February Newsletter

The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) Preschool session times are:
8.30 - 11.30 (morning session) and 12.15 - 3.15 (afternoon session)

Preschool children (not booked into childcare) may hang up their bags and access the outdoor learning experiences while waiting with their parents, until the doors are officially opened at 8.30 / 12.15 pm.

Upon arrival children may choose a range of learning experiences, which have been strategically placed indoors and outdoors.

For children new to our Centre, or who have not attended for some time, we ask parents/caregivers to please remind their child where the toilets and hand washing facilities are located and where and how to get a drink of water.

At apx. 9.00 am the bells are rung and all preschool children (including older children booked into childcare) gather together on the large red carpet area in the “Star Room”, before dividing into smaller groups, for literacy, numeracy and other learning experiences. (You will be informed ASAP of the name of the Educator responsible for your child’s group).

The younger children gather in the “Rainbow Room” for a literacy, numeracy or other learning experience designed to meet their developmental needs.

Following on from these experiences, all children will be provided with a fruit snack prepared by our very talented Cook, Jo.

The children will then return to the integrated play-based learning experiences available indoors and outdoors through the entire centre.

To ensure the safety of all children, we dismiss the children individually, directly to their parents / caregivers. For safety reasons it is imperative that the Educators are aware of who is going to be collecting your child from the Centre. If for some reason you are unable to make it to the Children’s Centre yourself and have arranged for someone else to collect your child please write the name of the Educator responsible on the sign-in sheets or please ring the Centre and notify the staff of these changes.

This person will be asked to provide proof of their identity (eg driver’s license) – if they are new to the Centre.

Please also note that it is not appropriate to send siblings into the building while you wait in the car.

Children will not be released to minors under 18 years of age.

The staff for Term 1, 2015 include:
- Anne Whittleston (Director / Educator)
- Jenny Reid (Assistant Director / Educator)
- Laura Francis (Community Development Coordinator)
- Janet Hazel (Educator)
- Kate Hallam (Educator)
- Roshni Amroliwala (Educator)
- Sonya Osborne (Educator)
- Angela Underdown (Educator)
- Carolyn Howson (Educator)
- Adrienne Hicks (Educator)
- Jasmin Sheehan (Educator)
- Lisa Mildrum (Educator)
- Jodie Murray (Educator)
- Andrea Randell (Educator)
- Julie-Anne Duffy (Educator)
- Robbi Meinel (Educator)
- Cathy Mazzarolo (Educator)
- Erin Wilkinson (Educator)
- Sally Pippen (Educator)
- Jona Angely (Educator)
- Carolyn Potter (Admin Officer)
- Jo Oliver (Cook / Educator)
- Nobuko Nakajima (Cook / Educator)
- Simon Costello (Groundsperson)

A warm welcome to families who are new to our Centre and welcome back to our existing families.

Research shows that success in learning is directly proportional to regular attendance and participation in education and care programs. Irregular attendance is an early indicator of the potential for disengagement from the education program. Poor attendance can limit children’s achievement of skills and experiences and may lead to underachievement which leads to further disengagement with nonattendance in later school years and consequently lack of success in adult life.

Dr Susan Krieg – (Senior Lecturer at Flinders University) stated in a recent research article “School engagement predicts success later in life” It is important to recognise that the patterns of engagement begin very early, much earlier than formal school.

Please ensure your child’s regular attendance! Please phone us and let us know if your child is not attending for the day.

Please note: It is a Licensing requirement that children are signed in and signed out when both arriving and departing each day.

Please ensure that all children are accompanied by an adult before opening the gates- if a child is observed to be on their own please accompany them back to a staff member!! Please ensure that the yellow metal loops are replaced over the top of the Entrance gates at all times!!

The Children’s Centre is open from 7 am for children booked into morning Child Care. Upon arrival, children will access a range of learning experiences.
Throughout the year Educators at KFCC engage in a range of training and development which enables them to more effectively impart knowledge to families on the importance of talking, playing, singing and reading with their child/ren right from birth. “There is now an impressive body of evidence from a wide range of sources, demonstrating that early childhood development affects health, well-being, and competence across the balance of the life course. Quality interactions during the earliest stages of life play a crucial role in shaping children’s perceptual, cognitive and linguistic ability, their physical, social and emotional development and physical and mental health, activity, skills and behaviour in adult life.” Moore and Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, 2006.

