

Welcome to Aspley East

REFLECTING ON THE SPIRIT OF HARMONY DAY— “EVERYONE BELONGS”

As we approach the end of the first term at Aspley East Kindy, I trust that you have all enjoyed the beginning of this exciting new adventure with your child. As we head towards the first break for the year I would like to take a moment to reflect upon what we have achieved at kindy in this first term of the year.

The celebration of Harmony Day on 21st March was a significant moment for us this term and has stimulated much discussion amongst the teachers about the Harmony Day values of belonging and respect. Last year during the Quality Improvement process, the staff identified that we would like to improve upon our ‘cultural competence’ that is, our ability to develop a kindergarten that embraces and reflects the diverse families that make up our local community. For us, this means not just celebrating special days (although we do enjoy this!), but more deeply, it means connecting with the experiences and daily lives of others in our community. On page 5 you will find an article about how we are trying to achieve this goal.

You would remember from our harmony day celebrations how the staff here believe culture to be held by everyone and enacted in many different ways in different families. We know that children’s educational outcomes are enhanced when they see, hear and feel their culture and ways of living reflected at kindy. When we ask parents to contribute, thoughts, feelings and information about the way that you do things in your family, it is because we use this information to better understand your child and to enhance their learning. When children see their family, their ways and their language when they come to kindergarten, they receive a message of acceptance, of collaboration....of harmony. Research shows that meaningful partnerships between educators and families results in enhanced early learning and wellbeing, increased parent and educator capacity to promote learning and increased job satisfaction for educators (Child Australia, 2011).

In an ever changing and increasingly global world with many difficulties and challenges to face, this generation of children will need to use their understanding, empathy and sense of tolerance to work together for a sustainable planet and hopefully, for a peaceful world.

Stephen Covey wisely told us that as people our ‘strengths lie in our differences, not in similarities’.

The Harmony Day message encourages us to ‘wander through the pages of each other’s story, it’s a way we can learn and understand’

From all of the staff at Aspley East we hope that you have a safe and relaxing Easter break and return ready for a fun filled and fantastic term 2 at Aspley East Kindy!

Marie White—Centre Director



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DATE CLAIMER

- **Committee Meeting**
22nd April 2014 7:15pm
- **Fees Due**
Friday 2nd May
- **Kindy Photos**
Wednesday 14th and Friday 16th
May
- **Grandparents and Special Friends day**
Tuesday 20th May
Thursday 22nd May
- **Last Day of Term**
Wednesday 2nd April (M/T/W)
Friday 4th April (Th/Fr)
- **PUBLIC HOLIDAY**
Monday 21st April (Easter Monday)
Friday 25th April (Anzac Day)
- **Working bee**
Saturday 17th May



IN THE NEWS

Technology is a vital part of our lives these days and technology use is now an expected part of teaching practice from kindergarten right through to high school and beyond. The uses, values and impacts of technology use are of great interest to both scholars and the general public alike.

A very well respected researcher at the Queensland University of Technology, Professor Susan Danby is currently completing some research into chil-

dren's use of technology and is conducting a research study investigating 'parent experiences and perceptions of the use of technology in early childhood'.

An opportunity has become available for parents to participate in this study by completing an [online survey](#). Your ideas, perspectives or questions are valued and would be much appreciated for this very interesting and timely study!

KINDY CULTURE

In the last newsletter, we wrote about the way in which we establish our culture, our rules and our expectations with new groups of children. This is an ongoing task and one which we revisit often throughout the year.

Something that the staff hold as very important and you will notice in the programs here at Aspley East is our belief in the importance of relationships to learning. Since we know how important relationships are to learning, we need to focus a significant part of our curriculum on the development of social/emotional skills. Without social emotional skills, children cannot learn as effectively and cannot make the most of their learning.

The difficulty with this type of teaching/learning is that it can be difficult to spot. You won't see this type of teaching displayed on a poster of letters or numbers and you will likely not see it in the daily slide show, but if you look and listen closely, you will see and feel it. When teachers spend time helping two children to solve a problem or when teachers plan to incorporate a particular game into the program in order to help the children learn to take a turn, we are increasing their social and emotional development. Creating a positive, warm and supportive learning environment also allows children to feel safe and to function to the best of their ability.

It makes sense then, that if social emotional skills help children to access their learning more readily and successfully, that the development of these skills significantly predominates in the teaching and learning program. Sometimes there is an assumption that the type of academic learning that occurs in school has little correlation with one's emotions or the social environment. Neuroscience has helped us to understand that this assumption is mistaken. We now know that there are direct links between emotions and learning. The same research has also demonstrated that systematic teaching of social emotional skills paves the way for better academic learning.

