



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2021

DATES FOR THE DIARY

DECEMBER 2020

Last day for Children -
Wednesday 23rd December

JANUARY 2021

Children return - Monday
11th January 2021

YARRUNGA'S CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

The last day for children will be on Wednesday 23rd December. The first day back will be Monday 11th January 2021.

Please ensure that your fees are paid up to the end of the year and there will be no fees charged for the period we are closed 24/12/2020-10/1/2021

Christmas at Yarrunga

Due to Covid-19 restrictions on gatherings, Christmas will look a bit different at Yarrunga this year. While it is very unfortunate that we cannot hold our usual Christmas party, we will be celebrating in the following ways:

- Educators will film the children participating in the 'Christmas Concert' and post the videos to the closed Facebook group.
- We will have Christmas lunch with all the children across all rooms during the last week of the year (no parents unfortunately).
- Preschool graduation will go ahead in smaller groups over a week. The Preschool team will communicate this with families.



Rooms for 2021

Next year there will be a change in where the rooms are situated, the Preschool will be back down the bottom and the Junior Preschool Room will be up the top.

CHILDREN'S T-SHIRTS & JUMPERS

If you would like to order a t-shirt or shirts or jumpers for your child/ren, order forms will be available in the office - Shirts \$12.00, Jumpers \$25 each
Please see Lisa or Karen



WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK!

How can we make our newsletter better?

What information would you like us to include?

Call us on: (02) 60217597

Or EMAIL admin@yarrunga.com.au



Yarrunga can now be followed
on Facebook and Instagram



WET BAGS

We have several wet bags left, if anyone would like one or two please see Karen or Lisa in the office, they are \$4 each.

COVID-19 Practices at Yarrunga

Physical Distancing	Hand Hygiene	Unwell, Stay Home
		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use of separated Sign-in stations• Observe pedestrian pathways• Avoid congestion at gates and doorways• If possible, limit attendance to one parent/carer for pickup/drop off	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sanitise hands prior to operating front gate and sign in iPad. Should you cough/sneeze/touch your face, please re-sanitise• Assist your child in washing their hands on arrival to room and prior to engaging in play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If your child is unwell, please keep them home• Please support our Educators when the decision is made to send a child home as it is made to protect the health and wellbeing of all

Educators rooms for 2020:

Nursery: Nicole, Emma, Lesley and Serena

Junior Preschool: Krystine, Chrissy, Julie, Tash & Deb

Preschool: Alana and Natt

Float staff: Jay, Carly, Robyn and Jodie

SCHOOL LEAVERS:

Most of the children have already had their "Big School" visits and we wish them well for their next adventure - Primary School.

Aeden Beath

Olivia Hanna

Alex MacKenzie

Elora Hollis

Bowie Jackson

Elle Distefano

Coco Miller

Alfred Sellwood

Violet Slater

Rosie Sanson

Finn Border

Toby Phillips

Fletcher Trollope

Olivia Thornton

Emilia Thornton

Maeve Dunsmore

Jasper Fellows

Finley Forster

Cailin Ewing

William Bradley

Emmett Burns

There are also a few Yarrunga families that are not returning next year, we wish them well and thank them for their continued support.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR 2021

PRESIDENT

Executive

General Committee

SECRETARY

Genna Richter

Therese Lum

TREASURER

Alana Wilson

Melissa Sellwood

VICE PRESIDENT

Carly Sheather

Jane Hendy

VICE SECRETARY

Kate Chandler

Lauren Hanna

VICE TREASURER

Heike Wilson

Justine McCormack

Rinelda van den Berg

Matthew Raine

Megan Dallinger

Ben Nott

FEE INCREASE

Yarrunga's daily fees will increase to \$97 per day from the 11th January 2021.

A letter explaining the increase will be emailed to all families.

PRESCHOOL ROOM NEWS

This month we are having Sophie and Phil come into our room to work with the children as they study at their respective higher education places. We welcome them both into our room and hope they enjoy themselves as much as we will enjoy having them.

We have been on an adventure to Pet Barn and to the train station. Whilst at the train station, we were able to board a real train, walk through the carriages, and go in the captain's cabin where they drive the train. We hope that we can organise an excursion on a train to Culcairn, stay for a picnic at the park located right behind the train station, and take a bus back to Yarrunga. This follows the children's interests of wanting to go to the train station, and of transport toys.