Young children are born ready to learn, and they learn and grow every time their parents and Centre Educators interact with them. You can make a difference in your child’s learning and even in how their brain develops. This is especially important in the first five years of their life, and it is through the everyday things that you do with your child that helps them learn. Numeracy and Literacy skills are crucial to every child and young person’s ability to develop as an individual, to live a satisfying and rewarding life and to actively participate in our society.

The Great Start website [www.greatstart.sa.edu.au](http://www.greatstart.sa.edu.au) contains a range of resources for games and activities based on everyday experiences such as catching the bus, or using bed time, to learn about time.

The Great Start Website has plenty of ideas and activities that can help you make the most of everyday learning and events. There are ideas for activities that families are already doing, ideas that may be new and will only take a few minutes and others that will take longer. There is also extra information if you want to learn more about the literacy and numeracy that your child will be developing and how this will link to learning in later life. The Department for Education and Child Development Birth to 18 - Numeracy and Literacy Strategy aims to prepare all young people for the future by enabling them to become engaged, confident and powerful learners, who use numeracy and literacy successfully in every aspect of their lives.

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children’s learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children’s learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. Through play the Framework recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development. At Keithcot Farm Children’s Centre each child has a portfolio which is an interactive way to share our understanding of your child’s learning and development. We record “Learning Stories”, jottings, photos and anecdotes about your child’s experiences in our program in relation to The Early Years Learning Framework that we feel capture important milestones; interests and achievements. You could share some stories/photos about your child at home and the things you think are important and add it to your child’s portfolio.

In 2015 we will continue to implement the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum - across our site.

Our focus for Term One will include:
- Topic 1: Privacy and correct names of body parts.
- Topic 2: Touching.
- Topic 3: Recognising abuse.
- Topic 4: Secrets.

In 2015 we will continue to implement Program Achieve – You can do it! The program is based on the social-emotional-motivational attitudes and competencies that research indicates are the foundations young people need to be successful and happy. The 5 Social-Emotional Capabilities (Foundations) are:
- Confidence: knowing you will experience success. Not being afraid to make mistakes, or try something new.
- Persistence: trying hard and not giving up when tasks appear too difficult.
- Organisation: listening carefully to instructions, taking care of belongings.
- Getting Along: sharing; taking turns; being honest, respectful, fair, and caring.
- Emotional Resilience: knowing how to stop yourself from getting extremely angry, or worried. Being able to move away from situations that arouse negative feelings and seeking out more positive situations.

National Quality Framework

At some stage this year we expect to be selected to participate in an Assessment and Rating process against the National Quality Standard (NQS).

The NQS has 7 quality areas:
1. Educational program and practice
   These programs should be stimulating, engaging and enhance children’s learning and development.
2. Children’s health and safety
   Every child’s health and wellbeing should be safeguarded and promoted.
3. Physical environment.
   This should be safe, suitable and provide a rich and diverse range of experiences which promote children’s learning and development.
4. Staffing arrangements
   Staffing arrangements should create a safe and routine environment for children and support warm, respectful relationships. Major changes as part of the National Quality Standard will improve staff-to-child ratios and the educational qualifications of the workforce.
5 Relationships with children
These should be responsive, respectful and promote a child's sense of security and belonging so they are confident to explore the environment and engage in learning.

6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
Good working relationships with families are fundamental to achieving good outcomes for children. Community partnerships should focus on active communication, consultation and collaboration that all contribute to children's learning and wellbeing.

7 Leadership and service management
Effective leadership and management will sustain positive relationships and environments that aid children's learning and development. Well documented policies and practices should be developed and regularly evaluated in partnership with educators, coordinators, staff and families.

Community Development
A range of Community programs, Family information sessions and social events will be happening throughout Term 1 including:

My Baby Short Course: starting Weds 11th Feb (6 weekly sessions). Special Guests include:
- Dr. Gus - Local dentist.
- Swim instructor from Golden Grove State Swim
- Megan Cornelius, food demonstration-introducing babies to solids.

More information will soon be provided for the following,
- Infant massage: with Bonita Stockley, 5 weekly sessions.
- ‘Balancing Me Time & Parenting’: with Jenny & Vivienne from Leap SA.
- ‘Therapeutic Parenting with Relationship & Regulation’: strategies for parents who seek to better understand and connect with their children.
- ‘Sleep Solutions’: with Dr Sarah Blunden/Brooke Michelle, sleep psychologists.
- Park & Play: family weekend social event.
- Blokes BBQ (for Dad’s & Children): weekend event.
- April School holiday activities will again be offered in collaboration with TTG Council.

