



## Presidents Report February 2018

Welcome to Balnarring Pre-School.

How exciting to be at full capacity to start another wonderful year. We are so blessed to be apart of this beautiful Pre-School and a program that is so giving.

Welcome back to our amazing Teacher team and welcome to our new team members, can't wait to see what you have in store for us for 2018!!

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome aboard our Committee of Management for the year:

Belinda Austin – Vice President  
Rachel Jacobson – Secretary  
Cane Mitchell – Treasurer  
Stevie Thomas – Assistant Treasurer  
Catherine Peachy – Fees Officer  
Nicole Fletcher – Enrolments Officer  
Brad Watson Fundraising Coordinator  
Rachael Wise – Newsletter Coordinator  
Bettina Waddell – Historian  
Amelia Bicknell – Grants  
Nick Ryan – Maintenance Coordinator  
Jade Mayhew – Co Op Member  
Tamara Blank – Co Op Member  
Jarna Browne – Co Op Member

Thank you team for putting yourselves forward to help run this amazing Pre-School. I look forward to working with you this year.

So just a couple of tips for you as families of the Pre-School of how you can make the most of this special year...

### GET INVOLVED

The more involved in the kinder, the more you get out of it. This doesn't just mean doing maintenance day and kinder duty. It extends to the parent nights held and the many exciting fundraising events throughout the year. Keep your eyes out for the fundraising letter in the coming weeks giving you all the dates.

The Trivia Night is NOT to be missed. This event is generally held mid year and is a brilliant evening of fun, laughter, connections, new friendships and raising much needed funds.

### GET A BUDDY

You may already know other families attending or you may not. I highly recommend in the first term, finding someone who can be your reminder buddy. The Teachers do an amazing job of giving you all the information and reminders you need, but as we all know, as busy parents, it's hard to always keep up.

Having a buddy, you can set up a SMS system between you to make sure you don't miss any dates!! And an added bonus, you make a new friend!!



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# Balnarring Preschool & Infant Welfare Association

Learning and Living with nature

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## MAINTENANCE DAY

Our first maintenance day of the year will be held on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March, notes will be going out to families this week that are rostered on. Please get in contact if you are unable to and we will swap you to another month. Thank you very much for your involvement with this. The incredible space we have continues to develop thanks to these days and your time.

## 2019 ENROLMENTS

Please be advised, enrolments for 2019 have OPENED as of the 1<sup>st</sup> March. To place your enrolment for your child, you will need to go on the Mornington Peninsula Council website and follow the links. Please ensure you don't miss this process and if you have any questions feel free to chat to Nicole Fletcher or your class teacher.

So excited to have you all here, 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: 20<sup>th</sup> March 7pm

Please feel free to approach me or call if you have any questions or ideas regarding the Pre-School.

Caroline Brunt  
0423303571



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### Djeembana (Gathering Place) February 2018

On behalf of the teaching team I officially welcome you to Balnarring Pre-school. The beginning of the year is exciting, challenging and exhausting as we learn about each other as we become a learning community. In the first week the team learnt 27 children's names and their parents and if they could retain any further names then learnt the siblings (Lisa is great at remembering siblings names) The children were required to trust people they may not have met before, play with children they have just met, engage productively in new environments and follow unfamiliar routines while trying to understand what is expected of them within this community. WOW no wonder we are all tired after only 4 weeks!

BUT even with these challenges everything has gone extremely smoothly. The half groups provided the team with opportunities to spend time with every child. This time is invaluable in creating a picture of who each child is, what their interests are, their learning styles, strengths and challenges and then using that information to develop a program and strategies that will ensure that each child has a positive pre-school experience. I am sure that even in the short time we have had together you have observed growth in your child.



The team really appreciated your patience during the phase in period. THANKYOU

Now we have come together it is very obvious how busy the group is. In response to the business we will be exploring different ways of presenting the sessions each day. We may all start inside or all outside or split into two groups OR be floating between indoors and outdoors. Each day the children will be encouraged to check the visual schedule so they know what is planned.

The program is developed fortnightly with adjustments made as we observe the children's level of engagement and support their contributions. We will be encouraging the children to explore the environment each day increasing their awareness of what is available drawing them into new learning experiences.

