

# GREYSTANES UNITING CHURCH CHILDCARE CENTRE

## NOVEMBER 2021 –NEWSLETTER



What a challenging year it has been for so many of us. It's so good to have things start to return to our new normal. It been so nice to see all our families return and see the faces of the children when they have reunited with their old friends.

Unfortunately we still have to wear our masks for a bit longer. Educators & families will still need to be wearing masks on arrival and collection times. Educators will continue to wear masks indoors until we are advised we are no longer required to do so. Educators are now able to take their masks off when outdoors and during the times when families are not in our service.

We have only been informed by the Department of Education at the end of last week that we can have some visitors return to our service provided that they follow some requirements that we will ask of them when organising their visit. Such as doing the QR check in, wearing masks, showing proof of vaccine, rescheduling if unwell, social distancing, use of sanitizer.

We also have not been able to show new families around our service or allow new children to come for a visit. We have just started doing this but these families also need to follow requirements listed above.

## Photos

We have not had photos this year as we had to cancel earlier dates booked.

We have now been able to secure dates for our photos. The dates we have obtained are Tuesday 7/12/21 from 9.00am, Wednesday 8/12/21 from 10.30/11.00 and Thursday 9/12/21 from 10.30/11.00. If your child comes on one of those days we will take their photos. If your child does not come in on those days you are welcome to come in on the photo days. Tuesday would be the preferred day if possible as we have more time but if unable come on Wednesday and Thursday. An envelope will be given to families as soon as we receive them for you to prepay for the photos before the photo day. Please hand to Wendy in the office or put in the fees box under the office window. There will be an envelope for individuals and a different one for siblings if you have siblings at the centre. We will also be taking separate photos for children Graduating and going to school. We will be taking photos of all children regardless of whether you decide to buy photos so they can be in the composite group photo. The photo package options and prices will be on the envelopes provided soon. At this stage I do not know when the photos will come back as the photographers are very busy. We will let you know when they are at the centre.

If you have any special requests for clothing please let the educators know in the morning of the photo day.

## CHRISTMAS PARTY

This year we are not able to invite families to our Christmas Party and it will be for the children only. We will be doing something similar to last year where we will celebrate over a week on each day so nobody misses out. From Monday the 29/11/21 to the 3/12/21 we will be having Christmas party food for afternoon tea. We will serve seasonal fruit each day as well as a savoury and sweet party food option for this week only. We will display the items on our menu that week.

We will also be playing Christmas party games, have Christmas craft and Christmas music to get us into the Christmas spirit.

## GRADUATION

For the children going to school in 2021 we will be doing our Graduation over 2 days. We are unable to invite our families to Graduation this year so we will be recording Graduation on Monday the 29<sup>th</sup> of November and Thursday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December at 10.30am. Once Graduation is recorded it will be prepared for families on a CD and given to families before the end of the year. We will try to record Graduation as we normally hold it but this time you will have a memory to keep of the event. If we are unable to get a photographer into our centre we will take photos of your children in their Graduation gowns.

## Self Assessment Tool

Every year our centre reviews our centre's Self Assessment Tool. The Self Assessment Tool states what things our centre is doing as well as what areas we wish to improve on. This is where we list a series of goals we would like to work on across the 7 areas

The 7 areas under the NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD include:

Quality Area 1: Education program and practice

Quality Area 2: Children's health and Safety

Quality Area 3: Physical Environment

Quality Area 4: Staffing Arrangements

Quality Area 5: Relationships with children

Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

Quality Area 7: Governance and leadership

Educators meet to discuss how they can make improvements and critically reflect on their practices. We also like to include families and the children where applicable to the goal.

One way to include families is through surveys on Storypark so we would love your feedback on any questions we pose to you.

The Self Assessment Tool is located in a folder at our sign on area in the 3 to 5 section and also in our Bunnies Room.

## Re-enrolment forms/Confirmation of enrolment for 2022

Thank you to everyone who returned the Re-enrolment form. We have handed out Confirmation letters to families that have been currently attending. This confirmation letter also will state what deposit money we currently have for you child/ren and any additional money that is required. We are asking that additional deposit money be paid by the 30/11/21

## Medications

Just a reminder that if your child does need medication at the centre please ensure that it has a pharmacy dispensing label attached to it which includes your child's name and the dosage to be given. Please hand to a staff member who will store in our medication box, and also get you to complete a medication form regarding the administering of the medication.

Pharmacy labels are also required on Non-prescribed medications such as teething gels, nappy creams and cough medications.

### Christmas closedown over December/January

The last day that our childcare centre will be open for the year is Thursday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 2021. We will re-open in the New Year on Monday the 24<sup>th</sup> of January 2022.

### Children not returning in 2022

Our last day is Thursday the 23/12/21 and fees will be charged up to that day. For the Bears children and any other children not returning in 2022 please let us know if you are intending on finishing earlier and what your child's last day will be.

