



## January - March Newsletter



*Check out our awesome tomatoes  
that we are growing down at Whites  
Creek Community Garden!*

### From Kerri's Kitchen ☺

#### Menu ideas

We would love some menu ideas from our families as we look at seasonal changes or additions. Send us over your favourite snacks for morning, afternoon tea (or ones we can include for late snack that are easy!). We also really value your feedback in regards to any menu changes you feel we can make. We love to hear from families if there are areas we can improve or change. Telling us what you love is also wonderful! ☺



## DIRECTORS CORNER

Hello families,

Welcome to our very first newsletter of 2022! Our newest families will be reading this for the first time, and our existing families will be used to seeing them every 3 months. Within the newsletter, there will be updates from each of the learning environments, updates from Kerri's kitchen, and other important pieces of information that we share with you all regarding the service, children's learning and our community.

Thank you very much to all of our families for completing our survey earlier this year, and joining us virtually for our information sessions. It has been mentioned that there is interest from our families to hold another information session in a few months' time. I will plan to ask families what their preference is, but we are thinking of June for our next session.

In this newsletter, I am providing some information about children's social and emotional learning. This was of interest to many of our families that completed the survey for us in January. We will share other information related to early childhood learning and practices along the course of this year as per interest from families within the survey.

### Professional Development in Jan-April for educators:

Practice Plus with Philip Butler: Began in February 2022 (ongoing) for more information about Practice Plus see below in the newsletter.

Developing a Code of Conduct (Child Safe Standards): Tara

Team dynamics and team development - leading and

guiding teams through murky times: Tara, Chan, Riley, Orlando, Frances

Pedagogical documentation is more than just a blog: Chan



## Koala Room

### Koalas Investigate Rainy Weather

Over the last few months, we have had more than our fair share of rainy days. The Koalas have had a fantastic time exploring the wet weather with all their senses, and learning about wet and dry textures. We have been out during and after rainy days, and observed the containers and toys that have filled with water. The Koalas have extended on this fascination with water play on hot days to learn more about water and how it splashes, drips, and pours!

### Digging and Construction Vehicles

The Koalas have been very interested in digging and transporting dirt in wagons, buckets, and trucks. To encourage this interest, we chose not to replant our veggie garden, and instead left it as an area that the children can dig and play in, without harming our plants. It's been wonderful to see their excitement as they transfer the soil between containers and tip it out of the trucks!

### Tunnels and Enclosures

We noticed that the Koalas were unsure about the tunnel at GrowFit, so we added tunnels and enclosures to the program and to our indoor and outdoor spaces to allow the children to explore these concepts at their own pace. They have loved crawling inside little hidey holes and through boundaries and doorways, and several children attempted the GrowFit tunnel for the first time last week!



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## Wombat Room

Community gardens are an important part of the Early Childhood Education Ecosystem. Research has shown that gardening improves all aspects of young children's development. It teaches children about sustainability and working with the community.

After sitting on a long waiting list, last August Rose Cottage was finally given a small plot at Whites Creek Community Garden. We were really excited and started working on our plot of garden with our children ever since.

We have frequent excursions to the community garden with children from the Kangaroo and Wombat rooms. We work together in preparing the soil and deciding what vegetables to grow. Children have firsthand knowledge of where their fruits and vegetables come from. It is all part of Rose Cottage's commitment to the environment and conscious effort to encourage children to be thoughtful in the decisions they make every day.





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## Kangaroo Room

The Kangaroos have been busy over the past few months with lots of new and exciting adventures taking part in our room. We have welcomed the new Kangaroo children and we have absolutely loved seeing them settle into the new environment and grow and develop.

Excursions are Back! And they have been a welcome addition to the weekly curriculum with the Kangaroos visiting little Battalion Park and also our plot at Whites Creek Community Garden; the Kangaroos have been busy tending to our garden and have been seeing all our hard work pay off over the weeks with tomatoes and most recently cucumbers all growing nicely.

Recent projects we have been focusing on in the room have been the book 'Big Rain Coming' where the Kangaroos got to read the book and also have experiences based on this piece of literacy. With so much rain lately, we looked into why it rains and made rainwater gauges to collect rainwater for experiment.

