PRESCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT
updated 21/09/2011

Centre number: 6663
Centre name: Cowell Early Childhood Centre

1. General information

- Centre name
  : Cowell Early Childhood Centre
- Centre number
  : 6663
- Preschool Director
  : Lucinda Glare
- Postal address
  : Box 68, Cowell, S.A. 5602.
- Location address
  : 42 Story Rd, Cowell
- Telephone number
  : 8629 2243
- Fax number
  : 8629 2099
- E-mail address
  : kindy.director@cowellecc.sa.edu.au
- DECS District
  : Eyre
- Geographical location – ie road distance from GPO (km)
  : 500 kms
- Enrolment/Attendance
  : Currently 16 full-time four year olds. Fluctuates 11 – 19.
- Co-located/stand-alone
  : Stand alone.
- Programs operating
  - Pre Entry
    : In the term before each child is due to begin kindergarten, each child is given access to one Pre-entry session a week.
  - Sessional Kindergarten for eligible children
    : We offer 4 sessions a week over 2 full days. These sessions are currently run on Tuesday AM & PM and Thursday AM & PM. We offer
a free lunch-time care program. For children using buses we also offer before and after session supervision.

- **Occasional Care**
  - We offer 4 funded Occasional Care sessions each week. 3 sessions for Over 2’s. Each session has 8 places (plus 2 emergency places). These sessions currently run Tuesday, Wednesday AM and Thursday PM. 1 session is offered for Under 2’s (6 weeks to 2 years of age). This session offers 4 places (plus 1 emergency place). The Under 2’s session run Wednesday AM. All sessions are running to near full capacity.

- **Preschool Support**
  - Preschool Support is negotiated with the Special Educator on a needs basis.
  - Currently we offer 7 hours of Preschool Support each week to support children with additional needs.

2. **Key Centre Policies**
   - **Centre Priorities/Statement of Purpose**
     - Strategic Directions through DIAF: Focus on Learning 1) Emergent Literacy focusing on Oral Language. 2) Numeracy.

3. **Curriculum**
   - **Framework used**
     - ‘Belonging, Being and Becoming’. The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
   - **Core Values**
     - Our core business is to meet community needs by providing quality education and care for children aged six weeks to five years, in a stimulating and safe environment which supports children’s learning through play.
   - **Specific curriculum approaches**
     - Curriculum is play-based, child-centred and offers open-ended learning experiences where children are challenged to think, learn and problem-solve.
   - **Joint programmes/special curriculum projects**
     - The centre runs a transition program, on a needs basis, for children beginning school at Cowell Area School.

4. **Centre Based Staff**
   - **Staff Profile**
     - Warranted: 0.6 Director, 0.31 ECW 2 Occasional care, 0.09 ECW1 Occasional care, 0.18 Preschool support.
Negotiated: 0.5 ECW 1
Current Utilisation: 0.6 Director, 0.77 ECW 1, 0.31 ECW 2.

- **Performance Management Program**
  - Staff are line managed by the Director, whose Performance Agreement with the District Director is monitored by the District Coordinator

- **Access to special support staff**
  - Special Educator based in Whyalla. A Speech Pathologist and Occupational Therapist can be accessed from the Whyalla Hospital Outreach service, and visit the town on a fortnightly basis.

5. **Centre Facilities**

- **Buildings and grounds**

- **Centre Ownership**
  - Centre is situated on land owned by DECS.

- **Access for children and staff with disabilities**

6. **Local Community** *(intended for country preschools)*

- **General characteristics: (eg. types of work available, languages usually spoken at home, local developments)**
  - The township of Cowell is situated midway along the western coast of St. Vincent’s Gulf on Eyre Peninsula. Originally a farming community, the district has become an increasingly important location for the aquaculture industry, in particular the farming of oysters. The town has also become home to a number of families who are involved in the mining of ore at Iron Duke (approx. 50 kms north of Cowell). A large number of families residing in the district are without the traditional support of family members.

- **Parent and community involvement in the preschool**
  - We have a committed Governing Council and most supportive wider community.

- **Schools to which children generally transfer from this preschool**
  - Cowell Area School.

- **Other local care and educational facilities, eg. child care, schools, OSHC**
  - Family Day Care, Playgroup, Commonwealth Respite Care.
  - Playgroup operates at the centre every Friday from 10am-12pm

- **Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities**
  - A supermarket, chemist, hairdresser, post office, deli, bakery, butcher, hardware, 2 hotels, Jade Motel and Bank SA. Other nearby shopping
centres include Cleve and Whyalla. Government Agencies are accessible in Whyalla (107 kms north of Cowell).

- **Other local facilities, eg. medical, sporting, social, cultural, recreational**
  
  There are two Doctors practising in Cowell and an 18 bed Hospital. There are good sporting facilities in Cowell, including netball courts, tennis courts, basketball courts, golf course, table tennis club, bowls club, cricket and football oval. A swimming pool is located on Cowell Area School grounds. There are numerous outlets to purchase oysters and other seafood throughout the town and plenty of opportunities to pursue recreation related to the water, eg. boating, fishing, swimming, snorkelling etc.

- **Availability of staff housing**
  
  Limited staff housing is available in Cowell. It is difficult to find private rental in Cowell, due to the aquaculture industry and the nearby Mt Millar wind farm construction.

- **Accessibility to Adelaide and relevant major centres, including public transport and its availability, frequency and cost (especially by air), road quality**
  
  Buses to Adelaide run once daily. Flights to Adelaide are available from Whyalla, and Pt. Lincoln. Roads to Cowell and to most other major nearby towns are sealed.

Local Government body is District Council of Franklin Harbour Phone: 08 8629 2019.