

NEWSLETTER – Issue 1



Thank You

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all parents. Thank you for allowing us to be a very special part in your children's lives. We hope to share with you many exciting events that take place as they grow and develop, and hope you do the same with us. Again, thank you and welcome...

2006 Enrolments

We are currently in the process of allocating new places for 2006, so we would appreciate you confirming your requirements with Sharon as soon as possible – especially if you require additional days.

Kindergarten Now Available!

We all wish a warm welcome to our new Kindergarten Teacher: Linda. Linda graduated from University of Melbourne with a Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies. Linda's developed a very special program for our kinder aged children which focuses on developing their readiness for school. These skills include:

- focusing on group time activities; and
- Improving language skills, communicating together in a school environment.

Linda's talents also include dancing and she has been a dance teacher for the last 8 years. Linda will also be using this talent to promote music and movement into her program.

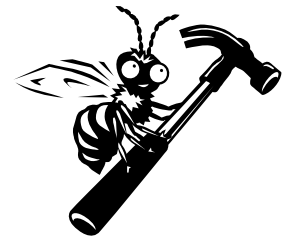
Our Website

Our website www.smartiepants.com.au is currently undergoing some new updates! We're looking forward to adding some new pictures, our handbook etc. Check out our updated Team section where you can read a little bit more about each team member.

2006 Working Bees



We are working on continually improving and making our centre a fantastic and rewarding environment. To achieve this requires a lot of hard work, and any assistance we can get would be very much appreciated. Working bees are voluntary, and to show our appreciation of your efforts, we hope to provide social enjoyment through a light lunch or BBQ. Our working bee dates for 2006 are as follows:



- 25 March 2006
- 6 May 2006
- 9 September 2006

Please don't forget to let us know if you have any special carpentry skills or talents!

New team members

Meet our 4 new team members: Linda, Jenna, Erin & Barbara. Check out our website (www.smartiepants.com.au) for profiles on all of our team members.

Sipper Cups, Drink Bottles & Sun Hats

We remind families to bring in drinking cups & sun hats for their children.

Holiday Notice

To make it easier for you to provide us with your 2 weeks notice and pay only half fee rates while on holidays – we have provided families a folder near our sign in form.



Tooth brushing

Tooth-brushing has been an absolute hit with the children. It's fantastic to be encouraging them to brush well and regularly at a young age. If you haven't provided us with a toothbrush yet, we strongly encourage you to do so. Also, we would really appreciate if all parents could provide tooth-brushes stored in a hard plastic container which we can regularly wash and sanitise. We're finding the zip lock bags not ideal as they are very difficult to clean.

Fund-raising

Over the next few weeks we will be conducting fundraising activities to raise money towards some very special new outdoor equipment for our centre, including a new fort. Please see Kira or Linda if you are interested in becoming involved. You can also register your interest at the end of this newsletter.

Do you know any healthy yummy recipes we could add to our menu?

We're constantly reviewing and updating our menu and welcome ideas and recipes you might have – especially simple, delicious and healthy dishes! You can let us know any of your recipes on the attached 'Getting Involved' form.

Do you have a special Skill or Talent you could share with us?

Are you a doctor, dentist, fire-fighter, nurse, singer, dancer etc ? Is there something special you could show our children?

We are currently seeking volunteers to visit our centre to meet with the children and share a special experience with them. Please register your interest in the attached form.

Accreditation & Improving the Quality of our Service

Over the next few months, we will be focused on implementing practices in order to meet the definition of High Quality Care as defined by the National Child Care Accreditation Council of Australia. This process is very important to us for two key reasons:

1. We can ensure that we are providing a service that is consistent not just with 'Satisfactory Care' or 'Good Care' but the highest quality of care, defined as 'High Quality Care';

2. We must demonstrate a level of Satisfactory or greater in order that our families may continue to be eligible to claim Child Care Benefit (CCB) while using our care.

The accreditation systems are made of up of 7 key quality areas and 33 principles. These are listed below.

