



Listening to children...

Recently some of the teachers attended a seminar with an American progressive early childhood educator by the name of Tom Hudson (or as he is most famously known "[Teacher Tom](#)"). The seminar was titled "Speaking with children so they can think".

Tom began the seminar by asking us to think about the ways in which we played in childhood and the experiences that were most significant. For most people, free play, family and holidays were most memorable, whilst school was a 'background memory'. This has prompted much discussion amongst teachers about the ways in which children play at kindy and the types of opportunities we afford the children in our care. Tom spoke of the place of schooling in modern life and the way in which schooling (in his opinion) has become 'the centre-piece of childhood' and the dominant presence in the lives of children. Tom pondered about how this has come to be and challenged us to ask ourselves: Why don't we think about schooling a little more broadly and consider the wider education of children....education in life skills, education in family life, education in play skills etc. Maybe if considered that education can and does happen everywhere, then we might allow children just a little more time to play freely, without pressure or worry about the next upcoming thing.

Tom spoke of the "Golden Age of Childhood" in which free play (in the street/parks and local community) was usually unsupervised, lasting for many hours per day. He spoke about the incredible depth of learning that children gain from these hours of free play. Just a few of these are: negotiation skills (figuring out which game to play, who can play and how to play it), problem solving skills, safety skills, resilience (facing difficulties) and regulatory skills (waiting for a turn, sharing resources).

Teachers and parents are often concerned about children's lack of resilience, of ability to 'amuse themselves' and to get along harmoniously with others. Tom asked us to think about how children can gain these skills when their play is often so restricted or organised by adults. We have tended to become so risk averse that we don't allow children to play how we used to play. Another educator Niki Buchan has written a thought provoking [blog article](#) about the place of risk in life.

We wonder about this at kindy everyday. Sometimes we get caught up in the rush of daily life constantly moving the children along to the next thing (morning tea, group times, rest times), rather than giving them the time and space to engage deeply, explore broadly and play joyfully. We need to remind ourselves of the importance of being in the here and now and enjoying the moments that come and go so quickly everyday.

Hope you enjoy pondering these questions and enjoy the rest of this issue :)



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DATE CLAIMER

• Committee Meeting

Monday 15th September

• Fees Due

Friday 17th October

• Last Day of Term

Wednesday 17th September (M/T/W)

Friday 19th September (Th/Fr)

• PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Monday 6th October (Labour Day)

• Working bee

Saturday 22nd November 2014
(Thursday/Friday Families)

Don't forget some important kindy events:

Excursion to Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary

9th and 12th September

Dr Joe's Science Show

15th and 17th October

IN THE NEWS



As you might remember from the previous newsletter, the kindergarten has been meeting with local member Tracy Davis MP and representatives from the Office of Early Childhood. This meeting represented a continuation of interactions held with Minister Davis over the last 18 months.

The most recent meeting was held in July and was the first official meeting of what is now called a 'Regional Panel for Early Childhood Inclusion'. We were delighted to have in attendance staff from C&K central, C&K Kindergartens, Gowrie Kindergartens and members from the Office of Early Childhood.

After a number of years of planning, it was very exciting to hold this first meeting in which representatives discussed the ways in which children and families with diverse needs are included in our educational communities.

Along with a celebration of good practice in services, there was a significant focus upon the barriers presented by policy, regulation and funding parameters.

The group will now work towards developing terms of reference, codes of conduct and a future plan for action. If you are interested in this area or would like to be more informed about the actions of this group, please have a chat with Marie.

Special thanks to past parent Doug Hawkes who has tirelessly worked to support the kindergarten in the progression of these meetings and also to Nyleta McRae (current parent) for her invaluable input and personal insight in contributing to our joint understandings of this issue.

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

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KINDY CULTURE

In the last newsletter, we wrote about the ways in which we develop and establish relationships with and between the children at kindy. We spoke about the importance of relationships and an attitude of care and empathy for others...

We teach the children these Aspley East Kindy values in the process of everyday life and happenings at the kindy. It might be as simple as asking a child to help another open their lunchbox or to comfort someone who misses their parent.

These are all useful strategies that enhance the children's social/emotional skills and make the kindergarten a beautiful place to learn and be together! We also feel that it is really important that children see these skills put into practice in their community and as such we make efforts to embed experiences of caring for others in our local community.

Some of the things that we might do are: welcoming visitors, offering help to families in need or sharing resources with others.

One of our families in the centre donates time each month to a community group which has as its focus supporting others in need in the local community. Each month Kate Edmonds (Unit 1—Thursday/Friday group mother) gets together with a group of others whose common purpose is to give to the community.

Sometimes they gather products to deliver to those in need and sometimes they gather food.

This month they will be collecting food goods to make up into hampers for delivery to a range of people/families in need.

We are asking the Aspley East Community to get behind the wonderful work that Kate is doing for our local community and make any donations that you can manage.

Items that will be gathered this month are:

-Home cooked frozen meals

-Packaged snack foods or treats

-Chocolates

-Packets of sweet biscuits

Please no tinned food or perishables.

