



# BALLYMORE KINDY

Term 1, 2015

March 2015

NEWSLETTER, EDITION 1 2015

IN THIS ISSUE

## Desley's dialogue

by Desley Jones, Director

Our first term at kindy is rushing to an end! No doubt you have found your child a little weary. This has been a time of enormous change and adaptation for all the children as they settle into the expectations of life at kindy. While we like to think there is a strong connection between kindy and home, the reality is that group life can be **very different** from life at home. The greatest learning curve for the children has been the acceptance of the reality of being one of 22 children with 2 adults at your disposal. Needless to say, this means that for many there has had to be a major adjustment in their levels of self-regulation, patience, turn taking, listening and consideration of others. Over the past few weeks Yvonne, Karen and I have all witnessed a significant level of development in all of these areas.

I would like to thank those parents who were able to attend our discussion night on "Talking about curriculum at Ballymore". We hope that the evening helped in knowing a little more about what happens in kindy. Research is consistently highlighting that these early years of education have a crucial impact on children's later learning.

In this newsletter, you will find an article that sheds a little more light on the reasoning underpinning our curriculum's focus on children's make believe play. Our games are of great importance to the children as you have probably noticed. Please feel free to speak with any of the staff if you have any comments or queries.

I have set aside some evenings in the final weeks of term for individual discussions with parents. These are important opportunities to share information about your child in the group setting. Sharing knowledge between home and kindy helps us to know, and to plan for your child in the most appropriate way. Please remember if none of the available dates is suitable we can make alternative arrangements.

I will also take this opportunity to advise parents that I will be absent from the centre on Friday 20 March and Wednesday 25 March. I will be very ably replaced by Mrs Kerry Slattery on these two days.



### Why do we play 'games' at kindy?

Useful information outlining why make believe or pretend play is so important in our children's lives.

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### Important reminders

Reminders for all parents and carers, to ensure the safety and health of our kids at kindy.

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# President's Report

by Kathryn Napier, President 2015

Welcome everyone to first term at Ballymore kindy. We hope your children are settling in and enjoying their time so far. We have a great mix of new and returning families so I'm sure everyone will have a fabulous year.

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce you to the 2015 Committee. We have representation in both groups, so please feel free to speak to any of us if you would like to help out or simply find out more about how the kindy operates. Parents are also welcome to attend committee meetings, which are generally held every 4-5 weeks. Please let me know if you'd like a list of dates.

## Our committee members this year include:

Kathryn Napier – President (Sam, G1)  
 Sarah Bender – Secretary (Tom, G2)  
 Sharon Mitchell – Treasurer (Edward, G2)  
 Nerida Hillstone – Promotions (Phoebe, G1)  
 Bec Mowbray – Grants (Lucy, G1)  
 Rebecca Horsham – Maintenance (Lily, G2)  
 Jude Lunn – Social, group 1 (Chester, G1)  
 Cath Bonifant – Social, group 1 (Lily, G1)  
 Sarah Connolly – Social, group 2 (Joe, G2)

Here is a brief run-down of what we've been up to so far:

**Election Stall:** Thank you to all the parents who volunteered their time at the kindy during the recent state election. We had a simple drinks stall set up as people were leaving the polling booths, which achieved some kindy fund-raising as well as three new enrolments for future years.

**Alumni Catch-up:** On Sunday 1 March, we held our second Alumni catch up at the park on Fagan Road. Everyone braved the humidity and had a fabulous time catching up with old and new friends. This event is deliberately kept low-key so that we can put it together easily each year. Next year's catch up will be held on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March. We hope to see you all there.



**Website Redesign:** Over the coming months, we will be updating our website with the help of an external web designer, to make it more user-friendly for mobile devices and to improve its administrative capability. Not only will the website continue to be used as a tool for promoting the kindy to prospective families but future families will be able to complete all enrolment paperwork online. We will also be adding a testimonials page to the new site, so if you (or your child) have any comments you would like to add, please send me an email on [kathryn@knphotography.com.au](mailto:kathryn@knphotography.com.au) or to Nerida Hillstone on [Nhillstone@hotmail.com](mailto:Nhillstone@hotmail.com).

**Promotions:** This year, the committee's main priority will be promoting the kindy and encouraging enrolments. This is because of the funding changes that will occur in 2016 should we not fill all of our spaces with children of pre-prep age. We will be using a variety of mediums including newspapers, magazines, libraries, play groups and school newsletters to spread the word. However, the large majority of our enrolments still come from word-of-mouth, so please don't forget to tell your friends and family about Ballymore Kindy.

We also hope the change in hours being trialled next year will attract families who may not have considered community kindergartens before. And please don't forget to 'Like' our Facebook page, as this is another easy and inexpensive way to promote the kindy and stay informed.

**Social Connections:** The kindy social calendar is off to a flying start. Our social representatives Jude, Cath and Sarah have a number of events planned including coffee mornings, a Wine and Cheese night and plays in the park. They are also planning a family bushwalk and parent's dinner for the coming months. These events are a useful way to make connections with other Ballymore families, so please look out for notices on Facebook or the sign-in area.

**Newsletter:** Finally, I wanted to say a very big thank you to Agatha McAndrew (Emily, G1) who has kindly volunteered to prepare the newsletter each term for us.

So that's it from me. I wish you all a wonderful year ahead and look forward to getting to know you throughout the year.