Learning about nature began in the first week when Ace collected two baby snakes in a jar. The children had many wonderings about the snakes: What type were they? Why did they die? Could they go see the snake? These wonderings led to discussions about snakes using posters as tools to developing their curiosity. One [poster showed a snake shedding its skin so then we showed the children a snake skin and discussed how a snake gets out of his skin. The children were then wrapped in lycra and asked to wiggle out of their 'skin'.



What learning occurred from this experience? Development of knowledge, investigating with a team, demonstration of curiosity, experimentation, and it was fun!



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The children have met the chooks or maybe the chooks have met the children. Very quickly they have learnt that chooks are tricky to catch! And how to hold them so they don't scratch. We have been collecting the eggs and will be cooking with them in the coming weeks.



Many children have been demonstrating their drawing skills and ability to create with the craft items.

When playing in a group the children watch and listen to each others ideas which extends their learning and play skills. Once such example was when one child discovered the tyres roll down the hill. Other children noticed joining in with the challenge of carrying a tyre up the hill then successfully rolling it as far as possible.

We have discovered that a favourite experience is messy play. Playing in mud, slime, soapy water, coloured water, and sand while it can be quiet messy provides children with learning through their sense of touch. They explore textures, discuss the textures and often relax while playing as the textures are soothing.



What else have we done? Climbed, built, played with balls, sailed on the seas, painted, picked the vegetables, cooked pikelets, shared books, solved puzzles, discovered shells, picnicked with families learnt many songs, jumped onto the crash mat and explored at the beach. And most importantly every one is walking in the door with a smile on their face ready for a day full of fun.



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### Coming events:

**PMP** Next week the Perceptual Motor Program (PMP) will start. This involves setting up specific gross motor activities that each child participates in. The children are divided into small teams and then rotate through the activities. An adult supports the children at each activity. PMP develops gross motor skills, problem solving, body awareness, auditory processing, following of instructions, coordination, confidence, risk taking and creativity. We will be seeking support for this program requiring 5 parents each time. Please see calendar for the dates and place your name on the slip near the attendance book if you can assist. PMP goes for approximately one hour and commences once the majority of children have arrived.

**ELC buddies** Mandy from Balnarring ELC will be bringing the group across the spend time with us. We are hoping this will occur once a term with the first visit scheduled for 14<sup>th</sup> March

**Harmony Day 21<sup>st</sup> March** – *celebrates the country's cultural diversity. It's a day to celebrate our cultural diversity. It's about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.* Parents are invited to return for lunch on this day with a plate of food to share from a country you have a connection with. Further details to follow

**Festival 24<sup>th</sup> March** – see separate posters

**Wed 28<sup>th</sup> March:** Coolart experience. Please meet at Coolart (Lord Somers Road, Somers) at 8:30. Families are welcome to stay for the whole experience or join us for morning tea around 10:30 or join us for an egg hunt (please keep a secret) at 11:30. The session will conclude at 12:00. Weelam group are joining us on this day.

**28<sup>th</sup> March:** last day of term

**16<sup>th</sup> April:** Term two commences

**23<sup>rd</sup> April:** Library staff visiting to share books and give each child a gift

**2<sup>nd</sup> May:** This is a joint day of learning with Balnarring Primary School, Balnarring ELC, St Josephs School and Boon Wurrung Foundation. It will most probably run from 9am -3pm. **SAVE THE DATE**

That is it for this month. If you have any questions please ask

Karen (on behalf of Djeembana team)



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## Weelam (camp/home) Group Newsletter – February 2018



**Womin djeka** to our first preschool newsletter for 2018. Weelam group is now experiencing many special times learning and working together on projects, sharing experiences and just being within our learning environments. Our teaching team has been supporting all the children to engage with each other and come together as Weelam group. New friendships are emerging, previous relationships have strengthened, and we have been supporting all the children to develop their skills to express their thoughts and feelings to each other using words and their verbal skills. Starting your preschool year means trying many new experiences, participating in new routines, becoming more independent and learning to trust others beyond your family. Each child is participating and developing these skills in their own way and time. We see Childhood as a journey, and as your teaching team we all feel very privileged to be part of each child's learning story and to be there to support them to develop new skills and see challenges as opportunities to learn and problem solve. If you have any questions and would like to share your thoughts with us about your child's start to their preschool year please do not hesitate to speak to me during the sessions, or ask to make a time to meet during my office time. Finally, a big thanks to the Weelam group teaching team for all their hard work making the start of our year very positive for us and the children. I look forward to a great year, Ann.

