



## Welcome to 2017

We wish all of our new and returning families a fabulous year ahead. We are excited about this year and all the possibilities it offers.

The Educators have been busy preparing for 2017, before the children started we were involved in several professional development days. Staff attended these days in their own time to ensure high quality outcomes for our children. Our educators are dedicated, professional, lifelong learners.



Look at the little world we created together – we were discussing all the opportunities for learning in nature and how much numeracy learning we gained through this experience.

## Curriculum News

The term started with great excitement and expectation, and it has not disappointed. The children and educators have been getting to know each other over the last 3 weeks quickly establishing relationships, routines and expectations. These are the cornerstones to developing a sense of belonging. It is only once children begin to feel that they belong that they will deeply engage in experiences. It has been pleasing to see how quickly the children settled and became engaged in their new environment.

Our days are structured to provide long periods of uninterrupted play which enables children to become deeply involved in their chosen experiences. It's once

children become immersed in their desired experience that they are able to construct new learnings and build upon their prior knowledge. Play is the platform that children (and adults) use to test theories, explore new ideas, practice skills and abilities and 'grow their brains'.

Belonging, Being & Becoming (BBB) The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) clearly articulates the expectation that children in our setting are provided with opportunities to '*learn through play*'. Our framework also expects educators to '*recognise their (children's) agency, capacity to initiate and lead learning, and their (children's) rights to participate in decisions that affect them, including their learning*'.

Some of the experiences that children have been exploring over the last 3 weeks have included

- Role Play interests have included: hospitals, firefighting, construction works, home corner, babies, carwash, mud kitchen, café
- Physical Experiences have included: climbing, bike riding, balancing, shaving cream mixing and creating, swinging, jumping, spinning
- Creative Experiences have included: easel painting, marble painting, crayon and water colour paints, finger painting, someone even invented 'kiss painting', dancing, singing, creative constructions with recycled materials in the construction area, creating master pieces at the hammering table, creating imaginative 'mini worlds' with a variety of loose parts
- Construction Experiences: marble runs, block buildings, car tracks including ramps and buildings, pipe works and earth moving, creating props for play with mobilo
- Group Times: learning names, discussing what has gone well during the day, having stories, planning what else can be explored, reiterating routines and expectations



What a great robot how creative young minds can be.

The educators intentionally plan the learning environments and develop statements of intent to support the learning program for all children. Each group (pattern of attendance) has their own statement of intent which guides our educational program and is available for families to read. Copies are attached to this newsletter.

We understand that through the orientation process families are given lots of information about preschool, however now that the year has started there are probably lots of questions that you might have.

One common question is *“What is my children doing each day?”* We often hear comments like; *“They don’t want to talk to me about kindy”, “They don’t know the names of the other children”, “They say they haven’t done anything”*. These are all very normal and natural responses for our children particularly as they adjust to their new routines and environments. Children are working very hard during their days at preschool and very tired by the end of the day. However the obvious question still remains for us as adults *“What are they doing all day?”*

The day starts with our routine jobs:

- lunches away,
- morning snack in bag,
- water bottle on trolley,
- bag in locker,
- posting name in box,
- then where to play (this can be a big decision and at times requires support from adults – which is totally OK).

Then comes saying good bye:

- This will vary for each child each day,
- It is not unusual for this to become a little more difficult after the first week or so once the initial excitement has worn off and children adjust to changes to family routines and build their stamina.
- Educators are very skilled and competent in supporting these times with calm nurturing approaches, if you are concerned about separation at drop off time please feel free to talk to your child’s teacher, another educator or Lorry. We can develop a plan and provide additional strategies that might support the transition and separation.

If families have experienced a difficult drop off please feel free to call and check how your child is traveling. Educators will try to call families to share how quickly children have settled and what experiences they have engaged in, however as you can appreciate educators are very busy and we can’t always leave the learning environment to make a phone call. We believe it is important for families to feel confident and comfortable with children’s preschool setting and should you want to call and check please do.



The work Men are very busy with their Earthworks.