*Kathryn Napier*

## IMPORTANT KINDY EVENTS TO ADD TO YOUR DIARY!

17 & 18 MARCH	Beats bus
25 & 28 MAY	Rainforest experience puppet show
Week of 27 APRIL	Kindy group photos

# Why do we play ‘games’ at kindy?

by Desley Jones, Director

Why is make believe or pretend play such an important focus in our curriculum at Ballymore?

- This is such a natural way for children play. Do you remember building cubbies under the dining room table? Dressing up in mum’s jewellery? Flying your cardboard box ‘airplane’ around the backyard? As children we liked to “try on” different roles to see how it felt – children today are just the same!
- Children are not, as some may think, “empty vessels” waiting to be filled with appropriate knowledge by teachers. By the time children arrive at kindy they have already acquired a significant range of knowledge, skills and attitudes. Establishing make believe games provides children with reasons to access that knowledge, refine it and build on it.
- In this type of program, children are seen as active (not passive) learners whose ideas are valued and who are encouraged to be creative decision makers and problem solvers. This is so important for their sense of identity – for autonomy, independence and the confidence to face and deal with new situations and problems.
- By being able to act on their ideas, children are motivated to extend their development and learning. Motivation is derived from a sense of purpose. Children are more likely to be actively engaged and learning when the experience has personal relevance to them. For example: it’s much more interesting to use pen and paper to draw a space map to use in your spaceship than because someone has told you to do a drawing!
- Language plays a major role in this program as children are encouraged to share ideas and communicate for a variety of purposes in their play. Language is vital to thinking and learning. Talking about ideas helps children to clarify their experiences and thoughts, and can help them to make connections between new and existing knowledge.
- By its very nature make believe play emphasises social relationships – focussing on children communicating and relating to one another in a variety of contexts. Children are encouraged to not only be independent in their efforts but also interdependent as the group identity is stressed – the need to be aware of others, and respectful of individual ideas and efforts.
- Make believe play supports research into brain development. Our play takes place in a climate of relaxed alertness. It involves content that engages the whole child in rich and complex problem solving, and allows opportunities for the child to bring to the surface, or represent, what is experienced or learned (Caine & Caine, 1994).
- Make believe play encourages the use of symbols - i.e. something representing something else. This symbolisation is

the first step in developing literacy and numeracy,

and the understanding that letters and numbers are symbols with meaning.

- Make believe play accommodates different learning styles and allows children to experience success as they play at their own level and stretch themselves to meet goals they have set. There is no “right” way to engage in make believe play. In addition, such play provides opportunities to interact in different ways. Quieter children can be seen to be a leader in play when their role requires it or when the game has relevance to them or has developed from their own idea.
- Make believe play is an effective strategy to assist children in meeting the 5 outcome areas of the Qld Kindergarten Learning Guidelines – Identity, Connectedness, Wellbeing, Active Learning and Communication and reflects the philosophy of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia:

**Belonging** is the basis for a fulfilling life – relationships with family, community, culture and place are paramount,

**Being** is about living the here and now. Childhood is a special time in life and children need time to just ‘be’ – time to play, try new things, have fun, and

**Becoming** is about the learning and development that young children are capable of.



## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

### Keeping our kids safe

In the interest of children's safety, we ask all parents to be very vigilant as they come in and out of the front gate. It is surprising just how easily young children can slip through.

If you do notice a child on their own at the gate, please ask them to come back in to the carpet or to their parent.

At the end of the day, all the children are instructed to be on the carpet, doing puzzles, using the games trolley or looking at books as they wait for their parent. We try very hard to ensure that no one escapes our attention at what can be a very busy time of the day.

### Signing in and out

Under National Regulations, it is essential that your child is signed in, and out, each day. Our sign-in sheet is also used as our record of attendance when we hold our fire drills so having everyone recorded is imperative.

### Washing hands on arrival

To assist in maintaining health and safety of everyone at kindy, please remind your child to wash their hands as they arrive at, and leave, the kindy each day and please check regularly that your child's washer is NOT touching the one below.

### Reverse parking in car park

Parents, please remember to reverse your cars in when parking at kindy – and please let anyone else know who may be doing drop-off and/or pick-up. While we have no control over other people who may park in this area, reverse parking helps in keeping children safe as they move through the area. Please see you Parent Information Handbook for more details.

***In 2016, Ballymore Kindy will be trialling new hours of operation.***

They will be:

<b>Group 1 – Monday and Tuesday</b>	<b>8.30am-4.00pm</b>
<b>Group 2 – Wednesday, Thursday and Friday</b>	<b>8.30am – 2.30pm</b>

We hope these new hours will reflect the changing needs of families, so please spread the word.


## ALUMNI FAMILY GET TOGETHER



The alumni family get together was held on Sunday 1 March. It was a great day with families past and present given the opportunity to catch up outside of the centre. This was our second alumni gathering and we are planning to hold it each year on the first Sunday of March. Thanks again to everyone who came along.

## WINE AND CHEESE NIGHT

Please come along to our Wine and Cheese evening on Friday 27 March from 7pm. This is a **parents only** event which gives both groups the chance to meet each other and socialize in a relaxed setting at the kindy. It would be greatly appreciated if each family coming could please bring along either a bottle of wine or a small plate of food to share. In a couple of weeks, we will place a notice at the sign-in area asking people to RSVP and nominate cheese, wine or sweets. Hope to see you there!



Parents,

Please join us at Ballymore Kindy for a

# Wine and Cheese Night

To meet the Ballymore Kindergarten Parents from Group 1 & 2.

Friday the 27th of March, from 7pm.

Please RSVP with your name on the list near the sign in book, nominating your preference for providing either wine or cheese.



Like our page on Facebook: **Ballymore Kindy**