

The Ballymore Bulletin

Term 2, 2019

Desley's Dialogue



Hello everyone and welcome to the Term 2 edition of our Ballymore Bulletin. We hope the information will be of interest and value to your family.

It's hard to believe that we are almost halfway through your child's kindy year and in the next 2 months our enrolment process will begin for 2020.

I know that at this stage of the year, many schools are already beginning their own enrolment process for Prep. Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries regarding your child's transition onto Prep. The state government has guaranteed funding for any child having a second year at kindy which is testament to the fact that delaying a start to Prep can be beneficial for some children, allowing additional time to develop in a less formalised educational environment.

When we commence kindy's enrolment process for 2020, Chris and I will send an email asking parents to let us know if they are considering giving their child extra time before Prep. We will then be able to reserve a space in your preferred group.

In this edition of our Bulletin, I have included an article titled: ***Developing Thinking and Learning to Learn***. Under both the Early Years Learning Framework and the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines, a key focus is that children build positive dispositions towards learning. Such dispositions include:

- Showing curiosity and enthusiasm for learning
- Problem solving, investigating and reflecting on learning, and
- Being imaginative and creative (QKLG, 2018, p2)

Positive dispositions enable "children to participate in and gain from learning. Effective learners are also able to transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another and to locate and use resources for learning." (EYLF, 2009, p33)

The strategies highlighted in this article are examples of a range of approaches that we use at kindy. I hope that they will provide useful suggestions for supporting your child as an engaged and enthusiastic learner at home and at school. **Desley**

Warm clothes

With the **cooler weather** here, please be aware that our kindergarten can get **very** cold (the downside of our lovely shady space), particularly in the mornings.

Please ensure your child dresses warmly for these next few months and has a spare set of warm clothes in their bag.

UPCOMING EVENTS TERM 2

Friday 31st May: Wine & Cheese from 7pm

Book Fair: Friday 31st May to 12th June

Sunday 23rd June: Family Bushwalk

The Ballymore Bulletin

Term 2, 2019

President's Report



Welcome to term 2! The children have enjoyed another action-packed program, with highlights including library borrowing, cooking activities, and the splitting of the bee hive. The committee, too, has been busy, working with parents and staff to support and promote the Kindy. You may have noticed the replacement rubber surfaces in the playground that were done during March – this important work has ensured the safety and upkeep of the beautiful Kindy surrounds.

Many past and present Ballymore families enjoyed the Alumni catch up on the last weekend March. This event was the brainchild of a past Committee, who wanted to continue their fond association with the Kindy. It is always wonderful to meet new people and reconnect with others.



A huge thank you must go to the parents who attended the Kindy working bee on Saturday 11th May, and to those on the weekend mowing and gardening roster. Your time and clearly enormous effort in keeping the Kindy looking so neat and tidy is greatly appreciated.

Our open day was held on Saturday 25th May, with over 20 families visiting the Kindy throughout the morning. The staff and helpful volunteer parents spoke with each family about the Kindy, and the children who attended were able to participate in activities just like a Kindy kid. It was a wonderful showcase of the opportunities children are afforded at Ballymore. Thank you to everyone who volunteered their time to help out - in delivering flyers, setting up, and their attendance on the day.

The Kindy will host its annual wine and cheese evening on 31st May. The playground always looks magical bathed in tea lights, with everyone enjoying a drink and some snacks and a lovely catch up in a relaxed environment. We would love to see you all there! Also be sure to mark the **Ballymore Kindy Bushwalk at Bellbird Grove on the 23rd of June in your diaries, and Saturday the 3rd of August for the annual parents' dinner.** This is another great opportunity to catch up with other parents in a relaxed environment. Details for all of these events will be confirmed closer to the dates.

You may also wish to add the Kindy coffee dates to your diaries – **in term 3: Monday 2nd and Wednesday 4th of September; and in term 4: Tuesday 12th and Thursday 14th November.** Venues will be confirmed closer to the dates. Please feel free to join us for a coffee and catch up directly after drop off. And finally, you and your families are invited to a **Family Park Play on Sunday the 27th of October from 3pm.** Stay tuned for further details.

