Our Vision –
To provide quality care and learning opportunities for every child to gain valuable life skills

We Value –
Introduction

The major foci for 2010 have been to:

- Continue to implement the Site Improvement Plan
- Continue to support all targeted groups including
  - Children with speech and language difficulties
  - Children with developmental delay
  - Children making the transition from preschool to school
  - Children attending OSHC at the Burra Community School
  - Children attending our Funded Occasional Care, over 2 year old, sessions

Four preschool sessions were offered each week, with two sessions offered on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Staff completed admin/planning days on alternate Mondays, with the Director working at the centre on alternate Mondays attending to administration.

The staffing configuration for 2010 was a 0.6 Director, Brenda Villis for Terms 1, 2 & 3 and Acting Director, Sheree Mader for Term 4 whilst Brenda was on Long Service Leave. The 0.5 Teacher position was filled by Melissa Agars, for Terms 1 & 2 and Courtney Lorraine, for Terms 3 & 4. Melissa is on Maternity Leave. The 0.5 Early Childhood Worker position was filled by, Corinna Kelly who also gave 1:1 support to children with special needs.

Funded Occasional Care continued, with two sessions offered on Tuesdays, for over two year olds. Julie McInnis continued as our Care Provider. Felicity Woods stepped into the care provider’s position when Julie was undertaking her teaching pracs.

The staff team has worked hard and witnessed and celebrated many exciting learning outcomes by individual children.

Working in partnership with parents is extremely important if the best possible learning outcomes are to be achieved for each individual child, thus staff members continued to work extremely hard to establish effective partnerships with each family.

Jim Low, the Principal at the Burra Community School and Sue Ryan, Junior School Co-ordinator, worked closely with the preschool’s staff to strengthen ties between the two learning centres. We were all sad when Jim needed to stand down as our Principal. An excellent Transition Program is now in place to support children as they move from preschool to school. Bev Low’s, weekly ‘Story Time’ with the preschool children also helped with their transition. Regular visits to the Agricultural Learning Centre also proved fantastic on-hands learning experiences for the children.

We were also invited to performances, parades etc. during the year. These experiences provided valuable learning for our children and helped with transition.

Heidi Mirtschin coordinated Play Group on Friday mornings. Many new families have attended Play Group throughout the year. Play Group hosted a extremely successful Book Fair which meant that many district families were able to access quality books for their children.

The general ambience of the centre has been very positive throughout the year with a good percentage of parents enthusiastic to work towards providing the best possible learning environment for the children who use our centre.
How are our enrolments going?

The majority of our children transition into the Burra Community School, with others moving to Farrell Flat, Booborowie and St. Joseph’s, in Clare. Unfortunately we lost three families due to employment opportunities.

Details:

- Term 1 – 23 children enrolled. Two Pre Entry enrolments. Pre School Support funding received for 6 children. 3 children graduated.
- Term 2 – 24 children enrolled. One pre entry child. Pre School support funding received for 6 children. 5 children graduated.
- Term 3 – 22 children enrolled. 1 pre entry enrolment. Preschool Support funding received for 2 children. 4 children graduated.
- Term 4 – 22 children enrolled. Pre Entry 6. Preschool Support received for 1 child. 5 children graduated.

Efforts continued to be made to increase enrolments where possible by:

- Regular communication with the Burra Play Group’s Coordinator.
- Sharing information with Booborowie’s & Hallett/Mt. Bryan’s Play Centre’s Leader.
- Regular communication with Julie McInnis, our site’s Care Provider.
- Regular communication with Sue, B.C.S. re new families who have young siblings.
- Fliers displayed throughout the district giving relevant information about session, times etc.

