The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) has recently released a Strategic Plan. This plan brings together key government functions to deliver and regulate services for children and their families across South Australia.

The new 2014 – 2017 strategic plan outlines six priority areas for improvement that will be delivered to the South Australian community over the next four years. The main purpose of this plan is to strengthen our public education system; improve health, wellbeing and child safety; increase engagement of children, families and communities with programs and services provided through DECD; and provide timely access to services.

**Curriculum**

The Golden Grove Fire Services visited on 29th July. Through this unique experience children across our site had the opportunity to

- broaden their understanding of the world in which they live
- be open to new challenges and discoveries
- explore aspects of identity through role play (as they take on the role of a fire fighter)
- co operate with others and negotiate roles and relationships in play episodes and group experiences as they transferred what they learnt into dramatic play experiences.

Chris (the Fire Fighter) informed the children – in the event of a fire at home – the safe place to wait for the Fire Officers is usually by their letterbox. Chris showed the children how to drop down low and “go go go” if they were in a fire and to cover their face and roll if they were on fire.

Children had the opportunity to hold the heavy water hose. We watched as one Fire Fighter put on all the protective clothing they wear before fighting a fire. The children had an opportunity to ask various questions such as “How do you know where the fire is?” “Where do you sleep when you work at night?”

**Respect, Reflect Relate Curriculum Document states**

“educators should provide props that foster pretend play and provide props and encourage for symbolic play” this is evident when we set the “green ute” out for a fire appliance, provide hoses, helmets jackets and a small ladder to allow children to build on their prior knowledge of the role of fire fighters.

Having the fire service visits assist with teaching the children about emergency evacuations and what to do in an emergency. Once a term we practice what we need to do for an emergency evacuation at the Children’s Centre. Educators remind the children to stop their activity as soon as they hear the whistle blow. We evacuate the Centre and move straight for the school gate, and onto the school quadrangle. Everybody then waits while all children, staff and Educators are counted and accounted for before moving back inside!

**It is absolutely critical that families sign their child in and out of the Centre to ensure their safety.**

Have you ever wondered what you need to do at home if you were in a situation where you needed an emergency evacuation? Perhaps you could ask your child what they would need to do at home?

We are planning to hold our own Keithcot Farm Commonwealth Games on **Wednesday 20 August! 9.30 to 11.00 am** The children will have the opportunity to participate in various physical activities and move around to different stations. Some stations will be set up in the centre and other at the Keithcot Farm School quadrangle. Some of the events the children may participate in include Hurdles, Basket Ball, Shot-Put, High Jump, sprints and an Obstacle Course. After the children have finished competing at each station they will receive a sticker to go on their sticker chart, and at the end of competing in all the events each child will be presented with a Gold medal.

The children will record

- The **height** of their high jump.
- The **length** of their long jump.
- The **number** of baskets scored when playing basketball.
- The **number** of stickers they collected on the day.

These experiences provide valuable **Numeracy** foundations which are critical for later successful mathematical applications.

This is also a Fundraiser! Sponsorship forms and additional information have been sent home. Additional Sponsorship forms are available upon request.

Children who do not normally attend on a Wednesday AM are welcome to participate with a parent / caregiver. Families are welcome to stay and join in the fun!!
Kate and Janet are engaging their small groups in various science experiments. Outcome 4 of Early Years Learning Framework Curriculum Document states “Children are confident and involved learners” and children develop a “range of skills and processes, such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, research and investigation.”

Science is just one way that we assist children to develop these skills as they engage in these experiments. Kate’s group have made crystals with Borax and water - when the water dissolves crystals are left at the bottom of the container! They have also made slime using glue, water and dye. Janet’s group put lilies in coloured dye and watched them change colour. Later this term we will experiment with “Exploding milk”. Milk is put into a tray and coloured dye added, this forms shapes on the milk, then we add a small drop of dish washing liquid onto the dye, the children were able to observe an explosion of colour across the tray!!

Reflect Respect, Relate Curriculum document 2011 states that educators “invite children to experience different texture, smells and sights”. We also made Marble paper by mixing dye with cooking oil. The children used an eye dropper to drop small amounts of dye and oil into a tray of water. White paper was then placed on top, the oil and dye soaked onto the paper making a marble effect. We have also made play-dough with hair conditioner and cornflour this is a very smooth and soft play-dough. We hope to experiment with soap dough, snowflakes, clay dough and quick sand dough!!

Health Services

As part of a range of services to children and families in SA, the Government provides funding to Child and Youth Health to offer free health assessments for children from 4 years 3 months to 5 years of age. The assessment includes vision; hearing; height and weight; dental health; general discussions with parents on health issues.

A CYH Nurse will visit KFCC on Thursday 11 September. Consent forms are available from the Office.

A parent or caregiver must accompany children.

The School Dental Service is the major provider of dental services for babies, children and young people under 18 years in South Australia. Around 130,000 children attend every year. The Commonwealth Child Dental Benefits Schedule for 2 – 17 year olds started in 2014. School Dental Clinics are located across Adelaide. To locate your local School Dental Clinic, and for more information about the Child Dental Benefits Schedule, visit www.sadental.sa.gov.au

Community Development

Thank you to the many families who completed the “Community Survey”! Analysis of the survey identified 6 parents who are interested in participating in a Parent Engagement Group. This group will assist Laura to plan for upcoming social events and parenting programs.

Recent parent Programs have included:

Infant Massage:

This was a very successful group with 2 parents from the centre attending and several others from the wider community.

PJ Storytime:

We had a fantastic turn out to the recent PJ night, with 16 families coming along. They were all really engaged in the night, spending time reading along with their children and then sharing several stories with a group.

Confident Parenting:

Presented by Jodie Benveniste, from ‘Parent Wellbeing’. This workshop provided parents with great confidence boosting strategies for supporting their families. A follow up session will be held on Wednesday 27 August @ 6.30pm.

School Holiday program:

The Circus Skills and craft session school holiday program was again run in partnership with the Tea Tree Gully Council and was very popular.

Laura is planning 2 sessions for the October holidays. One as a “Kids Bake Off” class and the second as a “Robot craft” workshop.

Future parent programs include:

My Baby Short Course: In partnership with Tea Tree Gully Council, with weekly Wednesday morning sessions until 10th Sept.

Making Better Food Choices Workshop: in partnership with Kings Baptist – reading food labels; understanding nutrition content of foods; swapping recipes and sampling delicious dishes! Monday 25 August 9.30 – 11.30 at Kings – Bookings are essential!

First Aid:

Laura has been sourcing the most cost effective option for us and she is also negotiating with Rick Baldock, Be Active PlayTime This session relates to how parents can provide useful, cost effective physical play activities for children in and around the home.

Dates to Remember

- Wednesday 20 August: Commonwealth Games Day 9.30 to 11.00am
- Monday 25 August: Making Better Food Choices Workshop
- Monday 8 September: Governing Council Meeting 6.45pm
- Thursday 11 September: Health Checks
- Thursday 25 September: Last preschool session for Term 3.
- Friday 26 September: No Preschool program – staff planning day – Long Day Care will be available for families who are booked into a Friday.