

Ballymore Bulletin



+think + play + learn + grow =

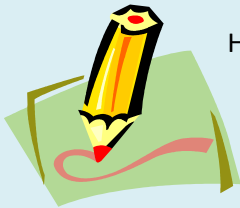


Ballymore Kindy



Term 2, 2021

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 halfway through your child's kindy year and that our enrolment process has begun for 2022!!

I know that at this stage of the year, many schools have also commenced their 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. Please remember that Chris has sent an email asking parents to let her know by the **15 July (earlier if possible)** if they are considering giving their child extra time before Prep. She will then be able to reserve a space in your preferred group.

We received very positive feedback from many parents following Anky's presentation on **Raising Resilient Children**. We all know that living with preschool-aged children can be wonderful but also presents some challenges (for the children as well as the adults). Anky's strategies for helping children to build resilience by tapping into their logical brain resonates strongly with our work at kindy.

With this in mind, I have included an article titled **Making Thinking Explicit: Strengthening relationships, self-regulation and cognition**. I hope that parents may find it useful to read of the strategies and words that Yvonne, Karen and I use at kindy to support children in building their logical thinking abilities.

Desley

WATCH THIS SPACE...

Our playgrounds are about to have a major



makeover in the upcoming holidays... very exciting! NOW...

President's Report



Hi All! Can you believe that term 2 is nearly at a close! It has flown. No doubt your children have returned home with lots of stories from a range of exciting adventures they have had this term. ... the walks to the park ... creek adventures (as part of the Creek Neighbourhood Project) ... the honey cakes made with honey from Ballymore Kindy's very own bees ... the new routine of "name sheets" where they all have to find their assigned bed ... the rainforest puppet show... the songs and games the children are planning and playing ... the list goes on.

On 15th May Ballymore Kindy held their open day. There was a large turnout of families. Some of these families were new families interested to see the Kindy, while others were children super eager to be in the Ballymore Kindy 2022 group. This just reflects the ongoing interest and importance of this Kindy to the community. The Kindy grounds looked great and showcased our Kindy perfectly. So, the working bee did a great job leading up to the Open Day – thankyou. I also want to thank Desley, Chris, Yvonne, Karen and Lindsay (Committee member, Promotions Officer) for all the behind the scenes work as well as on the day to make this Open Day a success.

It was also terrific that so many families could join together for Bowls and Brunch at the Grange Bowls Club on 30th May. Parents, Kindy kids and siblings had a great time and the jumping castle was a massive hit! Thanks especially to Megan (Committee member, Social Convenor) for organising this. It was such a lovely opportunity to meet with kindy families outside of the kindy drop off, pick up.

And last but certainly not least, it is with sadness we hear of Desley's plans to move on from her amazing work here at Ballymore Kindy. True to Desley's continual focus on the children, she has and continues to work on a plan that will see a smooth transition for the children and the incoming teacher/director of the kindy for term 4. I speak for the committee, and no doubt the families of the kindy as a whole, that we wholeheartedly support Desley and appreciate the hard decision this has been. The committee will help in any way we can in the lead up and through this transition. We send her every good wish in her coming adventures.

And with this in mind, please save the date Saturday 18th September for a celebration of Desley's 22 years at Ballymore Kindy. You should have all received your invitation by now and look forward to seeing as many parents as possible. We have decided to make this an "adults only" afternoon event, however we look forward to inviting all current children and their parents to a celebration evening with Desley late in Term 3.

Christine Smith President 2021

PICTURE PLATES

In term three we will be offering families the option to order a Picture Plate with their child's artwork on it.

Each melamine plate is \$28, a small portion of which will go back to the kindy.

If you wish to participate you will be supplied with the number of templates you require (siblings are more than welcome to do one). After completing the artwork at home, return to kindy in the box and 6 weeks later we will receive the plates!

It's a lovely memento of a moment in time. A number of our Kindy Committee Members have their plates from when they were in kindy.