### Uninterrupted Play 9am till about 12 noon:

- During the morning children have access to the inside and outside learning environments,
- Educators intentionally set up the learning environments to support children's dispositions for lifelong learning and extend/promote challenge within play episodes,
- Children play independently, alongside others, or in cooperative situations, it is important for children to be able to engage in all these types of play situations to build a positive sense of themselves within the preschool setting.
- Children are free to choose with whom, where and what they play; this in itself can be a challenging learning experience when a chosen peer might not agree to play the same game or in the same space
- Children build social skills, practice to negotiate and problem solve with peers and adults, develop ways of interacting, test social boundaries, take on different roles within play scenarios
- Educators will seek to connect with every child individually through this period of the day, build relationships and learning about each child; their strengths, interests and identifying possible areas that child is interested in learning more or might require support to further develop
- During this time children might develop ideas and experiences that require additional resources, information, support, negotiation etc the educators support children to develop plans, lead their learning and follow through with these agreed actions/plans
- During this period of the day some children can find it overwhelming to join their peers play episodes or choose what to engage in when this occurs educators support children to engage and find experiences that reflect their interests which enables them to build their sense of belonging
- Educators also support children to manage their personal care needs through; reminders, verbal instructions, visual cues and if needed physical support eg toileting and changing

### Morning Snack:

- Children can access their morning snack as they wish at any time up until about 11:30
- Educators support children to learn and independently manage this routine and expectations
  - wash hands before eating
  - get water bottle and snack
  - sit in a snack area (identified by the bins, inside and outside)
  - have a go at opening packaging if required (we use pinch, pinch, pull as a verbal prompt for commercial packaging)
  - have conversations with others while sitting and eating
  - uneaten food back in snack box
  - rubbish in bin either food scraps or landfill
  - snack back in bag
  - drink back in trolley
  - wash hands if need to and return to play



Here's our worm farm where some of our food scraps go.

### Toilet Routines:

- Children are encouraged to observe their internal signal to know when to use the toilet. Adults will support this through comments such as "you look like you have the wriggles maybe you should try to have a wee".
- Children choose a toilet and shut the door (we remind children one person per toilet)
- Flush toilet once finished
- Wash hands before leaving the bathroom
- We do at times need to remind our friends that while sometimes you might wee outside

when camping or at home, at preschool we always use the toilets

Transition to Lunch 1<sup>st</sup> Group Time approximately 12:00 noon:

- Educators provide children with a 5 minute warning before group time, educators walk around with a visual card and individually tell each child
- Educators walk around and explain 5 minutes has finished, time to go to group
- Children move off to their individual group
- Children place hats in lockers
- Children sit on mat with their group teacher



We record our thoughts in lots of different ways this is a great example of age appropriate literacy skills in action.

Lunch Time Group Experience:

- Children come together with teacher
- Share in story reading or discuss events of the morning
- Children apply their own sunscreen; looking into mirrors and following directions from educators if required
- Children wash their hands, educators monitor and support this process as required
- Children find and collect their lunch box from the kitchen bench
- Children collect their water bottle from the trolley
- Children return to their group, sit together and begin eating lunch
- Educators eat their lunch at the same time with the children
- Conversations are had during lunch to build relationships with children and adults; again to further develop a sense of belonging

- Children wait for the majority of their peers to finish eating before moving away, build respect for each other and learning about social expectations
- As children finish eating they might read a story, engage in drawing or have group conversations
- Once the educators feel it is appropriate the children are asked to place their lunch boxes in their bags and their water bottles on the trolley (at this point lots of children also refill their water bottle)
- Once these jobs are complete the children can return to the play
- If lunch boxes are left out or bags are not placed back in lockers educators will quietly and respectfully ask children to look after their belongings by putting them away. Educators will follow through with children to support them in developing their persistence and organisational skills.

Uninterrupted Play approximately 1pm till about 2:15pm:

This is the same as the morning block, often with children returning to play that they were involved in during the morning, building upon experiences and developing deeper understandings.

- There is space available for children to have a quiet rest if they prefer, some children might even have a short sleep, this is not mandatory however children can choose to participate if they like



Creating mini worlds with a variety of resources. This requires imagination, persistence and creativity all very important learning dispositions.

