

THE KIDS COTTAGE TERM 4 NEWSLETTER

Term 4, 2021 | Issue 15 | Date: October 2021



Term 4 Key Events

World Space Week: Will be celebrated at Kids Cottage the week of the 4th October with this year's theme focusing on Women in Space.

Children's Week: is taking place the week of the 25th October focusing on the theme UN Children's Rights article 15- Children have the right to choose their own friends and safely connect with others.

Diwali Festival: Hindu Festival of Lights takes place on the 4th November with Kids Cottage celebrating this event with delicious food, craft activities and games.

National Recycling Week: starts on the 8th November with a week filled of creating as little waste as possible whilst finding innovative ways to reuse old materials

Ocean Care Day: will be celebrated on the 5th December with children learning about the importance of a health ocean for our world

2021 Kids Christmas Party: will be taking place on Friday 10th of December celebrating 2021 which has been a very different year at Kids Cottage.

Director's Message

During Term 4 we are excited to see all the children transition back to school and Cottage. We do understand if your care needs change just to please let us know. All our educators are excited and thrilled to see all children and families again.

This term the group leaders will be getting to know the younger year group as they transition up a group next year. This allows not only the group leaders to get to know their new group but the children to know the new group leaders and what fun and exciting activities they have planned for the year to come.

Along, with the transitions of groups the group leaders will working on the Christmas vacation care program and the summer vacation care program. We are hoping by summer we will be allowed to go on all our normal fun excursions. Our December vacation care program will run from Thursday 16th Dec to Thursday 23rd Dec, the program will be out and available by Friday 19th November. As for Summer January will be reopening on Monday 10th January 2022 to Monday 31st January 2022, this program will be available on 10th December.

This term we are hoping to run our annual Kids Christmas Party on Friday 10th December, this will be confirmed at a later day due to what restrictions will still be in place.

Here are some staffing changes that have happened at Cottage, unfortunately Faith Nathan has had to resign due to her busy sporting commitments. We are hoping to get her back into Cottage one last night to say goodbye to you all. She would like to thank you all for the amazing 2 years she spent at Cottage and the opportunity is has provided her. We wish her all the best in her sporting career. We welcome Luke Ellicott and Tom Wagstaff to the permanent staffing team, both staff having been working over the last few years as casuals and now have joined the permanent team. I'm excited to announce that I'm currently pregnant and due in February 2022. I will be finishing up working at Cottage for maternity leave at the end of January 2022 vacation care, Eleanor will be stepping up as my replacement while I'm away and Katrina will be stepping up as assistant director. I'm planning on returning to Cottage in August 2022. I'm confident that both Eleanor and Katrina will be an excellent team supporting all children and families and staff.

2022 BOOKING CONFIRMATION

Believe it or not it is time to start planning for next year!

In October you will receive an email informing you that we will be rolling over your current bookings into 2022. If you would like to make any changes to your current bookings, please reply to the email and let us know no later than If we do not receive a response, we will take that as confirmation to keep the before and after school care bookings as is for the 2022 school year and will automatically roll over all bookings for all children next year.

If you know that your child/ren will not be attending Kids Cottage in 2022 as they are moving schools or your care needs have changed, please let us know so that we can offer the place to someone else. If you have a child that is moving on to high school, we have already planned to end their bookings at the end of the 2021 school year. If you do not want us to do this, please let us know. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions.

Spring Vacation Care Highlights

Despite low numbers attending our Spring Vacation Care we had lots of activities run to keep the children entertained through their school holidays.

The children loved the Disco Day on Tuesday 21st coming to Cottage all dressed up ready to dance the day away getting face paint and hair spray to finish their outfits. With the disco lights raving in the Hall the children played many different musical games including musical statues, musical bumps and corners with prizes going to the best dancers.

The children also participated in a Water Day on Wednesday 22nd cooling off on slip n slides and having water balloon fights out on the field. It was brilliant to see all age groups participating together and being inclusive of all. The children then got to play everyone's favourite game of Drip, Drip, Drop to round off the water play.

Friday 24th was the perfect weather for our Kite Wars Day at vacation care with the children getting to fly their own kites around the school. They took it in turns to see who could fly their kite the highest with the changing wind direction adding an extra challenge to the task. The children had hours of fun with some of our budding engineers even designing and making their own kites to fly.

Thursday 30th had the children learning all about the 3 R's during our Reverse Garbage Day. They got to create their own masterpieces out of recycled materials with very impressive results from an afternoon tea set to mini soccer pitch with a goal at either end. It was great to see the children's imagination run wild and the development of their teamwork skills as they developed their creations.

To finish off our Spring Vacation Care the children got to head to the Carnival during our Carnival Day on Friday 1st October. They tested their circus skills, hula hooping and wacky relay races before turning into Clowns having their face painted. We had a brilliant Vacation Care making the most of lower numbers allowing us to think outside the box and try out different activities and crafts making new friends along the way.

