



February 2010

Pelican's Nest Early Learning Centre: "News from the Nest"

A big "welcome" to all our families- whether it be to a new year and a new room or as a brand new family to our centre! We are starting the year in a very busy way and our new children are slowly but surely becoming accustomed to all the new faces, sights and sounds. We are looking forward to another wonderful year and are very pleased to be sharing the journey with you.

We must also say a big welcome to our new staff who have started in recent times! Kim has returned to us after her maternity leave, Abbey, Amy and Nicole have joined our roster throughout the centre and we are also welcoming Heidi Astrup who is a visiting exchange student from Denmark. Heidi has chosen our centre to do six month's practice teaching which will be a wonderful experience for not only Heidi but for our staff, children and families also as we learn and share each other's cultures.

Our newsletter is distributed every 4-6 weeks. Parents are invited to provide suggestions regarding topics to cover or even "classified" advertisements for their family business or items for sale. See Sandra or email at staylor@cca.qld.edu.au if you would like to be involved.

Sandra ☺



COMING EVENTS

Valentine's Day celebrations	Friday, Feb 12
Sporty Tots demonstration, 9.30 am (Rooms 4 & 5)	Wednesday, Feb 10
Kindy Karate demonstration, 9.30 am (Rooms 4 & 5)	Thursday, Feb 11
Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday)	Tuesday, Feb 16
Chinese New Year: Year of the Ox	22 - 26 Feb



A note about our special events

We try to fill our calendar with fun events for the enjoyment of our children, staff and families. These are usually a simple affair and participation is by no means compulsory. These occasions usually involve dressing up by staff and children and the daily activities are themed to match the occasion. This means we can have lots of fun and silliness without additional cost to families.

Periodically throughout the year we will have visiting shows. These shows are chosen for the experience they will provide the children- not just for the fun but also for the educational aspects incorporated into the show. These shows are advertised in advance and usually cost \$5 - \$6. The cost of these shows is calculated upon attendance and the performer's overall fee, we do not make a profit from these events.

Thank you to all the families who participated in our Educational Experience and Modern Teaching Aids Christmas toy catalogue fund raising drive- I hope you were pleased with your purchases and we are indeed pleased with our vouchers that amounted to over \$600! Staff recently chose items specifically for their rooms using the vouchers we received.

Housekeeping

With a new year and new families it certainly doesn't hurt to run through a few little housekeeping issues so that we may all enjoy our time at The Nest. It is also a good time for existing families to be reminded of the little things that are important to the smooth running of our service.

If you have not received a copy of the Centre Handbook, or have lost your copy and would like another, please see Lisa or Sandra.

Signing in and out

It is very important that every child is signed IN and OUT every day on the sheets provided on the bench on the foyer. These sheets are official documents which we must provide to representatives of DEEWR upon demand; they are basically a "receipt" that you have utilised the spot and are entitled to claim CCB /CCR. If a sheet is incomplete, you are liable for payment of full fees for that day. The correct way to sign in and out is as follows;

TIME	PRINT NAME	SIGN
8.05	M. Citizen	MC
3.45	J. Citizen	JC

Time- time in and time out; the clock is on the wall over your left shoulder!
 Print name- not a lot of room so just first initial and surname is fine
 Sign- once again, not a lot of room so initials are fine

What to bring:

- hat
- drink bottle/milk bottles
- a change of clothes (especially underpants and shorts if toilet training!)
- we recommend that children wear shoes to and from the centre

Please ensure all items are clearly labelled with your child's name. We can provide brochures for excellent label-making companies which may be of use to you.

Fee Payments

Statements are printed and placed in your pigeon hole every Monday. The bold amount near the top right is the amount you are owing or are in credit.

Payments may be made;

- directly to either Sandra or Lisa at the front desk using cash, eftpos or cheques
- by placing cash or cheques in a marked envelope in the locked fee box next to the sign in sheets
- by providing your credit card details so that we may make a regular debit on your behalf, or
- by direct bank deposit using internet banking.

Please note that for direct bank deposits sometimes we do not receive the most recent payments before weekly statements are printed. This will mean that your statement will reflect a higher amount owing. We know who regularly pays in this manner and we therefore know that you are not actually in arrears so please do not be concerned. We will amend your balance as soon as we are able.

Child Care Benefit

If your Statement is showing full fees (and you weren't expecting this), perhaps your CCB has not been processed yet. The FAO will back date entitlements 28 days but it is still a good idea to chase them up as soon as possible. There is very little we are able to do from our end (due to privacy laws) but we can usually tell you if the problem is associated to either the parent details or the child details. Often it can be as simple as one incorrect number in your CRN or a muddled up birth date.