A reminder for all families to take care when exiting the car park. On such a busy road, coupled with the bus stop, visibility can be tricky. Also take care when parking, and for safety, please reverse your car in when you arrive. Thank you for your continued attention to this. You would have noticed the Slow for SAM – the speed awareness monitor – outside the Kindy. The Committee have been in touch with the member for Central Ward, who assured us that the Kindy is on high rotation for the placement of the SAM – good news for car and pedestrian safety.

As always, please let me know if you have questions or suggestions about how the committee can best support you and your family whilst at Ballymore.

With very best wishes

Catherine Bonifant



The Ballymore Bulletin

Term 2, 2019

Developing Thinking Skills and Learning to Learn

One of the main goals of our educational program at Ballymore is to help children to develop their thinking skills and their dispositions for learning. People often assume that when we talk about developing children's intellectual, (cognitive or thinking) skills, we are referring to teaching them knowledge or facts such as the alphabet or numerals. Children's intellectual development is actually far more complex -these 'facts' are only one component. The thinking skills we aim to encourage at Ballymore include:

- Problem solving
- Predicting, inferring and hypothesizing
- Comparing and categorizing
- Representing ideas (including using symbol systems such as the alphabet and numerals)
- Recalling information
- Assimilating prior and new information
- Reflecting and evaluating

"If one of the goals of education is to promote children's intellectual development, it would seem that children need a program that develops all components of the intellect rather than one that concentrates on increasing their knowledge bases alone. Rather than being taught facts, children need to learn how to think.

Receptive learning which concentrates on increasing children's knowledge bases only, may result in:

- *Knowledge that is not necessarily interrelated and accessible*
- *Inexperience in using higher-level cognitive processes like hypothesizing, reasoning and reflecting*
- *Inexperience in using effective problem solving strategies*
- *Poorly developed executive control (ie monitoring the use of mental processes) and*
- *Children who are dependent on the teacher.*

When children learn how to learn, however, they become flexible, independent learners capable of mastering learning tasks.

Learning how to learn involves:

- *Learning general and specific problem solving strategies*
- *Being supported in developing representational abilities*
- *Learning to use the arbitrary knowledge of the culture*
- *Learning through actions on the world*
- *Learning to regulate learning, and*
- *Being confident enough to take risks."* (Thinking and The Young Child, 1987)

How can adults assist children in developing their thinking skills and in learning how to learn? The following are a sample of strategies that we use at kindy/pre-prep and that may be useful at home.

Ask **open-ended questions** that encourage children to think, and make a judgement or give an opinion. Open-ended questions require more than a one word answer – *What did you think of that story? What do you think the firemen would do if they got a flat tyre? Why do you think they put a fence around the playground?*

Help children to **access knowledge** they already have – *How do we know it is a meat eater and not a plant eater?* And to **make connections** between existing and new knowledge – *How is this dinosaur like the one we saw at the museum? I think this boat moves in a different way to Grandad's. What do you think?*

The Ballymore Bulletin

Term 2, 2019

Recall past experiences together – *Do you remember that disco game we played? How did we make the disco light? How will we make it this time?*

Encourage children to **make comparisons, to notice similarities and differences** – *What can you see that is the same about these birds' nests?... these cars?...these two words?*

Encourage children to **experiment** to find answers for themselves - *Try adding more red and see what colour you make? and to **reflect on and evaluate** their actions – How do you feel about that colour? How might you change it next time?*

Encourage children to **think about their thinking** – *What made you guess that answer for the What-is-it Bag? Which of your ideas do you think will be best? Why did you pick that one?*

Help children to **find patterns** in their world whether it be in music, nature, language, art – eg *patterns on a snake's skin, rhythms in music, rhyming patterns in books or poems etc.* Identifying patterns has been found to be fundamental to intelligence.

Reading books together is vital, including fact and fiction books. Encourage children to predict the ending – *What do you think will happen next?* And to use the illustrations to infer what is happening - *What do you think he is doing? I wonder what's going to go wrong?*

Make using numbers and reading and writing a natural part of the day rather than specific tasks on their own. They are so easy to set in meaningful contexts – *helping your read the shopping list, counting heads to see how many are at preschool, or 'writing' the menu in a restaurant game.*

Encourage children to **represent their ideas** in a variety of ways – *drawing, painting, construction, pretend play, story telling, "play writing", collage, clay.* There is no one right way! Representing ideas helps to firm understandings.