This is a great opportunity for children to experience the pleasure of giving to others and making a contribution to their local community and those in need.

If you would like to take this opportunity and get behind the work that Kate is doing, please bring donations to the office during the month of **SEPTEMBER**.

Garden Mornings

Thank you for making our most recent Spring Community Garden Morning a success.

It was a rewarding experience for the children to not only share their special place with their visitors but to also share their visitors with their friends. Grandparents have a very special role in children's lives and to share their wisdom with our kindy makes for a very special day!

We are looking forward to seeing the development of our newly planted gardens over the course of Spring and will hopefully get some lemons and figs on our fruit trees this season.

Donations of plants (non-toxic), seeds or pots are always appreciated and help us to keep the kindy garden flourishing. We are currently seeking unwanted ceramic or terracotta pots for us to plant up some ferns to 'green up' the patio where the children eat lunch everyday. If anyone has items like this at home that are no longer wanted we would love to give them a new home!

Child Protection Week

Child Protection week is from 7-13th September 2014.

Child Protection is an important element of our responsibility at Aspley East, not only for the teachers but for all community members.

From the QLD Child Protection Website:

Child protection is everyone's business. Responsibility lies with adults in our community to keep children safe from harm. **Listening to children and young people is the most important way to assist their safety and well-being.** If a child tells you they are being hurt, please seek help for them.

All members of our community need to make child protection their business and play a part in ensuring children are nurtured and safe.

Keep your eyes peeled for some family information on the kindy website during this week.

In the classrooms the teachers will be discussing protective behaviours with children. This will include ways to keep your body safe

There are events being held all over QLD in which information about child protection will be shared, find out more on the website

<http://childprotectionweek.org.au/calendar-2/>

BUILDING FUND

A very big thanks to families for their generous donations to the building fund so far this year. You can still contribute to the fund at any time and all contributions are tax deductible. Thanks to the donations of families this year and years past, we have recently been able to fund the installation of new air conditioning units in the kindy. This was a much needed upgrade and we are so grateful for your support!

Christmas Toy Catalogues

Each year we offer families the opportunity to purchase toys from some of the toy manufacturers that make many of our kindergarten resources.

This is run as a fundraiser with the kindergarten receiving a percentage of sales as vouchers to spend on new resources. In the past we have been able to purchase fantastic new resources such as puzzles, blocks and outdoor toys for the kindergarten.

Catalogues have been distributed via your communication file.

PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Please remember that the playground is **CLOSED** after kindy hours. Please ensure that your children are aware of this important safety rule.

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

School Readiness

Some schools are already beginning the enrolment process for prep 2014 so it seems pertinent to open some discussion about what Aspley East Kindy means when *we* talk about school readiness. This term means different things to different people and is inevitably a reflection of values. In the following dot points you will find just a few examples of the types of questions that we might ask when considering if a child is ready to make the transition to school. These questions reflect the values that we consider as important within our learning community.

- ◆ Can they get along with others, recognise feelings of self and others, wait for a turn, cope with changes in the day, say goodbye most mornings to a parent, cope with set backs?
- ◆ Can they complete tasks by themselves, solve problems, know how to get help, toilet independently, care for own belongings and manage food?
- ◆ Can they concentrate on a task, follow instructions, form own ideas and follow through on plans, share thinking with others using complex language?
- ◆ Are they confident, creative and innovative in their thinking, can they resource their own learning and adapt their ideas to incorporate the ideas of others?

Education is not preparation for life, education is life itself—John Dewey

Literacy and numeracy are also important skills for life success and teachers closely monitor each child’s development of these skills throughout the kindy year. There is a wide amount of variance in typical development in these areas and a very wide range of ‘normal’ development. Foundational skills in these areas are taught using a play and child-responsive approach at Aspley East. When meeting with the prep teachers from St Dymphna’s and Aspley East State School recently, we were reassured to hear glowing reports of the preparedness of the children coming from Aspley East. The teachers also wished for us to convey to families that children are NOT expected to be able to write, read or deal with written numbers BEFORE going to prep. One of the teachers reiterated to us that ‘this is what they come to prep for!’ The teachers also reiterated their understanding of the importance of play in both the kindergarten and prep years and all teachers shared our methods for incorporating numeracy within play.

For some thought provoking ideas regarding the concept of ‘school readiness’ there is a great article on the [blog site](#) of Tom Hudson (Teacher Tom). The article is called “Falling Behind” and was posted on 14th August 2014.

For a quick reference, please find here a simple checklist of indicators for parents to help make the decision about if your child is ready for the [transition](#) to prep. Please be aware that the teachers are always available for meetings before or after kindy if you would like to discuss your child’s progress in more depth.

DISCO

Thank you to everyone for your efforts to make the kindy disco a huge success and a fantastic night. Some special thanks need to go to those who contributed to the preparation of the event:

To the staff who worked tirelessly on Friday to move furniture and prepare the kindy...

To the committee members who helped with all the preparation and organisation...

To the parents who came early and stayed late to help set up and pack up....

