



Kinder News: Term 3, 2019

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From the President

In this term's newsletter I want to let you know a little bit about how we're planning for the future, but before I do, I'd like to wish Claire Blainey all the very best as she leaves Thornbury to take up teaching opportunities at another kinder.

It's been an absolute pleasure having Claire as an educator at our kinder. We'll really miss her gentle nature, calm approach and ability to build strong relationships with children and parents.

Replacing Claire in Blue Group will be Catherine Williams, who has six years of experience in kinders and childcare and was an outstanding candidate during the interview process.

Looking to the future

Over the last few weeks and months, while still working on the essential stuff that keeps the kinder going, we've been looking to the future and to making sure we're getting better as a Committee. I'll highlight a few of those activities in this report:

Parent survey

As I mentioned, we remain a proudly community-run kinder, and the vast majority of our community is parents (and children). Your input into how the kinder is run is critical; your opinion guides us.

With this in mind, we're putting together our annual parent survey, and this year, we'll be combining the general survey with the Bush Kinder and (first) Out & About survey. All parents will answer a series of questions relating to the kinder as a whole and then further questions based on which group their child is in.

Look out for a link to the online survey in your inboxes in the coming weeks.

Strategic Plan

We've also been working on the kinder's Strategic Plan. That probably sounds all complex and businessy, but it's simply a guide to be used by this and future Committees that emphasises some of the most important things we need to concentrate on.

The Plan is divided into the seven areas of the National Quality Standard, which relate to our educators' programs and practice, the safety of children, the physical environment, our staffing arrangements, relationships with children, partnerships with communities and families, as well as governance and leadership.

We've put the plan together based on feedback from all of our staff and our Committee.

More information

I know I bring it up every time I get a chance, but the other thing we've been looking at closely – it's been central in our Strategic Plan – is making sure we have a strong Committee next year.

We want to encourage as much involvement as possible, but we know to do that we need to explain really clearly what the Committee does and why parent contributions are so important for a community-run kinder. We've got some ideas on how to do this and you'll be seeing them in the coming months.

Until then, I hope to see you round the kinder.





From the Director

Why do we let children play with sticks, be superheroes, climb trees, jump from the highest rung on the climbing frame, experience the fire pit?

Simply because children will spend more of their lives as adults than they do being children and play equips children with skills for life.

But how does playing with sticks equip you for life?

When children play they naturally have opportunities to make mistakes and perhaps even make poor decisions – they will learn the rules and expectations and will begin to understand their impact on others. They will learn to begin to take responsibility for their actions. They will learn they have a voice and how to use their voice with their peers and the courage this can take. Teachers and educators who know them deeply will guide them with the skill and expertise of their profession. Children are given the time they need to practise, practise and re-practise these skills at the pace that is right for them. They have the opportunity to develop their competence in assessing and managing risk.

The result is children develop their emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency when they take considered risks in their decision-making and learn to cope with the unexpected. When adults view this play through an adult lens, while it may create turmoil within us, to remove risk from children's lives is to remove the opportunity for children to develop some very basic life skills.

The National Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) reflects this understanding of children's learning and I would encourage you to have a look at the copies in the foyer or visit the website to find out more.

<https://www.education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework-0>

Please contact your child's teacher or me if you would like to discuss this in more detail.

Angela



Dates for the Diary

Fri 20 Sept TERM 4 FEES DUE	Fri 20 Sept END OF TERM 3	Mon 7 Oct START OF TERM 4
1-7 Sept National Child Protection Week		
Sat 7 Sept Working Bee Thornbury Kinder, 9am-12pm <i>Bring the kids, spades, wheelbarrows, trowels & gloves</i>	Thurs 12 Sept Family Diversity Information Session Thornbury Kinder, 7.30pm More info on p. 10	Wed 9 Oct 4-year-old parent information night (2020 enrolments) Thornbury Kinder, 7.30pm
Thurs 10 Oct 3-year-old parent information night (2020 enrolments) Thornbury Kinder, 7.30pm	Sun 13 Oct Aver & Line family photos Thornbury Kinder, book your own session time <i>*kinder fundraiser*</i> More info on p. 8	Sat 26 Oct Halloween Disco Croxton Uniting Church, 326 St Georges Rd, 2-4pm <i>*kinder fundraiser*</i> More info on p. 8
Tues 19 Nov KINDER AGM Thornbury Kinder, 7.30pm		



3 Year Old Update

Excursions enable children to experience and explore different environments and to engage in meaningful ways with our surrounding communities. Our 3-year-old groups have commenced their first local excursion and walked to Penders' Grove Primary School. We work in partnership with our local primary schools to provide children with opportunity beyond the kinder gate. At schools we have access to the playground and the music teacher for a choir session.

We also walk around the block when the school schedule cannot accommodate us. Our upcoming excursions will include walking to the post box, Penders Park, library, café and the local Woolworths Fresh Food Discovery.

