



Elder St. Herald

ELDER ST HERALD

JAN FEB MAR 2020

ELDER STREET EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE

Welcome to Elder St. to all our new friends!

It is an Elder St tradition that all our new friends receive a big welcome in our first newsletter of the year...

You may have noticed it has been all hands on deck with cuddles, dancing, stories and lots of reassurance shared for friends new and old. We have lots of new friends and also parents who are fresh to the world of early childhood education and care. We welcome everyone very warmly and hope you are all finding the transition to care and work and the family juggle not too overwhelming.

We welcome to the Nursery Possums:

Ella and mum and dad Elizabeth and Rob

Eliana and mum and dad Sarah and Owen

Jakody and mum Stephanie

Isla S and mum and dad Kirsten and Jake

Luca and mum and dad Kate and Toby

New siblings to the Pos-

sums rooms are:

Willow, Nicholas and Harry.

We welcome to the 2-3 years Joeys:

Eva and her mum and dad Lina and Martin

Oliver and mum and dad Elizabeth and Rob

Henry and mum and dad Amy and Jason

India and mum and dad Natasa and Jason

Isla C and mum and dad Sarah and Aaron

Amia and mum and dad Cherie and Sam

Marli and mum and dad Krissie and Mitch

Ruby and mum and dad Lauren and Josh

We welcome to the Pre-school Wallaby group:

Seth and mum and dad Melissa and Mathew

Toby and mum and dad Monica and Mark

Ivy and mum and dad Lauren and Brendan



Partnership with Parents Questionnaire

“The questionnaire covers all 7 quality areas of the National Quality Standard and helps us work towards meeting, understanding and setting goals for continued quality care and improvement”

In May each year we generate an online survey known as our 'Partnerships with Parents Questionnaire'. The questionnaire covers all 7 quality areas of the National Quality Standard and helps us work towards meeting, understanding and setting goals for continued quality care and improvement. It is an opportunity to either immediately address any concerns or ques-

tions and also gives us scope as a team of professional educators to set new goals and keep on improving and growing. There is usually a time frame in which we like to have the questionnaire returned, but we also like to encourage new families that may not be fully aware of some of the practices of the centre yet, to take their time and are welcome to hold on to the ques-

tionnaire or seek further clarification if they need to in order to give a response to any area. Sometimes the questionnaires are also a good way to highlight certain areas or programming information that new families may not be aware of.

We aim to have the questionnaire emailed to families via Survey Monkey in May.

Equipment Levy 2020

Each year an equipment levy is charged to family accounts to support the cost of buying or replacing resources for the centre. Other Centres often run fundraisers for this purpose; we have a one off levy instead. Over the years we have sourced and purchased some amazing equipment with these funds. We always like to include our families in the purchasing process and

will shortly put a sheet out the front where parents can contribute ideas. We are trying really hard to purchase sustainable and mostly natural products as much as we can. We also like to purchase products that are multi purpose, educational and that will stand the test of time and many hands each day. No easy brief!

If you know of any

amazing equipment/game/construction set that you have seen or heard about, we would love to know about them. We will be looking through our supplier catalogues and discussing ideas and also know of some local toy makers that we will be using too. The equipment levy will appear on accounts in April 2020.



How do we assess children's learning in the early years?

It may seem extreme to consider assessing an infant's learning. Babies are so fresh and vulnerable to the world. However, assessment in the early years is understood as more of a way of ensuring that children are thriving and learning in our care. It is just as important to assess an infant's learning as it is for a child in the year before school as assessment is not about testing for new knowledge and skills, but more so connected to the holistic development of each child. Assessment in the early years is about making each child's learning visible.

The other distinct difference in assessment in children's early years is that we use assessment **FOR** learning, not just for assessment **OF** learning.

We use assessment, evaluation and reflection

to become close to the children's knowledge, skills, dispositions, questions and challenges. We assess in many different ways all the time.

One of the major components of assessment is documenting and reflecting on learning as educators. This happens by being thoughtful and considered whilst learning with the children. Taking note of what they are saying and doing, how they are responding and interacting and noting the choices they are making.

Project work provides great opportunities for this pedagogical assessment (NB: pedagogy means the overall methods and practice of educators). It creates a cycle of assessing for learning with the children and then using assessment as learning for the children and the educa-

tors. Projects work is conducted slowly and assessment is continuous. When the project has reached a certain point, then some documentation of the learning so far will be produced. The educators, children and families then have the opportunity to revisit the learning by discussing the documentation together as they move through the next stage of the project. This provides children with more opportunities to theorise, reflect and think about their learning so far.

A further really productive outcome of this learning cycle is the reflection it allows educators to make on all parts of the program and to consider that all the children in the group are being catered for. We are reminded to look at individual pathways for different children, liaise

with families, and plan integrated, engaging and meaningful opportunities for learning to take place (Fleet & Paterson, 2011).

