



February 2014

Dear Kindy Families,

A belated welcome to Largs North Kindy, 2014 is set to be an exciting year in our Kindy community. Although many of you have been members of our Kindy family over previous years, we welcome you back and say a special welcome to families who are joining us for the first time. A child's Kindy year is a special time, both for the child themselves and for the families...for many it will be a new experience, beyond their family circle, for some it will be the introduction of another safe place for them to extend themselves.

I would like to say a big thank you to the staff and families who have welcomed me. For me this is a 'homecoming' of sorts, as both of my children attended Largs North Kindy many years ago. I have been fortunate to have kept in touch with the Kindy over the years and am thrilled to be back, this time as a director.

We have had a great start to the year—not many tears and the children seem very settled and engaged. During the first weeks of any term, we spend time with the children talking about the ways of 'being' at Kindy that help to make it a safe and happy place to be in. The children are thinking hard about how to be great friends, how to care for our things and how to look after the Kindy space.

Kindy Session Times

Late last year Largs Bay School changed the start and finish times of their school days, which has significant impact on the loves of families who have children in both sites. It has been brought to the attention of the staff that the 3 p.m. finish at Kindy is also problematic for families with children at Semaphore Dominican.

As a short-term solution, we have changed our afternoon group literacy time to finish by 2:45 p.m., ensuring that this important group time is available to all full-day children and allowing families an opportunity to collect their children before heading off to the schools for pick up. We are operating with a 'flexible' pick up time between 2:45 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. which, although not ideal, will work throughout this term.

As mentioned, this is a short-term solution and we will be working with the community, through Governing Council, to develop a long-term solution that meets our community's needs.

Governing Council - Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of our Governing Council will be held on Wednesday 19th February at 7:15 p.m. The Governing Council ensures that parents, families and the community contribute to the decision making and running of the Kindergarten. We encourage you to consider joining the Governing Council, which meets twice a term, to share your ideas and perspectives to enhance the short and long-term goals of our centre.

Speech Pathologist, Sarah Adams will be presenting a talk about speech development, what is within developmental range and when to seek help.

Signing In

This year we are sending a strong message to our children, families and visitors that this is a place where literacy is very important. One of the most visible ways is our new 'sign in' sheets, which encourage children to write their own names. It has been wonderful to see the children signing their names each morning, and to see the different stages of 'mark making' that is evident.

If your child is not yet writing their own name, it is a significant achievement for them to even be recognising their own name amongst all of the others. Encourage them to attempt the first letter as a start.

Parking

A reminder to families that the area directly in front of the Kindy is a designated 'No Parking' zone. We have had a complaint from a watchful neighbour and would feel dreadful if a family was fined for parking in this area.

Kindy Photos

Our group photos are scheduled for Wednesday, 19th March. If your child's Kindy day is not a Wednesday, we encourage you to bring them along for the photo and will advise you of a 'window' of time in which the photos will be taken. We will provide more details closer to the time.

Sun Safety

The children coped very well with the extreme heat of last week, choosing to potter around in the shaded areas of the Kindy, enjoying the water play experiences offered. A number of parents enquired about the forecast temperature at which our centre would be closed. As our centre is air conditioned, we do not have a closure clause in our Hot Weather Policy. The 'Hot Weather Policy' is available for families on our website at <http://largsnthkgn.sa.edu.au>

Please ensure that your child has a shady hat, preferably a bucket hat with a brim rather than a cap. We ask that families apply sunscreen before bringing your child to Kindy and staff reapply sunscreen at lunchtime to ensure delicate skin is protected. Our 'Sun Safe Policy' is also available on our website.

Spare Clothing

Sometimes children become distracted by their play and have accidents, sometimes we offer wet or messy experiences, including our marvellous mud pit! Please ensure your child has a full set of spare clothes to change into in their bag so we can ensure they are comfortable.

Lost Property

Please ensure that your child has a hat to wear and that it is labelled with their name. We do have a lost property box, where we put items of clothing that we find, but if the hat or clothing is labelled, we put it into your child's pocket.

Library Books and Literacy Packs

Early literacy experiences enjoyed with family members makes a huge difference in a child's reading and writing development throughout life. I once heard Mem Fox quote a study that found that if a four-year-old child knew just four nursery rhymes, they were most likely going to be in the top reading group at age eight. Four nursery rhymes seem such a few, but it is evidence of the power of repetition of familiar rhymes and stories.

All of our library books are for borrowing and we have great range of literacy take-home kits as well. Please see a staff member, if you are unsure of how to record your borrowing.

Snacks

We encourage healthy eating in our centre but won't stop your child eating what you have packed for them for snacks. We do encourage the children to eat the healthiest part of their snack first, such as the fruit before the muffin. Some of the children have brought in fruit muffins they have baked with their families this week. Cooking provides wonderful opportunities to explore maths, science, language and discuss where ingredients come from.

We ask that there are no nut products in lunch boxes as we have several children with nut allergies. This includes Nutella, peanut butter and many other foods, particularly muesli bars.

School Dental Service

A new children's dental benefits schedule for 2-17 year olds started in January 2014. It is called the Child Dental Benefit Schedule.

The School Dental Service is a Child Dental Benefits Schedule provider and welcomes babies, children and young people under 18 years. Dental care is FREE for most children and the School Dental Service will bulk-bill Medicare. Our local School Dental Service is at Le Fevre Primary School.

Children who do not qualify for the Child Dental Benefits Schedule can still attend but a small fee may apply for each course of general dental care provided.

To find out more about the Child Dental Benefits Schedule visit the website at www.sadental.sa.gov.au

We hope this newsletter finds you all well and settling into the routines of the 'school' year. Please don't hesitate to ask the staff team if you have any queries or concerns.

Warm wishes,

Bev, Cheryl, Dannielle, Liz and Louise