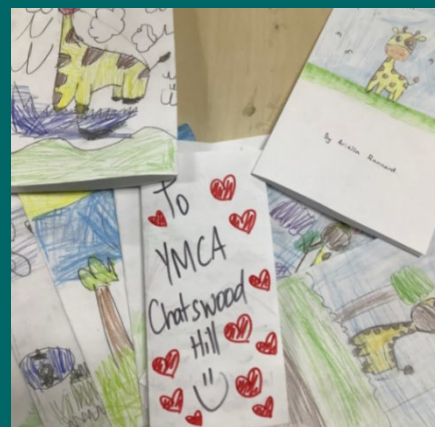


PEN PALS

Our long time Educator Mickey has recently moved to Queensland and started working at Chatswood Hill OSHC. She had the great idea of developing a pen pal system with Kids Cottage allowing the children to develop their writing skills whilst connecting with the wider Community. We received our first delivery of letters from Queensland last term with the children excited to read all about the new children Mickey was looking after.

Our Children were keen to write a response sharing their favourite games, colours and subjects at school. They also added their own personal touch drawing a picture on the front of their cards.

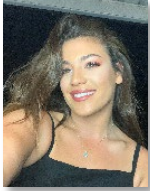
We will be displaying the progress of our Pen Pal system on our Community Wall in the front room of Cottage including the lovely letters we have received from the children and Educators. This is an initiative we wish to continue into the future, Mickey is greatly missed at Kids Cottage but this allows us and the children to still be connected and apart of one Community.



STAFFING SPOTLIGHT

To start Term 4, we thought we would share what our team has been up to during this lockdown. We have asked some of our team members to share with you all how they have been keeping busy and any new skills they have developed along the way. As a team we have held several social Zoom events playing games, catching up and sharing any highlights or important information with the team. It has been a real focus of ours to keep the team feeling connected to the Cottage Community even though they have been away for some time.

Brittany Merlo Brittany has been spending her lockdown commencing her Business Degree. When not studying Brittany can be found looking after her Kitten Basil or completing her other love Massaging. Brittany has not been at Cottage for quite some time, but we cannot wait to have her back and hearing all about what she has been up to whilst away.



Maddie Flood After finishing studying at the end of last year Maddie has spent lock down spending time with her family before taking the next big step and moving out. It has been an adjustment however is enjoying all the freedoms that has come with it. It was great to have Maddie back at Cottage for a few days during Vacation Care and we cannot wait to have her back soon!



Luke Ellicott Luke has spent his lockdown finishing off his Primary Education Degree. Once we are out of lockdown, he will be heading off to complete his final practical before graduating at the end of the year. We have enjoyed having him back at Cottage over the Spring Vacation Care and hope to see him back at Cottage soon before heading off to commence his teaching career.



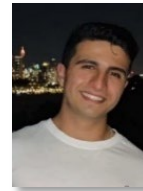
Regan Stephens Regan at the start of lockdown in July was in New Zealand visiting family and starting the lessons to fulfill her dream of getting her Pilot's License. It became an extended visit with Regan being away from Cottage for nearly four months but with restrictions easing she will be back at Cottage again soon we cannot wait to have her back!



Gabe Faux During lockdown Gabe has been developing his culinary skills cooking up a storm for his family and testing out new recipes for dinner. It was great to have Gabe back at Cottage over our Spring Vacation Care with the children excited to get their best soccer player back. We are looking forward to having Gabe back at Cottage soon.



Will Crellin Will has spent his lockdown studying with him nearing the end of his Economics' Degree. When he doesn't have his head in the books Will has been surfing every break within his five-kilometer radius living for the surf. It has been quite some time since we have had Will at Cottage, but we cannot wait to have him back in the coming weeks.



Child Protection Week Neighbourhood Mural

In week 9 we celebrated Child Protection week at Kids Cottage completing different activities with the children around child protection. The theme for this year was 'Every child, in every community, needs a fair go' so we got the children to draw their own Neighbourhood focusing on what keeps them safe and the places that are fun for the whole family. They drew houses, their families, parks, playgrounds and swimming pools along with police and fire stations as well as hospitals and schools. Once complete all their drawings were added to our collaborative mural of the Kids Cottage Neighbourhood which is now on display in Cottage.



We also programmed time this week to talk to the children about the UN Rights of the Child explaining that these are the rights each and every child is entitled to. We brainstormed with the children about the rights that are important to them and how we can facilitate them at Cottage. The children also completed a Scavenger Hunt with the children having to find the 42 rights that had been hidden around the school. It was great to see such high engagement from the children throughout the week!

Child Safe Standard 2:

Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Through implementing the Child Safe Standard 2, children's participation is embedded in organisational practice through feedback mechanisms such as our Kids Committee who meet three times a term.

Kids Cottage also creates opportunities for children to be included in organisational decision-making by collecting their input on the programmed activities and menu developed each week.

Staff are provided with knowledge and skills through weekly Professional Development at both our general and programming meetings to support children's participation at the centre. Staff also encourage peer support for children, so they always feel their voice is being heard.

Age-appropriate information that describes how adults should behave is provided to children and consistently reinforced.

QIP Development:

Our Quality Improvement Plan is a self-assessment tool that guides us to assess our performance in delivering quality education and care helping us plan for future improvement.

