

# ooranga

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020



*Preschool craft in home isolation.*

# COVID-19 and new strategies

The COVID-19 pandemic required some changes in 2020 to Ooranga's services, particularly in Term 2 when playgroup was delivered through craft and activities delivered to member's mailboxes across the region.



*Where's the green sheep? playgroup craft.*

As an essential service, preschools continued throughout the pandemic with Ooranga staff keeping connected with children and families who were in home isolation. Boggabri preschoolers mailed letters to their friends staying at home and families sent in pictures and comments about activities and crafts delivered. Educators also used technology to Zoom and Facetime calls into homes for storytelling and conversation.

Fortunately the use of an online platform, Storypark, was initiated prior to the pandemic which supported connection with preschool children throughout the year where videos, information and resources could be shared. Temperature checks, hand hygiene and social distancing were practised diligently at Ooranga services and we are grateful to all families for supporting these practices throughout the year.



*Preschool home delivery.*



*Mailbox joy!*



*Pandemic activities for the whole family.*

The NSW Early Childhood Education Directorate provided additional funding to Ooranga to enable fee free preschool supporting families to send their children to services when they may be experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic. Feedback from families was very appreciative of fee free preschool and we look forward to being able to extend this program into 2021.

# Ooranga

## Our partnerships

### GUNNEDAH EARLY CHILDHOOD NETWORK

Ooranga's Executive Officer, Rebecca Dridan, led the establishment of the Gunnedah Early Childhood Network, a collaborative group of early childhood and family focused services servicing the Gunnedah area. With funding from the Gunnedah Shire Council, the Network developed their



Gunnedah Early Childhood Hub Online

branding with KEO from Tamworth and an online platform, [www.gecho.com.au](http://www.gecho.com.au) where information about local services and a regular blog post can be found. The launch of the online platform was unfortunately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, however, a colouring competition in May during National Families Week connected many in the community to the new initiative. The Network has been busy advocating for improved medical services for young children, highlighting the importance of high-quality early childhood education and working together on attracting new educators to the early childhood education sector in Gunnedah.

### NEW VENUE FOR PREMIER PRESCHOOL

In conjunction with preschool families and the Liverpool Plains Shire Council,

Ooranga identified a new venue to operate their Premier preschool from in 2021 due to the old McMaster Hall becoming too run-down. Educators, children and families are looking forward to the new venue opening at the Premier Medical Centre with some impressive new play equipment in the new year.

### CURLEWIS PRESCHOOL UPGRADE

The Gunnedah Shire Council enabled the design and construction of new toilet facilities at the Curlewis preschool venue with funding from the federal Drought Communities Programme - Community Resilience Grant Program. This project will be completed by early 2021 providing more suitable facilities for young children and in addition, an accessible ramp into the building.

### BOOKS IN HOMES

The Books in Homes initiative was continued throughout 2020 with sponsorship from BHP. This initiative supports children to develop the love of reading, providing books in rural and remote communities.



Premier Medical Centre for preschool in 2021.