Whilst our new backyard and garden are being built, we are unable to open the gates as the temporary fencing is too short for our ever-growing Pre-Schoolers. We hope that this will be completed soon so we can re-open the gates and enjoy our interactions with our younger peers. The children have been really focusing on building cubby's out of the big blocks in the top yard, and working together to play with the water and not in it, when in the sandpit, making river channels and volcanoes.

Transition to school is really hitting off, with all of our school aged children visiting their primary schools this month. We have made a school play area as well where the children can dress up in school uniforms and do schoolwork to get ready for their big leap into big school. As these are happening so are the end of year letters that the educators are working hard on writing. These recap the year your child has had here at Yarrunga and we hope that reading them brings you satisfaction and joy.

With Christmas fast approaching, we are practicing our Christmas songs. Sadly, this year due to COVID-19, we are unable to put on our famous Christmas concert. This year we will be recording the show and putting it up on our private Facebook groups. We are also in the middle of doing our Christmas crafts which showcase a special skill that the children have learnt this year.

From all the Pre-School staff, we wish you a happy and safe holiday and will see you all in the new year, some in school uniforms!



Krystine, Natt, Netty, Julie and Tash.
preschool@yarrunga.com.au

JUNIOR PRESCHOOL NEWS

Here we are, it is the homeward roll... Welcome everyone to the December edition of the JPS newsletter entry! It certainly has been a momentous 11 and-a-bit-months, but the Juniors have absolutely rocked 2020! It is incredible how much every member of Team Junior (including educators and teacher) has grown this year.



Reflecting, there have been huge leaps forward for learners in terms of their self-help skills (dressing / undressing, toileting, addressing basic hygiene). We have seen some lovely friendships blossom and flourish between class members, which will continue in the new year as children transition into the Preschool program in 2021. Through managed risk-taking, children have gained confidence and a variety of skills, learning to take chances, and reaping the rewards for their bravery. Emotional resilience and persistence are traits that most young children struggle with (many adults too!), but there has been massive progress for class members with establishing and furthering these vital, life-long abilities. During spontaneous and Intentional Teaching-based learning and play experiences, cognitive; social / emotional; language; and physical skills have been practiced and enhanced.



The children who are remaining in the Junior Room next year are establishing some impressive skills that will promote leadership abilities, enabling them to further build on their confidence and consolidate a positive self-identity. Those who are moving to the Preschool Room are more than ready for the next challenging adventure!



Lately the group have relished completing their Christmas gifts and crafts, as they have discussed the upcoming festive period, sharing about what gifts they would like, who is set up their Christmas tree (and what decorations feature on it) and breaking out in spontaneous carols!



Last month we farewelled Phil... well, it was more of a "see-you-soon" moment, as he continues his TAFE placement in the Nursery / Toddler Room, before moving into the Preschool Room. His presence is certainly missed in the room, but our group relish seeing him out in the yard and rush to him, eager to invite and include him in their play.



A big thank you to Liv for bringing baby Lenny in for a bath last week for the entire Centre to watch and share in. It was a wonderful experience, enjoyed by all.



Stay tuned to our individual closed-group Facebook room pages for the broadcasts of our Christmas concert over the coming week!

We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for sharing this year with us and entrusting us to be a part of your child's learning journey. We hope that you enjoy looking back at the year, as you read their Individual Learning Journal and seeing the growth and learning that has taken place. Wishing you all the happiest and safest festive season yet. May it be as action-packed and adventurous, or as laid-back and sedate as you are hoping for it to be. Merry Christmas, and to all a good year!

Alana, Chrissy, Emma, Julie, Emily and Robyn

juniorpreschool@yarrunga.com.au

Educational Leader:



©2019 BLOGOGRAPHY.COM

NO FOOD FROM HOME! A reminder that we have children attending Yarrunga with severe allergies to egg, dairy, nut, and sesame. Anaphylaxis is a severe and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. We want to do our best to keep those at risk safe.

Please refrain from bringing food from home.

If you are bringing treats to share for your child's birthday, please check with room educators for allergies prior.

Yarrunga Policies:

Just a reminder to families and for all our new family's information - our policies can be accessed on our website www.yarrunga.com.au and the password is 2640

DIRECTOR'S REPORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020



Welcome and thank you for making the time to attend our AGM. Yarrunga Early Learning Centre has been serving the Albury community since 1982, and we are proud of the impact we have had on local families. The support of the community over the years continues to enable us to provide high quality care and education, create a nurturing environment and foster a lifelong love of learning for your children.