Quality Area	Quality Principle
Staff Relationships with Children and Peers	Principle 1.1: Staff interact with each child in a warm and friendly way
	Principle 1.2: Staff guide each child's behaviour in a positive way
	Principle 1.3: Staff initiate and maintain respectful communication with each child
	Principle 1.4: Staff respect each child's background and abilities
	Principle 1.5: Staff treat all children equitably
	Principle 1.6: Staff communicate effectively to promote respect and professional teamwork
Partnerships with Families	Principle 2.1: Staff and families communicate effectively to exchange information about each child and the centre
	Principle 2.2: Staff encourage family participation and involvement in the centre
	Principle 2.3: The centre has orientation processes for children and families
Programming and Evaluation	Principle 3.1: The program reflects a clear statement of centre philosophy
	Principle 3.2: Each child's learning is documented and is used in planning the program
	Principle 3.3: The program assists each child to be a successful learner
Children's Experiences and Learning	Principle 4.1: Staff encourage each child to make choices and participate in play
	Principle 4.2: Staff promote each child's ability to develop and maintain relationships
	Principle 4.3: Staff promote each child's language and literacy abilities
	Principle 4.4: Staff promote each child's problem solving and mathematical abilities
	Principle 4.5: Staff promote each child's enjoyment of and participation in the expressive arts
	Principle 4.6: Staff promote each child's physical abilities
Protective Care and Safety	Principle 5.1: Staff act to protect each child
	Principle 5.2: Staff supervise children at all times
	Principle 5.3: Staff ensure that potentially dangerous products, plants and objects are inaccessible to children
	Principle 5.4: The centre ensures that buildings and equipment are safe
	Principle 5.5: The centre promotes occupational health and safety
Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing	Principle 6.1: Staff promote healthy eating habits
	Principle 6.2: Staff implement effective and current food safety and hygiene practices
	Principle 6.3: Staff encourage children to follow simple rules of hygiene
	Principle 6.4: Staff ensure toileting and nappy changing procedures are positive experiences
	Principle 6.5: Staff support each child's needs for rest, sleep and comfort
	Principle 6.6: The centre acts to control the spread of infectious diseases and maintains records of immunisations
Managing to Support Quality	Principle 7.1: Written information about the centre's management is readily available to families
	Principle 7.2: Written information about the centre's management is readily available to staff
	Principle 7.3: Staffing policies and practices facilitate continuity of care for each child
	Principle 7.4: Management provides professional development opportunities for staff

The process of accreditation consists of two key stages:

1. A self Study and development process – in this stage a new centre implements policies, procedures and practices and then conducts a 'self-audit' of their systems, identifying areas where improvement can be achieved and strategies for achieving the identified improvements.
2. A full accreditation audit where qualified external auditors visit and observe the centre over a nominated period in order to determine the level of care that is being provided by the centre.

Request for assistance to help us establish a Parent Committee

We're currently in the process of forming our parent committee and are looking for volunteers to attend and provide feedback and guidance. The Parent Committee will meet mid-week once a month to provide feedback, guidance and advice to the Smartie Pants Team on how to make our centre run better. We expect each meeting will take around 1-2 hours. Tea, coffee and cakes will be provided by the centre. If you are interested in getting more involved in our Parent Committee, please register your interest by filling out the attached form 'Getting Involved' form.

Room Reports

Little Geniuses Room (Kinders)

Team Members: Linda (Qualified Kindergarten Teacher)

Normal Hours of Operation: (9.30am-4.30pm)

Hi everyone! For all of you who haven't yet met me, I'm Linda the new Kindergarten teacher in the Little Geniuses Room. I've had a challenging few weeks getting to know the children and the way the centre works, but I am finding each day, as I learn a little more about each child, their families and any mistakes that I have made, that the room is running smoother and the children are actively engaging in the activities & experiences I have provided.

A very special thanks to all the families who continue to bring in arts and crafts recycle material for pasting. The children love it! To date we've been learning about how to best run our kindergarten, while also learning about families, ourselves, shapes and colours. In the next few weeks I hope to focus our program on:

- the Commonwealth games;
- developing stronger self help skills especially during the lunch and other routine activities; and also
- dance and movement.

Also get ready for some more room changes! Over the next week we will be moving our lockers from outside our room to inside. I believe children in our room are old enough to freely access their own lockers and we will be encouraging them to manage their personal items like clothes, drink etc. by themselves and therefore better preparing them for school. I will also be introducing a new group time activity called 'travelling bear' where the children will take turns taking the travelling bear home. More details about this activity to come....

