



CATH'S CHAT (February 2014)

(www.cathskindy.com.au or email cathskindy1@bigpond.com.au)

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to a brand new and exciting year this year at Cath's Kindy. I hope you all enjoyed a wonderful and relaxing break with your families and are back into the swing of things now.

Welcome to all of our new families. We are happy to see all of you and your children settling in well to their rooms and bonding with their teachers.

It is also positive to see that our children that have transitioned into their new rooms have also settled in well.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Miss Katherine as our Early Childhood Teacher to Cath's Kindy. With her she brings a wealth of knowledge of the EYLF and Intentional Teaching. Katherine will be the co-room leader of the Butterflies with Miss Nicole whom is currently in the process of completing her Diploma.

Staffing for this year will be as follows: Butterflies Miss Katherine and Miss Nicole with Miss Pauline. The Caterpillars with Miss Jess (Room Leader), Miss Jen, Miss Emma and Miss Rebecca. The Snails with Miss Sharon (Room Leader) with Miss Rebecca and Miss Jen. Miss Heather is new to the child care industry having just completed her Certificate 3 and is taking on a role of learning and gaining more knowledge through practical experience at the centre. Of course, last but not least, Miss Gina our resident Mrs Doubtfire, cooking those wonderful dishes and scrumptious afternoon teas that the children love.

This year, Miss Karen's role has diversified into that of training staff, guiding practice and facilitating the day to day running of the centre. Given Karen's knowledge and experience, her role has moved from that of a Room Leader and is now that of being involved in all rooms, assisting staff, identifying training needs, maintaining the centre as well as a long list of other things. Karen is enrolling to complete her Early Childhood Degree in March via Distance Education. Karen is the guru on a day to day basis with regards to fees, extra days and any other enquiries you may have. Also a reminder that the email address for all emails now is cathskindy1@bigpond.com. I will be focussing on the higher end of this highly regulated industry to ensure compliance as well as following the National Quality Framework.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

We have just completed our Chinese New Year and Australia Day Celebrations.



Thirlmere Steam Festive (24-28/2/14) <http://www.thirlmerfestivalofsteam.com.au>

The Thirlmere Festival of Steam is Australia's largest rail heritage festival!

With all the fun of a country fair, the Festival is a fantastic family day out featuring over 150 market stalls, loads of adrenalin pumping amusement rides for teens, interactive kids activities, an animal farm, train rides, face painting, roving entertainment, helicopter joy flights and a large display of vintage steam machinery, classic cars and hot rods! At 1pm, the village comes alive with the event's official Street Parade. Featuring bands, floats, performers, classic vehicles and emergency services - the parade always attracts non-stop cheers and waves as it travels around each of our festival streets. When it all gets too much and you feel the need for a break, grab your favourite carnival food and head to the ever popular live Entertainment Stage. 'Music In The Park' runs from 9.30am - 4pm and features a brilliant line-up of bands, solo artists and outstanding local acts.

Harmony Week 17-21/3/14 - <http://www.harmony.gov.au/> - Harmony Day 21 March is a day of cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home - from the traditional owners of this land to those who have come from many countries around the world. By participating in Harmony Day activities, we can learn and understand how all Australians from diverse backgrounds equally belong to this nation and enrich it. We encourage the children to wear orange throughout this week.

Any family input from any background or culture that would like to participate in this program in allowing the children to experience something different is warmly encouraged to see your child's teachers or write it in the family input book located with the sign in sheets.

St Patricks Day 17/3/14: It honours Saint Patrick, the Patron Saint of Ireland who was executed on March 17, about A.D. 461. We would like to encourage all of our friends to dress up in their best St Patrick Day outfit, wear green, be a Lepriicorn, come as a pot of gold, whatever you like! We are celebrating this as part of our Harmony Week festivities.

Combat Day - 26/3/14: For those of you whom are new to Cath's Kindy, Combat Day is Miss Karen's pet project. Miss Karen is a Personal Trainer and loves watching the children attempt new things in a physical environment. See the website for photos of previous Combat Days. Miss Karen designs an obstacle course that challenges all of the children, yes even the babies. The children have so much fun and achieve so many things. I guarantee you that they should sleep well after Combat Day. Wear your favourite camo gear, enclosed sneakers are a must, plus a hat and a drink bottle. This is for our Wednesday children only. There will be more held throughout the year.

