

## Western suburbs kindergarten

### Welcome newsletter

January 2021



Staff and Committee would like to welcome all families to Western Suburbs Kindergarten (WSK) in 2021. We are very excited to begin the adventure of a kindy year with you and your precious little one. We aim to provide a safe, stimulating and fun-filled environment where children learn and develop through a range of play-based experiences. We look forward to getting to know you better as the year progresses and invite you to talk with us about your child at any time as we value your knowledge and parental expertise.

#### A Little Bit About Staff:

##### Keriann Reissenberger

Position: Director, Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader and Teacher of Group A

Qualifications: Diploma of Teaching- Early Childhood Education

Work days: Monday - Thursday (on class Monday, Tuesday and alternate Wednesday as teacher of Group A). Non-teaching Director alternate Wednesdays (8.00am - 3.00pm) and Thursdays 3.75hrs.

My story: Studied Diploma of Teaching at University of Western Sydney graduating in 1990. Worked in various Early Childhood Settings around Australia prior to starting at Western Suburbs Kindergarten in 2000. I feel very privileged to be one of the guardians of a community kindergarten with such a rich history.



##### Meg Sense

Position: Teacher Group B. Designated Supervisor to be responsible person in charge as required

Qualifications: Diploma of Teaching- Early Childhood Education

Work days: Thursday, Friday and alternate Wednesday

My story: I completed my Diploma in 1981 at Canberra University. I began my career teaching in Malaysia as an Australian Volunteer and moved to Singapore. I taught in both Canberra and Bellingen when I returned to Australia. I began teaching at Western Suburbs Kindergarten in 2006. I am currently treasurer of ECTA Townsville Regional Group.



##### Alana Maschke

Position: Teacher Groups C & D. Designated Supervisor to be responsible person in charge as required.

Qualifications: Bachelor of Education Early Childhood

Work days: full time

My story: I grew up in Brisbane and studied at QUT. I worked as a primary teacher in Brisbane for a few years then completed my country service in Blackwater for four years where I taught Prep. I met my husband in Blackwater and moved to Townsville with him which brought me to working at The Cathedral School and not long after Western Suburbs Kindergarten. When I first left Uni in Brisbane I aimed to work for C&K as I did a placement at a C&K kindergarten in Brisbane and loved it. I love the play based approach to learning and the flexibility we have in our curriculum



to cater for individual children and families to experience before formal school begins. I feel very fortunate to work at Western Suburbs Kindergarten with our amazing staff and families.

### **Nicole Rayner**

Position: Assistant Groups A & B . Designated Supervisor to be responsible person in charge as required.

Qualifications: Associate Diploma of Education (Child Care)

Work days: Part time (9 days per fortnight)

My story: I have worked with 3 to 5 year olds for over 20 years and I continue to enjoy being part of their learning journey. During the past 5 years I have been sharing the joy of yoga with children to help them self-regulate and get to know their bodies.



### **Erna Mikic**

Position: Assistant Groups C&D. Designated Supervisor to be responsible person in charge as required.

Qualifications: Diploma of Community Services - Children's Services

Work days: full time

My story: I've enjoyed working for over 35 years as an assistant in a centre with extremely motivated staff. I look forward to meeting all the challenges that come my way in the future.



### **Tiffanie Gilmore**

Position: Assistant Group B

Qualifications: Cert III Children's Services

Work days: Part time (1 day per fortnight)

My story: Tiffanie joins Western Suburbs Kindergarten this year working every second Friday.



### **Julie Kipping**

Position: Office Administrator

Work days: Tuesday- Friday

My story: I started WSK as a volunteer committee member for 3 years before commencing as Administration Officer in November 2006. Both of my children have also attended WSK.



## **Janelle Bennett**

Position: Inclusion Support Worker  
Qualifications: Certificate III Children's Services

Work days: Inclusion support. Group C – Monday, Tuesday and Group B – Thursday, Friday and alternate Wednesdays.  
Hours vary depending on funding and needs of group.



## **Emma Dellit**

Position: Inclusion Support Worker  
Qualifications: Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care

Work days: Inclusion support for Group D Thursday and Friday.  
Hours vary depending on funding and needs of group.



## **Arrival Procedure/Start and Finish Times:**

Please enter kindy via the front doors (Wellington Street) and be careful not to block the industrial bin or double gates in Sabadine Street.

Doors will open at 8am for Unit 2 families.

Unit 1 families, please wait until 8.30am when your teacher will invite you into the room.

From week two pick up times are 2.40pm for Unit 1 and 3.45pm for Unit 2. Please remember in week one all groups finish early as per calendar.

Due to COVID restrictions we ask that all families take maximum 10-15 minutes for drop off and pick up each day. All people (including toddlers and parents) must wash their hands on arrival and departure. Please keep an eye out on all correspondence for any changes to COVID restrictions.

