — “This is a daily occurrence for all members of our family. Our daughter is able to role model to her older brother. It makes me aware of strategies to work through the problem.”
- “I found them all very interesting and made me think about concepts she is ready for that I didn’t think she would be. The managing frustration was particularly good with the suggestion of 3 deep breaths—we are all trying this technique as a family, which gives my daughter an idea of when we as parents are getting frustrated.”
- “I found that most of the PALS social skills were very helpful to myself, and to other people that I’ve talked
“Too hard to choose only one! I found them all as important as each other, and skills that you think children just adapt, but this isn’t always the case.”

“I was frustrated with the way he would not greet people and just thought he would do it when he was ready. I thought he was really rude! But now he does it without a thought. I think he is better at sharing but he still needs work on taking turns and speaking up.”

“We have taken a bit from nearly all of them and practise them here, such as the relaxation method when she is mad or fighting with her sister. Also taking turns is good for both the girls as sometimes they don’t.”

“All of them—very relevant to where he is at!”

One mother ticked the ‘overcoming fear and anxiety’ and the ‘identifying feelings’ handouts and wrote “due to personal reasons that our family is going through” as the reason she chose these handouts.

The second question asked what did their child like most about the PALS Social Skills Programme and why?

Parent comments:

- “My son said it was fun because he didn’t know what puppets were going to be used next.”
- “Loved singing the ‘hello’, ‘my turn’ songs at home.”
- “I haven’t heard my daughter talk about the puppets or the DVDs but the songs have all had great work outs!!!”
- “When I asked her she said she liked the pictures identifying feelings and talking about feelings the most. I also heard her singing some of the songs at home so they must have had an impact.”
- “She enjoyed the puppets a lot. She even started making a puppet show at home. I also found singing the songs with her helpful and fun.”
- “My son loved the puppet shows but also really enjoyed the singing too! He would be singing the songs to himself in the bath or in the back of the car, but he told me he liked the puppet shows the best.”
- “He would come home and show me some new songs with actions that he had learned.”
- “My daughter expressed that she loved it all.”
- “The puppets were good because she said she learnt when she gets angry she needed to take three karate breaths in through her nose, hold in her belly and blow out and say ‘relax.’ The hello song she said she learnt to look at people then give them a smile and then say hello.”
- “He likes the music, can remember some words!”

Director’s comment:

When asked by their parents what they like most about PALS, apparently none of the children mentioned the DVD. However, we found that the kindergarten children were totally engaged when watching these 4 to 5 minute scenarios of children and a puppet involved in play situations where a conflict of some sort was enacted. The children sat very still and listened well, and even asked to watch them at other times.
The third question asked if it would be beneficial to implement the programme once each year?

Parent comments:

- “Definitely.”
- “Yes, definitely beneficial. I am amazed at how much he has absorbed. I listened to him explaining to his friend about sharing and taking turns and finding something to do while he waits. It was like he was talking word for word from what he had learned in the lesson. He then asked me to time 2 mins so that they could share a toy.”
- “Very beneficial, when social skills are important preparation for school, rather than focussing on academic items. Social skills are the foundation to learning.”
- “It is a fantastic programme—teaching our children positive steps to improving their lives. It is long lasting and will hopefully motivate parents to consider their role in making socially appropriate decisions. A must for all children.”
- “Yes. Social skills are often overlooked and as a parent it was great to be able to talk to her about these things, with some ideas on how to reinforce the concepts at home. I have seen a big improvement in her sharing and taking turns, which just might be the influence of kindy in general, but I think this programme has had an impact on this as well.”
- “I think it is a very good idea because I believe it will become very helpful for all parents.”
- “Yes, I think it is beneficial. Not only is it teaching the children, it’s sharing the knowledge with the parents as well (as all levels of teaching I believe should be backed up at home).”
- “Yes it is beneficial as it gives parents other ideas on how to deal with their children during difficult situations. Such as calming down a frustrated and angry child.”
- “Yes, it reminds us of taking that deep breath but also the kids love that different interaction.”
- “Yes, I think it’s a great programme and she has learnt a lot from it and so have I as a parent, especially the relaxation.”
- “Yes, I think it’s great.”

Then we asked for any other comments?

- “He has told me that I must not interrupt him when he’s talking to me and that I must stop what I am doing and look at him. He didn’t do too well on the ‘3 breaths to calm down’ exercise though. When upset I told him to take deep slow breaths and then I asked him, ‘Now what do you do?’ His answer was, ‘Scream.’ We will work on this.”
- “When I had the time to read them, the handouts were very informative. Some parents would find that much text intimidating.”
- “Would be great to use at childcare—reinforcing it for smaller children—much the same as, ‘Stop it, I don’t like it’ is a mantra. Well done—fantastic!”
- “This has helped him in areas he needed to improve.”
- “Great!”
- “I love what you’re doing! It really helps.”

Data Analysis

Overall, 100% of the returned surveys were positive about the PALS programme. We will be implementing it in term 3 of each year.
Enrolment and Attendance Data

Enrolment data for 2010 shows that our enrolments decreased by 13% from 2009 to 2010. Parents generally want to send their children to the Kindergarten which is closest to the school in which they are intending to enrol their children, and anecdotal parent comments and perception data suggests that another nearby school is in favour at the moment.

Our attendance/enrolment percentages are pretty much on par with the Southern Region’s percentages, and slightly above DECS percentages, except for term 4.

