



McKay Children's Centre
87372535

Centre Newsletter

Term 2, Week 4
May 2019

Dear Families,

As the days shorten it seems we have even less time to get things done in our busy lives! Winter is almost here so it's time to take advantage of the long winter evenings – talk with your children, tell stories, play games, read books, play music, sing and have indoor fun at the end of the day.

You may be interested to know the following interesting facts - We currently have 100+ children accessing our service each week – we have 25 educators on our staff team—20 are locally employed (Penola) by our Governing Council and 5 kindy staff employed by DECD. We are a large local business in terms of employment/turnover and are community based so we truly value your support.

Our dedicated staff team/s work hard to provide you and your children with a quality education and care service. We endeavour to meet your family/children's needs each and every day and most days we believe we do. Of course we are not perfect so we appreciate any concerns you may have and try to consider them as we move forward to improve what we do. Without your direct feedback we can't make this happen. If you have a concern or an idea that you believe will help us to build on our services we please speak directly with educators and we will respond. This occurs regularly for many families so if you would like to ask any questions please do.

Educators have been focussing on accessing Professional Development this year and we are fortunate to have Jane Lemon here to work with our educator team on site values and what is important for us in our work. We are working through her program which will promote continuity and cohesion throughout our services. We plan to all work from the same philosophical base. At the end of this week we will have our new Site Philosophy Statement which we will share with families.

As part of our site improvement process, educators engage in reflective practice conversations about children's learning and analyse documentation/records to develop the 'what next?' for their pedagogy. Educators support children to grow their learning dispositions through their own play, develop oral language skills and increase their wellbeing.

Our Quality Improvement Plan is up to date and ongoing as it supports our improvements across McKay.

Keep warm everyone

Jenny Smibert

McKAY GOVERNING COUNCIL 2019

Chair: Emma Bowen

Vice Chairperson: Meg Redman

Secretary: Lizzie Grosvenor

Treasurer: Cath Kidman

Public Officer: Leticia Gosse

Council Members: Matt Honner, Paul Stone, Amy Blackburn, Cath Loder

Staff Council Members: Jenny Smibert and Kathy Dempsey

We have a number of sub Committees on the Gov Council to cover Policy, the Environment, Finance, Staffing, Fundraising, an OSHC rep and Grievance Officers

These small groups are made up of some Gov. Council members, staff and other interested parents.

VACATION CARE in the Easter Holidays

This programme/trial has been declared a success! We opened and ran a busy program for the 4 days before Easter with high numbers of children accessing the days of fun activities—well led by Gaynor and her staff the staff by Ebony and Thank you to the staff team.

Many families have expressed an interest in a similar program in the July holidays. Gaynor has put out an expression of interest survey (to families in OSHC) once again. If you missed out there are hard copies available in office or call the centre and we will email to you.

Once we understand the needs and interest of local families we will plan accordingly. We hope to let you know in early June if a holiday program will be offered in July.

Picking up and collection Electronic sign in for C.C and OSHC.

This new innovation has mostly been successful. Ongoing IT issues (which we are addressing) seem to be our only hurdle –apologies. Thank you to each one of you who have stayed and are staying the course with us on this.

Diary Dates

Childcare open and operating normal hours throughout year (except Pub.Hols.)

Week 1 Term 2 begins for kindy Tuesday April 30th

Week 4 Governing Council Meeting Mon 20th May

Week 7 Kindy Closure Day Wednesday 12 June.

Week 8 Governing Council Meeting Mon 17th June.

Week 10 Kindy Term finishes Friday July 5th.

July Holidays OSHC Possible vacation Care trial.

CHILD CARE

Investigators-We have currently been focusing on Empowering children to make good choices/being kind and in that structure we have been encouraging our peers into making positive choices. Along with peer interaction of listening, responding, turn taking and using words. Children have thoroughly enjoyed music and movement with visiting local musicians and learning the Macarena and Nutbush dance movements.

This fortnight and the rest of the term we will be discussing feelings/emotions what they are, how each child feels, e.g. what makes them happy/sad and will be exploring other emotions such as surprise, angry, grumpy etc.. And encouraging children to observe facial and body language.