Enrolments have remained steady throughout the year, due to –

- Increased awareness of the enrolment/attendance policy.
- Due to families utilizing Funded Occasional Care, Play Group and Play Centres in our area families are introduced to the importance of continuing their child’s early childhood education.
- Early Enrolments accepted at the Director’s discretion.
- Positive word of mouth about our early childhood centre & what it offers families.
Attendance at a Glance

The attendance of children at the Burra Early Learning Centre is good, considering a high percentage of our children come from Booborowie, Willalo, Hallett, Mt. Bryan, Hanson and Farrell Flat. They travel long distances, many of them catching buses before 8 a.m. As we cater for Early Enrolments (formerly called Rural Enrolments) the children’s gradual transition into the centre is part time (a morning, or one day per week) which significantly affects the attendance pattern.

Taking the above into consideration the attendances are good and shows that parents are learning to value the importance of an early childhood education for their child.

Generally attendance has been only affected through family reasons or sickness.

The site Attendance Policy outlines the importance of regular attendance at preschool sessions. Parents were generally cooperative informing staff of absenteeism. Staff also monitored children’s attendance closely and followed up with parents promptly, when needed.

It will be necessary in 2011 to continue to give special 1:1 and small group support to focus children identified who do not attend as regularly as possible and to children who need extra support when in attendance at the centre e.g. often a first child finds separation from parents difficult and early enrolments, due to their age. We have been notified that although our attendances improved in 2009, due to receiving a Attendance Improvement Initiative Grant, we will again receive the Grant for 2010, to further improve our attendance figures in 2010.

Thus we need -

- To ensure all programs implemented at the site cater for individual families needs.
- To implement the site’s Attendance Initiative Plan if funding is provided in 2011.
- To ensure families value the importance of early childhood education.
- To support parents to ensure that children attend regularly.
- To encourage parents to become involved in the centres educational activities and to participate in decisions about their child’s education.
Site Learning Plan Achievements

KEY FOCUS AREAS:
Priority 1: Literacy & Numeracy
Improve children’s literacy & numeracy achievements

Actions:
- Screen all new children using the Speech & Language Tests provided by the speech therapist.
- Collect & collate data on individual children’s literacy & numeracy development.
- Staff promoted the importance of enriched conversations – 5 turns.
- TROLL used to screen Oral Language development when children enter and leave the site.
- FOC provider monitors children’s development and outcomes achieved. Staff team meets regularly to share this information.
- Profile Books to show literacy & numeracy development.
- Develop home plans if parents need to support their child’s literacy / numeracy development.

Data:
- Screenings clearly indicated the areas of concern regarding speech/language development. Referrals & results of screenings sent to speech pathologist for assessment. Where there was evidence of delayed development, action was taken by speech pathologist who worked in partnership with parents and staff.
- Checklists helped to provide valuable information on children’s strength and weaknesses in literacy & numeracy.
- Planned, documented and completed observations provided staff with valuable information.
- Data was collected when children started preschool, throughout their time at the centre and before they left the centre.
- Profile Books provided staff and parents with an overview of a child’s developmental learning outcomes in these two areas.
- The TROLL oral assessment tool was used to gauge the development of the identified children.

Recommendations:
- Maintain screening of all new enrolments using Speech and Language Tests
- Refer children who need additional screenings to the Speech Therapist.
- Provide individual learning programs for these children by working in partnership with therapist & parents.
• Continue to use observations, photos, work samples and checklists to obtain information on individual children’s development.

• Continue to inform parents verbally, through notes & by sending home Profile Books at the end of each term.

• Continue to use the TROLL assessment tool to gauge the development of the identified children.
**Priority 2: Well Being**

*Create an environment that improves the well being for all stakeholders.*

**Actions:**
To upgrade the inside and outside learning areas to improve the physical well being for children, staff and families as well as meeting OHSW standards.

Throughout 2009/10 negotiations between DECS Asset Management and our Governing Council took place, to upgrade the following -

**Inside improvements** -
- To provide upgraded children’s bathroom, including an additional changing area – DECS funded.
- To extend the Funded Occasional Care area to provide additional floor space for learning activities – Centre funded.
- To install safety gates for the kitchen area to prevent children entering this area.
- To install paint washing sink in the centre.
- Look into the possibility of extending the storage room and upgrading the kitchen area if sufficient funding is available.
- Continue to strengthen children and families understanding of nutritional values of food and drinks.

