



# MACARTHUR PRESCHOOL

## DIRECTOR'S DESK

### FEBRUARY 2021



[www.macarthurpreschool.com.au](http://www.macarthurpreschool.com.au)

Not for Profit, Community owned, preschool education since 1978

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To all our new families welcome to Macarthur Preschool for 2021 and to our returning families, welcome back. We hope you all had an enjoyable break over the holiday season, spending time with family and friends whenever possible. We are all looking forward to working with you and your children this year.

Just to help you get to know the staff a little better we have included in this report their photos and names. The staff have also provided a short summary of their background and experience.

There have been a few changes with staffing this year. We welcome our casual worker, Georgia Dore, to a permanent part time position on Thursdays and Fridays in the Yellow Room. Georgia will be our Additional Needs Support worker in this room assisting Dianne and Maree. Georgia has a previous association with Macarthur Preschool where she originally did her High School work experience here. All the team are looking forward to working with Georgia this year.

Elissa Dell has moved from working at the end of the week to the beginning of the week in the Yellow Room. On Mondays and Tuesdays Yellow Room staff are now Elissa, Tahnee and I. Both Tahnee and I are looking forward to working with Elissa on Mondays and Tuesdays.

We had a number of maintenance jobs happening at Preschool over School Holiday period.

A new and higher fence was constructed between Preschool and the neighbouring house, allowing much more privacy between the 2 properties and less opportunity for balls, beanbags and hoops going into the neighbour's yard.



I would like to thank Philip Wardley for repairing and revarnishing a timber craft trolley and timber table.

Thank you to Derek Linden who gurneyed the Preschool veranda ready for the children starting on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> January.

Thank you to Jonathon Lewis for repairing one of Preschool's sliding doors and a latch on another door as well as covering the cost of materials needed for these maintenance jobs. Also thank you to Committee and staff who came in over the holiday period to water the gardens and organise the garbage bins for collection.

At the start of each year we normally hold a welcome to Preschool disco night, but unfortunately because of spacing in the preschool and maintaining COVID safe practices such as social distancing, we will not be able to hold this event. We are hoping to hold this later in the year.

We will have our **Easter Raffle** again this year as part of the fundraising calendar. This will be drawn on **Monday 29th March**. If you are able to donate an Easter egg for the raffle this would be very much appreciated. Donations will be collected from Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March.



Our fund raising this year will be going towards landscaping our former grass area (which is now mulch) in front of the Preschool building. We hope to redevelop this into a sustainable natural play space where the children can interact with natural elements, such as trees, plants and rocks. We are in the process of getting a draft landscape design by Maryann Strickling. I am also submitting an "Expression of Interest" application for a Stronger Communities Programme Grant through Angus Taylor's Office to help with the implementation of this project.



At the end of 2020 we received notification that my application for a **Department of Education 2020 Quality Learning Environments program grant** was successful. This grant of \$6,200 will be used to install a new sun shelter over the mud pit area.

As many of you are aware this is a Non Profit Community Based Preschool, therefore relying heavily on parent and family involvement and support. The land and building are leased from Camden Council, but the preschool is solely responsible for all maintenance and day to day operations. Macarthur Preschool does not have a private owner. I (Sharon Beveridge), the Director/Nominated Supervisor, and staff work together with the Parent Committee in the running of the centre.

This makes it essential that each year the preschool has a full Parent Committee on board. We have only 2 Committee members returning this year so please consider joining our Committee and being part of your child's Preschool. We would love to have you on board.

Our Meet the Staff night and AGM will be held on Monday March 8<sup>th</sup>. You will receive more detailed information about the role of the Committee and Committee positions next week.

Due to COVID restrictions we are looking at having this meeting outside earlier in the evening. We will also need to know numbers attending so please ring the office or email if you will be coming on the night. Everyone will need to sign in using the QR code which is displayed at the end of the pergola. As we will most likely be outside you will not need to wear a mask.

**If you are interested in being on our Committee and cannot attend the AGM, please let us know what position you would consider.**

We normally provide tea/coffee and a light supper, but again because of COVID health and safety restrictions this will not be possible. Anyhow, we would still love you to come along and meet all the staff and other parents, as well as finding out more about your child's preschool. We have 1 staff member who has reached a special milestone year of working at Macarthur Preschool:

Beth Smith- 5 years.

This will be recognised on the night.

#### **Munch and Move:**

Macarthur Preschool is a Munch and Move Centre, where we encourage regular physical activity and healthy eating. In the morning at around 9.45am we have a "Munch and Crunch" time for the children. This helps to embed one of the key messages in the Munch and Move program, "Eat more fruit and vegetables", as well as enabling children who have had an early breakfast to eat something before lunch.