This year has been a very unusual, challenging one for the whole community (and world!) We endured bushfires, covid-19, closed borders and managed restrictions. Though I believe this challenging year has only amplified the strength of Yarrunga. Our educators further demonstrated their adaptability, they put their own anxieties aside to ensure that the children of Yarrunga received the same level of education, love and care regardless of what was happening in the outside world. Our Yarrunga community was further strengthened as we looked after one another, our amazing little children once again demonstrated their resilience.

While our community connections didn't look quite the same this year, we managed to get out and about early in the year prior to restrictions. We enjoyed excursions around our local area as well as to the Library Museum, where all children across the three rooms were able to participate in the Hairy Maclary exhibition. When restrictions commenced and we were unable to continue these outings, we connected and engaged with our local community in a variety of innovative ways such as virtual school tours, video story times with the Library and an online chat between the Preschoolers and the local pet shop when researching and buying some new pet fish.

Throughout the year we have continued to support students from Charles Sturt University, Wodonga TAFE and local high schools, for the professional practicum as part of their Early Childhood courses.



We have been able to continue our planned works on Yarrunga through the receipt of a Quality Learning Environments grant from the Department of Education, this is being used to update our vegetable gardens and create a play space with gate opening out onto the bike path and green area behind Yarrunga, further enhancing our connection with the community. A huge thank you to Sam Giblin for your hard work in making this a reality, and for stepping in when we were unable to hold a working bee earlier this year due to restrictions.

We were also successful in a Community Connections grant, which will see us continue our Indigenous Cultural sessions with multiple incursions and excursions in the new year, as well as a Physical Acknowledgment mural created by a local Wiradjuri artist.

In 2020 we welcomed Carly back from maternity leave and welcomed Alana as our new Early Childhood Teacher. Robyn joined our team in a more permanent capacity with roles in both the kitchen as well as in all rooms. Tash and Jay have also moved into permanent roles at Yarrunga and Jodie will be joining our team in 2021 on a permanent part time basis. Debbie Stanley welcomed a beautiful little girl, Ivy, into her family, and we look forward to welcoming Deb back from maternity leave in January 2021.

We were able to continue the professional development of Educators throughout the year. Early in the year Nat and Lynette attended the Inspire Early Childhood conference in Melbourne. That was the last face to face conference for the year, however we utilised a wide range of webinars and online learning for educators. I am very proud of a number of our educators who have taken the leap to further their studies, Nicole and Robyn are studying their Bachelor of Education (birth-five years) at Charles Sturt University, Alana is studying Masters of Education- Indigenous studies at Charles Sturt University. Tash and Jung eun are studying their Diploma of Children's Services at Wodonga TAFE.

Our casual educators are equally as integral to Yarrunga, and we are fortunate to have dedicated, experienced casual educators.





This year we sadly farewelled 3 of our educators from their permanent roles at Yarrunga. Molly Millington, Belle Lowe and Lynette Lascelles who have all stayed on as casual educators at Yarrunga. We were fortunate to be able to fill these positions with familiar faces, ensuring consistency for children and families.

I would like to thank our fabulous staff at Yarrunga- it has been a huge year, which was unexpected after the year we had last year! Each of you have maintained your professionalism, positivity and high level of education and care. I am so grateful and really couldn't ask for a better team.

A special thank you to Krystine Masterson who wore many hats this year in her roles of Preschool teacher, 2ic and Educational Leader. I really appreciate your dedication and commitment to Yarrunga as well as the support you provide to me.

Thank you to Karen and Carly, the role of Administration Manager and Treasurer this year was an additional challenge as we navigated the governments free childcare period and JobKeeper schemes. Karen, as always you took the extra work load all in your stride and without hesitation, thank you.



Thank you to our President Kate for your unwavering support and guidance through a challenging year.

Finally, thank you to our wonderful committee, we are so lucky to have so many families willing to give up their time to be involved in the operations of Yarrunga. This year we farewell Kimberly Prigg who has been a community member of our committee this year at Yarrunga. Prior to this year, Kimberly held an executive role in our committee as Vice President, thank you for your valuable contributions to Yarrunga, you will be missed!

I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas with your families and loved ones.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

Good evening, and a particularly warm welcome to new families that are attending their first committee meeting tonight.

Perhaps this year, more than any other, we have been granted a moment to pause and reflect on the strength and support Community provides. As a community based centre Yarrunga has always recognised these benefits and this year they were intensified as we worked together and navigated our way through the COVID pandemic.

As we kicked off 2020, things felt a little different right from the outset. Our community was reeling from a devastating bushfire period and the heat, smoke and haze restricted our practices to largely indoor-based. This was in contrast to our normal mode of embracing our outside environments, little did we know that this was only the beginning of new ways.