Autism Week 31/3-4/4/14. Autism Day is held on 2 April 2014. Autism is something that Cath's Kindy supports. We have families that we support with children with Autism. Blue Week is something that represents to us inclusion and support. See website for previous Blue Week's. Please note that the newspaper normally comes out and does a story on this each year, so please, wear blue, the bluer the better. Last year we looked like a group of smurfs. We released balloons into the air to symbolise individuality and to express freedom of differences. We would really love your support on this day. We will let you know what day the paper is coming out via email but we are hoping for Wednesday 2 April 2014.

Easter Celebrations 14-18/4/14: Well we all know what Easter means, don't we? Chocolate of course!!! We would love to see what Easter Hats you can create with your children. We will be hosting many an Easter Activity as well as a Hat Parade each day. Can't wait to see what creations you can come up with your children. Remember, sustainability is something embedded into the Early Years Learning Framework, so hats with a recycled or reusable theme would be lovely to see.

Anzac Day Week- 22-24/4/14: Throughout the course of this week we will be learning about Anzac Day and remembering what our courageous men and women did for our country. We encourage our older children (Caterpillars and Butterflies) to bring in things from home that they would like to share with their peers that signifies Anzac Day. This could range from poppies, rosemary, medals, slouch hats if any of your family has these items accessible to them.

Mothers Day Morning Tea 8/5/14: Keep this date in your diary. This goes from 9.30am for one hour, Mum's only. More information to come.

Emergency Services Week will be held in May more details to follow.

Road Safety Week May: We are holding an inservice on 17.3.14 and the topic is Out and About Safe Journey with Kids. Commencing at 6pm. If any parents would like to come, please let us know. No children please. We will have further details of this week to follow.

Throughout the course of the year we will be holding photo day, STEPS vision screening for 4 and above year olds, dental hygiene and Healthy Harold to name a few.

INTENTIONAL TEACHING AND FAMILY INPUT INTO THE PROGRAM: As Karen's role is changing, her focus is more towards Intentional Teaching and the program itself. Assisting the educators in grouping the children to allow maximum learning as well as guiding educators in extending on the children's learning through language and hands on practical experience. Intentional Teaching forms part of the EYLF and gives the children a vital structure in understanding the difference between free play and structured play and guided group experiences. You will notice in the Caterpillar room this year, they are using whiteboards as a learning tool for part of their intentional teaching program. As well as providing information on the notice boards in the room so that families can see what the children are doing on a daily basis. As mentioned throughout this newsletter, our program under the EYLF is focussed through family input.

This is how children can link to their world, their families and their environment. It enables the child to learn more confidently as they are learning through an interest rather than an imposed learning.

PARENT/TEACHER INTERVIEWS: This will be organised towards the middle of the year. This was trialled last year and the feedback from parents was extremely positive. We are continuing this as we are finding this more beneficial for parents to engage in this scenario as opposed to reading reports. Reports under the EYLF and NQF tend to put children in boxes and a category whereby all children are individual and learn at their own pace.

PORTFOLIOS: This year we have made some changes to our portfolios. You will notice that we no longer have sectioned areas. We have decided that the portfolios are your child's learning journey and will flow throughout the year. Artwork rather than just a piece of art will have small "blurp" to allow you to engage with your child about what they have created. You are welcome to look at your child's portfolios at any time and discuss them with their teachers. Should you wish to discuss your child in more detail, due to supervision and ratio you will need to arrange a meeting. Please see Miss Karen to do this.

WEBSITE: The website is always updated with new photos as well as the current newsletter. This year we are going to trial using the website and Facebook for the Kind. So like us on Facebook and as we start learning this technology a little better it will be another way we can keep you informed of news and events. Please be patient, this is not my area of expertise!

ADDITIONAL DAYS AND VACANCIES FOR 2014: We are nearing capacity with only a number of spots on a Monday and Friday left. If you are looking at securing any additional days, please let Karen know urgently. We have a waiting list for all rooms now for new families trying to get into the centre as well as families whom are trying to secure more days.