We ask that you respect these start times and also pick your child up promptly as staff require time before and after session for planning and setting up the program. Please phone the kindergarten if you have an emergency and will be running late so we can reassure your child. Late collection fees do apply as after session times impacts on staff's paid lunch breaks that occurs after session time.

Please complete the sign in/out sheet each day including sunscreen column (this is a legal requirement).

Apply sunscreen prior to your child arriving at kindy and indicate this on the daily sign in sheet. Apply insect repellent if required.

Assist your child to unpack belongings, wash their hands and join in kindy activities.

Give a confident, clear goodbye statement like, "I'm going now, have a fun day and I'll pick you up this afternoon".

Let staff know you are leaving and seek assistance if your child has trouble separating.

See the article from Kids Matter at the end of this newsletter for more detailed advice about how to make a smooth transition to kindergarten (although written for “school” the information still applies).

**We ask that parents do not take photos in the learning environment as there are several families who have indicated they do not wish to have their photos taken at the kindergarten. Please feel free to take photos of your own child in the front garden or foyer with our first day sign being mindful not to include other children in the background. PLEASE LEAVE ALL MOBILE PHONES IN YOUR BAGS OR POCKETS WHILST IN THE CLASSROOM OR PLAYGROUND. IF YOU NEED TO MAKE A CALL OR ANSWER YOUR PHONE WHILE IN THE CLASSROOM OR PLAYGROUND WE ASK THAT YOU LEAVE THE AREA AND TAKE THE CALL IN THE FOYER OR FRONT GARDEN.**

### **Health and Hygiene:**

Upon arrival to and departure from kindergarten, please assist your child to wash their hands.

Children suffering from infectious illness are to remain at home until well and children recovering from a high temperature, vomiting and/or diarrhoea should not return to kindergarten until 24 hours from the last symptom (48 hours in the case of an outbreak). We ask that parents help us reduce the spread of infection and keep your unwell child at home. If you are unsure of exclusion periods for any illness/condition please refer to your Time Out posted provided with your enrolment paperwork. This poster is also displayed in the kindy foyer.



Please also follow the latest Government COVID guidelines as they are advised by Qld Health. Our COVID-19 Commitment Statement can also be found in the kindy foyer.

If you wish to send in a cake to celebrate your child’s birthday at kindy, due to COVID restrictions we cannot share home baked goods, please only supply sealed packaged food from a shop. Please note, sharing cake for birthdays is optional.

### **Nutrition and Allergies:**



Healthy food choices should be provided and no drink bottles are needed as water is provided for the children to drink. Foods that are as close to their natural state are best, for example fresh fruit, vegetables, sandwiches or wraps, a protein source like meat, chicken, cheese or natural yoghurt. Please do not send foods that do not meet with our nutrition policy.

No cooler bags are to be placed in the fridge.

If your child is enrolled in a group that a child with allergies or anaphylaxis attends the teacher will notify you of procedures that need to be followed.

**IT IS ESSENTIAL EVERYONE WASHES HANDS UPON ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE.**

### **Outstanding Forms/Change of Details:**

Please provide Julie in the office with any outstanding forms and/or updated immunisation records.

We also ask that you advise the office of any change to personal details as the year progresses and ensure your emergency contacts are up to date.

**Fees:**

Fee invoices will be provided at the start of each term via your parent communication pocket. Please ensure these pockets are checked every day your child attends Kindy.

**No payment required until invoice is received. If you have chosen the payment plan option the payment plan details will be on the invoice for you to set up a bank transfer to our account.**

**Annual General Meeting – Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2021:**

All families at the kindergarten are members of the Western Suburbs Kindergarten Association Incorporated and are encouraged to attend monthly committee meetings. You are able to express your interest to be part of the 2021 Management Committee and Parent Group by filling in a Nomination Form, attached to this email. Details of positions are also attached. The AGM is to elect the 2021 committee will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> March and all members are most welcome to attend.

Please see Julie or Keriann in the office if you would like further information about the roles within our committee and we look forward to seeing many families represented at the AGM.

**Visitor's Book:**

The 'Visitors' book located in the foyer must be signed if you stay on roster or any time you are at the kindergarten outside your child's regular kindy hours (e.g. to attend a committee meeting, maintenance / cleaning volunteer work etc.) All attending, including siblings and other family members should be signed in for insurance purposes.

**Lending Library:**

The Parent and children Library is located on a bookshelf in the foyer. Please write the title of the item/s borrowed, author, your name and the date you borrowed and returned the item, into the 'Parent and Children Lending Library Record Book' located on the same bookshelf.

**C&K Parent Code of Conduct:**

A copy of C&K's Parental Conduct as referred to in your enrolment booklet is attached for your reference please direct any enquiries to Keriann.