We are not able to finalise your account & refund any bond until late Jan/Feb when we return from our Christmas break. The subsidy from the government is paid in arrears and will not be credited to your account till after we have commenced our Christmas break. Wendy will contact you to get bank details to refund money.

When you advise us of your child's last day you should ensure they attend on that day otherwise the subsidy will not be paid. The government ruling is that subsidy is only paid up until the child's last physical day at the centre.

### Aboriginal Christmas Drive 2021

Our centre is supporting the Aboriginal Children's Service in Redfern, Food Drive and & Biddy's Joy Playgroup by assisting with gifts and hampers for children aged between 0-15 years, Elders and Food Hampers for families. If you would like to contribute we will be putting a container outside our sign on areas to place items in.

Gift cards are an option (Woolworths, Coles/Myer, Hoyts, Dymocks, Smiggle, Rebel, Target or Kmart, JB Hi-Fi which can all be purchased from supermarkets, post office.)

If you would prefer to donate goods suggestions include back to school items, festive food hamper items, new toys & books. No second hand items please.

Please bring items to our centre by Thursday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2021.

Thank you kindly for your generosity and to be helping families in need.

### Toys

Please do not bring toys to the centre. They items often get lost or in some cases broken or stolen which causes great distress to the children.

Toys can also cause disagreements with other children when they think the toy is their toy.

For some families it puts extra pressure on them when their child wants to bring toys & to provide what their friends have.

Some toys brought in are not always safe & have small parts. We have safety standards we have to adhere to.

## Hats/Sunscreen

Don't forget to bring in your child's hat each day. If your child has outgrown their hat our centre sells plain coloured hats in various sizes for \$10.00 that you can purchase or have charged to the fees, just ask one of the educators and we will get you one.

Educators apply sunscreen when we go outdoors in the morning. If your child does not already have sunscreen on, please ask an educator and we will get some sunscreen for your child.

Please ensure your child is protected from ultraviolet (UV) radiation damage, by wearing clothing that covers as much skin as possible

The best styles are:

-tops with collars, and sleeves of at least three-quarter to full length

-pants or skirts covers as much skin as possible

Some other considerations when choosing clothing for better sun protection include:

Fabric structure – the tighter the fabric, whether knitted or woven, offers the better sun protection.

Tension-if the fabric is stretched it will be less protective.

Layering – of fabrics and garments is an effective way to increase protection from UV

Moisture content- fabrics offer less protection from UV when wet.

## Drink bottles

Don't forget to bring in your child's drink bottle each day and collect in the afternoon to take home and wash. Please ensure your child's bottle has their name clearly written on it.

## Bunnies

The Bunnies children have been very interested in activities like drawing and using scissors to cut paper, and often request to do these a lot throughout the day. We aim to provide them with open ended opportunities, like their choice of colour paper or supplying textas and pencils rather than pencils alone. This is to help develop their creativity, personal preferences, colour theory, fine motor skills, and build their confidence and self-esteem. There has also been a huge interest in reading and literacy, with books being popular with all age groups, so we encourage you to continue reading with your child at home and even bring in some of their favourite stories to class.

It's the time of year where we have begun the transitioning of some of the Bunnies children who will be in the Butterflies room in 2022. Part of transitioning includes children having the ability to dress/undress themselves (jumpers, shoes, etc.), begin toilet training if not

already, and visiting the Butterflies room to become familiar with the educators, routine and environment. We ask if you are thinking about toilet training, please make sure to bring plenty of spare LABELLED clothes and pull-ups for sleep time. Please check our post on Story Park with more details on toilet training/transitioning if you have any questions.

### Butterflies News

Welcome back to all our families.

In the Butterflies room children are happy to explore and investigate with the things around them. The children have shown interest in living things. Freddie the fish and Froggy having an adventure in Parramatta River, an activity for sustainability where children have shown appreciation and care for their environment. Educators have an important role to play in fostering children's natural interest; as one of the activities, we planted assorted seeds as the available resources (Woollies seedlings) where educators have discussed the impact of this activity on our environment.

Also, we have an ongoing Kids Traffic project, where we have discussions on road signs and rules especially crossing the pedestrian crossing and wearing helmets when riding bikes.

Other things children have been busy doing including are tracing lines, letters, numbers, cutting along the lines and writing letters. Letter sounding as "A as an Apple AAA" is so catchy that children like to sing at group time with Ms Lisa.

### Bears Room News



As we are fast approaching end of the year, we are focussing and encouraging children's independence and confidence which is going to be a big focus in coming days as children in the Bears' Room are preparing to attend school next year. We are encouraging this by providing a variety of jobs and responsibilities in the room. Daily routines such as taking care of their belongings, filling their drink bottles with water from the pitcher, packing their art and crafts in their bags independently and looking after their physical environment are some of the responsibilities that has scaffolded independence in children.