During term 2, the teachers at AEK will meet with the prep teachers from Aspley East State School. We will also be using this opportunity to discuss children's social/emotional development and wellbeing. We want to discuss how the children are coping with the social demands of a school environment, compare our teaching strategies and come up with creative ideas to enhance children's growth in these areas. The prep teachers offer unique insights for us into the skills that help children to succeed at school. We also offer unique insights into the ways in which we meet learning outcomes through play based learning programs. We are looking forward to this opportunity and will report to parents in the next newsletter any relevant information we have shared.

AT ASPLEY EAST...

WE DO PLEASE

WE DO THANK YOU

WE DO I'M SORRY

WE DO HUGS

WE DO LAUGHTER

WE DO RESPECT

WE DO MISTAKES

WE DO HAPPINESS

WE DO PEACE

WE DO GROWING

WE DO FRIENDSHIP

WE DO HELPING

WE DO CARING

WE DO KINDNESS

WE DO LEARNING

WE ARE FAMILY

*In the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter, and sharing of pleasures.
For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.*

Khalil Gibran

DID YOU KNOW?

- ◇ That laughter really is contagious? According to David Goleman, author of “Emotional Intelligence”, glee spreads so readily because our brains are built on open-loop circuits designed for detecting smiles and laughter that makes us laugh in response.
 - ◇ Humour, laughter and playfulness stimulate creativity, communication and trust (even though our games and songs might seem purely frivolous, they serve a much deeper purpose!). Laughter even stimulates physical health such as strengthening the immune system, boosting energy, diminishing pain and reducing stress).
 - ◇ Laughter benefits children’s social skills as it strengthens relationships, enhances teamwork, defuses conflict and attracts others to us.
- So.....have a good laugh as often as possible!

Our C&K Curriculum also says that **Shared understandings occur when:**

- there is belief in all children
- there is enjoyment and engagement in the learning process
- achievements are celebrated
-

Children are learning to demonstrate joy, interest and involvement in learning **with and alongside adults who** demonstrate intent in progressing children’s onward learning journey **in living and learning environments that** are dynamic, engaging and open to many possibilities. **Families** are informed about their child’s learning and achievements.

BORROWING LIBRARY

Did you know that the kindergarten provides a borrowing library for families to access?

You can borrow books from the library at any time.

There are a range of books that are updated each term and include both children’s literature and books for adults.

On the top of the book shelf there is a little box with a pocket for each family, please record books borrowed on your tab.

QUT STUDENTS

In term 2, Aspley East Kindergarten will host two students from Queensland University of Technology who are completing their first field experience as a part of the four year Bachelor of Early Childhood degree. It is a pleasure to host students and to assist in their learning journey. The children also enjoy having visitors and benefit from the ideas and innovations in education that students bring.

Hannah will be working in Emily’s class across the week and Katie will be working across the week in both Debbie and Marie’s class.

Please help Hannah and Katie feel welcome at Aspley East Kindy on their first days which will be Tuesday 22nd April and Thursday 24th April 2014.

ASPLEY EAST STAFF

MARIE WHITE

DIRECTOR/TEACHER

UNIT 1—THURS/FRI

DEBBIE QUIG

TEACHER

UNIT 1—MON/TUES/ ALT WED

SUE PEARSON

ASSISTANT

UNIT 1—MON/TUES/ALT WED

EMILY CLARK

TEACHER

UNIT 2—MON—FRI

PETA BAHRE

ASSISTANT

UNIT 2—MON/TUES/ALT WED

NICOLE HOMEWOOD

ASSISTANT

UNIT 1—THURS/FRI

JENNY KNIGHT

ASSISTANT

UNIT 2—THURS/FRI

HELEN HUMPHRIES

ADMINISTRATION

MON/TUES/THURS/FRI

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANTS

CHERIE DUX

MON/TUES/ALT WED/THURS/FRI

Inclusion @ Aspley East

At Aspley East we practice a philosophy of inclusion. Inclusion at AEK means that everyone no matter their ability, gender or social circumstance are supported to engage fully in the educational program.

We feel that inclusion is not only important for children's learning, but is in fact a right of all participants in the community. We feel that the values of inclusion support strong attitudes of tolerance, kindness and respect.

Our kindergarten practices inclusion for all children, but especially for those who face challenges in their learning journey either due to disability, learning delays or difficult life circumstances.

Within the programs, inclusion is not just about allowing those with the above challenges to be here, but is much deeper and involves taking measures to support full participation.

Some examples of what this might look like are:

- Teaching sign language to the whole class to facilitate communication with a child who signs
- Purchasing toys and equipment that allow participation by anyone regardless of ability.

- Teaching children important values of inclusion: respect, support, tolerance, kindness, compassion etc.
- Teaching children about diversity in the world around them and promoting difference as a value, rather than something to be scared of.

