

# THE KIDS COTTAGE TERM 1 NEWSLETTER

Term 2, 2020 | Issue 6 | Date: 14 May 2020



## Term 1 Recap

### Waratah's Rugby skills clinic:

Throughout term 1 we were joined at the Cottage every Thursday morning by the Waratah's who ran a rugby skills clinic. The children loved the drills and challenges that the Waratah's set gaining lots of new skills whilst having lots of fun along the way! We are looking forward to inviting another program to the Cottage once we are back up and running.



### Harmony Week:

We had lots of fun throughout our Harmony week with children getting involved in many different games, activities and crafts from around the world! We celebrated different cultures including Japanese origami folding, African beading, learning the Haka, creating Mexican God eyes and Aboriginal dot painting and boomerang making.



## Director's Message

Thank you to all Children and Families for your support over Term 1. What a way to start the year. It's been lovely meeting all the new Kindies and their lovely families. For Term 2 we will continue to keep all families well informed with the current COVID-19 situation and how it is affecting us here at Kids Cottage. The permanent staff and I have made a plan for the daily running's for Before School Care and After School Care and are very flexible to change. Along with how we plan to implement social distancing, we have marked the front room and back room with how many children and staff we believe can be in each room at one time. All permanent staff have completed Infection Control Training on COVID-19 and any other staff that will work this term. We are continuing our daily cleaning and disinfecting tasks along with monitoring the toys and resources children and staff use and implementing the correct cleaning procedures. We have also discussed our interactions with children and how to speak to the children who are asking questions or are worried about COVID-19.

On a lighter note I am excited to announce the appointment of our new Assistant Director Eleanor who has come to us from an OSHC service in Queensland. I will let her introduce herself below.

Hi Middle Harbour Community! I am excited to join such a warm and inviting team who are dedicated in providing an exceeding quality service for their Middle Harbour Community. I cannot wait to get to know the children, parents and the wider school community sharing my passion for school age care. I am a qualified primary teacher who loves working in the out of school hours sector as it enables me to guide and nurture children helping them develop their social and emotional wellbeing. I am going to try and get to know everyone as quickly as possible but if you see me around the Cottage please come and say hi.



# IMPORTANT REMINDERS

**UNWELL CHILDREN:** Children who are unwell with any contagious disease will be excluded from the centre. If your child is unwell, particularly in these uncertain times please keep your child home. If a child becomes unwell whilst at the centre the educators will make sure that the child is separated from the other children in a quiet area, made comfortable and parents notified to collect. If an occurrence of a contagious disease is confirmed at the centre, then the parent or emergency contact of each child enrolled will be notified. If you have any questions please contact us at [info@kidscottagemiddleharbour.com](mailto:info@kidscottagemiddleharbour.com)

**ABSENT CHILDREN:** Parents are to advise the centre if their child will be absent on a day they are booked into care. Parents are not to assume the school informs the centre of daily absences. Parents must inform a staff member either in person or in writing and the information recorded by the staff member no later than 3pm on the day of an absence. Failure of informing the centre before 3pm will be, in the first instance, given a warning, and in the second and subsequent instances be charged a search fee of \$10.00 per family. An email has been sent to all families in regards of their permanent bookings for term two. If you wish to suspend or reduce your permanent bookings for term two please email the Cottage at [info@kidscottagemiddleharbour.com](mailto:info@kidscottagemiddleharbour.com)

## Cottage Development during Closure

During the closure of the Cottage over the autumn school holidays our permanent team have been busily working behind the scenes to further develop the Cottage, so we are back up and running even better by the end of term two. We are planning exciting new projects and programs that we cannot wait to share with you all. Also, during this time we have been taking the opportunity to reconfigure the structure and program of the Centre so we will be operational during the social distancing restrictions.