These excursions build bridges for children to be part of their wider community and help children find their place in the world. Excursions support children's understanding of how society works and to begin to recognise and understand shared values.

Excursions provide children with connection to the local people of our community. We have met the postwoman, the local garage workers, the tradesmen and the immediate kinder neighbours who stop a moment to greet us "Good morning". Children become effective communicators and are confident and effective learners (for more information, please see the Victorian Early Learners & Development Framework <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/Pages/veyldf.aspx>).

The parent/carers who volunteer gain first-hand experience of our excursions and build the partnerships between kinder and home, giving children the confidence to participate more fully when offsite. We share information about the procedures and assessments undertaken prior to the excursions to better help families understand and trust the educators.

An Excursion Risk Management Plan is created for every excursion. The purpose of the risk assessment is to identify, assess and manage and/or minimise any risks posed to the safety, health and wellbeing of any child being taken on an excursion. The risk assessment contains the following information:

- proposed route and destination;
- water hazards and/or risks associated with water-based activities;
- transportation to and from the destination;
- number of adults and children involved;
- given the risks associated with the excursion, the number of educators and/or other responsible adults needed to provide adequate supervision, including the need for any adults with specialised skills;
- management of the specific health needs or other needs for any child for the proposed activities;
- proposed duration of the excursion; and,
- items necessary for the excursion (e.g. mobile phone, first-aid kit, list of emergency contact numbers for children on the excursion).

Fathima and Diana





Out & About Update

Out and About Kinder has given us some wonderful opportunities to try new things. We have been behind the scenes at Woolworths, visited the local library to proudly deliver our NAIDOC week pompoms and participated in library story time. We have also visited a variety of primary schools. These experiences add to the children's experiences and we can build on them at home kinder.

Most importantly Out and About Kinder is about building and developing the children's play skills, language skills, social skills, imagination and creativity. We do this by building on familiar experiences with visits to familiar places. Familiar places require less of a mental load (children know the rules, boundaries and expectations and don't need to learn a new set each time), allowing the children to go deeply into their explorations as they build with sticks, look for insects, grind up rocks for paint, and talk, run and play with their friends, picking up their ideas where they left them previously.

Together, these elements of Out and About Kinder add richness to the children's experiences and learning as we connect with the community around us.

Kate, Andrea, Fathima, Nu, Sara, Monika and Carmel.



Bush Kinder Update

With the cooler weather, we have introduced a small campfire to our Bush Kinder sessions. We have supported the children in developing an awareness of fire safety and the children have demonstrated how to be safe around the fire. The children have enjoyed eating their snacks around the campfire together and also cooking on the fire. We have cooked potatoes, corn, damper and marshmallows, which have helped to warm us from the inside!

As the children build their familiarity and confidence at Bush Kinder we have also explored the Parklands further. Our walks have taken us along the creek, over waterfalls, down grassy slopes and along the stepping-stones. These walks give the children the opportunity to build their stamina and practise following group expectations.

Danielle, Heidi, Monika, Diana and Claire



Spanish Language Update

In Spanish there is a large concentration on rhythm, rhyme and repetition. This has been the centre of learning Spanish numbers using a simple song. Chanting its rhythm and rhyme has helped the children reinforce their number vocabulary and we have experimented with the song in many ways. For example, picking out a certain number in the song and jumping up when we hear it saying “arriba” (up) or “abajo” (down). Creating these fun experiences engage children in their learning. We played “La Oruga Contadora” (counting caterpillar) where children collect numbers 1 to 10 to build their own caterpillar. We chant our simple song to help identify what the number is and then predict what number comes next. **Repetition of sounds, rhythm and rhyme makes language increasingly understandable, memorable and fun.**

Later this term keep an eye out for our Spanish Family Library. Families will be able to borrow books for a week to share with their children at home. We hope this becomes a useful resource for the entire family to learn and enjoy Spanish together.



Fundraising and social news

Esther, Angela, Anthea and I would like to thank everyone who donated, came, partied and spent money at our Trivia Night! It was a huge success – amazing costumes, dancing, singing and extensive general knowledge were all on display. This was our first year at the Thornbury Bowls Club and it could become the new home for Trivia Night. A very special thanks to Kate McLennan for co-hosting, who was the cherry on top and kept everyone laughing all night long!

This term our in-house fundraising wiz, Clare, together with class reps are helping the children design a self-portrait that will be printed alongside their classmates onto tote bags. These totes will be perfect to carry library books, bathers and towel, toys, groceries and will also make perfect family Christmas presents!

Term 4 is going to be a cracker, so make sure you put these dates in your calendars.

