

Ballymore Bulletin



+think + play + learn + grow =



Ballymore Kindy



Summer Edition

2016

Desley's Dialog



Dear Parents

Welcome to the "Summer Edition" of our Ballymore Bulletin. I hope all our families

have had a relaxing and happy summer break and are looking forward to the year ahead.

It is not long now until kindy begins for 2016 and already there is much thinking and planning happening for our year ahead. We really hope that you and your child enjoy your time at Ballymore.

I am always bemused by the new year media reports asking people what plans they have for the coming 12 months. It seems to me that one of the plans we need to make is to be open and flexible to what the year brings us. Certainly in early childhood education, each year brings with it a unique group of unique children and whatever plans we, as teachers, may have in mind will all be impacted on by the ideas and interests of your children. Yvonne, Karen and I very much look forward to the "surprises", delights and challenges ahead.

This new year also sees us trialling our longer two day program on Mondays and Tuesday. The management committee will have the responsibility of determining whether this program change continues in future years and/or what tweaking may be required to

maintain the viability (in every sense) of our small community kindergarten. The committee will welcome feedback from parents in both groups as well as from staff.

We hope you enjoy reading through our Bulletin. We have included updates on information to help families and children make a smooth transition to kindy in the first days.

I have included a short article on "**Creating Caring Communities of Learners**". This focus on relationships underpins the work that Yvonne (Mrs Matthews), Karen (Mrs Curling) and I do with your child. Focussing on emotional and social wellbeing is not a 'soft option' in education. Current brain research consistently shows that such a focus is not only enormously important in its own right, but also has direct benefits for children's engagement in learning experiences and their later achievement in school and general social adjustment through life.

Welcome to 2016 at Ballymore Kindy!!

Desley



www.facebook.com.au/ballymorekindy

President's Report



Hi Everyone,

Welcome to Ballymore Kindy. Over the next few weeks you'll discover that the centre is an excellent place for your children to start their education. And by the end of the year, you'll be astonished by the wonderful progress they have made over their four terms at Ballymore.

The kindy is in great shape, looking its best after some large grant works in recent years. Mrs Matthews and the children started an attractive and very popular vegetable garden last year, which I'm sure your children will also enjoy. And our native bees have settled in nicely to their environment and provided us with some interesting observations.

Our outdoor environment is perfect for play. The mud patch will be primed and the water trough ready for new children, so don't forget that spare change of clothes! The main play area also has a new awning, providing us with some lovely shade in the summer months.

Our AGM will be held on Monday 1 February 2016. This is where we discuss the upcoming year and select our 2016 committee. Our independent community kindergarten relies on parents to form our committee. It is a great way to be involved in the kindy and we have a variety of positions available. However, if you're unable to nominate for the committee, we would also be very grateful for your assistance at our upcoming working bees.

Thank you and I wish you and your families all the very best for a memorable year at Ballymore Kindy!

Kathryn Napier, President 2015

Alumni:

Our **Alumni event** is being held on Sunday 6 March this year. All Ballymore families, past and present, are invited to come along. It's a great way to keep in touch with Kindy. We will be meeting at Fagan Road park from 10 – 12. BYO: toys and food/drink.

This is an annual event, always held on the first Sunday in March, same time, same place!!

Kindy Wish List



When you have your next spring clean please keep us in mind. There are lots of things we can reuse at Kindy:

- ❖ Mobile phones
- ❖ Laptops
- ❖ Small flat screens
- ❖ Cardboard boxes of all shapes and sizes including very big ones.
- ❖ Lengths of material
- ❖ Ribbons
- ❖ **Paper** – any shape, size, colour, thickness, lined and plain
- ❖ Used envelopes
- ❖ Cardboard rolls – toilet, gladwrap
- ❖ Old saucepans and plastic cookware



T-Shirts for Sale

Our kindy shirts are a great way to avoid wear and tear on other clothes and also advertise our centre!!

Our new styles look great and reflect our kindy logo colours. They are available for \$15 each from Chris in the office.

Suncorp Bank BSB: 484 799

A/C: 507875746 Ref: Child's name

Email: admin@mpc.net.au to confirm your order with size/colour and date of deposit. T-Shirts will be left in parent trays for collection.