Imogen and Mickey have been working on the Cottage's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) developing the Centre's future goal of seamlessly embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture into the service. This is a new process for us however we think it is valuable for the future generations to have an understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. As part of this new venture we will also be sending different team members on Professional Development Courses to further enhance our understanding of embedding the culture into our day to day operations.

1 Educational program and practice

2 Children's health and safety

3 Physical environment

4 Staffing arrangements

5 Relationships with children

6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities

7 Governance and leadership

During this time Mickey and Kalani have been preparing our next NQF Training session focusing on quality areas 1,2 and 5. Due to the current situation our team are going to be completing the training online so different games and activities have been planned to keep the team engaged. Good luck Mickey and Kalani!

## From Kids during Isolation

We have asked some of our children the fun and inventive things they have found to do during the school holidays whilst social distancing:

Rory– “Water fight with water pistols and water bombs!”

Rafa– “Baking Anzac Biscuits with Mum, they are delicious!”

Bettina– “Dance classes using Zoom”

Tom– “Zoom playdates with friends”

Thank you kids for your innovative and inventive ideas. We would just like to add that all our team are here for any further suggestions so please feel free to come up and speak to any of us at any time. Also, we really want you to have fun when you are at Cottage during this time so if there's a game, a craft or something you really like to cook make sure you tell the team so that we can get it programmed for you!



# COVID-19 PROCEDURE UPDATE

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic we have updated and tightened many operational processes and procedures at Kids Cottage to keep children, staff, families and wider Middle Harbour community safe. These changes involve checking the temperature of any adult who enters the Kids Cottage building, moving our sign out station to out on the front deck, increasing the cleaning procedures around the Cottage and monitoring our child capacity due to space restrictions. All staff who are working at Kids Cottage have also completed Covid-19 Infection Control training that has been created by the Department of Health to ensure the whole team are following Government guidelines. Our aim with these changes is to minimise the spread of Covid-19 and keep the community safe. These changes are very fluid and subject to change to align with advice from the Department of Health.

## Team Temperature Check

Following advice from health care professionals and aligning with other Child Care Centres we have moved to temperature checking each team member before they commence their shift at Cottage. We have taken this step to alleviate risk of exposure for the rest of the Kids Cottage children, staff and families and enable us to continue to provide a quality care service for the Middle Harbour Community throughout the coronavirus pandemic. Any team member who presents with a temperature above 38 degrees will be asked to go home and if needed cover for their shift will be arranged. Team members who present with a temperature above 38 degrees will also be required to contact their doctor for further advice and cleared before returning to work.

## Updated Cleaning Procedures

Due to the highly contagious nature of Covid-19 we have ramped up our cleaning procedures around Kids Cottage. In attempt to minimize exposure we are asking all children to wash their hands for 20 seconds upon entry and exit of Kids Cottage and before and after eating. We are also asking all staff and visitors to Kids Cottage to either wash their hands or use the hand sanitizer pumps provided upon entering and exiting the building. At the end of each care session we are wiping down all tables, chairs and frequently touched surfaces with disinfectant spray or alcohol wipes along with cleaning any equipment that the children have used before putting it away. We are also minimising what type of equipment the children are using to keep Cottage as clean as possible with staff placing out only what is needed for the activity. Other cleaning procedures are as normal with a sweep and vacuum of all floors, cleaning of all kitchen utensils used for food preparation in dishwasher and cleaning of bathrooms daily. If you have any questions, please let us know.

## Sign out Procedure

As we are trying to limit the amount of people through the doors of Kids Cottage we have made the decision to move the sign in/out station to out on the front deck. There will be two stations set up with an Ipad, hand sanitiser and disinfectant wipes. Please only come up onto the deck when a station is free, use the hand sanitiser before using the ipad and wipe the ipad down when you have completed signing your children out. A team member will be out on the deck to radio your children and they will come out to you. We have also been informed by the school that for collection in the afternoons you will need to use the gate on Hale Road as the gates on Macpherson Street will be closed and locked by 3:15pm.