**Children's interests:** *The children have been exploring their interest and ideas through the play experiences.*



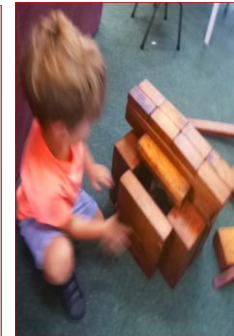
\*magnetic blocks



\*working helping to move the sand



\*sensory fun



\* making stories

**Thank you:** I would like say a big thank you to everyone who helped at the working bee. Our preschool garden was not looking the best after the holiday break. The new sand has been wonderful and allowed the children to do 'real work'. The children have helped to move it, and now are exploring this play space in new ways. Thanks also for your patience during the phase in period as we have been supporting the children to develop their sense of belonging within the program. Now we have moved into full time groups it has been great to have the parents join us during the sessions to help and to share their interests and skills with us. Parent/ family participation is important to our programs ability to provide quality experiences and support to all the children. Please see the roster and add your name to the days that you are able to join us.



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**Bush camp:** Our sessions at Bush camp and the beach have experienced all types of weather so far. We have experienced heat, rain, cold and had to cancel a session due to extreme high winds. Last week we all walked to the rock pools- everyone was excited as they found crabs and many other discovers walking there, in the rock pools and along the tracks. We never know what we will find and sharing our discoveries and wondering about what we have found is a very important time of learning within the Bush camp and beach environments. We have also begun listening to Boon Wurrung Country, just stopping, looking, and listening to Country. It is always exciting when we hear Waang up in the tree.

**Bush camp and beach discoveries:** *We are wondering about...*



*\*where the water came from in the sand? How the cow fish skeleton got up onto the beach? and if the red salt bush berries are ready to use as finger paint (if you look carefully you can find the red ones!!).*



*\*Walking to the rock pools, making discoveries and waiting to see if this is the rock with a crab underneath.*

**Back at Preschool:** *Our learning and living with nature program continues...*



*\*caring for the chickens*

*\*Who is making a nest in our nesting box? \* creating maps of bush camp/beach*



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**Our learning diary:** We have been recording our learning stories in our group diary, please take a look at the photos and stories that the team, parents and children have taken and written. We are encouraging the children to work in the diary, they are cutting out the photos, drawing pictures and telling us the words to write. The program goals and experiences are also displayed for you to read within this diary.

**Individual folders:** Each child also has their own blue folder, we have begun to write stories and put into them photos of what the children are doing. We have also begun our **story star** times this means we have been gradually listening to each child's story (that you means you are the story star). In small groups the children have been taking turns to tell their story, listen to the stories of others and to ask questions to find out more about their friends. It is also a great way to get to know each other's names. You are welcome to take your child's folder home whenever you like, all we ask is you return it to the shelf regularly so we can add more stories and the children can share them with each other at preschool. We also invite you to write your thoughts and what your child tells you within the folder. Just look for the boxes that say Child's Voice and Parent's voice, these spaces are there for you to add your words - we love to read your thoughts too.

**Restaurant Day:** Each Thursday we cook and explore our vegetable garden to see what is ready and if the chickens have laid eggs for us to use in our recipes. Already we have made vegetable damper, strawberry jam (strawberries and honey) to have on our scones and frittatas for the family lunch.



*\*we have been using our special children's safety knives to cut with and make our vegetables and strawberries small- these knives allow the children to learn these skills, just like they see adults do.*

**Sharing interests:** The children are encouraged to share their ideas and interests with each other...



*\*exploring books for information*

*\*making a dinosaur fly*

*\*working together allow ideas to grow*



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**Family Lunch:** Thank you to everyone who could join us, it was great to share this time with you.