First Day at Ballymore

We know there is a lot for new families to become familiar with at the beginning of the year, so we will try to make the first day as easy as possible. Arriving at about 8.20 will allow time to settle your child in to the day. When you arrive, Yvonne, Karen and I will be there to guide everyone in remembering to:

- **Sign the sign-in book, including ticking that sunscreen has been applied**
- **Help your child to wash their hands and apply sunscreen if not already applied at home**
- **Help your child to find their locker** (There will be a list on the wall in case you have forgotten yours!)
- **Help your child to put sheets into the red box, and**
- **One of the teachers will show your child where to keep their water bottle for easy access through the day.**

Please stay on the carpet with your child until 8.30. Puzzles and books are available for parents and children at this time. At about 8.30 (first day can be hectic so it may be a little later or earlier!) the teachers will come to the carpet to begin our day with the children. This is the time for parents to say "goodbye", and exit!!

Young children take their cues from their parents - engaging in long goodbyes or long discussions at this time can give them the message that you are feeling anxious and that they should be worried too - so please be very strong and resist the urge to linger or to look back.

If there should be tears please be brave (for your sake and your child's!) - we are well practised at handling tears! and we will certainly contact you if your child does not settle.

Feel free to phone us during the day if you are feeling concerned. But try and enjoy your day - it is a new step for you and your child.

Please return by 3.55 (Group 1) or 2.25 (Group 2), so that children are in the care of their parents and leaving the centre by 4.00 and 2.30 respectively.

Creating a Caring Community of Learners



Staff at Ballymore are strongly committed to the goal of creating a caring community for the children at our centre. What a caring community looks like though may be different to what you think. A caring community is not simply one in which children are protected and have all their problems solved. Rather it is one in which they feel empowered!

When a child's interpersonal side is well developed - when they feel emotionally and psychologically safe and capable of dealing appropriately with social situations - then they are more comfortable and open to engaging in a range of learning experiences.

Features of a caring community include:

- **Respect** for all members of the community
- A sense of **security and order** that includes an organised, predictable physical environment and supportive adults who remain calm even in the most emotional times.
- Support to develop **self-regulation**.
- A sense of self-worth, competence and **agency** for ALL children. We need to value all children, regardless of their behaviour, abilities or disabilities and help them to see themselves as capable and appreciated.
- The use of **problem solving** as an essential life and learning skill, including as a way to address social issues. Problem solving empowers young children, encouraging them to think through situations and deal with them with the (background) support of adults. When we constantly step in and solve problems for them or allow them to walk away from problems we actually are disempowering them.
- Caring **communication** - we have to take the time (and it does require a lot of time, patience and follow through) to help children communicate in a **CARING** way with one another. Communication involves "*caring talking and caring listening*".

What practical strategies do we use to create this environment?

- Our day follows a structured routine allowing children to feel secure in knowing what will come next. Within that routine however there is always space for flexibility to allow us to capitalise on unexpected moments. Changes are talked through with children so that as a group we know there are reasons for those changes.
- We set clear limits in terms of behaviour and we follow through with those expectations. As adults we know there are times when we need to step in and actively assist children to regulate their emotions and behaviour. We do this by acknowledging what the child is doing and/or feeling and then stating quietly, calmly but firmly what needs to happen at that moment. "I can see you would like to finish that drawing now but it is time to go so we will put it in a safe place to finish another time." And we will support the child to follow through with that request.

- Our circle times at the beginning, and throughout the day, are important for acknowledging EVERYONE in the group. Being able to see the person who is speaking is important for developing listening skills as a group and for identifying as a member of a group.
- When discussing games, all ideas are valued and respected. We assist children to clarify and to find the space, equipment and co-players to put their ideas into operation.
- Most importantly we encourage the children to respect the games and activities of other children. While we know that games look attractive and inviting, it is important to remember that they are the result of someone else's ideas and efforts and we need to ask them before entering. This respect is two-way - if we respect the games of others then they will respect our games.
- All our equipment has particular storage spaces so that children will know where to find, and where to put, things. Again this gives a secure feeling and a sense of control and empowerment when children know they can access what they need in games. We also establish clear expectations that children will put away equipment when they are finished playing with it, rather than leaving things on the floor or table, so that both the equipment and the space are cared for and ready for the next person.
- We model for the children our appreciation of the ideas and efforts that everyone brings to our group but we are also careful with our use of praise. Rather than evaluating (i.e. saying "good boy/girl") we will give a description of what has happened "You spent such a long time working on that painting"; "Thanks to everyone's help, tidy up was finished very quickly."; "Thanks for discussing that problem. I hope that solution works."
- We spend a lot of time on modelling *caring communication* for children and following through with them on expectations. We will bring children back and support them to look at someone who is speaking to them and to give them an answer, even if it is only one word. We also model the importance of not interrupting when a person is speaking to someone. We avoid encouraging the use of "Excuse me" which can become a way of controlling situations. Rather we talk about standing near the person and waiting until we can see they are no longer speaking or listening to someone else.
- We do not shy away from times of conflict between children. Rather than saying "Let's share and be friends" we take the opportunity to talk through social problems that arise, helping children to verbalise feelings and to find solutions to problems.
- We actively avoid the pressure for everyone to be "friends" and even avoid use of the word. Being friends with everyone is simply not a reality in any group situation. What is achievable though is everyone being "cared for" and feeling "comfortable".