We have several ongoing projects in the Bears room such as Emotional wellbeing in which we encouraged children to practice various prosocial behaviours such as acts of kindness, compassion, and helping behaviours. One of the other projects that we are working on is Nature which has helped children learn about plants, insects, natural world, interdependence between

nature and living things, sustainability and significance of recycling. These two projects are still ongoing and we aim to cover several big ideas related to these projects. The third project that is emerging from children's interest and ideas is learning about human body which we would extend further in coming days. We will be also exploring space and planets and involved in lots of collaborative work as World Space Week is just around the corner.

Children are also involved in a variety of school readiness and literacy experiences in the Bears Room which are providing children the opportunity to explore English and Mathematics. These experiences are reading books, tracing/writing alphabets and numbers, engaging in show and tell and participating in group discussions.

Over all we had a great term. We look forward to next term and working in collaboration with children and families.

Thank you Miss Neelam and Miss Eliane.

PS: We ask parents to please pack appropriate change of clothing as the weather is getting warmer.

### Promoting Literacy in Children



Literacy plays a central role in determining individual's life choices and is a key feature of a society that is committed to equity. The Australian Literacy Educators' Association (2015) has termed Literacy as a powerful and wide-ranging life skill. In this newsletter, I would like to take the opportunity to focus on the basic notion of literacy which is the foundation for all future learning. These are talking, listening, reading, and writing skill in children

Literacy starts at infancy when babies develop their oral language through interaction with others. Once infants start to use oral language in their interactions, this becomes the foundation for all future learning, including learning to read and write. This stage is followed by linguistic speech stage where toddlers between the age of 24 -36 months develop expressive vocabulary of 200-1000 words and start to show interest in looking at print, visual and multimedia texts and respond according to their understanding of the text. In a nutshell, oral language acquisitions that infants and toddlers develop during the early stage of early childhood scaffolds the development of phonological skills which is important for alphabetic literacy that helps children make connection between letter and sound. Therefore, oral language development, phonological abilities and print knowledge is the continuum of reading and writing skill for children from birth to preschool age.

Literacy skills in children depends on a wide range of factors, however, parents, carers, and educators play the most important role in promoting literacy and education in children. At Greystanes Uniting Childcare Centre, we promote literacy skills in all age groups through various play-based experiences and by creating a literacy rich environment. Children learn best when they are provided with continuity. Therefore, here are some of the strategies for parents and carers to promote literacy at home for children:

- Creating a literacy rich home environment by providing an abundance of literacy materials and activities to encourage wide array of learning process.
- Shared book reading with preschool-aged children however, making it informal reading activity by prioritizing on oral language, focussing on the story and not just the printed text.
- Having regular conversation with children at home.
- Interacting with babies and toddlers by singing songs, using various facial gestures, reading them books using a variety of voice tone.
- Exploring the environmental print with children such as stop sign, traffic lights, house numbers, street names etc. when outdoors.
- Visiting library and borrowing books.

### Recipe from the kitchen

#### CHEESY TACO PASTA BAKE

200g macaroni

1 onion and 1 red capsicum diced

500g lean beef mince

30g taco seasoning sachet

375g salsa jar

180ml cheese pasta bake sauce

1 cup pizza cheese

Preheat oven 200 degree

Cook pasta

Cook onion & capsicum in a saucepan, add beef, taco mix, salsa and cheese sauce

Transfer to baking dish, scatter with cheese

Bake for 20-25 minutes



## STORAGE OF CHEMICALS SAFELY AT HOME

With so many chemicals and other hazardous materials being used in our homes it is sometimes helpful to think about how we are storing these chemicals and other hazardous items in our homes so that children are kept safe. It is important that we store and use all chemicals according to the instructions on the packaging. Remember, chemicals may be toxic or flammable, and they may create a poisonous gas or liquid when mixed.

Remember to always keep chemicals in their original containers, never in cups or soft drink bottles.

### 11 Safety tips for storing chemicals in your home

-Before you buy a product, read the label. Before you use a product, read the label and then follow the instructions for use.

-Try to find the least dangerous product that will do the job, especially if there are children in the house.

-Keep chemicals in a locked cabinet out of the reach of children (including children who are good climbers!). If you can, keep liquid chemicals away from (or below) dry chemicals.

-When you use a chemical product, follow the instructions. Make sure you have the recommended protective equipment (such as gloves, safety goggles and a face mask), and work in a well ventilated area.

-If you are using chemical cleaners, wash the cleaning rags before you use them again or before throwing them out.

-Keep chemicals in their original packaging, so you can easily identify them. Do not keep chemicals in

- containers that the product may react with or cause to degrade

- unlabelled containers

- containers that originally stored a different product (particularly a food or drink product)

- containers that cannot be sealed.

- If you have to repackage a product, make sure it is clearly labelled.

- Do not use chemicals for anything other than their intended job. When you are finished with a chemical do not pour it down the drain, toilet or gutter.

- Follow any special storage instructions (for example, keeping flammable liquids away from heat, keeping medicines in a cool place, and keeping acids away from alkaline products).

-Check regularly that storage containers are not damaged or leaking, especially if you are storing chemicals for a long time.

-You are legally required to store pesticides in their original containers, and those Containers must meet the labelling requirements for poison.