- **Aver & Line** are doing the family photos on Sunday the 13th of October. Be sure to book your spot promptly as time slots are limited. \$15 from each order goes to our kinder.
- The afternoon of the 26th of October is our annual **Halloween Disco/Bake sale** at the Croxton Uniting Church on St Georges Rd. Dress up in your favourite spooky outfit and come ready for games, dancing, lucky dips and prizes. We would love help with this event: baking, selling cakes, helping decorate the hall, donating lucky dip items, packing up. Please contact fundraising@thornburykinder.com for more info or to put your name down to help.
- **Cherries** (or possibly mangoes) will be available to order again in Term 4. The cherries were delicious last year, so please consider purchasing them for end of year gifts and sell them to your friends, colleagues, rellies and neighbours – our kinder benefits directly from every box sold.
- And last but not least, our **End of Year Picnic** will be in December. This is not a fundraiser but just a nice way to end the year. Date TBC.

Thanks from the Fundraising Team
Phillipa, Esther, Anthea, Clare and Andrea



Noticeboard

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP): Invitation to parents/carers

As a service, Thornbury Kindergarten takes pride in our efforts to develop an increasing presence of Indigenous culture within our programs and curriculum. To continue to achieve this, we are working towards developing higher levels of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions.

This year we will be increasing our efforts by formalising our RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN (RAP) using the national platform: NARRAGUNNAWALI

This process will involve the following:

- Establishing a RAP working group
- Completing the reflections survey
- Writing a Vision for Reconciliation to the community
- Choosing 14 of the 39 RAP actions listed on the platform

If you would like to join this group, we would love to hear from you. You are encouraged to email Heidi at heidi@thornburykinder.com or phone the kinder on 9484 1095.

Anyone keen to join the Working Group will be sent an invitation via our NARRAGUNNAWALI platform.

Our aim is hold regular meetings throughout the remainder of the year and the first meeting for 2019 will be held on Wednesday the 21st August at 5pm.

We are hoping to put together a group of approximately 10 people, comprising staff, families and the wider community, including consultation with the Indigenous community.

<https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/raps/what-is-a-rap>

Grant success: Connecting Kids with Country

We are pleased to share that Thornbury Kinder has been successful in receiving a grant from Darebin Council to support our Connecting Kids with Country initiative.

We will be partnering with Uncle Trevor Gallagher – an Aboriginal Elder who specialises in teaching Indigenous traditions, history, culture and customs – to produce a series of fun and immersive sessions for staff, the kids and their families. These experiences will connect the kids to country through traditional song, dance, artefacts, ceremonies and nature.

We look forward to sharing more information with you about this exciting initiative in the coming weeks.

Family Diversity Information Session

At Thornbury Kindergarten every child is valued and respected. We work to make sure all families are welcome and included – but there's always more work to do in this area.

With that in mind, we're engaging in an exciting new project with Rainbow Families Victoria, funded by Darebin City Council. As part of the project, we'll be updating our resources, policies and procedures to make sure we continue to include and welcome children from families with sole parents, families with lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex and trans parents or



carers, and children with grandparents and extended family members who care for them, as well as many other diverse families.

We'd like to invite you to a free Parents and Carers Information Evening run by Rainbow Families.

Date: Thursday, 12 September

Time: 7.30 – 8.30 pm

Location: Thornbury Kinder (8C Newcastle Street, Thornbury) – Amethyst Room

At this adults-only session, you'll receive practical advice on how to talk to your kids about gender and family diversity. The evening is also an opportunity for parents and carers to find out more about our project, to ask questions, look at our new books and talk to staff.

Have a question?

We encourage you to ask questions anonymously via a question box that will appear in the foyer at kinder in the weeks leading up to the event. They'll be addressed by Rainbow Families.

RSVP

Please RSVP using the Try Booking link below, to enable us to set up for the session appropriately. We look forward to seeing you there!

<https://www.trybooking.com/BERRO>

Child Safety update

National Child Protection Week: 1st - 7th September

National Child Protection Week is coordinated by NAPCAN, starting on the first Sunday of September and the aim of the week is to engage members of the community in supporting families and protecting children. This year's theme aims to promote the messages:

- Kids do well when parents are supported;
- To raise thriving kids, parents need support to navigate life's choppy waters.

When we build stronger communities, we can create safer environments for children. What do you think makes a strong community for you and your family? How can we at Thornbury Kinder support our families and children to be a part of a strong community? This support can be as simple as bringing families together to build social connections or helping families to access additional services. If you feel that you or your child needs additional support, please don't hesitate to make contact with your child's teacher or our director, Angela.

We all have a role to play in protecting children from harm.



Kinder merchandise

Dressing for kinder is easy with kinder merchandise! T-shirts are \$15 each and come in red, blue, yellow, orange, purple, apple (light) green and olive (dark) green. They look great in kinder photos! Polar fleece jumpers (size 4 only, \$25) and windcheaters (size 6 only, \$20) are available in red or blue. Bucket hats are available in red or blue (\$10). Merchandise samples and order forms are located in each foyer. Completed forms and correct money should be placed in the fees box in each foyer.



Keeping in touch

Facebook



Please join the Thornbury Kindergarten Facebook page for information and updates. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/thornburykindergarten/>

