



MERINO COURT

Childcare Centre

MAY 2016

NOTES FROM THE OFFICE

Welcome to the March 2015 edition of Merino Court News.

You have probably all noticed some new staff around Merino. We have some staff doing some casual shifts. Jane does Mondays in the Possums room and we have Sam doing casual days when we need to. Both Jane and Sam are educators from Nellie's other centre, Lifestreamers. We are happy they have joined the Merino team.

We hope you all have been enjoying our Facebook page. We try and post things daily for you guys to catch a glimpse of our day. If you haven't already, please go and 'like' our page so you can keep up to date with our latest goings on.

It is coming up to the end of the financial year, so it is time to start thinking of CCR payments. As you are all aware, there are 4 ways to receive your Child Care Rebate.

- [Paid to your child care service to reduce your fees](#)
- [Paid to you fortnightly](#)
- [Paid to you quarterly](#)
- [Paid to you annually](#)

The payment method you choose for Child Care Rebate will be applied for the entire financial year. A new payment method cannot be applied until the start of the next financial year unless exceptional circumstances apply. You may change your payment choice for the next financial year by logging on to your [Centrelink online account](#) through myGov between April and June of the current year.

-Cal

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK OUTCOME 2 SUMMARY:

Learning Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

The EYLF's Learning Outcome 2 contributes to each child's experiences with different communities as they progress through stages of living and learning with others. Respectful, responsive relationships allow each child's confidence to allow them to be an active contributor to their world.

Merino Court gives our children the opportunity to contribute to decisions that affect them & participate in everyday routines and events as they learn to live interdependently. Encouraging their feelings of connectedness, our children belong to an ever growing list of communities such as family, friends, local areas, the Merino Court family, our country, their own traditions & values, and their cultures.

- 2.1 Children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.
- 2.2 Children respond to diversity with respect.
- 2.3 Children become aware of fairness.
- 2.4 Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment.



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Monthly Projects and Participation

For those of you that aren't aware, Tammy is Merino Court's Educational Leader. This means she guides and supports the staff to provide fun and educational learning experiences and implement curriculums that are based on Merino Court's Philosophy, the Early Years Learning Framework, and adhere to the National Quality Standards and National Regulations.

Part of this, is to motivate the staff to participate in some fun experiences, such as the DIY resource project that you all spent time voting on over the past month. Both Mel's Italian Flashcards and Sue's English Castle won equal first prize-a gift voucher. Thanks for voting everyone.

Each month, Tammy will have a different fun project for the staff to undertake.

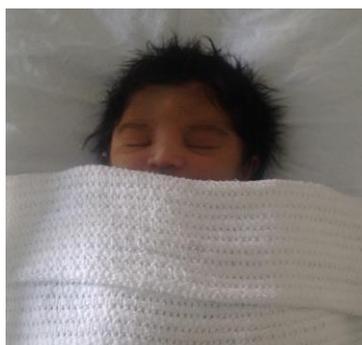
We want your participation on this so keep an eye out. We will inform you all of each month's project, whatever that will be, and we will ask for your input and votes. Each month we will award the winning staff member for their effort with a gift voucher, and we will also award one of the participating parents with a voucher for their input and vote.

Our latest project is on Reconciliation. Reconciliation Week is the 27th of May to the 3rd of June. The project is for staff to research and implement various reconciliation activities in their curriculums during that week. Please pay close attention to the activities through the daybooks, talking with your children about what they have been learning in the room that week, going into the rooms and checking things out. Please take note of age appropriateness, effectiveness etc. Also, we welcome you to look around at the centre as a whole and pay attention to what is happening in all of the rooms, Possums, Goannas, Schoolies.

We will provide a little questionnaire for parents to fill in with their name and details, and this can then be placed in the fees box in the foyer. A winner will be randomly pulled out of a hat, from those parents who participated and filled out the questionnaire.

Thanks in advance for your input and we hope you have fun with this!!!

**Congrats Ayten on
your baby boy
Mirach!!!**





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GOANNA'S GOSSIP

We have been enjoying learning about our neighbourhood and cities in the Goannas room. The children have been using google earth to find landmarks they know near Merino Court, as well as looking at pictures of cities and making their own using the resources in our room.

This interest will be extended into learning about people/jobs in our local community.

Sue and Tammy would love it if some of our families could organise to spend a few minutes when they can to speak to the children about their jobs and what they do. The kids would love it.

The Goannas have also loved getting their hands dirty in our garden with Sue. They are very knowledgeable about caring for the plants in our yard.

We sadly said goodbye to Amelia and Yashmeet this month. We will miss you guys. On a happy note, we gladly welcomed back Danika to the Goannas room. It's great to see that you are still that funny character we all know and love.

-Tammy and Sue

POSSUMS

April was garden month, so we spent lots of time doing garden related activities - planting plants, painting flowers, talking about weather and how it affects our garden and watching our new plants grow that we planted.

We had a tea party in the sunshine, lots of climbing on our frames and painted pictures of our pets for "National Pet Day".

We welcomed Sofia into our room and celebrated Molly and Ruby's birthday in March and Jack and Karen's birthdays in April (all turned 2 except Karen).

We started learning about flight and aeroplanes.

We have also started our Mother's Day crafts so expect something to be coming home soon.

-Lindsey, Karen, Bek, Mel, Jane and Sam



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SCHOOLIES STUFF

The Schoolies had lots of fun over the school holidays. They set up the rooms for themselves with activities, resources and games to entertain themselves. They also planned out the school holidays by themselves and were really fair with each other when deciding what activities to do each day. They put lots of thought and care into it...Great team work guys. The Schoolies planned some fun excursions to Inflatable World-we tried a different Inflatable World this time and it was much bigger and better. We also went to the movies to see Zootopia, Scitech and some parks. We were treated to ice creams on some of the days. Now the weather is cooling down and getting wet, we will start to spend more time indoors, so we will be playing lots of games and expressing ourselves with lots of different art forms.

