



Presidents Report April 2017

Welcome Back!

I do hope you all had a wonderful and safe holiday and an enjoyable Easter. What a great way to end the holidays.

WELCOME

We are very excited to be welcoming a new staff member to our already elite team of teachers.

Jill and Catherine have spent time reflecting on how to best support all children in the Gareeal group and have come to the decision that an extra pair of hands (to lower the ratio) will make all the difference. I would like to highlight the impressive decision this team has made to ensure all children are given equal amount of time and attention. This is not a reflection that our team are not coping, but quite the opposite. They are continuing to look for creative ways to maintain and provide a quality program and take the nervous leap to come to the committee asking for an extra staff member to be appointed to the group. As a committee, we had to take into account our financial position and make the best decision for the kinder, the teaching team and the children.

So, in saying all that, we are so excited to welcome Sara Dorrington who you no doubt know her face from the local community. Sara has been living in our community for 8 years and has been working casually at the Early Learning Centre in Balnarring since the start of the year. We feel very lucky to have her on board as Sara is only 6 months off finishing her 4 year Bachelor of Education at Swinburne University. Sara looks forward to a future in Early Childhood Education and as she is already familiar with our kinder and teacher team, will fit in smoothly and quickly.

If anyone has any concerns about this addition, please feel free to talk to myself or of course Jill to discuss further.

On that note regarding our elite teacher team, it is time for the Victorian Early Years Awards 2017 and anyone has the opportunity to nominate their childhood teacher for the award of 'Victoria's best early childhood teacher'. Please see the poster on the door or contact me for further information if you desire.

Please remember you are all welcome to our Committee Meetings as a General Member if you would like to hear more about the comings and goings of the Pre-School.

Next Committee Meeting: 23rd May 7pm. Please feel free to approach me or call if you have any questions or ideas regarding the Pre-School.

Caroline

0423303571

TRIVIA NIGHT

Don't forget trivia tickets are on sale...don't miss out, make sure you book your spot today!! Tables of 10 are available, or come along alone and we will find a friendly place for you!!



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.



Djeembana News April 2017

On the last day of term we had an interesting day at the beach. When we went to the rock pools sand had eroded from underneath the wooden fence. The children offered their thoughts on what had happened – see our reflection book for their answers. We explored reflections in the puddles in ‘A’ reserve, learning that the dirt settles to the bottom of the puddles providing a perfect example of reflections, then when the dirt is disturbed the reflections disappeared. Many children tested their physical skills climbing trees and the rangers spoke to the children about how to tread carefully when walking near the trees.

The children arrived back after the break with lots of stories and excitement that the Easter bunny had visited them. There has been constant chatter and recalling of what they had been doing over the break. Thanks to those who have returned the kinder books- we have started sharing them and learning about each other’s adventures.

As you know Jonah was withdrawn from the Seeing Eye Dog program. I was notified over the holidays that he is now living with a family of three boys and has settled in well like he has been there forever.

Coming events

- Introducing ‘Share Book Monday’. When you arrive on Mondays we invite you to share a book or two with your child and possibly other children. We will share books for approximately 20 minutes, you can stay the whole time or just for one book, maybe one week you can stay and the next you can’t- whatever works for you.
- Julie (who is relieving for me when I am away) will be joining us at the beach this week so she can observe what happens when we are learning in nature.
- Wednesday 26th the children from the early learning centre are coming to spend some time with us.
- Next week at the beach we will be hosting teachers from Mentone Grammar who are looking at running an outdoor program. They will spend the session with us.
- On the 3rd of May we will be involved in a joint learning day with the Boon wurrung foundation, St Josephs Primary school and Balnarring early learning centre – a separate note will be sent home with details. The day will run from 9:00-3:15. Leading up to this day the children will be involved in more intentional learning about First Peoples culture and language
- On the 5th May we are going to walk to Coolart where we will explore the colours of Autumn, the visitors centre, feathers and the wetlands. Pick up will be from Coolart on this day (Lord Somers Rd Somers) – please let the people know who are collecting children on that day.
- I will be away from 9th May until 24th May



I am sure we are going to have a great term, looking forward to your support and involvement.

Karen and Lisa



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.



Weelam group News April 2017: Womindjeka to Term Two



Welcome back, it was terrific to see our Weelam group families and friends again after our holiday break, there was much excitement as stories were shared and friends reunited. Easter surprises were discussed and “*eating all those eggs*” I was told was the reason they all looked so much taller!! Holidays offer all of us a time to change routines and hopefully the pace of everyday life when you must be here and there by certain times. I hope the holidays gave you a chance to relax with your family and do different things in your own time.