If you have any questions, queries or suggestions about how to improve our program, please don't hesitate to speak to me at any time.

All the best, Linda

Hug-a-bub Room (Babies)

Team Members: Kira (Qualified Assistant in Training), Carol (Qualified & Room Leader) & Tryphena (Qualified)

Normal Hours of Operation: 9am-4.30pm

Welcome back to all our families. We hope you've had a wonderful rest over this holiday period and have now settled into 2006. Welcome also to many of our new 'bubs' who have recently joined our room – welcome Ava, Morgan, Mimi, Stevie, Anastasia, Madeline, Martin, and Ashleigh! We are expecting even more new little ones to join us soon in the coming weeks.

Don't forget to check out the program. We had fun painting sunflowers, beach balls, buckets and other summer items. Our next theme will be moving 'into space'. Also our family photo tree continues to bloom. Is your family on it yet?

On a more serious note: Please be aware that several of our babies have grown long finger nails and as their 'pincer' grip develops many of our children could hurt one another. Please help us prevent injuries by keeping their little fingernails trimmed.

Sadly we wish Cassie, Taj & Heather well as they move up into the older room 'Pip Squeaks'. We know they will continue to have fun and will learn skills in their more challenging new environment.

Best wishes, Kira & Carol

Pip Squeaks Room (Early Toddlers)

Team Members: Bree (Team Leader & Qualified), Belinda (Qualified Assistant in training),
Jackie (Qualified & Pip Squeak's Room Leader) & Emma (Qualified Assistant)
Normal Hours of Operation: 7am – 4.30pm

Welcome back to all our old families and a special welcome to the new families in the Pip Squeaks room! The children are finally settled in and enjoying the room. Just to let you know the regular staff in the room to go to with any concerns, queries or compliments are Bree, Jackie and Belinda.

In the room over the past month the children have been enjoying learning about farm animals, the noises they make and their names. Lots of art activities including the pink pigs you can see around the room and pasting cotton balls onto the lambs. Lots of mess and fun!! The children have also been doing some water play in the sand pit making mud and things to 'eat'. They are a very social group and enjoy following one another from activity to activity! In the next month we will be focusing on colours and families. So please ask them the colour of everything at home so by the end of the fortnight they have some colour recognition.

It is nice to have a thread between childcare and home. You can sing the songs we sing and ask about the colours we're learning and this will give the children some type of continuity. Our program is always up in the room and has a space for the songs and books we are focusing on in the fortnight's program. There is also a place on it for family feedback. So if there are any interests that your child has at home that we might not know of please feel free to either communicate it verbally with the staff or write it up onto the program so we can incorporate it in.

Also, parent teacher interviews are coming up beginning the week of the 27th of March running from 4pm-7pm. A sheet will be placed in the notice stand beside the pip squeak door with available times if you could **please put your name down next to a time to confirm a booking.** The meetings are not compulsory just a chance to look at your child's developmental records and discuss any issues that you may have regarding your child.

Can all parents also please bring in a labelled sipper cup, toothbrush and summer hat to remain at the centre.

Thanks, Bree, Belinda and Jackie

Mini Minors Room (Family Grouping & Late Toddlers & Pre Kinder Group)

Team Members: Michelle (Team Leader & Qualified), Eleanor (Qualified Room Leader), Tabitha (Qualified),
Elissa (Qualified Assistant), Jenna (Qualified Assistant in training)

Normal Hours of Operation:

7am – 9.30am Family Grouping

9.30am – 4.30pm Late Toddlers & Pre Kinder Group

4.30pm-7pm Family Grouping

Welcome again to our Mini Minors Room. Splitting out the older toddlers into our room has proven to be very successful and the children have settled in really well. My name is Eleanor and I am the Qualified who will be running the room and its programs. I've already had a really good chance to get to know many of the children when I job shared, managing the Pip-Squeaks room, and I am very excited about offering our children a more challenging 'pre-kinder' program.

Over the last few weeks we have been busy settling into our new routines and getting to know one another. With many new children joining us each day we have been singing name songs before lunch so we can all learn our new friends' names.

Our room has also been focused on doing older, more challenging activities, spending a longer period in group time (like reading books & group games) and we are now introducing new routines to build children's self help skills, such as during dressing, toileting, scraping their own bowls after lunch etc...