Notifying of absences

If your child is going to be absent- whether it be planned (such as a holiday) or unplanned (illness)- please let us know as soon as possible. This will allow staff to better plan their day and it will also give us the opportunity to "sell" your day for you if possible. If someone is waiting for a casual day and we are aware of an absence we can temporarily sell this spot to the other family and you will not have to pay for it. Absences advised in advance are noted in the diary and matched with the temporary wait list as appropriate. It is not always possible (especially at times of high absence due to widespread illness or school holidays) but we certainly do try to help families in this way.

Pigeon holes

Not every family has their own pigeon hole- there are around 100 holes and we can have up to around 140 families enrolled so some doubling up is unavoidable! If you are sharing a hole, make sure you check to see if the contents are yours before taking them home.

Pigeon holes will be used to send out statements, newsletters, memos and other information to families. Some information is very important so it is vital that you regularly check and empty your pigeon hole.

In the interests of cutting down on clutter and saving trees, please complete and return the coupon below if you would like to be added to my email list for newsletters and other memo items.

YES! Please include me on the emailing list.

Name: _____
Email: _____

Parking

This can be a big issue for some, particularly those who need to do drop offs and collections at "peak hour" when school is going in or coming out. We share the car park with the school families and teachers. There is one area in the main car park which is labelled "CHILD CARE CENTRE". Until more parking can be created for the school as a whole, please remember the following;

- park safely- not on gutters, foot paths or grassed areas. Parking in these areas reduces visibility and may force children to walk into dangerous areas to avoid your vehicle.
- If you will be staying in the centre for longer than 10 minutes, please use the main car park and not the short term parking zone directly outside the centre.
- Cars are not permitted to park and leave their car in the set down zone outside the library

School excursions

Changes to the Child Care Regulations last year has meant that we are now recognised as being a part of Caloundra City School and we are classified as a "co-located service" (prior to the changes any child care facility was considered a completely separate entity, even if they were on the grounds of a school). Basically, this means that we are free to use the grounds of the school as if they were the grounds of our own service- we are not required to have higher staff:child ratios and we do not need to do tonnes of paperwork and planning for a spontaneous trip. To enable these wonderful experiences to occur within the program, shortly your Group Leader will have a group list to sign, giving staff permission to take your child onto the school premises. You will be notified in advance if this will be occurring and details of their destination will be provided. Of course all care will be taken and you are free to decide for your child not to participate, just let your Group Leader know if this is the case.

Some of the experiences we will have at hand will be;

- * visiting the permaculture garden
- * visiting the chickens
- * games on the oval (more space to run and kick balls!)
- * visiting the new resource centre/library

- * exposure to the school community for the Pre Prep children
- * participation in events such as Under Eight's Week



Thank you!

We must say a huge thank you to Linda Blyth (Jack's mummy) who entered the S26 Toddler Gold competition we promoted in the foyer last year- Linda WON a fantastic Panasonic digital handycam for herself and one for our centre as well! This fabulous resource will be enjoyed by us all and we congratulate her on her win and thank Linda for making this possible for us also!

A special thank you also to the Du Rieu family of Caloundra City School for the donation of a huge Duplo set and for a large collection of art & craft supplies. The children have really enjoyed these special gifts and we appreciate the generosity of the Du Rieu family.

Thank you also to our very own Sacre family for your generous donation of a large box full of giant blocks- you can never have too many when you have so many little people wanting to share!



School banking

Our children have access to the Commonwealth Bank Dollarmite banking system through the school. Deposits will be processed each **Tuesday during term time**. Bank books and money may be left at the front office on any day of the week and after processing on the Tuesday they will be placed in your pigeon hole for collection. Application packs are available at the front office.

Parent Committee invitation

All parents are invited to join our Parent Committee. Our first meeting will be March, 2010 (date to be advised). This committee is designed to allow parents to discuss issues, make suggestions and most importantly develop a social network for parents within and outside the centre. Traditionally our committee has been very informal with meetings every two months and emailing or informal chats between times. A parental perspective is so important to ensure our centre is meeting the needs of each unique family and every contribution, big or small, is appreciated and valued. It would be wonderful if we could get the committee organised to a point that members feel comfortable with initiating simple, informal get togethers for interested parties, whether it be to have a park play date, a quick coffee and chat or perhaps even meet for a movie. Our centre has a lot of families new to the area and new to the country so this sort of social access is so very important.

Please complete and return the form below if you would be interested in participating in our committee meetings.

Yes, I would like to be involved in Parent Committee meetings.

Name: _____
 Email: _____
 Best phone: _____