FUNDRAISING FOR THIS YEAR'S CHRISTMAS PARTY: We will be looking at doing some light fundraising in preparation of this year's Cath's Kindy Christmas Party so any thoughts or volunteers to assist would be greatly appreciated. We used to have a shopping tour in October which was very successful. It allowed normally the Mums, but Dads are welcome also and any family members (not a children activity though). We organise a coach, go out to all the outlets, shop till you drop, have lunch, and come back to Kindy absolutely exhausted. It's normally a Saturday leaving early and coming home late. We make a percentage of sales. One year our Mum's spent a whopping \$15,000!!!! You can get all of your Christmas Shopping done. Bring plenty of bags under the coach with your name on it. We go to bags, makeup, underwear, clothing, kitchen goods, toys shops and perfume, just to name a few. Keep your eyes out for the date and book in quickly as we can only fill one coach and positions will fill!!!

NO TOYS TO KINDY: Please be advised that we would appreciate children not bringing in their own toys to Kindy. It does not promote sharing and turn taking which we focus on but also creates angst if the toy gets misplaced.

COMMUNICATIONS SLIPS: The communications slips located near the fees box are used for advising us of an injury that may have happened at home i.e. bruised forehead or that somebody else may be picking up, or changes to contact details etc. Please give them to the morning staff. Don't put in the fees box.

FEES: Just a reminder that all fees need to be paid one week in advance at all times. Please ensure your direct deposit is set to pay prior to the Friday as the late fee applied is automatic at 5pm on a Friday. A \$20 late fee is applied to fees not paid weekly and that are in arrears. This late fee will be applied each week for a period of two weeks, then your child's position will be vacated. It is imperative that fees are paid weekly to avoid staff performing "debt collecting roles" rather than being involved with your children. If you are having any difficulties with fees please see Karen rather than ignoring your fee reminders. Bonds are now \$120 and all statements have been amended to show that.

LATE PICK UP: If you are going to be late picking up your child i.e. after 6pm, please advise the office as soon as possible. Please be reminded that a late fee will be charged to your statement. Our Policy states \$20 for the first 15 minutes and then calculated thereafter.

MENU: Miss Gina welcomes any favourite recipes or suggestions for our menu. Please put a note in the fees box or give to staff.

DRINK BOTTLES, HATS AND APPROPRIATE CLOTHING: Could we please ask that all children have a sun smart hat, even in winter, a drink bottle and changes of clothing for accidents and weather. We find it difficult to change a child if the weather turns hot or cold and there is nothing in their bag to change them into.

HOUSEKEEPING: Just a reminder of some housekeeping. Please bring your child into the centre in the morning with a clean nappy, if your child has a soiled nappy, staff will ask that you change them prior to leaving. If you have had to Panadol your child throughout the night with temperatures, they should not be at the centre. Our Policy is that we will contact you if your child becomes ill and you are to make arrangements to pick your child up as quickly as possible. We will administer Panadol upon a phone call if your child becomes unwell and develops a temperature, but you will still have to pick your child up. This reduces the risk of cross infection to all at the centre, but your child, when unwell, wants to be at home with his/her family.

FAMILY INPUT BOOK: We really appreciate you using the family input book located near the sign in sheets. This information is invaluable to us as Educators. Under the EYLF it is an essential part of the Quality Outcomes. Please continue using this book. For more information go to <http://deewr.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework>

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY NEWS: If you have anything you would like to share with our families in regards to Our Community, please let me know and I will share it via our newsletters.

Parent Resources: Feel free to take any of the brochures located in the foyer. These are from local community based, private based businesses as well as any Government information that you may find useful. This gets updated regularly.

Notice Boards: Please see the notice boards for regular updates. You will see a lot of things that are happening in and around our centre as well as the local community. If you require anything to be advertised please let us know. The notice boards will also advise you of any upcoming events, illnesses and general information.

Policy Review: The centre has policies based on the National Law and Regulations. These are updated annually. The folder is located in the foyer and we would like families to be given an opportunity to read our policies and provide feedback.

SNAILS SPOT: Welcome to all my little Snails old and new. We have spent the last few weeks getting to know each other and me finding out about your routines. You have all settled in beautifully.

Could I ask parents to ensure a good supply of bibs are packed each day. The Snails upon watching their little friends increase their self help skills by feeding themselves, which can be messy and rather than change clothing each meal time, it would be great if bibs could be packed, labelled and I will return each day in a plastic bag.

If you have something special you would like to share with us, or an interest that your child has, please feel free to talk to us about it or add it to the our Family Input Book.