Please place your child's 'munch and crunch' in a separate small container for the children to access easily. If sending a banana or apple, these can just be left whole or the apple cut up if easier.



The staff incorporate Fundamental Movement Skills, such as running, jumping, catching and kicking into the preschool program and the daily routine. Fundamental Movement Skills are a set of specific movement patterns and are the building blocks for the more complex skills required for games, sports and other physical recreation activities. There is a total of 13 Fundamental Movement Skills. Each month we focus on one particular skill.

Our Fundamental Movement Skill for February is jumping and running.



Here at Macarthur Preschool we will also be using the ELLA (Early Learning Languages Australia) Program. ELLA is a fun and easy digital language program for preschool children. Using ELLA has shown multiple benefits for children.

Children will expand their knowledge of how language works and apply these skills to other literacy tasks, such as listening carefully to sounds in words. These skills will be used when children learn to read and write. ELLA will help develop foundation skills, such as learning colours, counting and greetings.

**This year your child will be learning Spanish using the ELLA app at Macarthur Preschool.**

Please click on the following link for the parent information brochure about ELLA:

<https://news.ella.edu.au/link/id/zxxx60138ba9e9b07498Pzzzz5c00cc4d5a131924/page.html>

There will also be copies available at the sign in table. Please read and if you do not want your child to participate in this program please inform the preschool in writing.

## **Just a few reminders:**

### **Preschool Hours and Late Fees-**

Preschool is open from 8.30am - 4pm.

Please remember that earliest drop off time is **8.30am** and final pick up for a child is **4pm**. If children are picked up any time after 4pm, a late fee will be charged.

- **\$15 for first 15minutes (4.00pm- 4.15pm)**
- **\$30 for every 15 minutes thereafter (4.15pm onwards)**



### **Car Parking-**

For safety reasons, staff and committee request that all parents and families park in Crookston Drive or in our car park. As Lawson Avenue is such a narrow street as well as being a bus route this creates safety issues, particularly when cars are parked on both sides of the road. Buses cannot get through when cars are parked directly opposite each other in this street.



### **Departure through Preschool Gate-**

As you are leaving preschool please be aware of other children. All children leaving preschool need to be accompanied by an adult. Please do not let unaccompanied children out through the gate.

### **Preschool Climbing Equipment-**

Our climbing equipment is closed in the morning when staff and children are setting up the outdoor area and also in the afternoon when the children are inside. Frequently touched surfaces on this equipment is wiped down at the end of each group. For safety and hygiene reasons please make sure siblings of children attending preschool do not use this equipment.

### **Hand Washing and Sunscreen-**

In Term 1 when children are outside first, we ask that all children have sunscreen on when they arrive at preschool. Please tick the sunscreen column next to your child's name in the sign in/out folder if they have applied sunscreen.



We also make sure each child has washed their hands on arrival at preschool after putting bags in their lockers and departure after collecting bags from lockers. This is to help prevent cross infection between home and preschool.

### **Sunscreen, Medication and Creams-**

These should not be left in children's bags. Any sunscreen, creams or medications should be handed to a staff member to store in a safe place.

A medication form needs to be filled out for children needing any medications or creams while at preschool. These also need to have a chemist label stating name and dosage.

### **Children's Clothing and lunch boxes-**

Please make sure that all your child's food containers and drink bottles are labelled as well as their clothing. This makes it easier for staff to find the right owner and eliminates our collection of lost property.

**Signing Your Child In and Out-** It is extremely important to remember to do this as the Department of Education and Communities requires the Preschool to keep a record of the day and time each child arrives and leaves. Also, at any given time of the day we need to know the exact numbers of children in the centre for safety and supervision purposes and especially in case of any emergency, such as a fire. (Part of our emergency/fire drill is to take the Attendance Folder).

Looking forward to getting to know you all and hopefully sometime this year we may be able to return to holding a family event in some way.

Hoping to see some of you at our AGM.

Sharon Beveridge

Nominated Supervisor/Director/Teacher

11<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

## 2021 Important Dates

### **Term 1** (10 weeks)

<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> March:</b>	<b>AGM</b> Easter Raffle Donations are welcome
<b>Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March :</b>	Easter Raffle Tickets are due
<b>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March:</b>	Easter Raffle is drawn
<b>Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April:</b>	Last day of Term 1

### **Term 2** (10 weeks)

<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April:</b>	First day of Term 2 STEPS Vision Screening
<b>Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April:</b>	STEPS Vision Screening