It is updated annually allowing us the opportunity to reflect on the improvement plan set from the year before and then create a new plan for the year ahead.

The QIP is a working document with progress notes being written in throughout the year to document progress on our improvement plans for each Quality Area.

Our QIP is always accessible to all families with the printed document being found next to the sign out iPads at the front of Cottage.

We would love parent input into our QIP development. Our first Quality Improvement is to increase our Sustainability Practices at Kids Cottage. If you have any inputs into future sustainable initiatives you wish to see at Kids Cottage please let us know, your input is greatly appreciated.

Community Involvement

We are planning a fundraising event in December this year to raise money for the Make a Wish Foundation who do so much to enrich the lives of children who are going through a difficult time in. We are currently looking into the different options of the kind of event we can hold depending on how the restrictions have eased by December.

We are hoping to hold a fundraising afternoon the first Friday in December having our Middle Harbour Community come together for a fun filled afternoon raising money for a good cause. It is currently looking like it will be a bingo or trivia afternoon raising money for a great cause.

If you cannot make it on the afternoon, we will also be taking online donations towards such a good cause at this time of year.

We will update you all once the plans are finalised, we are looking forward to having celebrations and life back at Kids Cottage again and what a great time so close to Christmas.

Kids Christmas Party

The annual Kids Cottage Christmas Party will be taking place on Friday 10th of December to celebrate what has been a very different year at Kids Cottage. Our theme of this year's Christmas Party is Under the Sea with lots of themed activities for your children to get involved with. These will include a Jumping Castle, face painting, photo booth, making shell necklaces, sand art, decorating Christmas ornaments and so much more. We are encouraging all children to get dressed up for the event and our Team will be encouraged to do the same.

There will also be a visit from a very special person dressed in Red to wish all the children Happy Christmas before we break up for the Christmas Holidays. It is going to be a special afternoon where we can get all the children together again after such a challenging year and so we hope your children can be part of it too! If your child/ren do not usually attend After School Care on Friday's but would like to book them into the Christmas Party, please let us know and we will book them in.

As per last year we are going to have to be running under tighter restrictions and so only children booked into attend Kids Cottage on Friday 10th of December will be able to attend the Christmas Party. Parents will also have to collect and go from the event and so we suggest that you arrive to collect between 5pm and 6pm so your children do not miss out on all the fun!

Extra Curriculars 2022

With extra Curriculars having to be postponed until 2022 we have pushed our art and AFL programs back to commence in Term 1 2022.

Kids Cottage is pleased to announce that Bring It On Sports will be joining Kids Cottage during Term 1 to run a 1-hour program each Wednesday afternoon from 4pm commencing week 2. The AFL program will be focusing on the fundamental skills, rules and tactics of AFL where the students get to test their skills in a fun, inclusive, safe environment which encourages high involvement and participation.

We have also lined up RAW Art to run an 8-week Art program on Thursday morning that will commence week 2 of Term 1 for ages K-Yr6. These will again be one-hour sessions from 7:30am- 8:30am where the children will discover some fun new processes learning about colour, line, shape, texture, and pattern finishing each lesson with an exciting, completed artwork!

TRANSITION BACK TO COTTAGE

18th to 25th October

Sign In and Out Procedure:

- When signing in and out your child/ren we ask you to please use Hale Road gate for entry and exit.
- The sign in and out iPads have now moved to the outside of Kids Cottage just on the Balcony. There are two separate stations set up with hand sanitizer and wipes for the iPads. We are asking all parents to use these iPads to sign in and out, as we are reducing the contact within our service.
- We will be reviewing our procedure as more and more children start to attend the centre and will update our plans and inform all families and children.

Masks:

- Parents/ caregivers are to always wear a mask when on school grounds as per the recommendations by the Department of Education.
- All Staff members are required to wear a mask whilst at work in line with teachers as outlined by the Department of Education

Social Distancing:

We're also implementing the following social distancing strategies where possible to limit the spread of infection:

- Cancelling all excursions and unnecessary visitors, Extra Curricular Activities have been postponed until 2022.
- Parents/ Caregivers to maintain a 1.5m distance when signing child/ren in and out and when on school grounds.
- Asking all parents and guardians to limit their time on school site to reduce risk of spreading infection in the community- collect and go.

Staffing:

- Staff are practicing Social Distancing whilst at work to maintain the safety of the Middle Harbour Community
- All Staff will be vaccinated by November 8th in line with Department guidance
- All Staff will be wearing a mask whilst at Kids Cottage

Our current advice is:

- For children NOT to attend Kids Cottage if they have any cold and flu like symptoms.
- Please seek medical advice before attending Kids Cottage if symptoms are present.
- If you have returned from an overseas trip or had contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case in the last 14 days you must self-isolate as directed by the federal government.
- If your child has a Health Care Plan that has been updated, please provide us with an updated copy.
- We have a suitable area for isolation for any children or staff who get sick during their time at Cottage.

If your child will not be returning to Kids Cottage for the remainder of the year please let us know as soon as possible so we can remove their bookings. Once your child/ren can return to school your bookings will automatically start up again and so if you do not let us know you maybe charged as per our two-week cancellation policy.