In March 2020 we were all facing large degrees of uncertainty in our lives with the practices of living through a pandemic thrust upon us. Yarrunga saw weeks of low attendance as families endeavored to make the best choices for their families including keeping children at home. I am very proud of the response Yarrunga was able to afford our members with financial modelling completed quickly to offer fee-relief to all. Ahead of needing to activate this, the government initiated support in the form of JobKeeper, "Free-Childcare" and other tax relief, providing financial security to Yarrunga. Thank you Carly Sheather and Karen McKinnon for your help here. The impact of the government funding assistance can not be understated and it was pleasing and reassuring to see the government and broader community recognise the value and importance of childcare. I hope this recognition is enduring and more is done to support the sector, and the wonderful educators and staff that work within it, post pandemic.



Every year we take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank our wonderful team of educators and staff at Yarrunga. This year will have felt very uncomfortable for many of you but this has not translated into an uncomfortable year for our children or families. Thank you for managing all the requirements handed down from the NSW Health Department and also our Regulatory Authority, while maintain such high levels of care and education of our children. To have been able to send our children to a place of calm and as-far-as possible "normal" has meant such a lot to so many of us.

Lisa Parker, our Director, thank you for your leadership and commitment. I said this to you last year however this year it has been doubly true. You have been unwavering in your commitment to Yarrunga as you have managed many challenges and been a tower of strength for our team.

I would like to acknowledge our continued partnership with AlburyCity and thank them for their ongoing support as we continue to enhance our facilities. I would also like to again thank AKPS for their role in our refurbishment project and helping us to bring this project to full completion in 2020.

I thank you for entrusting me with the role of President again this year and truly feel privileged to be able to share in the care and education of my children in such an active and involved way. Thank you to the outgoing committee, and all others, who have contributed to the Yarrunga community over the last year.

As we move to the election of our new committee, I hope that you are encouraged to join the committee, excited to help bring our philosophy to life and grow Yarrunga.

Thank you.

Kate Chandler



TREASURER'S REPORT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

Yarrunga Early Learning Centre is a not-for-profit organisation, fees are set based on expected utilisation in order to achieve a break-even result. When setting the budget each year, we are continually challenged with increased running costs, throw in a global pandemic and this year has been the most testing yet. With the finalisation of the building project and our return to Yarrunga this financial year we also still had some income and expenditure to finalise.

Come March 2020 we had an entirely different financial landscape to navigate. In the early days we like all were uncertain what the next few months would have in store for us. Lisa, Karen and I met weekly and sometimes daily to discuss the ongoing situation and to closely monitor the financial position of Yarrunga. Insert free childcare, utilisation of 19 children a day, the offering of job keeper and other government incentives the centre did its best to work though the constantly changing times whilst trying to remain financially viable.

As you will see in the next few slides we were able to get through the worst of the pandemic and come out stronger than what we went in. Much of the work with regards to the government incentives/payments and reporting fell on Karen and Lisa and both did an amazing job apply and record keeping for all that we were eligible.

On top of this we also lost the legacy funding of the Long Day Care Subsidy. This was approx \$40k each year. Some of the funding has been replaced however at each instance we need to apply for funding and that funding is to be spent on particular projects and thus does not come into our operating budget – we have been mindful of this when budgeting as there is no definite figure each year.

In 2019-20 wages remain the centre's major expense. Our staff continue to make the centre what it is and therefore having the correct level of staff to cover planning time and ensuring ratios are met is a never ending task for Lisa. Income this year has as always been collected mainly by fees but also by ACC contribution as well as government incentives such as Job Keeper.



Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to all the executive committee and sub-committees who invest a lot of their time to ensure the centre maintains its reputation as a quality childcare centre.

I must also put here a big thank you to Karen for all of her hard work and support that she provides me as Treasurer – nothing is too hard for her and this year especially she has really stood up and navigated Yarrunga through a very uncertain financial time. All of the extra work you put in on this certainly did not go unnoticed – thank you.

I move that the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2020, comprising of the Statement of Comprehensive Income, Statement changes in Equity, Statement of Financial Position, Statement of Cash Flows, Notes to the Financial Statements, Committee of Management Declaration, Independent Audit Report and Detailed Income and Expenditure Statement be adopted.

Carly Sheather

Treasurer Yarrunga Early Learning Centre



EDUCATIONAL LEADERS REPORT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

Educational Leader & NQS Report – AGM 20.11.2019

2020 has seen a year that presented some unexpected challenges which educators were able to embrace by upskilling and adapting their professional practices.

