



KEITHCOT FARM



May 2020 Newsletter

The staff for Term 2, 2020 include

- **Anne Whittleston** (Director / Educator)
- **Jen Reid** (Assistant Director / Educator)
- **April Grant** (Family Practitioner / Social Worker)
- **TBC** (Community Development Coordinator)
- **Tamara Hall** (Speech Pathologist)
- **Sarah Harry** (Occupational Therapist)
- **Janet Hazel** (Educator)
- **Roshni Amroliwala** (Educator)
- **Coby Romano** (Educator)
- **Adrienne Hicks** (Educator)
- **Le-arna Rathjen** (Educator)
- **Lisa Mildrum** (Educator)
- **Jodie Murray** (Educator)
- **Andrea Randell** (Educator)
- **Magdaline Saredakis** (Educator)
- **Julia Tilley** (Educator)
- **Iona Angely** (Educator)
- **Yogini Patel** (Educator)
- **Amanda Smith** (Educator)
- **Cathy Mazzarolo** (Admin Officer)
- **Jo Oliver** (Cook / Educator)
- **Nobuko Nakajima** (Cook /Educator)
- **Sue Hall** (Finance Officer)
- **Kylie Webster** (Finance Officer)
- **Simon Costello** (Grounds person)

COVID-19

We hope that you and your family are keeping well during these challenging and unprecedented times.

We are committed to doing everything we can for the safety and well-being of our children, families and staff. As the coronavirus (COVID-19) affects us all in diverse ways, we are closely monitoring this evolving but hopefully slowing situation. We are following guidelines provided by Australian Government Departments to minimise the spread and impact of the virus.

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) is the key decision making committee for health emergencies. It is comprised of all state and territory Chief Health Officers and is chaired by the Australian Chief Medical Officer. AHPPC along with advice from SA Health remains

unchanged -schools, preschools, Children's Centre's and other early childhood facilities are low risk environments for children, young people and staff, and should remain open.

If your child has not been attending, and you have not been in contact with the Centre, could you please ring the Centre on 8251 2700 to inform us of your child's anticipated return date. We will continue to respect the preference of parents to remain at home - if this is your choice.

Individual sites will only be temporarily closed if there is a confirmed case of COVID-19. We will then follow the protocol in line with SA Health.

Throughout this unprecedented Health Pandemic, we have maintained a focus on good hygiene.

Washing hands before eating, after using the toilet; blowing the nose and touching animals etc is an important part of our Curriculum.

Children's understanding of **WHY** we implement these hygiene practices and other procedures is embedded in our daily routines.

Children are explicitly taught effective handwashing practices, coughing into their elbow and the appropriate use of tissues.



Handwashing advice from SA Health *is that* soap and water is the best way to reduce the number of microorganisms (germs) on hands and should always be encouraged over the use of alcohol based hand sanitisers in a non-healthcare setting.

During this Health pandemic commercial cleaning services have increased at Keithcot Farm Children's Centre by an additional 4 hours each day on top of our normal commercial cleaning. This additional cleaning conforms to the **Environmental cleaning and disinfection principles for COVID-19.**

Discussing Coronavirus with children.



Young children are at different stages of understanding COVID-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus. When broaching the topic with children, we need to consider factors such as children's

- Age
- Exposure to the news and media
- Experiences within their family/ children's centre/ school.

For this sensitive topic, there isn't any generic resource that is appropriate for all children.

Instead as parents or educators we need to have careful, child-led conversations.

As with all times of change, children respond well to routines and rituals, so maintaining consistency in both familial and educational contexts is vital.

Regulate children's exposure to the news.

As we saw with the 2019/ 2020 bushfires – and as we know from many decades of research – this does increase their anxiety.

Careful co-viewing and age-appropriate explanations are needed to explore the COVID-19 topic with children.

Overall we have to ensure that conversations are relevant and child-led, and remember that some children may need more or less information than others (eg) they may ask a specific question but then continue with what ever they were doing. Not every question from a child needs to be a part of a long conversation or exploration of COVID-19. So gauge the situation and take it one step at a time.

For more detailed information according to differing levels of understanding and capacity you could access Early Childhood Australia's blog [The Spoke](https://thespoke.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/viral-talk-children/):

<http://thespoke.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/viral-talk-children/>.

Parents seeking more information could call the SA COVID-19 Information Line on 1800 253 787. This offers local advice on general COVID-19 information for South Australians, 8am to 8pm 7 days per week.