### End of Day Tidy Up approximately 2:15pm:

- Educators provide children with a 5 minute warning before pack up time, educators walk around with a visual card and individually explain to each child
- Educators walk around and explain 5 minutes has finished, time to pack up
- Educators support children's understanding of roles and expectations by clearly stating expectation and guiding children to achieve the expectation, eg "Douglas you need to pack up the blocks now, they go in these shelves and we keep going until all the blocks are in the shelves".
- Children pack up the learning environment; building a sense of belonging and responsibility for their learning environment; educators often spend lots of time explaining that everyone needs to help with this part of the day
- Educators ask children with shoes off to put their shoes on, again educators support as required encouraging children to develop independence
- Children organise their belongings into their bags, checking that their lunch boxes and water bottles are in their bags
- Children put their hats in their lockers
- Children bring their bag to their group space

### End of Day Group Time Approximately 2:45pm:

- Children sit on mat with group teacher
- Group conversation about what has occurred throughout the day, what children might like to do next time they're at preschool or they might have a story or play a game
- Adults come to collect children
- Teachers say goodbye to children ensuring they are being picked up by 'their adult'
- Children collect their bags and greet their adults
- Children and collecting adult check for any lost belongings and art work to collect

We hope this gives you a little insight into your child's busy day at preschool. This is obviously not an extensive list of everything that occurs at preschool however it does provide an idea about the daily structure, routine and expectations. While it is

enjoyable to spend the majority of the day playing at the age of 3, 4 and 5 years of age, it is also very challenging, tiring, and social and emotionally exhausting.

When asking your child about preschool you might like to try questions like;

Who sat near you at lunch? or

What did *teacher name* talk about at the end of the day? or

What was in the sandpit today? or

Where were the paints today?

We hope some of these questions are helpful 😊



Here's some of the work undertaken with the pipes.

## Staff Information

Purple Team, Monday Tuesday Wednesday even weeks

Bethany, Lina, Megan, Sarah – *Teachers*

Bronny, Cathy, Trudy – *Early Childhood Educators*

Orange Team, Thursday Friday Wednesday odd weeks

Emily, Kate, Philippa, Shelly – *Teachers*

Karen, Sarina, Wendy – *Early Childhood Educators*

Sue – *Finance/Administration Officer*

Fran – *Community Development Coordinator*

Brad – *Occupational Therapist*

Lorry – *Director of Education and Care*

Regular Relief Staff

Nicole – *Teacher*

Wendy – *Early Childhood Educator*

Glenn – *Early Childhood Educator*

All Early Childhood Teachers (including Director) have at least a 4 year university qualification in Early Childhood Education or a recognised equivalent. All Early Childhood Educators have at least a certificate III in children's service; 5 Early Childhood Educators have a Diploma in Early Childhood.



Finance/Administration Officer has a university qualification in finance  
Community Development Coordinator has a University qualification in social sciences  
Occupational Therapist has a University qualification in Occupational Therapy

## Pupil Free Day – 14<sup>th</sup> March

This year there will be 4 Pupil Free Days. During these days staff will be engaged in professional development sessions. This term the Pupil Free Day is the **14<sup>th</sup> March**, all of the DECD Schools and Preschools in the Greater Gawler DECD Partnership will have a Pupil Free Day on this date to support families. This means that there is no Preschool on the 14<sup>th</sup> March.

## Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March at Elsie Ey at 9:15am. If you are interested in either attending or being a member of the governing council please express your interest to Sue, Lorry or another member of staff. Being a member of the Governing Council is very rewarding and enables families to develop a deeper knowledge of the centre operations.

## National Quality Standards Framework (NQS)

Every Early Childhood Service in Australia is governed by national regulations and legislation. Each state has a Regulatory Board responsible for ensuring services meet these obligations, as part of this process every site has an external assessment. We have been notified that our service will be having the external review sometime after the 6<sup>th</sup> March. We are looking forward to this opportunity to learn about how our service is seen within the NQS context.



What a creative picture with lots of detail.

20<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017



Creative expression with crayons and water colours.

## Up Coming Dates

**13<sup>th</sup> March – Adelaide Cup Day Public Holiday**

**14<sup>th</sup> March – Pupil Free Day**

**29<sup>th</sup> March – AGM 9:15 am**

**13<sup>h</sup> April – Last day term 1, 2pm finish**

**14<sup>th</sup> April – Good Friday**

## Important Information

### Medical Information

If your child requires any medication to be administered while at Preschool, including 'over the counter' products such as Panadol or Dimetapp we require a 'Medication Authority' to be signed and completed by an authorised prescriber. The medication needs to be stored in it's appropriate package in an individual dosage clearly labelled with child details and dosage (labelled by the dispensing practitioner).

### Sign In Sign Out

Please ensure adults delivering and collecting children from preschool sign the child in and out of the service via the group sign in sheet.