BIRTHDAYS:

Kai	4 th May	4 years old
Jaice	7 th May	2 years old
Shravani	11 th May	5 years old
Darcy	12 th May	10 years old
Sue	19 th May	68 years old



Nature Garden Update

We haven't made much progress with our nature garden as of yet, as we were waiting for it to cool down a bit so we could start work on the garden out the back. But all of a sudden, the weather changed much faster than we were expecting and turned cold and a little bit wet some days.

This kind of prevents us from working on the nature garden for the time being.

But that is a good thing, as we can spend the colder months, planning a really great nature area in our garden and then can start to obtain all the resources and materials we need to create an awesome nature space where the children get interact with nature.



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Fee Rise

Our annual fee rise will take place, as of July 4th 2016.

The new fee rates are listed below:

Daily rate :
Possums and Goannas \$95

Before School \$47
After School \$58
Before AND after school \$75

CLOTHING REMINDER

As you have probably noticed, the weather has definitely cooled down of late. Please make allowances for this and make sure your child has warm clothes (including jumpers and socks) as we still like to spend time outside when we can.

With the wet weather coming, it would be great if you could provide gum boots for your children. They can come in gumboots or they can have them in their bags. We can then still go outside for a run and a play when it has been raining, and we don't have to worry about their socks and shoes getting wet.

At rest times, we have the heating on for the children, so as our sleep policy states, we need to take off any thick jumpers, jackets, hoodies. With the heating on and the blankets we provide, the children are more than warm enough.

NEW FEE PAYMENT METHOD

As per the email you all received recently, we are changing to a direct debit payment system for fees. Accounts are issued by email each fortnight and payment is by Direct Debit on the last Friday of the account period. Fees are payable for **all** days the children are booked in regardless of whether they attend or not, this includes sick days, school holidays, family holidays and public Holidays.

Families are to nominate their desired account via their own login details that were emailed to them, or ask Cal for an authority form and I will sign you up. Your account will only be debited the amount owing on the selected date. This is not a set amount and will reflect your usage over the nominated period.

Fees associated with Direct Debit are passed on to the family. They are:

- Bank Account per transaction \$0.75
- Visa/Mastercard - Calculated on transaction value 0.90% + \$0.75
- Amex - Calculated on transaction value 3.85% + \$0.75
- Failed transaction - Per failed or returned transaction attempt \$2.75
- Claim/Chargeback - Only charged when payment is reversed \$33.00
- Refund - Per refund (credit/debit card only) \$2.75

This new payment system will come in to effect as of the end of the first invoice period of June. All direct debit accounts will need to be set up by Monday 6th of June, with the first payment coming out on Friday the 17th of June. Payments will then be processed every second Friday there on.



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5 minutes with...Cal



What is your background and how long have you been at Merino?

I was born in the UK and moved around A LOT, to different areas, cities and countries before settling in Australia as a teenager. I've been at Merino Court for 9 years now (Long service leave...I'm comin' for ya).

Tell us about your family life

I have a small but close family living in Australia. My mum passed away when I was very young and my dad has always lived overseas. I'm close with my brother and sister whom both have a son and daughter each.

What do you enjoy most about working at Merino?

The staff team here is great and we can always have a good laugh and rely on each other when we need to. I love that we are a small centre which allows us to get to know the kids and parents individually. We are really lucky to have a great bunch of kids here, and although they keep us on our toes, they provide us with endless entertainment and laughs.

When can parents talk to you if they need to about anything?

I'm at Merino 4-5 days a week. I'm available to speak with families whenever you see me, if you don't see me, just call or email.

What's your best memory/funniest story from your time at Merino?

There have been so many funny stories over the years. My faves have probably been any time that one of the kids whom are learning to speak and say the word "truck", and it comes out sounding like something very different...you all know what I mean...that has always brought a smile to my face. It probably shouldn't...but it definitely does. Lol. There was the time some of the kids used my freckles as a dot to dot activity...the time the kids threw water on my pants so it looked like I wet myself...the time I fell over and hurt my knee badly (needed crutches, time off work and a knee brace for months afterwards) and couldn't get up again and whilst on the floor in pain the kids all roared with laughter whilst throwing stuff at me...the time Sue had to run really fast to the bathroom while watching me have a dance off with the kids (walking feet inside please Susan)...the time I had to run fast to the bathroom in tears of laughter after watching one of the kids attempting to do a flip onto the safety mat (no one was hurt but it was very funny believe me)...the time I was poed on, peed on, vomited on and bogeyed on in the same day, that was a good one...I could go on and on with these stories

What are your hobbies and what do you get up to in your spare time?

My hobbies these days tend to revolve around food hence my weight gain over the past 12 months. I love to read. I recently purchased a bike to do some bike riding but I haven't yet taken the bike out in public as my friends have all told me it's a stupid hipster bike...so it's just sat in the spare room at my house. It may become a hobby one day

What is the funniest thing that has happened to you lately?

My 21 year old nephew watched some stupid youtube video about a guy throwing eggs at his mum over a period of days and making her catch them before they split and cracked all over the floor. He thought it was a great idea to try it on me, but my reaction skills aren't as good as they used to be, so instead of trying to catch the eggs, I would just lash out and try and punch and kick the eggs away, every time smashing them all over myself.