If your child is showing signs of being unwell before coming to the Children's Centre, **it is important to keep him/her home for the day, and ring the Centre to inform of your child's absence.**

Preschool Health Checks

We have been informed by Child and Youth Health that they will not be attending our Centre for 4 year old Health Checks for the foreseeable future.

In order to offer some form of health check/ information to families, they are going to be offering phone consults.

While this will not allow the physical part of the assessment (vision, hearing, growth), it will enable discussions with parents, or staff, which may lead to referrals to other health professionals if necessary.

More information about this process will be sent home to families of children who are due to have a health check as soon as it is available.

Curriculum

Through our integrated program we have taken a positive approach to the social distancing restrictions brought about by COVID-19. Our focus has been on keeping families connected with a sense of belonging.

We traced around many of the children's bodies, they then painted and carefully cut around them.

This work depicts each child giving a virtual hug which is designed to post/pass/give to a person they haven't seen for a while.

Through this learning experience children could recognise and develop their self-identities, they learnt to be resilient in the current situation the world is in. Practiced their fine motor skills and built language skills as they develop their verbal and non verbal communication skills.

The following message was attached to their work.

***I miss you when you are far away.
I'd love to see you every day.
But since I can't
come over to play.
I'm sending you a hug today!***



Immunisation



Immunisation is generally thought to be the best way of reducing the likelihood of children being infected by serious diseases such as whooping cough, hepatitis and polio.

From 1 July 2019, changes to the [South Australian Public Health Act 2011](#) (the Act) came into effect. In the event of an outbreak or possible outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease, the chief public health officer may direct that a child with, or at risk of a vaccine preventable disease be excluded from an early childhood service.

From 1 January 2020, the Act requires early childhood services to request and keep copies of a child's immunisation records while they are enrolled at the service. A parent or guardian must provide an approved current immunisation record when their child enrolls at the service, and an updated immunisation record after their child receives a scheduled immunisation, within specific age ranges.

- at the time of a child's enrolment. The statement must be printed from the Australian Immunisation Register no earlier than 1 month before enrolment.
- after the child turns 7 months and before they reach 9 months of age
- after the child turns 13 months and before they reach 15 months of age
- after the child turns 19 months and before they reach 21 months of age
- after the child turns 4 years and 2 months and before they reach 4 years 8 months of age.

Our Centre is required to provide children's current immunisation records to the chief public health officer within 24 hours when requested. This will ensure a rapid response to prevent the spread of a vaccine preventable disease.

The only approved immunisation record that can be used is an immunisation history statement from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (AIR).

Immunisation history statements can be obtained by using either:

- Medicare online account through logging in to myGov
- Phone the Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809 to request that an immunisation

In the event of an outbreak, or risk of a vaccine preventable disease, we may be required to provide the chief public health officer with:

- ✓ your child's name and date of birth
- ✓ copies of your child's immunisation records
- ✓ the contact details of a parent or guardian.

This will allow the chief public health officer to review the immunisation status of children at the service, and to exclude any children at risk of contracting the vaccine preventable disease.

To reduce the spread of certain infectious diseases, we must follow [SA Health's recommended minimum periods of exclusion](#). If there's a case of an infectious disease, we'll display a notice at the service. If your child has an infectious illness, they may be excluded from attending the service.

Children who are susceptible (for example, a child who is non-immunised or whose immunisation status is unknown, or a child with an immune deficiency) may also be excluded during outbreaks of some infectious diseases.

Parent Complaint Policy

We all expect quality and expert care and teaching for children in order that they achieve their potential.

We also recognise that at times things may go wrong.

If you have a concern or a complaint, we want you to let us know.

It's important to learn from mistakes or misunderstandings so that we can improve your child's experience and learning, and also improve processes where possible.

A complaint may be made by a parent if they think that the Children's Centre has, for example:

- ✚ done something wrong
- ✚ failed to do something it should have done
- ✚ acted unfairly or impolitely.

Your concern or complaint may be about:

- ✚ the type, level or quality of services
- ✚ the behaviour and decisions of staff
- ✚ a policy, procedure or practice.

Sometimes a complaint is about something we have to do because of State or Federal law. In such cases we

are able to talk to you about the matter and help you understand the requirements and why they exist.

The first step in working through a complaint is to talk to your child's Primary Educator. (If you do not know who this is – please ask Anne or Adrienne or give us a call on 82512700).

If you still are not satisfied then please refer the concern to

Anne Whittleston: Director – Education and Care.

E: Anne.whittleston916@schools.sa.edu.au