If you would like to participate, please complete the form beside the sign on book. There will be a sample plate on display.



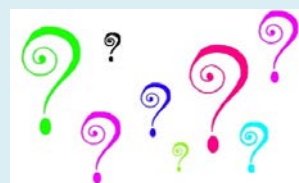
Making Thinking Explicit: Strengthening relationships, self-regulation and cognition.

Many aspects of children's education will be very clear and obvious to an onlooker, however there are other aspects of the curriculum which are more subtle and perhaps not recognised by someone watching on.

As adults working with young children, one of the most effective and yet often unrecognised strategies of teachers is to make their thinking, and the thinking of children, explicit. In doing this, we can, as the title suggests: support the development of positive relationships in the classroom and facilitate children's executive functioning, emotional responses and social abilities.

What do some of these strategies look like?

- The importance that we place on group times, and in particular on reading books together, is a considered strategy to assist children in developing the ability to regulate their attention. Before beginning stories we will often do a breathing exercise and then verbalise what we will be doing – “And now you will be able to look up at the book and think about the story as I read it” and “I will be able to think about the words that I have to read so that I say the right ones.” Explicitly identifying what to look at or what to think about is an important first step for young children.
- As discussed in previous messages, our listening and thinking activities such as Buzz Groups and the What Is It? Bag have a focus on the processes of attending, listening, and processing. We specifically prepare ourselves for these listening activities by guiding the children to “sit beside someone who you won't feel like talking to because we have to listen to and think about the clues” and by incorporating activities such as “Close your eyes and make a picture of your kitchen in your mind. Can you see something in your kitchen with a plastic handle...?” Visualisation is an effective thinking skill for young children to become aware of, as is the use of private speech – children will naturally use self talk to regulate or guide their behaviour, emotions and cognitive strategies and we can capitalise on this in education – “You could say to yourself ‘Now I need to stop and look at the book and then I can go to play outside’.”
- This self talk is also practised in a different way when we have fun together sharing songs using the actions only – ie saying (or singing) the words in our head.
- In helping children to regulate their attention, we also assist by explicitly explaining where our attention is focussed. For example, often as stories finish we will invite the group to make comments on what they have listened to (an important thinking process in itself as it encourages the use of memory and connections with personal experiences). Inevitably someone will make a comment that is far removed (or totally unrelated to) what the book was about. In these instances, we will bring their attention back by saying “I know you would like to talk about that but at the moment my brain is still thinking about how they solved the problem of the missing cat. Did you want to say something about that?” We will also offer the option to “keep that other idea in your mind and tell me about it when group time is finished”.
- Encouraging children to give opinions, thoughts and comments (What do you think about...? Why do you think...? What do you think will happen next?) lets them know that we value their thinking abilities as well as strengthening these skills. Being able to predict what might happen next in a story is a particularly useful skill for beginning readers and demonstrates how they are able to hold elements of information in their mind (working memory) as well as to respond to a range of possibilities (cognitive flexibility).
- Our efforts to wonder and ponder on things with children (a culture of enquiry) also builds on these skills as we toss around questions and possibilities together holding ideas and information, drawing conclusions where we can and asking more questions when we can't.
- Listening and responding to others is a complex activity for young children and requires them to manage their awareness (noticing that someone has said their name), self control (stopping what they are doing) to attend to what the person is saying, processing what has been said (requiring the use of their working memory) and then



maintaining self control and attention long enough to respond. Supporting children through these interactions takes time and patience on the part of adults but will help to build their abilities and to strengthen relationships with others.

