

Newsletter

22nd February 2022 Term 1 — Week 4

Dear families,

We have been really impressed with the development of children's independence since the beginning of the term. While some morning drop-offs will be challenging at times, children are beginning to demonstrate higher levels of resilience as they form trusting relationships with their teachers and peers. This will develop more and more throughout the course of the year, with encouraging support from the adults in their lives. What a great start! Feel free to catch us for a quick update on how your child is settling in at drop off or pick up time.

Aboriginal Education

Have you noticed our bush-tucker garden, up near the shed? In 2021, Kurna elder Uncle Tamaru, children and the teachers planned and landscaped this area. There are temporary signs in place with "eating" symbols indicating to the children the plants that are edible. We also have other bush tucker plants in other garden beds with "eating" signs, as well as our European vegetables growing up near the water tanks. Late last year, we commissioned a local Kurna artist Allan Sumner to digitally create the mural that is on the wall opposite the children's lockers. We asked Allan to include creatures and plants that children would see regularly in our area of the Mount Lofty Ranges and our Wirra. It's been fantastic to see children looking at the mural and engaging their families, teachers and other children by talking about what they can see.

In the mornings, the children have been practicing a Kurna language Acknowledgement of Country—I will post an activity on Seesaw with the words and pronunciation for you to refer to at home. We will be gradually using more and more Kurna words here at Kindergarten, so don't be surprised if your child comes home with some unfamiliar words! We are still learning new Kurna words too.

Gardening programme

Rebecca Mumford was unable to come in for her gardening sessions this week due to COVID restrictions, so we used her online resources to get the ball rolling! The W/Th children planted seedlings with Roxy last week and took home their own copy of Rebecca's book "The carrots and the ladybirds", and the M/T group will do so today. Rebecca's welcome video can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/671821567>.

Kind regards,

Bianca, Cathy, Hayley, Roxy and Vikki

Governing Council 2022

By now you should have (hopefully) received an email from me with the link to complete a form regarding joining the Governing Council this year. So far I have only had two responses, and I do hope that you will consider joining us. It's only two meetings per term and we try to keep meetings under an hour. To do this, there is sometimes some pre-reading such as finance reports and a policy or two to review. If you would like to know more before completing the form, please email or come and see Bianca!

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=6fS7c4gGRkmuqboLtA7PBwxOO4eocwNOuGH-GeVzvWIUMok2VUJFSjVHN3VKUodVRkFMN-ldDTE5CMY4u>

Children's progress meetings

In the coming weeks, we will be formally inviting all parents/caregivers to make a time to meet with the teacher who will be responsible for communicating about your children's learning and development, and writing their report at the end of the year. Bianca, Cathy, Roxy and Hayley are currently finalising our "focus children". Please note that this doesn't mean that you can only talk to your child's focus teacher if you want an update or to share some important information, it just means that this teacher is responsible for checking in with you. We all make note of and share information from families with the other members of the team.

REMINDER

Please remember to pack children's lunches separately from their morning snacks. Lunches go in the trolley, morning snacks stay in their bags in the lockers.

Please make sure you have named all items that your child brings to Kindergarten so that we can return when we find them. Some children are still learning how to keep track of their belongings. Thanks!

Aldgate Kindergarten

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Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Calendar dates

Monday 7th March: AGM 6:30pm followed by first 2022 meeting 7-8pm.

Monday 14th March: Public holiday

Tuesday 29th March: Gardening with Rebecca 9:00-11:00am.

Wednesday 30th March: Gardening with Rebecca 9:00-11:00am.

Thursday 14th March: Last day of term. Kindergarten closed for the school holidays. Vacation care is available for enrolled families in the Aldgate Primary School OSHC. If your child needs to attend vacation care, please make sure that they are booked in for a couple of Before or After School care sessions during the term to help them get to know the staff and the spaces.

Friday 15th April: Easter public holiday.

Monday 2nd May: Kindergarten reopens for term 2.

Friday 6th May: Kindergarten 10:30am-3:30pm Monday/Tuesday group.

Tuesday 10th and Thursday 12th May: Photo days! Individual, group and sibling photos. We would like all children to be in the group photo even if they are not ordering photos. Order form to come later this term. Sibling photo sessions are also available—bookings essential.

Friday 13th May: Kindergarten 10:30am-3:30pm Monday/Tuesday group (final for the term).

Friday 20th May: Kindergarten 10:30am-3:30pm Wednesday/Thursday group.

Friday 27th May: Kindergarten 10:30am-3:30pm Wednesday/Thursday group (final for the term).

CAN YOU HELP?

We would appreciate a few donations for our spare clothes cupboard: Size 4 and 5 GIRLS long sleeve t-shirts, jumpers, track-pants or leggings. Thanks!

Current learning program focus

We are continuing with a strong focus on building relationships between children and children, children and teachers and teachers and families. The Early Years Learning Framework outcome 1.1—Children feel safe, secure and supported—is of high importance, as is outcome 1.4—Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect. These relate well to our current Child Protection Curriculum focus—The Right to Be Safe (Feelings).

Some children are still learning how to use appropriate strategies to solve problems and express their feelings appropriately. It's not easy! However it's important to learn from our mistakes, and to develop the skills required to deal with emotional situations more appropriately next time. We are intentionally teaching and supporting children to use words and body language to express their feelings, to have strategies to enter play smoothly, to sustain play experiences, and to assert themselves appropriately. These are some of the things we will talk about with you in our upcoming parent/teacher meetings.

Our numeracy focus is the outcome "I quantify my world". We will be giving the children lots of opportunities to notice quantity as an attribute and use the standard number system. You might like to visit this website for some ideas for home! <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/parents-and-families/curriculum-and-learning/early-years/learning-with-your-child-greatstart> We will also be posting on Seesaw (and sticking into learning journals) individualized information about your child's current knowledge and skills, and next steps for their learning. We will also discuss this with you at our formal meetings.



Friday kindergarten sessions

A reminder that the Friday Kindergarten sessions are held in weeks 1-4 each term. The Monday/Tuesday group has the first two Fridays, the Wednesday/Thursday group has weeks 3 and 4. All sessions are 10:30am-3:30pm (following playgroup) [The dates are on this newsletter AND on our website!](#)

Why only two Fridays per term?

We are required to offer children 30 hours per fortnight as part of the Universal Access program. Our model is to offer 2 x 7 hour days per week and "bank" an hour a week for each group, rather than offer longer days. 7.5 hour days would be very tiring for both children and staff, as well as making drop off and pick up times clash with the school.

So, we have 40 weeks of preschool over the year, so we "bank" 40 hours. Each term, we have 2 x 5 hour Friday sessions (10 hours). As we place high value on our playgroup as a community service and transition program and we cannot offer it at another time, we start Friday Kindy at the later time on Fridays following playgroup.

It's great if children can attend these sessions, however we recognize that it can be too tiring for some children (especially those in the Wednesday/Thursday group), so please don't feel that they have to attend if they are too exhausted and need a day off.

Please let us know if your child won't be attending, just like any regular Kindy day, so that we can staff with appropriate ratios. Thanks!