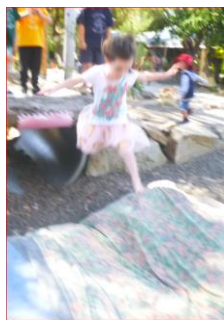
*Our Family lunch was a fun time to play with the parachute together. We bounced the balls up in the air, experienced being under the parachute and all disappeared- can you see where we went!!*



**Challenges:** We see challenges as opportunities to learn. Challenges can be positive when you feel supported to try, to be brave, to develop the skills to problem solve, acknowledge your attempts and learn from others.



*\*new ways*



*\* Being brave*



*\*trying new tastes*



*\*solving how to get back down again.*

**Smoking ceremony:** Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make our new Womin djeka sign. The sign will be placed on our outside wall at the next maintenance day. It looks fabulous with all the discoveries. To assist us all to learn more about First Peoples symbols and meanings I have included this information here. *“In a Smoking Ceremony, leaves of three plants may be used – Cherry Ballart (ballee), River Red Gum (biel) and Silver Wattle (muyan). The cherry ballart is a plant that requires support when young but has strong resilient wood. The cherry ballart symbolises youth. The wattle was vital to local clans, every part being used: seeds, bark, wood and gum. It represented the elders. The red gum is the most widespread eucalypt in Australia and is symbolic of the entire community and the community’s access to the land and its resources. As you walk through this smoke, you are also walked through and protected by a physical merge of the old and the new. Smoke cleanses the visitor, and was a ritual to discourage bad intent.*



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## Learning and Living with nature



Reference: Aboriginal Resource Trail Royal Botanical garden

**Dates for your diaries:** Please save these dates, look out for flyers and texts as more information will follow.

1. **Labour Day holiday: Monday 12<sup>th</sup> March, No Preschool**
2. **PMP:** We will begin our PMP experiences within small groups on Thursdays from 15<sup>th</sup> March, please add your name to the roster if you can join us from 9am to 10:30am to help.
3. **Wednesday 21st March: Harmony Day 'we all belong':** please join us at Bush camp at 11:45am for picnic lunch. Please bring a plate of food to share (*food that reflects a country that your family have links with, have visited and/or connections through heritage.*)
4. **Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March: Coolart Easter celebrations:** We will join Djeembana at Coolart to walk, build a nest and join in an egg hunt. All families are welcome to stay all session or return for snack time (10:30am) and/ the egg hunt (11:30am) Drop off 9am/pick up 12:30pm
5. **Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March: End of term.** Come join us for our Easter bonnet parade at 1:30pm.  
*Happy Holidays everyone*
6. **Monday 16<sup>th</sup> April: Term two begins**
7. **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> April :** 1pm Visit from Library, Storytime



**Great questions:** We have been encouraging the children to develop their sense of wonder and to find out more by asking great questions. These are just a few...

- *Is there more than Bundjil and Waang?*
- *Does a spider crab make a nest?*

*(this sand picture of 'Bundjil' was made at the beach this week)*

**Reminder: Sat. 24<sup>th</sup> March Balnarring Ngargee festival:** Please start collecting sticks that can be decorated and bring them along to help us to rebuild Bundjil's nest. Start thinking of your message to the Land and the children that you can write on your stick.

See you there, Weelam group teaching team.



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### Manameet & Gareeal 3 year old Group February 2018

It has been a lovely start to the year for both the 3 year old groups in 2018. Lisa and I are enjoying getting to know your children and beginning to build relationships, which will help them to become more comfortable and confident as their sense of belonging increases over time. The orientation sessions with and without the families allow the children to begin to feel safe, secure and supported. We are afforded more time with each individual child in the group and also more opportunities for us to get to know our families.