Our most recent focus has been on insects after visiting the garden and seeing the different insects visiting; this has now been extended on with our most recent project about bees.

Our FIT and dance is still a weekly fixture on our curriculum and we have introduced weekly mindfulness exercises as well.

The Kangaroos got to challenges themselves with the big equipment at different parks as well as the new obstacle planks in the yard. We also practise basketball at the court in the park and further develop our multiple gross motor skills with Coach AL each Thursday.

We also encourage children's imagination and creativity through changing over the room setting and encouraging varied learning materials. The Kangaroos were obsessed with the loose part areas as they used clay, leaves, sticks, beads and other materials for multiple purposes.



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## Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse

Our team have been refreshing our training in regards to mandatory reporting for any child that is suspected to be at risk of significant abuse, harm or neglect. It is important to share this with our families too so that you are aware of your obligations as an adult within the community if you suspect this kind of abuse or harm of a child. Tara recently attended a webinar regarding the child safe standards and the below link was given for our team to refer to should this occur. It is a great tool for families to see the detailed information about the organisations that are involved and their contact details should you ever need to access these. We can all together create safe and secure environments for our children.

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/early-childhood-education/working-in-early-childhood-education/media/documents/child-safety/responding-to-incidents-reporting-flowchart.PDF>

Child Safe Standards and the Child Safe Scheme:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vExwN-u2Abw>

## April Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1.	2. World Autism Awareness Day
3.	4.	5.	6. Nature Play Week begins	7.	8.	9.
10.	11.	12.	13.	14. Parent Payment Fee Day	15. Good Friday Public Holiday	16.
17.	18. Easter Monday Public Holiday	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.
24.	25. ANZAC Day Public Holiday	26.	27. Centre photographs Earth Day	28. Parent Payment Fee Day	29.	30.

## Practice Plus with Philip Butler

As a team of educators, we have been focused on a program named "Practice Plus" with Philip Butler from Semann & Slattery for almost four years now. Semann & Slattery are a company that provide early childhood centres with consultancy services, training and organisational development programs and leadership coaching to educators and leaders who value quality, innovation and evidence-based practice.

Practice Plus has helped us to gain perspective on current practices and the level of quality we deliver in terms of our educational program, documentation and interaction with children during their time at Rose Cottage.

This is a very critically reflective practice and encourages the educators to think about their current practices and ways in which we can improve and deliver high quality across all aspects of our service.

We will be ensuring we keep our families in the loop of any changes that may be considered and that you are a part of this decision-making process. We would love any feedback along the way, as always. Your input and choices are very valued.

## Children's social and emotional learning

Play is a natural way for children to explore their world and create meaning through curiosity, exploration and questioning. This allows children to develop their knowledge and skills, but also their wellbeing. Play-based learning has a very powerful impact on children's cognitive, social, physical and emotional development.

Educators that research and base their teaching on theories relating to social interactions and play based learning are able to support children become confident and autonomous learners that moves along with them beyond early childhood and into their lives. Empathy and emotional intelligence are largely developed by encompassing play-based teaching and practice with the children.

Play also helps children build on their social and emotional skills, alongside a supportive educator to guide along the way. Important aspects such as language and communication, navigating relationships and expressing themselves can be learnt through rich play based experiences.

Through play, children learn about:

- the give and take of relationships with friends (negotiating)
- how their behaviour can affect others and to develop empathy
  - how to lead and follow
  - repairing relationships

Focusing on play-based learning can also help children to express themselves creatively using their imagination. Through this play, children are able to express their feelings even before being able to use the words to do so. Educators that are attuned to children and have secure relationships with them can observe their play and plan further ways to support children to continue to express themselves in these ways. This also allows children to continue to develop these important skills so that over time, this will be the foundation for their future relationships as they grow and take this with them into life ahead.

References:

Be You - <https://beyou.edu.au/fact-sheets/social-and-emotional-learning>

### *Why is "play" important?*

- *Through play, children can use the skills they have already mastered to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world*
  - *Through their explorations, children are making connections and building up ideas, concepts and skills*
  - *Children feel comfortable and confident when they are playing and consequently feel able to experiment, take risks, question and explore.*