**Caring for our Kindy:**

Please supervise younger siblings when at kindy as much of our equipment is not age appropriate for younger children. We also ask that you pick up after them to model respect for the kindy environment and ensure no resources are damaged and/or lost.

We have a mouthed toy bucket on the kitchen bench in each unit, please ensure all mouthed toys go into this bucket so they can be cleaned before going back into the classrooms.

If you notice a workplace health and safety issue, please report to staff so we can ensure this is attended to.

**Garden Roster / Maintenance Levy Procedure:**

Please see the noticeboard in the kindy foyer regarding the Garden Roster / Maintenance Levy procedure. Any questions once you have read the notice board please see Julie in the office.

**Animals at Kindy:**

No animals are to be bought into kindy or the kindy grounds at drop off or pick up time with the exception of Guide Dogs and/or Assistance Dogs. Group B please ensure you have read the email that was sent to you regarding this.

We look forward to a happy start to the kindergarten year and encourage you to speak with any staff member if you have a concern or query.

*Keriann, Julie, Meg, Alana, Erna, Nicole, Tiffanie, Janelle and Emma.*



RATED

**EXCEEDING**

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD



# Getting ready for the first day of kindy



It's official, the holiday season is over, and attention is now turning to the year ahead, for many families that means preparing their child for their first day at kindy or childcare.

Kindergarten is an exciting time in a child's life. However, it's also a time when parents can feel a little bit of sadness, as it can feel like your baby has grown up.

Robyn Mercer, an experienced early education expert from C&K, explains there are many things families can do to help make the first day and weeks of kindergarten as enjoyable and stress-free as possible, for children and for parents.

"Kindergarten is a magical time in a child's life, it will be a year where they explore, create, learn and grow, but starting when everything is new and unfamiliar can be a big step,".

## Preparing for their first day

Preparing your child for their first day is not about getting them to do anything, it's about talking to them Robyn explains.

"Children are curious and like to know what is going on. Tell them about what kindy will be like, how they will meet their new teacher and eat lunch with new friends, how they will get to do lots of playing, exploring with loads of fun experiences. This helps create a sense of belonging and predictability which takes away some of the anxiety.

"For those children who have been in care before, transitioning into the kindergarten room is exciting but can still create a few nerves. They will be in a different setting and meeting their new teacher and new friends.

"Talk positively about what they should expect, focus on all the exciting, fun activities they will do,".

## On their first day

On their first morning, Robyn says allowing enough time to get ready and arrive at kindy helps keep everyone calm.

"Involve your child in the process of getting ready. Pack their lunchbox and bag together, so they know of what all their belongings look like."

"Aim to arrive at kindy a little early, so you can introduce them to their teacher and take time to walk around the garden and room together. Also, don't forget to bring your camera! Capturing them on their first day of kindy is something you will want to remember forever."

## Saying goodbye

When it is time for parents to leave, Robyn has an important piece of advice.

"When it's time to leave, let the teacher know you are going, say goodbye to your child and remind them that you will be back. Even if your child is upset, we understand it can be upsetting for parents to see their child sad, however, saying goodbye is essential. By physically saying goodbye your child is aware you have left and won't go looking for you later on, as this can cause even more distress. Saying you will be back gives them reassurance they will see you soon.

"Just because they may be sad when you leave, doesn't mean they will have a sad day. It's more likely they off running and playing and having loads of fun, which they will tell you all about when you come to get them.

## Beyond the first day

As the term gets underway, even if a child has been happily going to kindy every day and separating from you, some children's behavior may change a after a few weeks.

"By week three or four, going to kindy is no longer a 'novelty', the excitement may fade, and some children will go through the 'missing mum' phase," Robyn explains.

"Don't panic, this can happen and is normal. Continuing talking to your child positively about kindy, help them focus on the elements they enjoy, establish a morning goodbye ritual and always emphasise you will come back to get them and that you love hearing about what they do during the day.

"Remember, your child's educator is always available to help. Keep them involved in any emotions or concerns your child may be experiencing. So they can continue to work with you to make your child's learning journey is the best it can be.

## Tips on preparing for their first day

- Be positive about it. If they see you are happy and looking forward to it, they will reflect that.
- Pack their bag with them. Make sure they are familiar with their belongings, what does their water bottle/hat/lunch box look like, can they see their name written on it?
- Take time arriving; the first day can overwhelm some. Walk around the room and the garden together, to help settle them in. It can also help you to be familiar with their surroundings so you can ask them about it at the end of the day.
- Introduce yourself to their teacher, starting kindy is also about joining a community and the more you get to know their teacher, and what they are doing each day the more you will gain all from experience.
- Don't panic if the first day is not smooth sailing. Some children will take to kindergarten as if they have done it a thousand times before, others may need a bit more time to adjust, and that is ok!