May 2015 Newsletter

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- Jenny Reid (Assistant Director / Educator)
- Laura Francis (Community Development Coordinator)
- Kate Hallam (Educator)
- Janet Hazel (Educator)
- Roshni Amroliwala (Educator)
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- Angela Underdown (Educator)
- Carolyn Howson (Educator)
- Adrienne Hicks (Educator)
- Jasmin Sheehan (Educator)
- Erin Wilkinson (Educator)
- Lisa Mildrum (Educator)
- Jodie Murray (Educator)
- Andrea Randell (Educator)
- Julie-Anne Duffy (Educator)
- Robbi Meinel (Educator)
- Cathy Mazzarolo (Educator)
- Sally Pippen (Educator)
- Iona Angely (Educator)
- Renee Bowman (Educator)
- Carolyn Potter (Admin Officer)
- Jo Oliver (Cook)
- Nobuko Nakajima (Cook / Educator)
- Simon Costello (Groundsperson)

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 non-attendance in later school years and consequently lack of success in adult life.

**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. Although our Children’s Centre opens at 7am and closes at 6 pm for children booked into our Long Day Care Program - **please make every effort** to collect your child **no later than 5.45pm** – this enables our Educators to finish packing up equipment, setting up for the next day and a myriad of administrative tasks that they are required to do before they go home to their own families - they often spend several hours of a night time writing reports and preparing learning experiences for the next day. We have a very stable staff team at Keithcot Farm Children’s Centre with a minimal staff turnover for a number of years. This reflects the high level of value and respect that our staff team receive from families and the wider community.

**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 times between 11.30 and 12.15 enable our Educators to finish packing up equipment, setting up for the afternoon session and a myriad of administrative tasks that they are required to do before they have a 20 minute lunch break!

The afternoon session finishes at **3.15** however we understand that many families need to collect children from school at much the same time so we commence farewelling at 3pm. Please make every effort to collect your child **no later than 3.15pm** – this enables our Educators to finish packing up equipment, setting up for the next day and a myriad of administrative tasks that they are required to do before they go home to their own families - they often spend several hours of a night time writing reports and preparing learning experiences for the next day.

Attention!

The Entrance Gates are locked at all times!!

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!!

Curriculum

Children come to our Centre with a wide range of literacy skills and experiences. We encourage children to notice signs around our Centre and words on packaging used for collage that they use daily. We encourage children to attempt to write their name on their work using their name cards and to view a range of literature available to children throughout our Centre and by being read to as often as possible. The older children visit the “Hedley Beare Resource Centre” at Keithcot Farm Primary school at least once per week. These opportunities relate to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) Outcome 5 **Children are effective communicators – they take on roles of literacy and numeracy users in their play.**

To support the development of strong literacy skills, children and babies are exposed to a range of developmentally appropriate **Phonological Awareness** activities including rhyme, sound and later, letter recognition. Current local and international research shows that Phonological Awareness is a strong indicator for later reading and writing success at school.
All children are assessed in **Phonological Awareness** during their first and fourth term in the Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) preschool program. This assessment includes listening skills, clapping syllables in words and identifying the initial sound in words and is summarised in the child’s **“Statement of Learning”**, which most Preschool children received last term. Throughout each session all children across our site are introduced to a variety of rhymes, finger plays and listening games which help develop their phonological awareness and ultimately their literacy skills. Older children are also encouraged to sign the initial letter of their name and are exposed to a number of Australasian signs (sign language) at group times.

Our **literacy kits** are proving very popular with many children as they share this great resource with their family. Thank you to Cathy for continually updating them. Please do not forget to return them so others can have the opportunity to share with their child.

For children who are feeling a little apprehensive about attending KFCC – literacy kits enable them to share their favourite story or game with their family, which further builds links between home and the centre.

**EYLF Outcome 2** children are connected with and contribute to their world, and they demonstrate a sense of belonging and comfort in their environment.

We have organized for the Fire Service to visit the centre twice this term. Monday May 11th @ 10.am and Thursday 21st May. All children attending those days will have the opportunity to experience first hand the Fire Appliance.

The children will be given an opportunity to ask questions relating to the role of a **Fire Fighter**, assisting them to become effective communicators. These experiences cover various aspects of our program that are related to **The Early Years Learning Framework**: Children broaden an understanding of the world into which they live and are open to new challenges and discoveries. They explore aspects of their identity through role play (as they take on the role of a Fire Fighter).

We will provide the “green ute” to be used as a Fire Appliance along with hoses, helmets, jackets and a small ladder. These play experiences further assist children to co-operate with others as they negotiate roles and relationships in play episodes and group experiences as they transfer what they learnt from the real experience into the dramatic play experience.

This also relates to the **“Reflect Respect Relate”** curriculum document stating that Educators provide choices and different experiences for children and this is one way that we broaden children’s knowledge and understanding of the world we live in.

**Sustainable practices are embedded in our Curriculum.** We encourage children to learn how to become more energy efficient and to foster their capacity to understand and respect the natural environment. A **worm farm** has been set up allowing children to see the benefits of waste reduction, turning organic waste into nutrient fertilizer for our plants in the garden. We are also starting to plant winter vegetables and herbs in our edible garden.

If you are in the process of organising your vegetable garden at home and have a few seedlings left over or would just like to help us with this process, we would very much welcome your involvement 😊

The children will have the opportunity to plant seedlings such as peas, spinach, lettuce, silverbeet, carrots and beans and there is already potatoes growing in the raised garden bed.