This coming Friday, the 2<sup>nd</sup> March, full sessions in both groups commence. We will continue to provide familiar play-based activities and mat times based around your children's interests and strengths which we have observed and which you have discussed with us. We will also be spending time learning to care for our chickens and vegetable garden as well start up our learning journals and create a group poster of our families to display. Some of you may have seen that Lisa and I have been working with the children, often in small groups, to establish routines and transitions, assist with self-help skills like hand washing and toileting and begin to establish behaviour expectations. These are done through songs, music, stories and short discussions. We have also introduced board-maker to the children which are visual representations (pictures) showing what happens at kinder (schedule), how to wash hands and go to the toilet and some expectations such as how to sit and listen during mat times. Please feel free to take your child to the orange board maker board which we display near the piano at the beginning of each session. It often helps children to feel more settled and secured knowing what is happening and when they will be collected.

It is important to remind everyone that the children are still very young and many just beginning their more formal education away from family. We do not expect children at this early stage to be able to sit for long periods of time, for instance during a long story or discussion in large groups. Our aim is simply to get children to join us (for even a minute) and begin to understand how to come together as a group. Often, children will move away from the group if they see something more attractive to do in the room. This is developmentally appropriate and why we often use the opportunity of snack time to read and speak to the children and have things close by to the group for children to play with alongside a mat session. We also tend to use music and dance to come together at the end of sessions before pick-up. Again, participation and engagement will vary amongst the children depending on their interests and sense of belonging. We will always speak with you if we have any concerns and welcome you to speak to us if you feel concerned. Rest assured it is quite common during the first two terms as children are settling into the program and kinder and getting to know Lisa and I.

As we transition this Friday into full sessions we will explore the routines within each group further and establish more expectations around behaviour. If your child is hungry or you feel that having something to eat and drink will help to settle them into kinder please feel free to help them set up to eat. We will aim to have a snack table or will use special mats on the floor, which Lisa and I can set up so please let us know. We find that many meaningful and enjoyable interactions between us and the children as well as between the children themselves occur at these small snack gatherings!



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**You will receive a copy of an 'all about me' page for your children's kinder journals this week. Please return them ASAP with some family photos, drawings and/or info about your child and family so that we can go through them in small groups, get to know each other better and strengthen our relationships.**

## **Stay and Play**

Thank you to the families who have signed up to stay and play for the remainder of this term. Term 2's roster is also out so if you missed out please feel free to write your name down. If you are doing your first stay and play, please let us know and Lisa or I will be happy to explain things to you.

## **Enrolment Information**

There are still some outstanding items I require as soon as possible for some children's enrolment records. It is imperative we have full records in order to comply with departmental regulations. I will send out a text message later this week to advise families if I require anything further such as contact information and online statement print outs.

## **Drop Off and Pick-Ups**

Thank you to all the families noting in the sign in book if sun cream has been applied to their child. Applying sun cream prior to the session allows more time for play. If you have not signed to say sun cream is applied, then we will apply according to your preference of our / your sun cream. Even on cloudy and cooler days the UV remains high at this time of year! Also, please try to remember to sign your child in/out on the correct line. Look for their name on the right hand side of the sign in book, it remains in the same location each session.



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## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 2<sup>nd</sup> March – 23<sup>rd</sup> March – Full sessions

Manameet 8:30am-11am / Gareeal 12pm-2:30pm

- Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March – Last Day of Term

Join us during the normal session time to celebrate Harmony Day and the end of term 1 with time in the pine forest and grassy park next to kinder and a party! More details to follow soon

Thanks Jill and Lisa



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**Our Maintenance Day will be held on:**

**Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March**

Committee member:

**Families of:**

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

## **PARENT LIBRARY**

In the foyer there are an assortment 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.

## **ATTENTION ALL FAMILIES**

Working with children check (WWC) –Creating a Child safe environment.

Parents will not be required to have a WWC as they are not regularly with the children. However.... When in our group please be aware that a parent is always to be in sight of the staff when with the children. Any change of clothing or toileting challenges will be managed by the staff **EVEN IF YOU KNOW THAT CHILD**. Please let a team member know if a child requires support

## **Kindergarten Central Registrations**

**Register your child for kindergarten for 2019!**

**Kinder registrations are now OPEN!**

**Accepted from 1st March 2018 – 1<sup>st</sup> July 2018.**

**This year there will be a 5 month registration period which will give you plenty of time to register your child for kindergarten in 2019. 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.**

## **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



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