What can parents do?

At Aspley East we feel that it is important to discuss difference openly and honestly with children, not to highlight how different those, for example, with disabilities are, but to recognise that we are really more the same than we are different. Some people just need a little extra support in order to do the same things that most children are able to do with no difficulty.

We take a very responsive approach to children's difficult questions about disability and difference and try to answer them honestly and openly (within their developmental level and ability to understand). Follow this link for a great article which explains how you can [respond to children's questions about difference](#).

Please find below a heartfelt story written by Nyleta McRae (mother of C in Unit 1 Th/Fri).

Fragile X and C

My name is Nyleta and I am the mother to three children, two of which have Fragile X.

Fragile X is an inherited genetic syndrome that can be passed down from either parent. Prior to having children I was not aware that I have permutation Fragile X, meaning that I have a 50/50 chance of passing Fragile X on every time I get pregnant. There are also a range of symptoms that can affect permutation carriers.

C struggled from the day he was born with feeding and severe reflux, but it wasn't until he was 18 months old and not meeting milestones that we found a special clinic to have him assessed. After months on the waiting list, assessments and blood tests the results came back. He was diagnosed as Autistic and Fragile X. Fragile X is the leading genetic cause of autism and about 1/3 of FX kids have it.

As a result of his Fragile X C has an intellectual disability, some low muscle tone, Autism, speech delays and sensory sensitivity. He can find large groups of people and unfamiliar places very difficult to cope with and is not great with transitioning between different activities.

On the plus side he has an excellent memory, is very inquisitive, fantastic problem solving skills (which make C-proofing the house very challenging) and a sunny disposition and is very affectionate and loving. If you can get him to focus he is very good at following instructions and completing tasks and he does love to be praised when he does things. At home he likes to help with housework and in the kitchen, where he likes to load the dishwasher, help with cooking and generally be part of every activity.

C's endless energy and happy personality make him both a challenge and a joy to live with. We are lucky to have him.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AT ASPLEY EAST

If you read the section in the last newsletter, you would be familiar with the National Quality Framework and would be aware that Aspley East Kindy has been assessed and determined to be 'Exceeding' the National Quality Standard. If you would like to find out more about the NQS follow this [link](#). Such an outstanding outcome is the result of the commitment of all staff to continuous improvement and development. As a result of our assessment, we will be taking some time this year to review our Quality Improvement Plan in order to continuously strive for excellence and innovation in our practice. One area that we particularly want to focus on is family, culture and community which relates to Quality Area 6: Families and Community.

In the area of Families and Community we identified a common desire to increase our cultural awareness and make even more links with our local community. Our first community dinner for the year is just one way in which to provide a beautiful opportunity for the centre to meet as a whole, to get to know others in the community. We would love to hear from families who might be able to help us to link with the community in other ways. Here are just a few questions that might get you thinking:

Any family members with particular talents? Any links through work to organisations of interest for learning? Anyone who loves to read and could read to small groups of children? Anyone who loves cooking? When the learning environment reflects the richness of the people who make it up, learning will inevitably be more meaningful for the children so please let us know if you would like to become involved in any way.

Please follow this link to see a quick video clip about [Quality Area 6](#)

ACTIVITIES OF THE FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

You would remember that at the beginning of the year we called for volunteers to make a fundraising committee to support the kindergarten's efforts to raise funds for kindy projects, activities and resources for the children.

We now have a small group of mums who have generously offered their commitment to supporting our fundraising efforts this year. The fundraising committee members are:

Marie White (Kindy Director)

Tania Vico (MTW mum of Unit 2)

Serena Ford (TF mum of Unit 1)

Jane Sharry (MTW mum of Unit 2)

Liz Dillon (TH mum of Unit 1)

Rachelle Grant (MTW mum of unit 1)

If you are interested in joining the committee or helping out in any way please see Marie. For those who cannot make it to meetings of the committee due to work commitments, but are interested in being involved, we are happy to keep people in the loop via email.

You recently received a newsletter about the Bunnings BBQ fundraiser courtesy of the fundraising committee. It is a big effort to organise this event and we are very excited about this great opportunity to raise funds, please throw your support behind the efforts of the committee if and when you can.

Hoping to see lots of you there at:

Bunnings Carseldine on Monday 21st April from 9am

A very big thanks to families for your incredibly generous donations to the fundraising effort, there are too many to mention individually but trust that we so very much appreciate your support of our kindy!

A special thanks to those in the wider community who have also offered support. **Amanda Cooper** (Councillor for Bracken Ridge) provided a Coles voucher to purchase items for the BBQ and local business **Warburton Butcher** who is supplying the sausage order and also gave a voucher to put towards the purchase of same. <http://www.warbys.net.au/>

Following on from the Bunnings BBQ will be our next big yearly kindy event, the KINDY DISCO. This is a very highly anticipated event and usually is accompanied by a BBQ dinner.