**EYLF Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world.** The herb and vegetable gardens encourages caring for a group project and enables children to recognise that they belong to other communities. It gives children the opportunity to participate in meaningful ways through shared decision making about the caring and expectations of the garden.

Through these experiences, children demonstrate an increased knowledge of and respect for the natural environment.

The garden will be harvested by the children and used to prepare healthy snacks or take home and include in their family evening meals.

Our Bokashi buckets are proving to be a good resource for fertilizing our garden. This is done in two ways. Firstly the food scraps go into a bucket with Bokashi mix and as the matter breaks down it produces liquid fertilizer which is diluted and used on the flowers and vegetable garden. Then once the food scraps in the bucket have decomposed these are added to the compost bins where it breaks down further and is then added to the garden beds.

**By embedding sustainable practices across our Curriculum we are not only reducing the amount of waste that goes into landfill which in turn produces methane and carbon dioxide but we are also helping to reduce contamination and greenhouse gases!**

These greenhouse gases contribute to worldwide climate change. Scientists predict that climate change will impact on all our lives, especially on our health.

Keithcot Farm Children’s Centre is endeavouring to reduce our carbon footprint. 😊
Every term we practice an **Emergency Evacuation**. We discuss what is an emergency and what do we do in an evacuation? The children are reminded that they leave their play based learning experience and head straight for the gate, and move with an Educator to the school quadrangle. All children, staff and any visitors are counted, to ensure we are all present before moving back inside. 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.

**Child Protection Curriculum**

As Educators we are legally responsible to protect children, under the Children’s Protection, Act 1993 and to report all suspected causes of abuse and neglect. Each week in our program planning we plan for our Child Protection Curriculum. Each week children follow a topic for example “**Safe** and **Unsafe** situations”.

We discuss that we need to hold an adults hand when leaving the Children’s Centre and then crossing the road.

We talked about **Warning Signs**: how we feel when in an unsafe situation. The children’s response was “you get a wobbly tummy or feel sick in the tummy” (two good signs to look out for). Who do we trust if mum or dad are not around? Who could they go to for help- a friend, a teacher, a neighbour or a relative. We talk about our “body parts”. In these discussions all body parts are called by the correct terminology so there is no misunderstanding if they are informing an Educator about any unsafe inappropriate touching etc. These discussions assist children to recognize their feelings and to be assertive and confident to say “**Stop**”!

This topic relates to the **Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)** with the following Outcomes.

**Outcome 1**: Children have a strong sense of identity – they …
- Initiate interactions and conversations with trusted educators.
- Feel recognized and respected for who they are.

**Outcome 2**: Children are connected with and contribute to their world – they …
- Broaden their understanding of the world in which they live.
- Empowered to make choices and problem solve to meet their needs.

**Outcome 3**: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing – they…
- Show increasing independence, care & safety for themselves and others.
**Community Development**

What a fantastic first Term we have had. 😊

A big thank you to all of the families who have participated in our parent information workshops including

- “Sleep Solution Session” with Brooke Michell
- “Raising Children with Confidence” with Jodie Benveniste.

We also had a fantastic Saturday Harmony Day picnic in March.

**Term 2 will include a range of opportunities for parents and families including:**

- **Fussy Eaters** (parent information session) with Occupational Therapist Sarah Harry
  Tuesday 12 May @ 6.30pm
- **Building emotional resilience in our children** (parent information session) with Psychologist: Mark LeMessurier.
  Date to be confirmed.
- **Infant Massage** (5 weeks @ 1 hour course for parents to participate alongside their baby) with Bonita Stockley
  Commences Tuesday 5th May or Friday 8th please contact Laura asap as places are limited.

- **My Baby Short Course** (6 week course hosted at Greenwith Community Centre)
  Starts Wednesday May 20th
  Special presenters include Angela Stephenson, Staines Development & making inexpensive toys for baby.
  Sue Kerr, personal trainer - exercises to do with baby.
- **Dad’s Day Out** (Saturday BBQ & playgroup)
  Date to be confirmed.
- **Family Picnic & Play date**
  Date to be confirmed.

**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. 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 general lack of exposure.

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 could you please provide this information as soon as possible by using the following instructions.

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

It’s important to keep your child’s most recent immunisation history statement so you can use it when proof of immunisation is needed. For example-you can use your child’s statement to:

- Help meet immunisation requirements for school
- Document that your child has received all vaccinations required by five years of age.
- Help with eligibility for the Child Care Benefit.
- Show an up-to-date immunisation status for the Family Assistance Office.

**Dates to Remember**

- **Monday 27 April**: DECD preschool closure – normal Long Day Care
- **Tuesday 5 May**: Infant Massage commences.
- **Friday 8 May**: 2nd Infant Massage group
- **Monday 11 May**: Governing Council Meeting @ 6.45pm
- **Tuesday 12 May**: “Fussy Eaters” Information Session @ 6.30pm
- **Monday 8 June**: Queens Birthday Public Holiday

**Daily Communication with Families**

*Please ensure that while your child is at the Children’s Centre that you are contactable via your phone.*

*Please make every effort to respond to messages left on your phone as soon as possible – thank you.*

**Please note**

If at any time you have any questions or are looking for information about our Community or child/parent related information please don’t hesitate to contact Laura on 0428 880 390
Laura.francis@sa.gov.au