Encourage children to **use a problem solving routine** – *state the problem, think of possible solutions, choose one to try, implement, evaluate, make a second choice if needs be.* These strategies can be used in a range of situations, including social problems.

Desley Jones

Recycling Project – Terracycle

We are now collecting L'OR and Moccona coffee capsules, as well as Beauty Products and Oral Care products.

Please collect from workmates, neighbours, friends, relatives and bring along to kindy and place in containers in our Front Courtyard.

We are hoping that through this recycling activity we will support the children to build an attitude of caring for the environment (reusing materials to make new products) and caring for our wider community (**all money raised through our recycling efforts will go to Ronald MacDonald House**). Given our proximity to the hospital, we regularly hear and watch helicopters landing on the roof of the hospital and have many conversations about why people might be in the helicopter – are they having a baby or are they very sick or have they had an accident. Being able to help families with sick babies who may be staying at Ronald MacDonald House makes sense to the children in the context of their own experiences of wanting to be with family when they are unwell.

The Ballymore Bulletin

Term 2, 2019

Preventing the Spread of Infectious Illnesses at Kindy

As we enter the cooler months of the year, it is important to request everyone's assistance in keeping our children as healthy as possible whilst in a group setting.

Children are particularly at risk of infection because:

1. They have close contact with others in closed spaces for long periods of time.
2. They have had previously little exposure to many common infectious diseases.
3. They have increased contact with materials that might be infectious.
4. They are likely to get childhood diseases that in the past (ie before child care) would have been more common in older children.
5. They have age characteristics that contribute to the spread of infection eg lack of control over bodily secretions, and initially, immature mastery of correct hand washing procedures.
6. They are at risk of some infectious agents which live for many days on surfaces or which require only one to a few organisms to cause illness.



As detailed in our *Exclusion of Sick Children & Sick Staff Policy*, the most important ways to break the chain of infection and stop the spread of diseases are:

- **effective hand hygiene** (Please see poster in the children's bathroom)
- **exclusion of ill children, educators and other staff** (the need for exclusion and the length of time a person is excluded depend on how easily the infection can be spread, how long the person is likely to be infectious and how severe the disease can be), and
- **immunisation** (Please see the schedule on our large noticeboard), and
- **cough and sneeze etiquette** (coughing or sneezing into inner elbow is most effective or using a tissue to cover mouth and nose, putting the tissue into the bin straight away and washing hands immediately).

In advising parents on the length of exclusion periods for infectious illnesses, staff will be guided by the Qld Health's poster **Time Out** (also on our large noticeboard) and by the Australian Government's Publication - ***Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services***.

In situations of non-infectious illness, parents will be contacted and asked to take their child home if a child appears unwell and exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- Sleeps at unusual times (without reason),
- Is not able to participate in the program as he/she would normally,
- Has a fever consistent with our *Managing a High Temperature Policy*,
- Is crying or distressed as a result of discomfort due to illness,
- Is in need of constant one to one care, or
- Is emotionally unsettled.

In all instances we will support unwell children to be as comfortable as possible while waiting for their Parent/Carer to arrive.

The Ballymore Bulletin

Term 2, 2019

Honey Cupcakes

Ingredients:

- 125g butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup caster sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla essence
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 eggs
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups plain flour, sifted
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk



Method:

1. Preheat oven to 160 degrees
2. Place the butter, sugar, vanilla and honey in a bowl and beat till light and creamy
3. Gradually add the eggs and beat until well combined
4. Add the flour, baking powder and beat until just combined
5. Spoon the mixture into 12 x $\frac{1}{2}$ cup capacity muffin tins lined with paper cases and bake for 20-25 minutes or until cooked when tested with a skewer
6. Allow to cool on a wire rack

Testing the opening of containers at home:

It would be a great help to your child's developing independence to test how easily they can open their food containers at home before sending them to kindy. Being able to do these small tasks unaided does make children feel more capable and means they are able to be independent in their self care activities rather than having to wait until help is available.