Commencing the year in a haze of smoke from the devastating bushfires in our community saw educators checking air quality daily and planning for vigorous physical play indoors as opposed to our usual outdoor activities which have always been fundamental to our core values about children's play and learning.

After some creative thinking it was suggested that we utilize the internet for connecting with families in isolation and community links to support continuity of learning and transitions. The creation of closed Facebook groups has proved highly beneficial and strengthened our connections with families by providing them with additional avenues to view and provide feedback about their children's learning and curriculum initiatives.



Soon after the everyday lives of educators, children and families were impacted by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. For Yarrunga this meant that one of our recognized strengths, being the collaborative partnerships we have formed with members of our local community, was impacted due to our inability to be physically present. Educators realized that for our community connections program to continue we would need to think differently about how we engage with families and community organizations.



Examples include: Sharing activities between home and Yarrunga, celebrating special occasions such as birthdays, family polls and most recently planning for our Christmas concert. Links with local schools have helped children familiarize themselves with big school by watching tailored transition videos prior to their face-to-face orientation visits which are currently underway. We have also connected to school assemblies and productions, and participated in *story-time* at the library museum using specific links.

Fortunately we have recommenced our community outings and have been warmly welcomed back with lots of beeps from vehicles passing under the freeway bridges, a spontaneous invite onto the XPT by the train's conductor who noticed us walking, and a tour of our favourite pet shop.



Moving forward:

2020

- Mixed age walks and visits to the local parks

2021

- XPT to Culcairn & bus back to Yarrunga
- Indigenous Cultural excursions & incursions
- Eastern Hill Nature Play & Learning
- Wonga Wetlands excursion

Educators are keen to research additional opportunities as per COVID Safety guidelines.

Quality Improvement:

Our goals to support quality improvement processes in 2020 have been achieved with the implementation of the following strategies:

- A Peer Mentoring System
- Aligning educator goals, professional development and Educational Leader mentoring with links to our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Matching policies review and research articles for reading time with Quality Improvement review.



These goals were added to our Quality Improvement Plan early in 2020 and displayed in our meeting room along with feedback notes from families and educators which helped us to remain focused and work collaboratively through the process.

I attended a QIP writing workshop in March this year which outlined steps to encourage and support all educators to showcase their unique skills and interests by contributing examples of their own and their teams best practice directly into the self-assessment tool which is a living document. This promotes ownership and pride in our Yarrunga team. Educators are keen to practice articulating their strengths for others and this can be achieved by continued room visits during Educational Leader planning time along individual educator goals.

Looking to the future:

As a service team we have been reflecting on the benefits of mixed age play and managed risk taking. We expect any changes to current practice to be thoroughly researched and consulted in collaboration with families and community.



On behalf of myself, educators and staff I thank Yarrunga's Management Committee for their ongoing commitment to quality early childhood education and care.

Krystine Masterson



Grievance Policy

If parents have any concerns or complaints, please follow the attached *Grievance Policy*

1 Informal Resolution of Grievances

Initially any grievance raised will be approached in an informal manner. (Informal Procedure for Resolution of Grievance). If required, an appointment time with the Centre Director and/or

President of the Management Committee

Genna Richter (phone 0428109382) to discuss the grievance can be arranged.

2 Formal Resolution of Grievances

2.1 In the event informal processes are unable to be used or informal processes fail to achieve a satisfactory outcome for any of the parties involved in the grievance, the formal process will then be used. Determining whether the grievance will be handled formally is at the discretion of the Director/President of Management Committee based on feedback from the concerned parties at the conclusion of the informal stage (Formal Procedure for Resolution of Grievance).

2.2 When a formal resolution of grievance is pursued, all interactions must be documented by the Director (Complaint form), signed (by Director and or parties involved), and a copy given to each party concerned.

2.3 Any allegation that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child has been compromised, or relating to a staff member, the details of action taken in response to a complaint will be recorded and kept in a confidential place.

3 Regulatory Authority – ACECQA

3.1 The Nominated Supervisor or Certified Supervisor will notify (within 24 hours of the complaint being made) ACECQA of a complaint that alleges

- a serious incident has occurred or is occurring while a child is being educated and cared for by Yarrunga.
- the National Law and/or National Regulations have been contravened.

The required Forms to be completed are;

Notification of Complaints and Incidents (Other than serious Incidents) as required by the Education & Care Services National Regulations – through the National Quality Agenda IT System (NQA IT System). Log in to access the portal.

A scanned copy of the written complaint will be uploaded prior to submitting the form electronically.