My holiday: I spent the two weeks in these holidays overseas, the first couple of days in Singapore and then two weeks in northern India. Journeying to other countries offers many opportunities to learn about other cultures and observe the many ways things can be done. I also find it fascinating to reflect on what I see and what this may mean for Australia and the children I teach. I have included some of my thoughts within this newsletter- please let me know what you think. These are some of my discoveries and thoughts from my journey overseas. In Singapore I discovered the government has begun a ‘Kindness’ campaign, there were many billboards with messages and examples of empathy and thoughtfulness towards others and I even discovered a Kindness shop with special friends to include the children of Singapore in this Kindness project.



Here I am in front of the ‘Kindness shop’ with the ‘Kindness’ friends. Singapore are teaching their nation these values, not just the children.

This beautiful statue in front of the museum was titled: Bringing the past forward. I found this a powerful message to reflect on for children.



India:



India offers many opportunities to reflect on the impact of large populations on cities and the environment. India has now banned plastic bags. Could this happen in Australia one day? We joined a folk festival in Darjeeling, many of the singers were refugees from Tibet, proudly sharing songs that are banned within their Country. Their traditional costumes were beautiful.



I was able to watch this playground from my balcony. It was typical of school playgrounds I saw. The children had one ball and created games with minimal equipment. Here they even played on the roof too.



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.



Learning and Living with nature

Term 2: We ended our term one around our camp fire and reflecting on what we had enjoyed and had fun doing throughout term one, this was a very relaxing way to chat and share our thoughts. Returning to Preschool today the children were excited to see the sticks that were on the ground, blown down over the holidays. A team of children collected them in the trolley and took them down to our campfire telling me they were ready for our next fire. Our plans are to begin cooking on our fire this term and move our restaurant day experiences to this space.

Kim our Tuesday Volunteer: For this term we will be joined each Tuesday by our new Volunteer Kim, we welcomed Kim to our group at the end of term one and has returned enthusiastically for this term. Please say "Hi" to Kim when you see her, she has already become a very supportive member of the team and friend to the children. Several student teachers will join us throughout May too.

Reminders: *(please add these dates to your calendars)*

PMP: Our PMP program will start again on **Thursday 27th April** and **every fortnight** after that during Term 2. i.e. **11th and 25th May, 8th and 22nd June.** Please make this program possible by adding your name to the list and come and help with the activities.

ANZAC day: Tuesday 25th April. This is a Public holiday, No Preschool on this day.

Save the Date: Wednesday 3rd May @ the Balnarring Foreshore with the Boon Wurrung Elders and Artists connected to the Boon Wurrung Foundation.

Time: 9am to 3:30pm (all day event). This will be a special Joint Day (all day) of learning for us with Djeembana group and other local children services, including St Joseph school. We will all meet at B reserve at Bundjil's Nest opposite the shop. The children know the way. Did they tell you we saw Bundjil when we visited in the last week of term one? You will be asked to complete a permission form for this day (available soon).



Tuesday 30th May: The Responsible Pet program will visit us from 10:30am for a session with the children and there will be a Parent information session from 11:15 on this day. I strongly recommend this session for all parents. *This program supports us with knowledge about when dogs should be left alone, things we should not do to dogs, how can you tell if a dog is happy, scared or angry, a safe way to approach and greet a dog and what to do if approached by an unknown or aggressive dog. The aim of this program is to help prevent the instance of dog-related accidents and injury, it is important for children to recognise:* Reference: <http://pet.education.depi.vic.gov.au/>

Times to share thoughts with families: As we move into term two I will be offering times before and after the sessions for each family to speak with me about their child, your time at Preschool so far and thoughts for 2018. Please let me know if you have a preferred times/ days I am always happy to make a time to speak with you. After hours times can be arranged.

Your child's Folder: Please return your child's white folder to the shelf, we look forward to reading your thoughts and stories and we have already begun making stories for their books.

As new events are planned we will send out information in our notices. Term two is a wonderful time of learning, making discoveries and sharing many special times together. The children have made many friends and are developing the skills of friendship we explored in term one. It was so exciting to observe acts of thoughtfulness towards others, to hear words of kindness within conversations and the joy the children were showing in being back together as Preschool friends as we engaged together today. Please enjoy this term with us..... Kind regards, Ann



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.