## GUNNEDAH EARLY CHILDHOOD NETWORK MEMBER ORGANISATIONS





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## From the management team

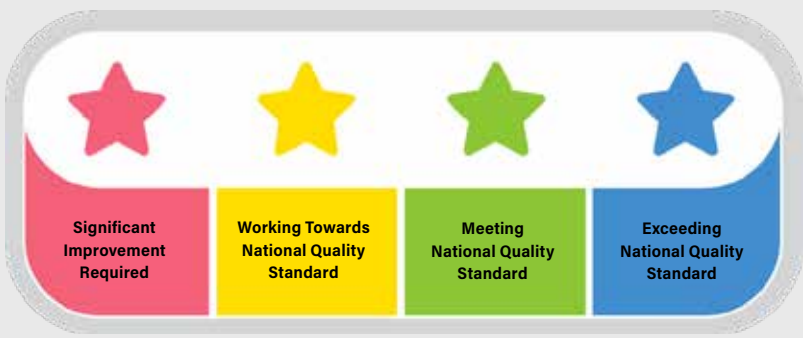


### FUNDING PROVIDES NEW RESOURCES

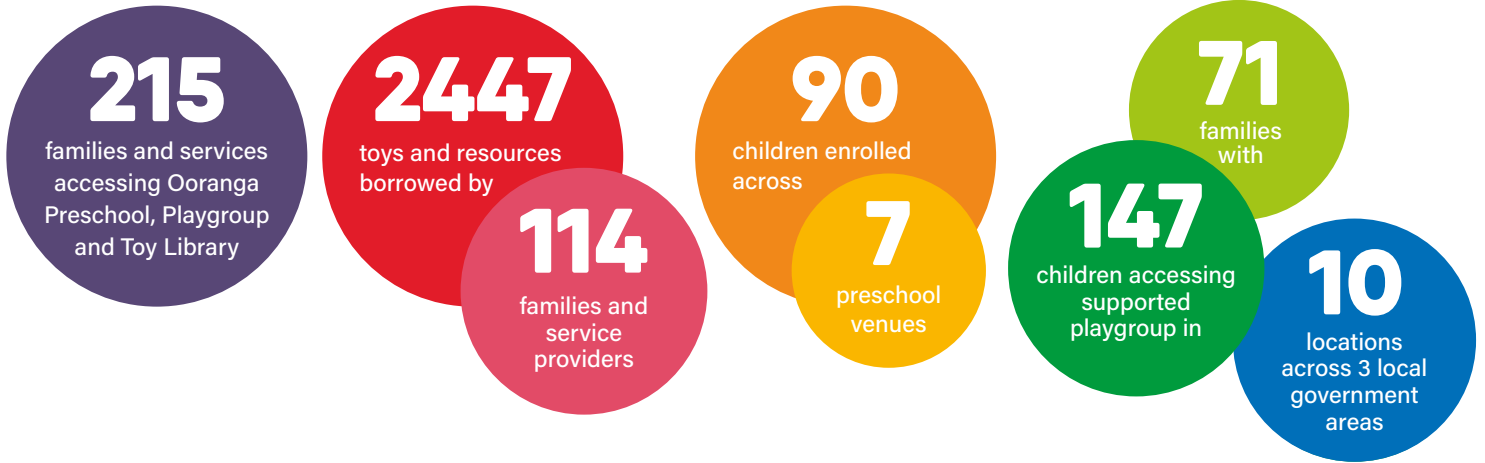
Early childhood education is enjoying an increasing profile in Australia, partly due to its essential service status identified during the pandemic but also because of recent research that is showing the importance of the early years for setting a positive trajectory for lifelong learning. Funding for the preschool sector in NSW continued to enable the provision of high-quality services with corresponding regulation stimulating continuous improvement. Ooranga was fortunate to receive several Quality Learning Environment grants through the NSW Early Childhood Education Directorate to purchase fabulous new resources for outdoor play environments at our Premer, Curlewis and Currabubula preschool venues.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD

Preparation by Ooranga preschools for Assessment and Rating under the National Quality Standard is well underway with the actual assessment visit expected to occur in the second half of 2021. The national assessment measures the quality of early childhood education, types including preschool, long day care, family day care and outside school hours care, against national benchmarks of 7 quality areas that are important outcomes for children. Following assessment, services are allocated a quality rating which assists families to easily access information about service quality.



# By the numbers

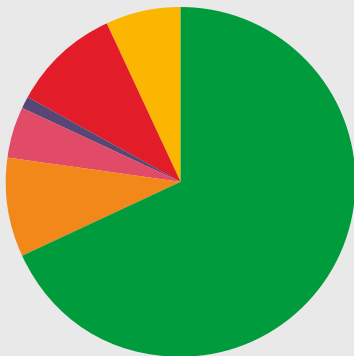
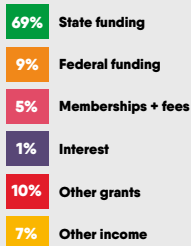


## Financials

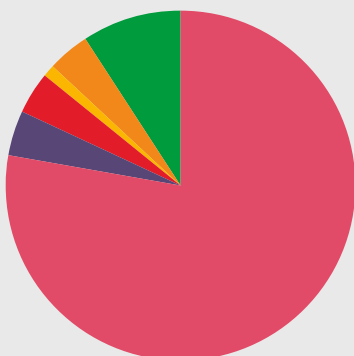
Ooranga gratefully acknowledges the support and participation from individuals and groups in the locations in which we operate, including local parent committees, Councils, schools and other community organisations.

Funding for Ooranga services is provided by the NSW Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate through Mobile Preschool Contracts and the Start Strong Pathways program. Additional funding in 2020 was provided through small grants and member contributions.

### Operating revenue



### Cost of services



## What's next in 2021?

- Lead and actively participate in the Gunnedah Early Childhood Network [www.gecho.com.au](http://www.gecho.com.au)
- Participate in National Assessment and Rating
- Continue to support rural communities through access to high quality early childhood services

## Our philosophy

### VISION

Young children flourish within their local community.

### MISSION

To support individual child development through the provision of high quality, mobile early childhood services to rural communities.

### VALUES

- Child directed programs
- Inclusion of all children and families
- Respect in our interaction with others
- Commitment to local communities
- Learn through play
- Excellence through continuous improvement



Complete audited financial statements for Ooranga FMRU Assoc. Inc. can be found at the ACNC website, [www.acnc.gov.au](http://www.acnc.gov.au).

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