What guides our thinking as we assess children's learning is our national learning framework (Early Years Learning Framework or EYLF), our knowledge of child development and theories of learning and philosophical approaches to early years education. We aim to assess and document what is meaningful to the child and their world and the curriculum decisions that we make as educators within our program. We also work together as educators to self assess and ensure that every child's learning needs are being met and enriched.

Finally, we see assessment of young children's learning as opportunity to advocate for childhood and as a means to showcase how young children are strong intentional learners :)

"Our responsibility is to provide opportunities and experiences for children to gain expertise in demonstrating knowledge when needed" - Fleet & Patterson



ROOM NEWS...what's been going on in our rooms for January, February & March????

NURSERY POSSUMS.. Hi everyone, hope you are all great!! There is so much to learn about the children in the Possums. They teach us so much everyday which allows us to then focus on how we can enrich their learning and development too. We have been keenly observing as the children settle and become familiar with the spaces and faces in our community. What we have learnt so far from these observations is that relationships are at the core of children's capacity to learn and engage. From our conversations with families and their input about their child's interests, animals are a very common interest for the children in the Possums. From here we have been able to discover that the children have a deep interest in all aspects of animals. More than just the sounds that they make, or the way they look. We can see that the children are trying to understand the details of each animal and are trying to find ways to express this understanding with the educators. So far we have taken a multi-modal learning approach to this project by including projected and moving images of animals in different environments, reading stories, singing songs etc. We will continue to focus on this interest and see what other learning languages we can connect to with the children. **BE-LONGING TREE** — Each year we create a belonging tree in the Possum room. This has become a very special part of our program. Our belonging tree represents the importance of where each child comes from and the very special people in their life. To become a part of this please provide us with a recent family photo for us to place on our tree. The children often point to their family photos and are able to carry them around the room at their request. It is very special. You can either provide a hard copy 6x4 photo or email us a photo that we can print. **REMINDERS** — sunscreen on arrival, bed/comforters in cots and plenty of extra clothes in bags please. Warm wishes — Lauren, Carley, Jena and the team



TODDLER JOEYS... Hi! Thanks for stopping by...Educators' practices and the relationships they form with children and families have a significant effect on children's involvement and success in learning; in other words relationships are at the core of what we do everyday! Needless to say we have dedicated a great deal of time engaging in conversations and getting to know each other with lots of cuddles. This opens up to us who the children are in this space and we become close to their knowledge. There has been great interest in construction with many different resources; duplo, magnetic blocks and also open ended loose parts including cardboard cylinders, stones and bottle top lids. Our dramatic play kitchen has been in full use with role playing of cooking and caring for babies taking place. We come together as a group for brief periods of time each day and the children enjoy the togetherness of group learning, especially singing interactive songs. Our greeting song "Hello Joeys" is a favourite and has been a great settling in tool for new friends as they are supported to become familiar with our names. Other beloved songs are "Hop little bunnies/ dinosaurs/puppies"; "We're going on a bear hunt"; "5 cheeky monkeys" and "10 cupcakes" told using felt board pieces. Within our Atelier space (creative workshop) the children have loved the freedom to mix their own colours and access resources to extend their ideas. Some days it's more about the process of mixing than the end product of a certain colour or using it in an art piece. Educators have intentionally been following the children's lead, taking a step back and simply observing and documenting the children's voices and actions. We are interested to find out the meaning behind the children's mixing of colours, what they are learning from it and trying to experience this through their eyes. It takes great commitment by adults to value children as capable and to hold ourselves accountable to not 'teach' whilst they are learning and experimenting. We will be documenting this learning within our educational program. Kate only has until Fri 13 before she heads off on maternity leave. Roxi, Bree and Jena will continue the wonderful program for the rest of the year. Warm wishes Kate, Roxi, Bree, and Jena :)