## Child Capacity Restrictions

As a result of Covid-19 we are also having to limit our casual booking numbers, anyone who has their permanent bookings on hold will be honored however if you are looking to add or change the days of your bookings they will be added on a week by week basis. We are monitoring the number of casual enrolments to allow us to provide care for children of essential workers and children who are at risk in keeping with guidelines outlined by the government. Our new capacity is being calculated based on available inside space due to daylight savings and inclement weather as we head into winter. If you have a permanent booking currently on hold for the start of term 2 and wish to reinstate that booking for the day your child is attending school, please contact us via phone or email. Also due to the current health crisis we are asking all parents to make sure their child's healthcare plans are up to date at the service.



# STAFFING SPOTLIGHT

We thought we would start off term 2 by updating you on changes to our team and introducing some new faces. For those of you who have been attending Kids Cottage, these will all be very familiar faces however you may not be aware of their new roles within the Kids Cottage Community. Our permanent team work tirelessly to plan and implement our before and after school care programs. They can often be found at Kids Cottage during before school care, after school care and the middle of the day problem-solving together, attending trainings on child development and best practices within the out-of-school hours care industry. Our permanent team are here to help as much as possible.



Hi! My name is Faith Nathan I am currently training with the Australian Women's open 7's program where we travel the world to play different countries. I have been working at Kids Cottage for almost a year now as a permanent part time Educator working alongside Imogen as a Junior Group Leader. I am also currently studying for my Certificate IV in School age Education and Care. My favourite to do at Kids Cottage is any type of sporting activity with the children as this helps me learn their names as well as getting to know them a bit more.



Regan is also just completing her first year at Kids Cottage and can often be found working with the seniors or kids club groups. Regan has been assisting Kalani to organize & lead the Kids Club during term 1 whilst further honing her skills in school age care. Regan works most mornings and afternoons and loves engaging in any active outdoor game with the children however will also enjoy running any type craft or cooking activities.

## Kids Committee

Our Kids Committee for 2020 only met a few times before the restrictions however we thought we would update you on how the Kids Committee will be running for the rest of the year.

Due to Covid-19 most aspects of the running of Kids Cottage have had to adapt and the Kids Committee is no exception. As we will not be able to ascertain which children will be attending Kids Cottage on set days throughout term 2, we have amended how Kids Committee will be run. Instead of the same children who were elected in term 1 attending the Kids Committee meetings all year we will be choosing two children from each year level on the day of the meeting to create the committee. The children offered on the day will then have their say on what they wish to see in the program, food menu and activities at key community events. The meetings will take place one day in both week 4 and 8 with different children being chosen for each meeting. We believe this will give us a wider and more varied view of children's perspectives and allow for a greater range of children's voices to be heard.

As we believe running the Kids Committee in this way will be beneficial due to a larger majority of children having their voices heard we will be continuing the structure for the rest of the year. We will then assess at the end which structure we believed worked better. We are always open to suggestions so if your children ever have anything they wish to see at Kids Cottage please let us know.

## Donations

During these challenging times we all want to help our community in any way we can. One of the ways we thought we could help is sharing with you some of the ways our team are donating to all who are on the front line of this pandemic.

Donation Suggestions:

- **Donate Blood**- During this health crisis it is more important than ever for healthy donors to keep donating blood whilst others are in isolation.
- **Buy Them a Coffee** - A new initiative has been developed offering you the opportunity to show your gratitude to the front-line medical teams through the simple act of buying them a coffee. Details at [@buythemascoffee](#)
- **Adopt a Healthcare Worker** - Another new initiative allows you to adopt a local health worker and help out including walking their dog, donate items they can't find or items for their patients. Details can be found at 'Adopt a Healthcare Worker Sydney' on Facebook.

It is in times like these that we need to band together as a community and support the people who are risking their own lives for the health and safety of others. Thank you in advance for your kindness and generosity, we will get through this together.