The kindy disco will be held on:

Friday 25th July.



HELPING OUT AT KINDY

BOOK CLUB

Thanks to all those families who have already supported our kindy book club with orders for first term. Each time parents make orders, the kindy receives a percentage of these sales to spend on books for kindy. From this first order we already have \$77 to spend on new books!

A special thanks goes to Rhonwen Corbett (Unit 2 Mon-Wed parent) who has volunteered to be the book club co-ordinator for 2014.

We are so delighted with the many generous offers of goods, services and time from parents so far this year. As a community organisation our success relies upon the support from our community which is our children, staff and families.

On the sign in desk you will notice a folder called "community responsibilities and jobs roster". This folder is a 'one stop shop' for things that need doing around the kindy and ways to be involved at kindy. In this folder you will find information about the kindy, job rosters that you can sign up for, working bee sign up lists and parent roster sign up. For many families, it is difficult to make it to weekend working bees or to attend the kindy during the week due to work and other family commitments. This folder will be a place where you can hopefully find things that fit in with your schedule (you don't need to sign up for a regular job, you might just like to water the plants for us every now and then or cover some library books if you get a spare moment).

We hope to use this folder and the lists available to be able to strike a balance between keeping the kindy maintained and recognising the very busy nature of family and work lives.

Are you accessing Kindy Portal yet? Did you know that all of the program information and activities at kindy are recorded digitally via Kindy Portal? If you have lost your password, please ask your child's teacher to send you another invite to join.

Policies....

With the cooler weather beginning to creep in and an early start to the flu season, please read on to find some snippets from the C&K Policy regarding illness and exclusion:

The less contact there is between people who have an infectious disease or illness and people who are at risk of catching it, including those who have not been vaccinated, the less chance there is of the disease or illness spreading. Excluding sick children, educators, and those who have not been immunised, is an effective way to prevent and reduce the risks from the transmission of illnesses and infectious diseases while children are in C&K's care and C&K personnel are working at C&K.

For these reasons, education and care services, work health and safety and public health laws impose strict obligations on parents / guardians, C&K services, educators and others to take particular precautions, such as excluding children from C&K services, to prevent the spread of contagious illnesses.

If a child is unwell, they should not attend at a C&K service, even if they do not have a condition that requires exclusion. It is in the child's best interests that they remain in the comfort of their own home being cared for by their parent / guardian or another close family member.

Parents / guardians are required to advise the C&K service immediately where the child has, or is suspected by the child's parent / guardian, registered medical practitioner or the C&K service of having, an infectious illness or disease.

As most of you would already be well aware, illness spreads very quickly and easily amongst children in groups. If your child is at all unwell or seems to be coming down with an illness, please keep them at home in order to help us to have a healthy, happy kindy this winter season.

The full policy can be located on the shelf outside Helen's office.

C&K ASPLEY EAST KINDERGARTEN

12 Clorane Street Aspley, 4034

Phone: 3263 3292

Email:
admin@aspleyeastkindy.com.au

Teacher Emails:

DQuig@aspleyeastkindy.com.au
EClark@aspleyeastkindy.com.au
MWhite@aspleyeastkindy.com.au

www.candk.asn.au/aspleyeast



QPAC and Andrew Kay in association with KW & NB Ltd present

WE'RE GOING ON A BEAR HUNT

Adapted from the picture book written by Michael Rosen and Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury

LIVE ON STAGE!

The classic award-winning book comes to life vividly and noisily in a hugely innovative, fun-filled stage adaptation direct from London's West End.

Expect a quirky musical score with ridiculously catchy songs, laughter, rhythms, rhymes and repetitions paired with participatory scenes and plenty of mischievous adventure!

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|-------------------|--|
| Dates | 5 – 17 April 2014 (April school holidays) |
| Show Times | 10am and 12pm 7 – 17 April Additional 2pm shows 5 and 14 – 17 April |
| Duration | 55 minutes (no interval) |
| Venue | Cremorne Theatre QPAC |
| Price | School groups of 10+ \$30.90/pp* 1 free ticket per group of 10 |
| Bookings | Reserve seats for your group today! Contact QPAC Group Sales on 07 3840 7466 or groups@qpac.com.au |

Teachers Resources

Download the education pack at
qpac.com.au/event/bear_hunt_14



*a \$14 transaction fee applies to school group bookings. To unsubscribe from this email, reply with 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.
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QPAC: Cnr Grey & Melbourne Streets | PO Box 3567 South Bank QLD 4101 | T 07 3840 7444 | F 07 3844 1839

Click [here](#) for links to other great school holiday activities happening in Brisbane