To the DJ (who is a past kindy parent) for his continuing dedication to our kindy community...

In recognition of the significant contribution that families made to the Bunnings BBQ earlier in the year, it was decided that this year the kindy would charge a lower entry fee to cover the costs of running the disco only (rather than run it as a fundraising opportunity). We hope that you all had a great time at the disco!

The next kindy fundraising event will be the **Kindy Tea Towel drive**. Every year the children create beautiful self portraits which are printed onto tea towels which are sold to families. These are a beautiful memento of your kindy year and is a great fundraiser also. Keep your eyes out for an order form in your communication file soon.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

As you may be aware, Aspley East Kindergarten was assessed under the National Quality Standards which are a part of the National Quality Framework for Australia (guiding practice in the education and care of children from birth—13 years old). Aspley East Kindergarten achieved an outstanding result with an overall rating of “Exceeding the National Quality Standard”. Services are due to be assessed once every three years so in 2015 the centre will be due to undergo another round of assessment.

The National Quality Standard (NQS) is a key aspect of the NQF. The NQS consists of seven quality areas, each containing standards and elements, that children's education and care services are assessed and rated against.

The seven quality areas covered by the National Quality Standard are:

1. Educational program and practice
2. Children's health and safety

3. Physical environment
4. Staffing arrangements
5. Relationships with children
6. Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
7. Leadership and service management

The kindy staff have been working on developing Quality Area 6 over the course of the last year and looking for ways in which to continually improve our engagement with our community.

If you have any feedback or ideas that you would like to share with us, please feel free to email Marie.

If you have any ideas for how else we might engage with the local Aspley community or if you or your family members might like to contribute some knowledge, please let us know.

SPOTLIGHT ON A STAFF MEMBER...

Kindy Website

Have you had a chance to have a look at the kindy website yet? We would love some more feedback from parents and please mention our website when chatting to family or friends about the kindy.

We are hoping to continue developing the site over time and it will be an important place to go not only for daily information about things happening at the kindy but also for updates about our upcoming 50th Anniversary in 2016!

Did you know that you can subscribe to the site so that you can receive updates via email when new information is loaded onto the site.

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Since families attend Aspley East Kindy for only part of every week, you usually only get to see half of the total staff. In this section we hope to introduce you over time to all of the fabulous staff that work at the kindergarten. Aspley East Kindy is very lucky to have a diverse staff with different skill sets, qualifications, life experiences and interests.

Debbie Quig is now the longest serving staff member of Aspley East Kindergarten with 2014 being her 15th year here!

Did you know?

- Debbie has been married 23 years and have two beautiful daughters aged 20 and 17.

- Debbie enjoys walking, reading, cross-stitch, researching family history and spending time with family.

Debbie has made some reflections on her time at Aspley East so far...

It is a privilege and honour to have worked within the Aspley East community for 14.5 years, working collaboratively with dedicated professionals, parents, and young children alike. When I come to work each day I am surrounded by caring, friendly people and I am greeted with hugs and excitement by the children. A happy, smiling child can create such joy - and really make your heart sing! For me, it is not only the education of young children that is at the core of what we do, but the relationships we form with each and every person within our community that makes Aspley East such a special place - and a great environment in which to work!

Policies....

Asthma and Anaphylaxis

Did you know that when enrolling in a C&K service, all community members including teachers and families have a responsibility to ensure that children with medical conditions and allergies remain safe?

In regards to food allergies, please remember that we have children with the following life threatening food allergies in our service:

Nuts

Eggs

Contact with these products can cause life threatening allergic reactions for those children who are

affected.

Please remain vigilant with the preparation of your child's food for kindy and let anyone else who is likely to prepare food for your child.

Did you know that there has been some very recent developments in the field of research relating to the causes of conditions such as asthma and anaphylaxis.

The Asthma Foundation NSW website have published reviews of this exciting research. You can find it at: <http://www.asthmaaustralia.org.au/>

A MUST SEE EXHIBITION FOR ANY LION KING FAN!

The Art of The Lion King Exhibition at the Tony Gould Gallery at QPAC provides a rare glimpse behind the scenes of The Lion King and its journey from movie to stage production. Brisbane is the first Australian city to host the exhibition which includes set models, drawings, character scale models and original costumes. There are also panels depicting different aspects of production and a video presentation of interviews with key creative artists.

THE LION KING EXHIBITION IN BRISBANE – ESSENTIAL INFO

This exhibition is open to the public from Tuesday 5th August 2014. A closure date has not yet been set, however The Lion King musical will be showing in Brisbane until late January 2015. We will update these date as the information is made available.

Opening Times: Tuesday to Saturday 10am – 4pm

Admission: Free

Location: Tony Gould Gallery, at the entrance of the Cremorne Theatre, QPAC, South Bank.

For more information, click [here](#) or visit the Brisbane Kids [Event Calendar](#).



It's Brisbane Festival time again from the 6th—27th September. This year there are some fantastic family packages available, check it out at

<http://www.brisbanefestival.com.au/whats-on?genre=family>

Brochures are also available on top of the lockers at kindy.