If you have any questions about our program, please don't hesitate to ask. We also appreciate any feedback, suggestions or ideas that you might have for how to improve our program.

Looking forward to providing a fulfilling year for you and your children.

Eleanor, Tabitha, Elissa & Jenna



Dear Parents,

We will be including a number of exciting music, movement and dance classes into our develop programs, and inviting external teachers and special program providers to offer their services at our centre. These services will be subsidised, however, we ask families wishing to participate in these programs to contribute towards the cost of each class for a small fee of \$3.00 per session.

Last week we had Hey dee ho come and visit our centre. They provided a half hour demonstration in each room. The activities and songs provided to each room were all developed appropriate to the age groups participating and all the children were enthralled; enjoying the songs, dance and puppet play. We believe these experiences will be really positive for your children and hope to extend the lesson plans delivered during the class into our program as well.

Hey dee ho will come out once every second Thursday at 9.30am for the babies, 10.00am for the toddler groups and 10.30am for the kinder group. If your child is not booked in on this day we don't want them to miss out. You are more than welcome to come and join in as long as you stay with your child during the presentation. Those of you who are interested please fill out the bottom of this slip and return it ASAP to the staff in your child's room. Thank you.

Please note that these fees can either be paid up front for the term or with your consent may be added on to your regular fees.

ABOUT HEY dee ho: Hey dee ho music for tinies was born in 1987 on the Mornington Peninsula. From the creation of two wonderfully creative women it has grown to 7 franchised areas across Melbourne.

At hey dee ho - music for tinies we aim to provide babies, toddlers, pre- school children and their parents or care givers an opportunity to have fun together sharing the pleasure of music. All activities in the musical program involve adults participating alongside children. The atmosphere is warm, friendly and non-threatening. No pressure to participate is placed on any child and minimal restriction is placed on children who spontaneously respond to the music. Hey dee ho is a family activity and younger siblings or grandparents are always welcomed.

Hey dee ho is an entertainment based music program where musical concepts of beat, rhythm, tempo, pitch and dynamics are introduced in the course of the programs.

The primary aim of hey dee ho is to expose children to a broad musical experience in a structured program appropriate to the age group and we have 50 different themes to cater for this (you will experience a different theme each week at hey dee ho).

The program includes music ranging from standard nursery rhymes to more contemporary songs such as those from The Wiggles and Hi 5. We also include many of the basic components of child development. These include fine and gross motor skills, cognitive development, turn taking (important in the development of developing interactive social behaviour), spatial awareness, listening skills and more.

We have also introduced segments on "signing" and other languages as well as "musical stories".

Children gain confidence in themselves and learn most when they are having FUN and that is the emphasis at hey dee ho music for tinies.

Yes I would like _____ to participate in Hey dee ho and wish the \$3.00 to be added onto my fees ()

Yes I would like _____ to participate in Hey dee ho and will pay for the term up front. ()

Yes my child attends Smartie Pants on Thursdays ()

No my child does not attend Smartie Pants on Thursdays ()

Getting Involved!

Below is a list of activities, already discussed in our attached newsletter, which you can get involved in at our centre. Please tick the areas that you are interested in becoming involved in.

Please note that we very much appreciate any involvement families are able to offer but also understand that our working families are very busy and with family time being so precious and that it may be difficult to participate in many or all of these activities.

Yes I _____ (your name) would like to participate and be a member of the Parent Committee

Yes I _____ (your name) would like to receive updates on the Parent Committee agenda, minutes and actions so I can be involved in issues that interest me within the centre.

Yes I _____ (your name) would like have a special talent or skill I would happy to share with children at the centre. My talent or skill is _____ (your skill). I would be available to visit or assist the centre with my talent or skill on _____ (a day & time of the week or a specific date).

Yes I _____ (your name) would like to be involved in the following working bee dates (please tick the dates you wish to attend).

25 March 2006

6 May 2006

9 September 2006

Yes I _____ (your name) am happy to help the centre in fundraising for its new outdoor equipment.

Yes I _____ (your name) have a recipe I recommend for the centre.

Recipe: _____

Serves: _____
(Don't worry we'll work out how to make a larger number of serves!)

Ingredients: _____

Instructions: _____