This term we are focussing on sensory play with lots of different textures to feel as well as craft activity, playdough, goop and lots of messy play!!! Yippee. Old clothes are always the best with a lot of changes.

During the term we will be expanding the Snails language and literacy skills through a variety of ways, for example stories, singing, 1:1 interactions and music.

During the term we will be looking and learning about our upcoming events through a variety of activities such as songs, art, group time, discussion and books. This will expand on our language skills and community knowledge and involvement. Busy busy busy!!!

CATERPILLARS CORNER: Welcome everybody to the Caterpillars room, we are looking forward to our time with your children. This year will be an exciting year as we encourage the children to grow and develop whilst having fun. We will be focussing on extending the children's learning through family input, please feel free to share any information about your child or family via the input book or to the educators. As well, we will be fostering our self help skills including meal times, recognising own belongings, putting (and keeping on) hats and shoes and helping to pack away. Their physical development will be extended through various craft activities including learning to use scissors and outdoor play. Small group activities will incorporate language, literature, music and movement and intentional teaching. Please see our displays on the notice boards in our room. Shelving is evident to allow children's choice of activities.

Please remember to pack nappies if required, changes of clothes and any sleeping needs and a drink bottle as previously mentioned.

BUTTERFLIES BUZZ: Welcome to the Butterflies Room. If you or your child has any special items linking with our themed days/vents, please feel free to share them with us. Even if it is just a photo at the Steam Festival for example.

We have designed our goal sheets and they will be coming out to you shortly via email. This goal sheet will contain information so that we can work collaboratively with you and your child(ren). School readiness will start at the end of March.

Our School Readiness Program (SRP) will run from the end of March to the end of October prior to transition days at "big school". The aim of this program is to give your child a headstart for his or her first formal year at school. We do this by focussing on learning skills in literacy and numeracy at the Early Stage One Level (NSW Dept of Education).

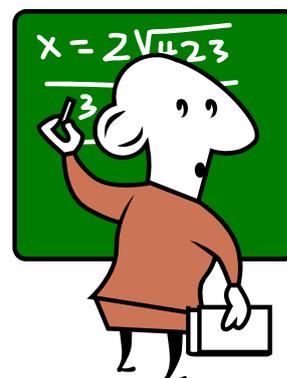
Two programs are used to teach these skills. "Ants in the Apple" for literacy and "Count Me In" for Numeracy. Lessons are held in small groups and are based on learning through music and games and gradually the formal writing of letters and numerals is introduced.

An important part of the program is teaching children to write their names using the correct Foundation Font as used in NSW schools. Each child has their own laminated name cards which range in difficulty from fully supported to independent.

A Literature group runs concurrently with the SRP. It's aim is to introduce a quality picture book on a weekly basis. A language experience approach is taken so the children hear good examples of the written word and engage in lots of fun activities around the text. Children in the SRP also partake in this program.

We are confident that your child, as a participant in our SRP, will take the following skills with them as they transition onto "big school":

- Recognition of their name and the ability to write their name
- Recognition of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds and be able to write some, most or all
- Able to rote count to twenty and write these numerals, matching numbers to givens sets of objects
- Recognise colours, shapes and understand their purpose in our world
- Be able to sit at a table and concentrate on an activity for an appropriate length of time
- Be able to work as part of a group and contribute to problem solving activities
- Engage interactively with using the whiteboard. Their involvement builds confidence and encourages patience and waiting their turn.
- Be introduced to iPads and it's technology and be comfortable when going to "big school" with the use of the interactive whiteboards



Current song the Butterflies are learning:

Tiny Turtle

I had a tiny turtle
His name was Tiny Tim
I put him in the bath tub
To teach him how to swim

He drank up all the water
He ate up all the soap
Now he's lying sick in bed
With bubbles in his throat

Bubbles Bubbles Bubbles x 3
Bubbles in his throat

Bubbles Bubbles Bubbles x 3
Pop!!



For those of you new to the area, welcome, if I can be of any assistance to you, please feel free to use me as your local Community Directory. If I don't know something, I will certainly find out for you.

I look forward, as always, to your input, ideas, comments and suggestions and thank you once again for allowing us to be part of your family. Keep your eye out for those goal sheets coming shortly via email and return as quickly as possible.

Kind regards,

Cath