PRESCHOOL CONTEXT STATEMENT

Centre number: 6505
Centre name: Berri Community Preschool

1. General information

Berri Community Preschool
Centre number - 6505
Preschool Director – Katrina Papageorgios
Postal & Location address - 1A Fiedler Street, Berri SA 5343
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DECD District - Berri Barmera Partnership

Geographical location – Berri is in the Riverland, 230km from GPO, in a north easterly direction from Adelaide. Berri is situated on the beautiful River Murray and provides many opportunities for recreational activities.

Enrolment/Attendance - numbers vary from year to year - usually between 70 and 80 children but recently, numbers have declined due to families moving to the city for work. Children are entitled to access four terms of preschool in the year before they start school. There is one intake at the beginning of each year for children who turn four years of age before 1 May. Exceptions may apply.

Berri Preschool is a stand-alone preschool with the Berri Regional Child Care Centre located within 75 metres, connected by a safe walkway. Both agencies work co-operatively with each other to enable children to attend both facilities.

Programs operating:-

- **Sessional Kindergarten for eligible children:-**
  4 year old children are offered 30 hours of preschool per fortnight. These can be taken on:-
  *Mondays and Wednesdays, 8.45 to 3.15 and alternate Fridays, 8.45 to 12.45 or
  *Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8.45 to 3.15 and alternate Fridays, 8.45 to 12.45.

- **Pre Entry:-**
  Pre-entry is held in term 4 depending on the availability of staff. Parents of under 4’s are asked to phone the centre to make a preliminary enrolment for their child. These families will receive a letter regarding a parent meeting and session times.
Occasional Care for over 2 year olds operates on Monday and Friday mornings.

Lunchtime care is included in the 30 hours preschool per fortnight. Children bring their own healthy lunch.

Bilingual Support is dependent upon the needs of the child, funding and availability of a support worker. However, the curriculum is inclusive, and staff cater for all children’s needs including wellbeing and language support.

Preschool Support is provided for children who have a developmental delay (physical, cognitive and/or emotional). Children with speech and/or language difficulties may attract also attract support from Disabilities, (DECD) and assessment and support from a DECD Speech Pathologist.

Child & Youth Health Assessments – are conducted at the centre each term.

2. Key Centre Policies

The centre operates with a yearly Quality Improvement Plan which encompasses 7 Quality Areas:

- Educational programme and practice
- Children’s Health & Safety
- Physical environment
- Staffing
- Relationships with children
- Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
- Leadership & service management

The core business of our preschool is to plan and provide high quality learning experiences for children in their preschool year. This is supported by quality teaching, respect for children, catering for individual needs and working in collaboration with families.

3. Curriculum

The curriculum is constructed around on the Early Years Learning Framework with the focus on children learning through play and children’s voice.

The centre’s Core Values and Principles are:

- excellence
- respect
- responsibility
- equity
- commitment
- trust
- credibility
- caring

4. Centre Based Staff

The centre operates with a full time Director and Teacher and depending on numbers, 0.5 or 1.0 Early Childhood Worker. With Universal Access, extra staffing positions are available.
5. **Centre Facilities**

- **Buildings and grounds**
  
  Berri Community Preschool is situated near the water tower, 100 metres along the road which passes the side of the Berri Regional Child care Centre. The main building is over 50 years old and has large grounds. Facilities are continually upgraded and extended. The outdoor area boasts a large sandpit, a bike track, a rock water-course, a large cubby, a covered stage area, extensive verandas and shade areas and flower and vegetable gardens. The building is large and has a disabled bathroom, two activity rooms and a withdrawal room. The centre houses 2 interactive boards.

- **Capacity (per session)**
  
  The centre can cater for up to 45 children per session.

- **Centre Ownership**
  
  The land and building were originally donated by the community and are now owned by the Department of Education and Child Development.

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

- **General characteristics:** (eg. types of work available, languages usually spoken at home, local developments) - Berri is considered to be the central government town of the Riverland. Numerous government departments and agencies are located here in addition to the Berri Regional Hospital, Riverland Community Health Services and Families SA. The area is multicultural and has been the home for several generations of many Greek families with a growing Sikh population. Fruit picking was once a main industry but has reduced significantly, and now provides only casual opportunities for work.

- **Parent and community involvement in the preschool**
  
  Berri Preschool has an open door policy where children’s families are welcome at any time. The Governing Council welcomes new members at any time. The GC meets on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7pm.

- **Schools to which children generally transfer from this preschool**
  
  The preschool mostly feeds into 3 public schools and 3 private schools. As Berri is a regional government town, many people travel from other towns to work here. Often their children attend the neighbouring child care centre and also this preschool. Consequently, our preschool at times has fed into 12 different primary schools.

- **Other local care and educational facilities, eg child care, schools, OSHC**
  
  OSHC is available at Berri Primary School and they will take 4 year old children if they have an older sibling at the facility. A taxi transports the children to and from preschool.

  The Berri Regional Child Care Centre caters for children from birth to 5.

- **Commercial/industrial and shopping facilities** - There are 2 main shopping precincts in the town housing Woolworths, Coles and Target.
Other local facilities, eg medical, sporting, social, cultural, recreational - There is a large medical centre in the town located near the Berri Regional Hospital which is serviced by many visiting specialists. The Riverland Community Health Centre has a range of health services including an Early Intervention group.

Availability of staff housing
Some teacher housing is available and there are also short term fully equipped units.

Accessibility to Adelaide and relevant major centres, including public transport
Stateliner buses travel to Adelaide twice per day and return. The main highway (Sturt Hwy) is the main route to Sydney and connects to the Northern Expressway north of Adelaide.

Berri Preschool is in the Berri Barmera Council area (ph:85 821 922) - see the website for more details.

7. Further Comments

Establishment of new services and/or programs
Occasional Care is being offered from term 4, 2015.

Partnership/incorporation arrangements with other groups
The Berri Barmera Partnership includes Berri Community Preschool, Berri Primary, Glossop High (2 campuses), Winkie Primary, Glossop Primary, Monash Primary, Barmera Kindergarten, Barmera Primary and Cobdogla Primary.