Manameet and Gareeal News April 2017

Welcome back to Term 2, we hope you all enjoyed your holiday break and time spent with family and friends. Last term we said goodbye to one of our Manameet Families and would like to wish them well for their travelling adventure. A new family is joining our Gareeal Group and we are looking forward to getting to know them this term. Gareeal will also get an additional team member for this term; her name is Sara so please introduce yourself when you get the chance.

Since our last newsletter, the children, families, Cath and I celebrated the end of term 1 with a party at kinder. Everyone appeared to enjoy the celebrations and we loved that families and friends took up the challenge to join in our group time singing and dancing! Children love it when adults join in (seeing them being silly too) and enjoying themselves.

Thank you for all the wonderful things you found in nature with your children and brought in on the day. The children created some wonderful and creative nature hats with the goodies. We took time to look at and explore the items we had before deciding how to attach them. Unfortunately, time got the better of us and we were all so busy playing that we didn't get around to creating our photo display so this is something we will continue with this term. Cath and I will also continue to build our relationships with children. To put it into perspective for you, the 3 year old children have had a total of seventeen and a half hours at kinder in term 1 (not including the 2 orientation sessions), during which I was away ill one week. In total we have spent 15 hours together which is what the 4 year olds do in one week at kinder. So in the scheme of their lives it is only a very small amount of time and so many of the goals from term one will continue into term 2.

You will notice changes to the room layout which happens over the holiday periods. This can sometimes be overwhelming for some children so I would suggest spending a little bit of time with your child at the beginning of the session to help settle them into an activity. To ease this you will notice I have only made minimal changes to the activities the children were engaged with toward the end of the term in order to help them settle back in after the break.

Real world tools and experiences

I hope you all found the three to four year old development information I provided in the last newsletter beneficial. Following on from this, I have decided to provide you with some relevant information relating to low expectations of children and why we provide children with real world experiences and tools at kinder. There are many good reasons why we as parents and teachers choose to protect children from what we perceive as potential dangers in the world. However, sometimes our concern for children's safety and wellbeing can go too far and rather than helping children to take risks and become independent, capable and safely learn to negotiate tools and materials which they see in their everyday lives, we forbid them. This can actually cause more harm than good in the long term, albeit through our good intentions.

In order to provide a holistic and well rounded quality program for all children, various activities / learning opportunities are provided. These activities may be dramatic / imaginative play, sensory (playdough, messy play, water etc), construction / art (craft, blocks), music and movement, physical, self-help and real world experiences. Literacy, numeracy, science, emotional, environmental and indigenous learning is embedded throughout the program within experiences. Any of these activities may also involve the use of real world tools and materials such as spades, paint brushes, tents, hole punches, sticks, etc. Providing children with the opportunity to engage in and with real experiences and tools often has an element of risk associated with it. For instance, during cooking children may be working with utensils that are sharp or hot, they may do some gardening which involves spades or shovels or woodworking with hammers and nails. Whilst exploring the outdoors they may climb a tree or walk / balance on uneven or steep objects and whilst crafting they may use hole punches and scissors. The list of real world opportunities provided to children



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.



Learning and Living with nature

over the kindergarten experience goes on. There are real risks involved, however all teachers and educators are acutely aware of these risks and only provide a real world experience for the group that is manageable and carefully considered beforehand. Tools, experiences and materials are introduced; children are guided through them and then observed to ensure they are appropriate. Risks are thought through and weighed against the learning that occurs at the same time.

In the three year old groups we have started small as we get to know children and they have had a few opportunities to use the smaller, real world shovels in the dirt pit. These shovels are a manageable size for the children however they are in every other aspect the same shovel that you will more than likely have in your garden shed. Cath and I have supported the use of these shovels with the children, speaking to them about their proper and safe use. This has helped to increase their self awareness and that of others. We monitor the use of the shovels and step in to provide support as necessary, which promotes self regulation and self control skills for children. Children have used the shovels in the dirt patch to dig car and truck tracks, pipe runs and holes. The benefits for the children in using the real shovels are numerous. The tools were engaging for the children and allowed them to undertake the task they wanted them too. If we were gardening or digging hard dirt we would never use a plastic sand shovel and if we did, most would give up annoyed and frustrated with the tool. Children feel the same emotions and our job is to provide them with engaging opportunities to learn and succeed so a plastic spade just wouldn't cut it. So they have had the opportunity to feel success and therefore good about themselves and combined with the fact that they are using an adult tool they want to explore means they have had sustained engagement in their learning. Thinking to their future learning, engagement is a key critical skill all children need to succeed. Just as importantly, they have been working alongside and beginning to communicate and cooperate with peers. This has benefits for their language, social and emotional development. Real world experiences and tools are often messy and dangerous and they certainly challenge our idea of what young children are capable of. Yet this example shows how beneficial it has been to some of our threes and why we believe it is so important to view children as competent and capable.

