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NEWSLETTER

Dear Families

What a great start to the year we have had. The children have come with varied experiences of being in group settings but are all managing the routines exceptionally well. We look forward to sharing their rapid growth, development and joy of exploration at our beautiful site this year. A very warm welcome to you all.

We would also like to welcome our new team member Jen Maddern, who has already established warm relationships with the children. We are very lucky to have Jen in the Early Childhood role as she is a teacher. Only one more enrolment and we will be able to officially appoint her as teacher. Jen has had experience in a range of Adelaide Hills kindergartens and lives in Bridgewater with her husband and two boys. Welcome Jen.

It is great to have Catherine Martin back this year as an Early Childhood Worker. She will be here each day for lunch care and lead the Relaxation program. Catherine also works as Assistant Director at Littlehampton Out of School Hours Care.

Cathy is very excited to have been reappointed as Director for Terms 1, 2, and 3. This is a wonderful community to work within and we all look forward to a busy year.

Please approach us if you have any questions and if you need a lengthy chat we are always available to find a convenient time.

Regards
Cathy, Jen and Catherine

Governing Council meeting

The Annual General meeting will be on Wednesday February 20th at 6.30 pm at kindergarten followed by a short general meeting. You will receive a letter with more information soon.



Communication

We will often share information with you about the curriculum (all the experiences that support your child as a learner) and your individual child's development, verbally and in their Learning Journals. Please check emails, texts, gate notes and your pocket every day for general information. Child-care children will have notes placed in their bags each day.

Sometimes community organisations ask to place leaflets in your pockets e.g. this week there is one from Workskil. We also have a Community folder about local services and events for children next to the parent sign in sheet.

Toys

We ask that children do not bring their own toys e.g. matchbox cars, dolls etc to kindergarten. They can be lost or broken and sometimes cause conflict. We have fantastic

resources here so please explain to your children that they are best left at home.

Children who have difficulty separating from their families often need a familiar comforter and it is fine if they need to pack one.

Birthday celebrations

Birthdays are very exciting occasions when you turn four and five. If the children would like to celebrate here with their friends we would love them to bring in something healthy to share, rather than a cake, to be in line with our Nutrition Policy. Examples of what you could provide include home made fruit muffins, fresh juice iceblocks, a cheese platter or fruit kebabs.



Parent help

We often have small maintenance jobs that need attending to. If anyone is available to do this on a regular basis please let us know.

On Thursday (Odd weeks) and Wednesday (Even weeks) it takes considerable time to pack away and prepare for the following week. We would love a parent to come in and assist - sweep the verendah, clean paint and glue brushes, wash dishes etc. Please let Cathy know if you can help on a regular basis. A huge thank you to Lisa (Emily's mum) for tidying up last week and Luke (Joel's dad) for watering in the holidays.

We need some restoration work on our old pin up boards. They need to be removed from the wall (4 screws), have new hessian stapled on and be reattached. Cathy can come in on a weekend to help with this - probably 3 hours work for a team or it could be done board by board depending on

the help available.

We sometimes have a washing bag near the parent sign in sheet and it always amazingly disappears and comes back with clean items the following week.

Immunisation and Birth certificates

We are still awaiting some birth certificates and immunisation records for the four year old dose for children's files. This is required by the Department for Education. If you bring in the originals we will photocopy them for our records.

Curriculum News - What we are learning

Our fortnightly program is displayed above the children's sign in table. Please read this and offer suggestions to build on the program or you may have some relevant resources.

We will be recording the children's learning each fortnight in the 'Big Book of Learning' which will be on the children's sign in table next week. Please look at this with your child so that they can share with you their joyful discoveries.

In our first week of kindergarten it was wonderful to see the children engage in a range of experiences independently. Making a water course in the sandpit was initiated by the children. We have some budding artists and amazing problem solvers - evident when they completed the challenging Rainbow Snake puzzle together.

The children have managed relaxation time really well - straight after lunch they lay down and we encourage them to be calm and quiet as they listen to music and stories. Sensory additions, like candles and soft squishy objects, to hold help children to focus. They are all ready for action after this wind down.

We are going to begin our family noticeboard. We ask children to bring in a family photo which they talk about at 'Sharing Time'. We laminate it and keep it on our board all year. It is a great discussion point and children can also take the photo down when they are sad and missing their family and hold on to it until they are ready to play.

For mathematics/numeracy we will be talking about calendars and sequencing events. We are going to get the children to fill out the Birthday Chart. Normally staff do this but we thought it would be more meaningful if the children do it. We will help them write their name. We will also do a map that indicates where every child lives.

For homework they will need to find out what month they were born and which town they live in.



Fees

Fees are due by Wednesday March 6th. If you pay on line please key in your invoice number and your child's name as the reference. Payment envelopes are on the bench if you are paying by cash. Please place them in the fees box on the staff office door. Receipts are only issued for cash payments.

Please remember to:

- Arrive at 9.00 am and pickup at 3.00 pm. Staff need time in the morning to set up the days experiences and discuss issues that may be confidential
- Sign in and out each day
- Apply sunscreen to your child before arrival - if you forget please use ours

- Provide a bottle of water each day
- Ensure your child has a broad brimmed hat.
- Pack an ice brick in your child's lunch box

Diary Dates

Pupil Free Day 27th of February

Kindergarten sites in our Partnership (region) are required to have their Quality Improvement Plan into the Department by the 8th of March. We have sought and received approval from Governing Council and the Educational Director to hold a *Pupil Free Day for Oakbank Kindergarten on Wednesday 27th of February* to prepare this with our Early Childhood Leader. Please mark this date in your diary. If your child needs to be booked into child care please let Tenille know.

Bunning Sausage Sizzle Friday April 5th



This is our most lucrative fund raiser and it's also lots of fun. Helpers are rostered on for 3 hours and we also ask for donations. The family that was able to get us free sausages has left so if you have any contacts please let us know.