PRESCHOOL WALLABIES

.....Hello to all our wonderful families and friends in the Wallaby room. We would like to share with you all the news we have about our beautifully slow and steady start to the year. The children that are new to the Wallaby room in their own time have been extending their friendship groups and venturing into new relationship experiences. This of course takes a different amount of time for different children and it is necessary to remind ourselves what a big transition it is to come into a new class or space. Even as adults this could be somewhat overwhelming. Our new friends are all doing so well at finding their identity amongst a new group and our older Wallabies have taken on the mentoring role showing great compassion and leadership. We have made a commitment this year as a community of learners to embrace a 'slow pedagogy'. This is a commitment to look at time differently in our practice as educators. We also see this as a commitment to involving the children's voices and rights as we make curriculum decisions every day. What this looks like in practice is observing the children's interactions and play very closely and respectfully and giving them time to finish work, solve problems and work on projects in uninterrupted sessions. This intentional teaching strategy has been formulated by the team as we understand that with our planned project work we will be better able to encourage the wonderful learning dispositions we have been seeing this year. We have noticed such creative and imagination filled play taking place. The children have been working together to build on their ideas and creating innovative and meaningful games from these ideas. This type of imaginary role play in groups provides opportunities for negotiation, problem solving and encourages critical thinking. To bring all of this together to form our education program, we are working on the early stages of developing our first project of the year. Our preliminary planning is pointing to a project based around the concept of creative thinking. We are at the stage of exploring the protagonists within the program ie; children's ideas, experiences and other happenings each day and then working together to brainstorm where we could take these with the children as a group. Some of the wonderful exciting experiences that are giving us lots of ideas have been our Nature Play visits to Ker-rai Creek and our engagement with the work of Jasmine the artist. We had our first visit to the creek in late February with the Friday children and felt that there was great benefit to the children's creative thinking and connection to place. Other than the absolute sheer joy of splashing, climbing, jumping and sliding, there were moments of wondering, finding, questioning and noticing. We are all very excited for our next **Nature day which will be on Monday 16th March at 9.30am**. Pack gumboots and extra clothes! Our first session with Jasmine will be Wednesday 11th of March and we are all very excited for this visit and time with her. Our outdoor educational program has also been a time for lots of socialisation, risk taking and testing our physical limits. We re-introduced the bikes to the space a little while ago. This was of course met with great excitement. The children responded well to working together to understand negotiating turn taking, safe riding and the bike track 'road rules'. They also encountered struggle (this hill bit is hard to get around), problem solving (who can push me up this hill?) and success (we did it together!!). With so many big news events happening around Australia this year, especially the catastrophic impact of wildlife from the bushfires, we have provided time for the children to ask questions and role play their understandings and ways they can express compassion and empathy. This occurred in the dramatic play space set up to care for hurt wildlife. What looks like simple play to adults is actually the beginnings of humans connecting to the world around them, acting out their concerns and feeling empowered to make a difference. Thanks for reading - please let us know if you have any questions or would like to chat with us about your child's time in the Wallaby room. Take care—Paula, Donna, Bec & Ellie



LET US KNOW WHAT
LEARNING FOCUS
YOU WOULD LIKE US
TO WORK ON WITH
YOUR CHILD





Elder St ECEC Annual Family Day!

SUNDAY 24 MAY, 2019 @ OAKVALE WILDLIFE PARK

We can't wait to spend the morning with you all at our special annual event! We will be sending a separate email to all families about this event as we need to know definite attendance numbers for the day. We will be booking as a corporate event and covering the entry cost of all children enrolled at the centre and also any parents of enrolled children who attend. Other siblings and adults that are not parents of enrolled children will need to be paid for via our centre billing system prior to the event so we can in turn pay that to the Oakvale office. More details to come soon...in the meantime **save the date!**

Educational Record Dates

The dates below are when your child's individual profile will be uploaded to your individual online program folder and emailed to families.

*** 18 May 2020 * 7 September 2018 *21 December 2020**

HAPPY BIRTHDAYS!!! JANUARY— Olive turned 2, Chloe turned 2, Cedar turned 3, Axl turned 4, Ruby turned 4, Isla C turned 3, Ruby P turned 2, Louis turned 2

FEBRUARY— Woody turned 3, Meredith & Zoe turned 4!!

MARCH— Jakody turns 2, Ivy turns 4, Sid turns 4 and Florence turns 2!!



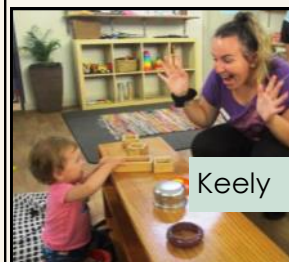
Kate begins maternity leave very soon to await the arrival of her little girl. Kate's last day will be Friday 13th of March, she will return in early 2021

MEET OUR NEW TRAINEES!

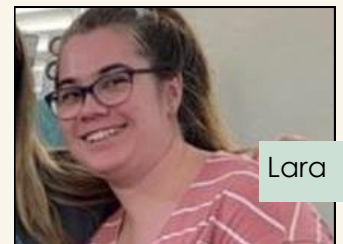
We have three new faces at the centre in 2020. You would probably already have met 2 of the girls over the last couple of months, and Lara will begin next week. Olivia and Keely have already impressed us all so much with their dedication, professionalism and caring engagements with all at the service. Lara has been in for team days and visits and we know will make a great addition to the team. too Welcome girls!!!



Olivia



Keely



Lara

TEAM HOLIDAYS AND ABSENCES COMING UP

Team members on holidays or attending professional learning in March to May:

- Jena (Nursery/Joey's) PD—13 March
- Roxi (Joey's) - 16 March—27 March & 9 April
- Cath— (Kitchen) 31 March—3 April
- Ellie—(Preschool) 18 March
- Lauren (Nursery Possums) 20 March—22 March
- Kim (Office) 6—20 April
- Carley (Nursery Possums) 8 April
- Donna (Preschool) 16—17 April
- Bree (Preschool) - 16-17 May



Little faces engaged in listening, meaning making and learning

Staffing Arrangements—as we have over the number of staff needed to meet our regulatory requirements we do not have the need to engage casual staffing. We will at times move some educators to cover certain leave if there is a need to support a less experienced team member during the holiday period. Our staff planning and continuation training supports this to happen by having our team familiar with all the children in each room.