Stay and Play

Thank you again to all the families who have stayed and played with us term 1. We and the children really appreciate your support and help. Term 2's roster is now up next to the sign in book and we would love to see you or another family member at kinder. Due to the limited number of sessions in the 3 year old groups we prefer not roster families onto specific dates and can keep it this way with your support of a minimum of one volunteer per session, thank you.

Thanks Jill and Cath



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.



Fundraising report April 2017

Welcome back families!

I hope you all had wonderful school holidays and enjoyed the break.

We have just received our quarterly report from Ritchies and the donations we have received from families using their Ritchies cards are fantastic!! Please if you haven't done so already, be sure to sign up at Ritchies for your community benefit card, it's a very easy way to contribute to our awesome kinder.

The Balnarring 'Back to School' Trivia Night is fast approaching! In case you have missed the details it will be held on Saturday 27th May at 7pm at the Balnarring Hall.

While tables of 10 are available don't feel pressured to make up a whole table. There are lots of people who are purchasing tickets for themselves only and we can make up tables for the night. It's a great way to meet new people and get to know our wonderful community. Tickets are starting to sell fast so be sure to get in quick so you don't miss out.

Details are:

Tickets \$22 (includes raffle ticket to win a VIP table that will be fully catered for with food and nibbles – drawn the week prior) tables of 10 available.

Tickets can be purchased from the kinder 5983 5803 or email charlbella@outlook.com

Payment - you can either bring exact cash to the kinder or direct deposit into the kinder bank account (if depositing in to the bank account, please also email us your contact details and who the tickets are for so we can match payments:

Account name: Balnarring Preschool BSB: 633 000 A/C#: 1377 12014 Reference: Your name

Drinks are available at bar prices, strictly a NO BYO Alcohol event. Lots of raffles, door prizes, wine grabs and Silent Auction with INCREDIBLE items up for grabs!!

The donations are continuing to come in for this awesome night and we have some pretty amazing items so far. There is a donation tree set up in the foyer that we will start adding items to so you can have a sneak preview on what will be on offer! If you feel you may be able to contribute in some way, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Wishing you a fun filled April families!

Rachel Jacobson

Fundraising Coordinator

Balnarring Pre-School

0407 527 609

charlbella@outlook.com



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.



Maintenance Day Sunday 30 April 2017 @ 9.30am

If you are unable to attend on Sunday, you are welcome to do your duty during the week on a day that suits you.

Kindergarten Central Registrations

Register your child for kindergarten for 2018!

Kinder registrations are now OPEN!

Accepted from 1st March 2017 – 2nd July 2017.

This year there will be a 5 month registration period which will give you plenty of time to register your child for kindergarten in 2018. Please visit the Mornington Peninsula shire website and follow the directions to apply online.

If you have any questions about enrolments for next year please contact the enrolments officer or one of the teachers at the kinder on 5983 5803.

Boon Wurrung Language

Womindjeka (wom-in-djeka) - Welcome/hello

Bubup - Children

Waang - Raven

Bundjil - Eagle

Guyeem (goy-eem) - Kangaroo

PARENT LIBRARY

In the foyer there are assortments of books covering various topics that are available for parents to borrow.

One section is dedicated to the developing knowledge about the culture of the First Peoples. If you are interesting in learning about the history of the Aborigines and sharing stories with your children then please take a look at these books.

Book swap boxes

In the foyer there is a book stand provided by Peninsula reads. Children are invited to take a book from this stand and share with their families at home. This book is theirs to keep.

The book swap boxes and stands have been placed all over the Peninsula in various public spaces e.g. Centrelink, Peninsula Community health, Maternal child health centres, Balnarring Laundry Mat. Your child can take a book from any of these boxes/stands.

When you have books that are no longer being used in your home please donate them back to the book boxes/stands



Acknowledgement: Balnarring Preschool acknowledges that our children and families play and learn on Boon Wurrung Country. We acknowledge the Boon Wurrung of the Kulin Nation as the First Peoples of this land. We thank them for caring for the land and the waterways and value the sharing of their knowledge and stories. We pay our respects to their Elders: past and present.