**Outside improvements** -
- Have an additional section of fence installed from the SE corner of the building to the southern fence plus another section of fence installed from the NW corner of the larger shed to the western fence.

**Data:**
- Evidence of inside and outside improvements being finished which improved the physical well being of the centre.

**Inside improvements** -
- Completion of children’s bathroom and additional change room
- Completion of room used for funded occasional care
- Negotiations finalised for the upgrade of the kitchen cupboards and installation of the safety gate – to be undertaken in the summer holidays.
- Installation of the paint sink has been done.

**Outside improvements** -
- Completion of additional fencing mentioned above

**Improved understanding of nutritional values of food and drinks**
- Feedback from children about healthy and ‘sometimes’ foods
- Feedback from parents about children’s food/drink awareness at home.
- Evidence of healthy food/drinks in children’s lunch boxes

**Recommendations:**
- Staff to continue to monitor children’s food and drinks.
- Staff to continually talk about the importance of having healthy food and drinks.
- Director to continue to work closely with DECS, Asset Management personnel to ensure that all improvements are completed and meet with DECS requirements.
Priority 3: Improved outcomes through partnerships:

Improve children’s learning outcomes by working with parents and Junior School staff teams to achieve the best possible learning outcomes for individual children.

Actions:
- Curriculum information appeared in newsletter regularly.
- Use of Communication Books to share information with bus families.
- Sought verbal & written information from new parents using Individual Child Profile form.
- All children screened and parents notified if there were concerns. Referrals made.
- Staff & parents worked together to improve children’s learning outcomes – home plans.
- New resources purchased to improve children’s learning outcomes.
- Staff accessed workshops that would benefit partnerships & learning outcomes for chn.
- Preschool staff & Junior School Coordinator, monitored effectiveness of Transition program with parents and JP staff team.
- Continue visits with Junior Primary staff teams, to share information about children.
- Work closely with families whose child’s attendance is irregular.

Data:
- Positive feedback from parents regarding the curriculum.
- Positive feedback from bus families on the value of exchanging information through the communication books.
- Improved learning outcomes being shown by each individual child
- Evidence collected through photos, work samples, anecdotal observations and checklists placed in individual children’s Profile Books.
- When parents notified of concerns, their extra 1:1 help, resulted in improved learning outcomes for their child.
- Feedback from parents who have been part of their child’s transition from the centre to the school regarding the effectiveness of the present Transition Program that is in place.
- Feedback from Burra JP staff about the sharing of information about their new enrolments
- Improved attendance of children whose attendance has been irregular

Recommendations:
- Continue to inform parents about the early year’s curriculum through newsletters, Director’s Reports, Profile Books, pamphlets, informal conversations and centre displays.
- Continue to encourage the exchange of information between parents and staff team.
- Continue to place a strong focus on Oral Language, Literacy and Numeracy learning experiences. Continue to use TROLL to gather information about children’s oral language development. Continue to inform parents about the importance of giving Emergent Literature experiences to their child to help with their reading readiness.
- Purchase and make additional learning resources to assist children’s development in literacy and numeracy.
- Library books to be sorted so that only the best literature is available.
- Ensure that all children are screened regularly.
- Continue to work in partnership with parents whose children need some extra 1:1 support.
- Staff team to access specific training so that the best possible learning outcomes can be achieved for individual children.
- Continue to work closely with JP staff and parents whose children have moved onto school to gauge effectiveness of our early childhood curriculum and the Transition Program.
HIGHLIGHTS

Special Highlight –
Completion of planned improvements to the centre in both the inside and outside learning areas.