Total enrolments 2008 - 2010

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<th>Term</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
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Total attendance percentages 2008 - 2010

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<td>86.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>85.7</td>
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Seaforth Rise Children’s Centre

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Southern Adelaide and DECS attendance percentages

<table>
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<th>Term</th>
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<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>88.8</td>
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<td>93.4</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>87.8</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>87.2</td>
<td>90.3</td>
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In 2010, children from our centre went to 7 feeder schools; 83.3% enrolled in Government schools, and 15.9% in Non-Government schools. Seaford Rise Primary and All Saints Catholic Primary continue to be our 2 main feeder schools, taking 79% and 13.5% of our children respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<th>2010</th>
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<td>0921 - Christies Beach Primary School</td>
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<td>0313 - Old Noarlunga Primary School</td>
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<td><strong>60.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>79.0</strong></td>
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<td>0720 - Clarendon Primary School</td>
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<td>0362 - Port Noarlunga Primary School</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9756 - All Saints Catholic Primary School</strong></td>
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<td><strong>13.5</strong></td>
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<td>8210 - Christian Brothers' College</td>
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<td></td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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Parent Opinion Surveys

Despite distributing about 70 surveys, disappointingly only 9 were returned. I feel this is too small a number to accurately analyse the data. Next year, I will distribute hard copies of the surveys each term to the parents of the children going to school. By doing this I will be able to ascertain if they are being returned (which we are unable to do with the online method) and I will be able to discuss this with the parents and put out reminders to them if need be.

Parent Comments - Quality of Teaching and Learning

- I have had 2 sons go through Seaford Rise Preschool and have been very happy with the education and care that they offer my boys and also myself
- Brilliant staff - absolutely dedicated to providing a quality service to the community on a limited budget.

Data Analysis:

- 8 out of 9 respondents strongly agreed with the statements, “Teachers are enthusiastic in their teaching”, “My child’s teachers make learning interesting and enjoyable” and “The pre-school has an excellent learning environment.”
- 8 out of 9 respondents agreed/strongly agreed with most of the Quality of Teaching and Learning statements in regards to high quality teaching, teachers knowing their child and expecting and helping them to learn, and the high quality learning programmes and environment.

Parent Comments - Support of Learning

- Again I wish to reiterate the staff are brilliant and work wonders with a limited budget.

Data Analysis:

- 100% of respondents agreed/strongly agreed with the statements “This preschool encourages children to have a sense of pride in their achievement” and “Children know how they are expected to behave at preschool.”
- 8 out of 9 respondents strongly agreed with the statements “Teachers at this preschool treat my child fairly” and “This preschool provides a safe and secure environment.”
- For the remaining statements, 7 out of 9, or 8 out of 9 respondents agreed/strongly agreed in regards to the teachers providing help and support, that their child is happy and has access to enough quality resources and would receive support for their additional needs, and that the preschool changes its programmes and activities to improve student achievement.

Parent Comments - Relationships and Communication

- Great communication
- As a full-time working mum I am one of those difficult ones to keep informed on the happenings of the kindy, when payments are due or even just the book club - the staff have managed to work around this problem and I am kept very well informed by the kindy using various mediums.

Data Analysis:

- 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “Children from all backgrounds and cultures are treated fairly at this preschool.”
- 8 out of 9 respondents strongly agreed with the statement, “This preschool assists the development of my child's personal and social skills.”
- For the remaining statements, 7 out of 9, or 8 out of 9 respondents agreed/strongly agreed that they feel welcome at the preschool and are provided with opportunities to discuss their child’s progress with the staff, that communication systems are working well, and that they are encouraged and given opportunities to have a say and be involved.
Parent Comments - Leadership and Decision Making

- There has been a change in senior staff over the last year due to the change in status of the kindy and I believe the staff have handled the change well.

Data Analysis:

- 100% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “The preschool includes parents and community in decision making.”
- For the statement “I am given the opportunity to be involved in the preschool’s educational activities”, 3 respondents were neutral, 3 respondents agreed and 3 respondents strongly agreed.
- For the remaining statements, 7 out of 9, or 8 out of 9 respondents agreed/strongly agreed that the leadership is effective, the preschool is well organized and the is always looking for ways to improve, that parents are invited to participate in decision making and the development of pre-school plans through the Governing Council, and that overall they are satisfied with the preschool’s planning.

Generally, the responses were very positive. Involving parents in educational activities is always challenging and we will be discussing this as a staff team to garner ideas of how we can improve in this area. Parents were asked to stay and participate in the Camp Quality puppet show, and also to attend our excursions. Our annual Wheel-a-thon, and the Art Show in term 3, were positive ways to have families participate at kindergarten. Parents are asked to help with the washing and the cleaning, to participate in the fundraising, and to be on the Management Committee, but generally our families who also use the childcare service usually join the committee.

I made available a brief questionnaire in terms 1, 2 and 3, (one of which was returned) and then put the same questionnaire in all the childrens notice pockets in term 4 (2 of which were returned!)

The 3 questions I asked were:

1. **What’s working well at Seaford Rise Children’s Centre?**
   (“Staff are always friendly. I feel even though I know they are busy, they are always approachable to discuss any needs.” “Friendly staff. Plenty of information.” “You’re all great guys, my son loves the teachers.”

2. **What needs improvement at Seaford Rise Children’s Centre?**
   (“Remove old barrel.” – yes I agree and this will be happening soon!)

3. **What are your ideas?**
   (“You guys are doing a great job. Keep it up!!” Another parent suggested we ask families to bring in cans and bottles to recycle and therefore raise money. Storage could be an issue however. One parent had an interesting idea which we will discuss further as a staff: “Can parents be invited to visit a kindy session – so we can have an idea how sessions are run and what children do?”)