If at any time you have a question relating to parenting/child developmental stages, or you have a suggestion for a parenting information session or are looking for information relating to events/activities around the Community please touch base with Laura- Community Development Coordinator. Laura.francis@sa.gov.au

Children’s Centre Management
Keithcot Farm Children’s Centre is a locally managed, community based site within the Department for Education and Child Development.
Educators and staff in partnership with the Governing Council
- identify strategic priorities annually within a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).
- work collaboratively to strengthen community partnerships
- use human resources flexibly, effectively and efficiently.
- are accountable to the local community.
The Governing Council meets apx. twice per school term.
Membership of the Governing Council consists of parents elected at the Annual General Meeting and the staff leadership team.

The first Governing Council Meeting for 2015 will be held at the Centre on Monday 2 February @ 6.45pm.
Throughout the year we will be reviewing and updating our Children’s Centre Policies.
During our 1st meeting we will review all the “Administrative Policies” including
- Enrolments and Orientation.
- Priority of Access
- Payment of Fees
- Preschool Lunch Care Program
- Delivery and Collection of Children
- Lost Children
- Governance and Management of the service including confidentiality of records.
- Dealing with complaints
- Employee grievance.

Parent Complaint Policy
We all expect quality and expert care and teaching for your child in order that they achieve their potential. Working together with the Department for Education and Child Development will give us the best chance of solving a problem that may arise during your child’s years in prior to school settings and school.

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.
The first step in working through a complaint at Keithcot Farm Children’s Centre is to talk to your child’s Primary Educator, if you still are not satisfied then the Director – Education and Care : Anne Whittleston.

Ask at the front office for a copy of the Parent Guide to Raising a Concern or Complaint brochure. Steps guiding how complaints should be made are explained in the brochure. Use this guide to help you think through what you are concerned about and how to resolve the matter respectfully and effectively.
Health Checks

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 4-5 year old children. The assessment includes vision; hearing; height and weight; dental health; general discussions with parents on health issues (eg. Immunisation) and questions on children’s growth and development. A CYH Nurse will provide assessments on Friday 20 February.

If your child is 4 years and 3 months or older and you want your child to participate, please collect a consent form from our Community Development Coordinator Laura. A parent or caregiver must accompany children to the Health Check.

About complaints or concerns

This information may be helpful in explaining what a complaint is:
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.
If you'd like more information give Anne Whittleston a call on 82512700 or visit the department's website at www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint or email DECD.parentcomplaint@sa.gov.au. There is also a Freecall number 1800 677 435.

Immunisation

It is important to remember that children are more likely to come into contact with infectious diseases when they are in early childhood settings due to the close contact they have with many other children and adults and their lack of exposure.
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.
If there is an outbreak of an immunisable disease, children without up to date immunisation may be excluded, even if they appear to be well – this is a legal requirement.
If you have not provided an up to date immunisation history statement recently you please provide this information as soon as possible.
You can get a copy of your child’s immunisation history statement:
- Australian Childhood Immunisation Register
- at your local Medicare office
- by calling 1800 653 809
- www.medicareaustralia.gov.au

Sun Safety

To ensure that the children are protected from the harmful effects of the sun, we ask that all children bring a named hat which is either a Legionnaire or wide brimmed style that protects their face neck and ears, each day. Hats with a front peak only (Baseball caps) are not an acceptable means of protection for the neck and ears.
Navy Blue Legionnaire Hats are available for purchase @ $4.00 each. (Please name all belongings including shoes !!)
Sunscreen should be applied by parents/ caregivers to all exposed skin before arrival at the Centre. Sunscreen will be reapplied every two hours in line with the current Cancer Council recommendations.
If your child has a medical need for a particular brand of sunscreen (eg- allergic to others) we need permission from your Doctor to administer this sunscreen and you will need to supply your own sunscreen with your child’s name on a Chemist label.
If you do not want your child to receive sunscreen- please put your request in writing and it will be filed with your child’s personal documentation.
Please do not send children with exposed shoulders/ backs/ chests etc. These children will be asked to put on a t-shirt or will be required to spend all day inside as sunscreen alone is not an acceptable means of protection for these body parts.

Fees

From the beginning of 2015 all families accessing Long Day care; Lunchcare and Preschool will pay their fees through a Direct Debit scheme.
Preschool families may alternatively pay their annual Preschool fee at the beginning of the year.
Thank you to those families who have paid their Preschool fees in full.
If you are not sure what to do or you have mislaid your forms please speak to Anne, Jen or Carolyn in the office as soon as possible.