- Children’s interactions with one another are so complex, and their skills are still developing, so that they regularly need our support to reframe the actions, thoughts and language of others. When we take the time to do this (eg “Bill come back for a moment, I think Jim wanted you to know that he wasn’t happy that you walked over his castle. Let’s work out what we can do about this.”), we not only support relationships and self regulation but we also expose children to differing perspectives thereby contributing to the development of their Theory of Mind – the ability to understand and predict another person’s mental processes, including their intentions, emotions, motives, thoughts. When we reframe thoughts and behaviours we build children’s cognitive flexibility – the ability to respond to differing demands, priorities and perspectives.
- Our focus on children’s imaginative play is also supporting this acceptance of different perspectives as we actively demonstrate our valuing of varying ideas and abilities when we listen to and assist children to represent their ideas in play. These play experiences offer opportunities to draw attention to past experiences, encouraging children to access their prior knowledge – “Let’s think back to when you went camping, where did you sleep, what did you eat, what was different from being at home?” We sometimes challenge ourselves too – “Let’s see if our brains can think of a new idea or a game we haven’t played yet.”
- Our “games” present a range of problems to solve – how to share the blocks so that everyone has some for walls, how to make a tree for the dinosaurs to sleep under, how to attach fairy wings to the babies, what to do if someone wants to come into my game? It is empowering for children to know that they can solve problems for themselves – both practical problems and social problems. Social problems are particularly complex as they need to take account of differing perspectives and there are usually no “right answers”. The actual process of problem solving in small or large groups, for whatever purpose, provides authentic opportunities to build cognitive and social skills as children are exposed to different perspectives and have practice in talking and listening to others. As adults it also allows us the opportunity to scaffold children’s deeper level thinking as they ponder on actions and reactions (eg if I have all the blocks how will this make ...feel?) and to facilitate a sense of community as we work through issues together.
- At Ballymore, we make a conscious decision NOT to have an over reliance on “rules” at kindy – which is not to say that we don’t hold high expectations in terms of behaviour! Rather it means that we encourage the children to think about and verbalise why we do, or don’t do, certain things. Asking, “Why do you think it won’t be a good idea to run and jump off the fort?” and supporting children to articulate that someone might be walking beside it and you may not see each other and you might land on them, shows much greater thinking ability on the part of a child, than saying “because it’s the rule.” Understanding the reasoning behind required behaviour has greater significance for children’s developing relationships, self regulation and cognition than mere compliance.

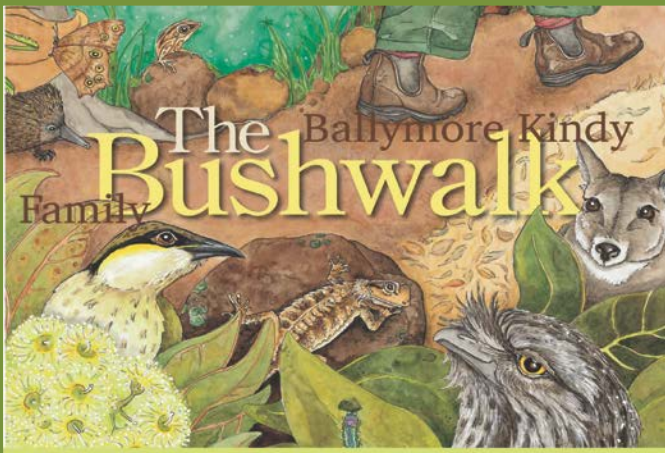
Brain research is demonstrating the important role of executive functioning skills for children’s overall personal development and academic success. These skills include working memory, inhibitory control (linked to self regulation) and cognitive flexibility. These skills are important for planning and organising, decision making and resisting impulses. They develop throughout childhood and are crucial for adaptive behaviour. Being able to regulate behaviour (eg inhibit inappropriate responses and delay gratification) will contribute to children finding school a satisfying experience. Making our thinking, and the thinking of children, explicit, directly assists in building these skills.



Part of our efforts in making thinking explicit has also meant an extension to the vocabulary we use with children and no doubt, over time, many of our words may come home to you. We often discuss our brain (or “mind” – interchangeable terms at this age) and what we want it to do and what it can do, using our memory (“let’s put that into our memory”), concentrating, focussing, distracting, planning and making decisions - to mention a few.