Other highlights have been –

- **Successful transition experiences** for our new school starters each term.
- **Improved attendance pattern** – due to the ‘Improvement in Attendance Initiative’ grant an extra ECW was employed, giving additional support to the identified children.
- **The Easter Party** offered lots of Easter games, plus the Easter Bunny left goodies for all the children.
- **Mother’s Day celebrations** - mothers & grandma’s enjoyed coffee & delectable delights with their family members. Extremely well supported.
- **Dress Up Days** – proved to be lots of fun for all participants.
- **Father’s Day Twilight Kindy** – fathers & grandpa’s spent valuable time participating in activities, followed by a pooled tea. Extremely well supported.
- **End of term Parties and Graduation Ceremonies** – held in Terms 1, 2 and 3.
- **Hospital Visit** – the residents in Holder House loved listening to the Christmas songs presented by our children. Some residents felt special as their grandies were in attendance.
- **Christmas Party** - Twilight Kindy, followed by families joining us for end of year celebrations - Party Tea, Graduation Ceremony and Items.
- **Visit to Jamestown’s Magic Cave.** Children enjoyed the BUS ride to and from Jamestown. The visit to the Magic Cave to see Father Christmas was followed by a picnic lunch at Memorial Park. A magical day for everyone.
- **Visits to the Burra Community School’s Agriculture Learning Centre** to broaden the children’s knowledge on steers, chooks & chickens, goats and sheep were worthwhile learning experiences.
- **Jane, our cleaner** – continues to be employed by our Governing Council and is a delight to work with.
- **Janine, our gardener**, also employed by our Governing Council, loves her job, thus keeps our outside learning environment safe and a great place to enjoy.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the staff at the Burra Early Learning Centre, I would like to acknowledge and thank staff from the District Office. Terri Sizer, our Regional District Director, has provided fantastic guidance and support. Jane Moore, Early Childhood Consultant, provided excellent information through her regular hand outs and we valued her expertise in the early childhood sector. The support of all other District Office personnel has also been gratefully appreciated.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of Paul McLeod, the Disability Coordinator, for the Yorke & Mid North District and Ann Marriott, our Speech Therapist. Ann’s support has been valued and appreciated by our staff team and the parents she has supported.

Janine, our CFH nurse was a delight to work with and always enjoyed her visits to Burra. She always provided valuable feedback to parents and staff on individual children.

To State Office Personnel, I would also like to acknowledge their assistance. They have always been willing to help when help has been sought.

To Melissa, Courtney, Corinna, Julie, Libby and Felicity thank you all for your individual contributions as you all carried out your various roles on the staff. The children have received wonderful care, love and support from you all as they continue their learning journeys.

To Julie McInnis’ thank you for your efforts in the Funded Occasional Care room. Julie nurtures the littlies admirably and they love ‘Mrs. Ginnis’. As Julie is also the coordinator at both the Hallett/Mount Bryan & Booroburie centres she builds up wonderful friendships with the children, who then transition into our centre with ease as ‘Mrs Ginnis’ is there!

To Heidi Mirtschin, thank you for your enthusiastic approach in your role as our Play Group Coordinator. Your enthusiasm is infectious and our staff knows that you work so hard to provide fun activities for the children present. Improving numbers is your reward for your efforts.

Thank you to the Governing Council’s Office Bearer’s A special thank you to Anthea Lines, Chairperson, Jodie Stockman, Vice Chairperson, Cheryl Clonan, our Secretary and Jo Van Gasteren, our Parent Treasurer, for carrying out your duties efficiently. Your contributions have been greatly appreciated. Thank you also to the other members of the committee for
your individual contributions. Your commitment to help our centre has been commendable. Despite everyone's hectic lives, many parents have helped out in so many different ways. A very special thank you to Leanne Stockman, who so ably coordinated our fundraising in 2010. Thank you to the families who contributed to our centres fundraising this year.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the wonderful children that we have been blessed to work with at our centre. They are all unique individuals thus we love celebrating their individual achievements as they continue on their learning journeys.

Thank you all for your commitment to our early learning centre whilst I have been the leader of the centre. I have just loved my involvement with so many families and take with me some wonderful memories that I will always treasure.

Brenda Villis
Director