Explorers-Children have noticed the season changing eg the leaves changing colour the wet weather. With the change in the weather visits to Gym kids where children can practise risk taking gross motor in all forms of physical play. We have been utilizing the School oval for exploring, collecting leaves physical play etc... Sensory play with various forms e.g. slime, kinetic sand, playdough, enabling children to explore different textures, pliability and smell. Dramatic play has allowed for role playing and small world play.

Both programs are available for viewing with previous fortnights happenings on display boards.

Healthy Food and Nutrition

We are currently reviewing our centre policy. Children are all encouraged to eat the snacks and lunches you provide. At McKay we support children to independently access food from their lunchboxes and to make wise choices.

Healthy foods are eaten first and we ask that lunchboxes are packed so their food is easily accessible and visible. If you have concerns around whether or not your child is eating their food their lunch box will tell you. Food remaining is food they haven't eaten, if there is no food remaining then you can be fairly sure it was eaten during the day. Children eat their lunch at different rates, some remain at the table for longer. Once play starts again most want to get going quickly so this can mean others don't wish to finish their lunch. We have regular cooking days -the children generally love to try new food/ flavours they have made. On these days perhaps lunch box may have a little more in them.

Its sometimes difficult to gauge how much to pop into their lunchbox feel free to experiment. Needs may and can frequently change so being responsive to this is a good idea.

PRE SCHOOL 4 Y.O. CAFHS CHECKS

Shirley Johnston (CAFHS Nurse) has been able to do these checks for some children this year at McKay. Sadly there wont be enough time for all to receive this service at McKay. The good news is that you are able to arrange for your own checks either in Penola (Young St) or in Mt Gambier. Shirley has indicated she will be at Young St in the July holidays so you can book you your child in for their 4 year old check. These are VERY important checks. Surprisingly each year there are a few 'surprises' found in hearing, vision, speech and physical development. This information enables us all to put in place early intervention strategies to support your child's future development. Another example of team work from you as parents, us as educators and CAFHS an allied health team member.

ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

This is visible throughout our centre both indoors and out, at the bookmaking tables, book areas, group times, snack and lunch times, drawing tables, puzzle areas, games, painting easels, construction and building, cooking, washing hands, thinking times, planning times, sand area, obstacle courses, on bikes.

Reciprocal conversations, listening, questioning, observing, body language signals and more- all contribute to oral language development and growth.

If you were unable to make time for a Parent Educator chat last term you may still to call and organise one any time. If you would like to speak 1:1 with a kindy/childcare/ OSHC Educator please just ask and a mutual time can be arranged. Mostly these chats are valuable - they can allay any concerns you may have and help to inform about how your child grows here at McKay, how we support children to develop their learning dispositions through engagement, building strong relationships, documenting, reflecting and planning. Please speak with educators any time, share the fun things and should you like a longer chat please ask a team leader/Kathy in C.C. or Kathia/

OSHC

OSHC IS MOSTLY FULLY BOOKED ON TUESDAYS/WEDNESDAYS/ THURSDAYS A FEW OPENINGS ON THE OTHER DAYS.

THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES WHICH HAVE FOLLOWED ON WITH INTERESTS AND IDEAS FROM THE VACATION CARE PROGRAM- THE MEGA POM (GIANT POMPOM) BEING A GREAT EXAMPLE. THIS CONTINUITY HAS BEEN BENEFICIAL FOR MANY CHILDREN. THERE HAS BEEN LOTS OF COOKING- PIZZAS-VERY POPULAR! THE SUNNY DRY WEATHER OF LATE HAS BEEN TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF WITH MORE THAN USUAL GAMES AND SPORTS ACTIVITIES HAPPENING OUTDOORS KICKING FOOTY AND GYMNASTICS - 'MAKING HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES'! THE 'FOOTY TIPPING' IS A FUN ACTIVITY FOR THE OLDER CHILDREN ESPECIALLY AND EDUCATORS HAVE OBSERVED SOME INTERESTING LEARNING OCCURRING AROUND IT AS THE WEEKEND APPROACHES. ALWAYS THERE ARE CRAFT/MAKING/CREATIVE EXPERIENCES AVAILABLE AND SOME OF THE YUMMY SNACKS PREPARED ARE APPRECIATED EVEN TO THE POINT OF CHILDREN QUEUING UP HAPPILY TO DO THE DISHES IN THE KITCHEN! WE NOW STAFF BOTH OSHC GROUPS WITH X2 EDUCATORS EVERY DAY.