Our goal is for children to see themselves as accomplished thinkers. As with emotions, if we take the time to consider our own thinking and what happens for us when we think, and then share these experiences with children, we will take them some way along the road to refining their own thinking abilities.

Desley



**All families are invited to the
Ballymore Kindy Family Bushwalk
9.30am on Sunday, 25th July**

We will be meeting at Bellbird Grove walking tracks,
Brisbane Forest Park

Directions:

Allow for approximately 30 minute driving time from Herston.
Head west along Waterworks Road to The Gap continuing towards Mt Nebo.
Drive past "Walkabout Creek" for about 3.5km where you will see a sign to turn right to
Bellbird Grove.
Take the Bellbird Grove turn-off and drive to the end to parking area where we will meet.
Parking, toilets, picnic tables, gas barbecues and water (treat before drinking) are provided.

What to Bring:

Wear your comfortable walking shoes and be sure to bring drinking water, hat
and sunscreen. Pack your morning tea and picnic mat so we can have a picnic together
after the walk.

Questions:

Please ask Desley should you have any further questions regarding the bush walk and
if you need to contact us on the day, please phone: 0421 642 690.

*"This is an opportunity for families to spend social time together. Parents are requested to
take full responsibility for their children and siblings i.e. this is not a kindy excursion".*

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.

RECYCLING YOUR COFFEE CAPSULES

Please keep dropping in your coffee capsules to the bin near the sign on book.

We are regularly sending boxes full to Terracycle and collecting points which are transferred to \$\$ which are then donated to the Ronald McDonald House!

Ask your friends and family to collect as well!

Sustainability matters:

Perhaps you have already heard of this great little podcast from ABC radio. Mrs Curling (Karen) has brought it to our attention. "Little Green Pods is for busy people, like you, who know they could do more to save the world".

This is the web address to find out more

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/little-green-pod/>

**CHECK OUT OUR CARROTS FROM OUR
VEGE POD!**

Want help managing screen time with your child?

Find out more at: esafety.gov.au/early-years

An Australian Government initiative from the eSafety Commissioner, eSafety Early Years supports online safety for under 5's.



Spread the Word about Ballymore Kindy!

Do you know of anyone who is looking for the right Kindy for their child to attend in **2022 or beyond?** Our beautiful, not-for-profit, community kindergarten might just be the place for them. Ballymore Kindy now has their enrolment list open right up to 2025, and we would love you to help us **get the word out!**

You could do this by:

- ✓ liking us on Facebook (Ballymore Kindy)
- ✓ sharing Ballymore Kindy Facebook posts to Groups or Business Pages you may be involved in (such as Mother's groups, playgroups or schools)
- ✓ collecting some Ballymore Kindy brochures from Desley's office to leave at workplace receptions, on front counters of shops, or with any interested parents you may know
- ✓ simply talking about Ballymore Kindy at school pick-up/drop-off or playgroups/mothers' groups and directing interested parents to our website: www.ballymorekindy.com.au

To attend Ballymore Kindy, children must be 4 years old by June 30 of the year they wish to attend, in order to satisfy the Approved Kindergarten Program requirements.

Please encourage all parents who are interested in enrolling their child at Ballymore to contact Desley or Chris by email at admin@ballymorekindy.com.au or by phone on **3252 3732**.

Rainforest Experience visits BK

Kevin Galland from Evergreen Children's Theatre visited both groups this term with his puppet show – Rainforest Experience.

Kevin's shows are perfectly pitched to this age group. His 'set' is similar to the spaces that we build for our games. He encourages us to 'pretend' that we are walking through the forest and to "stop, look and listen". Kevin talks about caring for the forests and the importance of not cutting down the rainforests. We learnt the importance of putting rubbish into bins and recycling.



Cooking Honey Cakes with Mrs Matthews.

Why not try some over
the holidays!



Honey Cakes

From Mrs Matthews and Mrs Curling

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