Building a caring community means focussing on relationships. This focus not only provides children with emotional and psychological security, but also develops skills that will greatly enhance their progress through life. These include problem solving, language use, perspective taking, recognising and responding to a range of feelings, emotional regulation, depth of thought, empathy and assertiveness, and action and reaction to name just a few.



Council Elections

Local Council Elections will be held on Saturday 19 March and Ballymore Kindy will again be in operation on the day as a polling booth. Please let everyone in your neighbourhood know. It is a great way to help people become acquainted with our kindy.



The committee may also decide to hold a small drinks stall (or similar) on voting day and parent assistance in manning the stall will be much appreciated. Please keep the date in mind.

Thanks in advance!

Housekeeping Matters

- It is important that we have all relevant forms completed before your child commences at kindy. Please check for any emails from Chris asking for information to be sent in. Thanks.
- Each child should have received a letter from kindy with reminders of start dates, what to bring and which locker will be theirs at kindy. Group 1 commences on Monday 25 January and Group 2 commences on Wednesday 27 January.
- Please ensure that:
 - all your child's belongings are clearly named
 - your child has a spare set of clothes in their bag each day
 - hats and clothes provide good sun protection
- Each child will require at least 1 small washer for hand wiping. Having a (second back up) one in their backpack can be really helpful.
- **It is essential, under safety regulations, that the washers are not touching each other so we have to ask that washers be no larger than approx 30cm x 30 cm in size. Hair bands are easy loops to sew on the middle of the washer:**





Consider being a Ballymore Kindy Committee Member for 2016!

"I have found being a committee member a very rewarding experience. It has allowed me to contribute to my child's learning environment and to help ensure that the kindy remains a centre of excellence for many, many years to come." (Lisa Higson Bulletin Editor 2012)

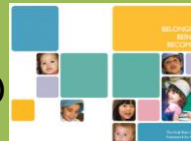
If you have a particular skill that the Kindy could benefit from or you would like to pitch in and do what you can, there is a position for you.

**See you at the Kindy for the AGM 7.00 for 7.30pm start
Monday 1st February.**

Did you know? – Planning in Early Education

Early Education Programs are required to adhere to curriculum documents at both the national and state level. At Ballymore Kindergarten our planning is informed by:

- **The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF)**



The Early Years Learning Framework is part of the Council of Australian Government's (COAG) reform agenda for early childhood education and care and is a key component of the Australian Government's National Quality Framework for early childhood education and care. It underpins universal access to early childhood education and has been incorporated in the National Quality Standard in order to ensure delivery of nationally consistent and quality early childhood education across sectors and jurisdictions.

The Early Years Learning Framework describes the principles, practice and outcomes essential to support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The Framework has a strong emphasis on play-based learning as play is the best vehicle for young children's learning providing the most appropriate stimulus for brain development. The Framework also recognises the importance of communication and language (including early literacy and numeracy) and social and emotional development.

- **and the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG)**

The *Queensland kindergarten learning guideline* provides advice for planning, interacting with children, monitoring and assessing, and sharing information in kindergarten contexts. The guideline:

- is based on the *Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF)*
- is an approved framework under the *National Quality Standard (NQS)*
- helps services meet the criteria for an approved kindergarten program. For more information, contact the *Office for Early Childhood Education and Care (OECEC)*.

Both documents are available at kindy for parents to read.

