



# Birrahlee Newsletter

## August 2022

### WELCOME

Dear Parents,

Since returning this term Birrahlee has managed to maintain quite a healthy community and we have been reviewing how we can introduce families into the classrooms. We are pleased to inform you that from this week beginning 15 August, parents will be invited into the classrooms in the afternoon to collect their child -more detailed information will be sent via email.

The children have adapted incredibly well to separating from adults at the “Kiss and Drop stations” and independently entering their classrooms, unpacking their bags, self registering by either placing their name pebble into a basket or writing their names on a sign in sheet, then unpacking and placing their bags into their lockers.

**Open Day** was held last term for prospective families wishing to visit Birrahlee before placing their name onto the Waiting List. Thank you to the parents who volunteered their time to provide food, face painting as well as setting up or packing away.

**2023 Enrolments** have begun and all children returning next year have been re-enrolled and we are now offering places to new children registered on our waiting List.

Wishing all a great Term 3!

Deánné Allan

### TERM 3 CALENDAR DATES

Monday 18 July – Friday 23 September.

- **Photo Days**

Please collect, complete and return order form by 22 August

- 23/8 MOM1,2LS, 3MS
- 24/8 3SD, 3FL, 3LS
- 25/8 MOM3, 2SD

- **Japanese Drumming**

Monday 29/8 & Friday 2/9

*Details about the performers will be sent separately.*

*Cost to be advised and will be charged to your account*

## Update from the Educational Leader

### Program and Practice

At Birrahlee we regularly reflect on our program and practice so that we can continue to offer a high-quality preschool program. Partnerships with families are a high priority and how we inform families about their child's progress is an essential part of what we do. From our reflections we have made some changes to how we gather and document the children's learning and development.

As we value family input, we have recently put a priority on connecting through phone calls, conversations, and meetings. The information that has been discussed is then collated, and goals and strategies are set for your child, this is then followed up with regular observations which help teachers to track the development of your child. At the end of the term (or when the goal is reached), the teachers will then evaluate the learning and development and the cycle will start again, new goals will be set.

### Transition to school statements

The information collected throughout the year will be used to write the transition to school statement. This statement gives a snapshot of the learning, development and background of children moving from Birrahlee to kindergarten.

The new transition to school statement has been developed by the Dept of Education and will be submitted straight to the school through an online portal. The teachers will be working on these in the coming weeks

## PALS Social Skills Program

During Term 2 our Inclusion Support Teacher, Jody Fowler has been running the PALS Social Skills Program for small groups of children from each class along. PALS is a 10 week program with 20-30 min sessions focusing on social and emotional behaviours that promote friendships and getting along with others.

An Educator from each class joins the group in order to carry through and follow up the concepts into the classroom for the benefit of the whole class. The concepts are introduced through the use of puppets, short video stories and visual reinforcements.

This program has been successful in supporting children to utilise their thinking skills during calm times, so they can build up their toolkit of strategies to implement during challenging times. Another key in its success is the consistent messaging provided in the session, during play at preschool and at home by sharing information to all involved. Groups continue into Term 3 as there have been disruption due to illnesses.



## Library visits...

**We are pleased to announce the next little step towards "normal" as we resume class visits to Lane Cove Library.**

We are currently in the process of organising dates with the library, which are usually at 10am twice per term. We will let you know of the dates soon.

Please help us by:

1. Ensuring that your child has their own library membership so they will be able to borrow a book on the day.

A system will be set up for the class so they are not required to take the card when they visit with the preschool.

<https://www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/Community/Library/Pages/Membership.aspx>

2. Accompanying us on the visit to share the joy of books and maintain high supervision ratios. All parents, grandparents and other fabulous adults are welcome. Your class teacher will organise this closer to the date

## Our community – local and global...

### Community Art Project

Over the past weeks the children have been working as collective groups creating a weaving as part of the Children's Art Project in the Lane Cove Arts Festival.

These weavings have been taken to council and will be displayed in the Plaza for the duration of September.

### Voices for Reconciliation

The Birrahlee children from 3FL and 3LS did a wonderful job performing at Children Voices of Reconciliation in the Lane Cove Plaza as part of the GAI-MARIAGAL FESTIVAL on 27 May.



### Bee Day

Recently the children explored why bees are important to our livelihood in conjunction with World Bee Day. Including important global issues into our curriculum raises the children's awareness of these important environmental factors which may impact on their future if not addressed now.

The main purpose of World Bee Day is to spread awareness of the significance of bees and other pollinators for our survival.

<https://www.worldbeeday.org.au/>





## Jumper Donations

Birrahlee jumpers came in a variety of sizes and we found ourselves with some very large jumpers which were too big for even the tallest preschoolers.

We have donated these “too big” jumpers to an Aboriginal community preschool in Coffs Harbour who will distribute them amongst the community. We’re sure that they will be put to good use.

A huge THANK YOU to Peter Beard (our ‘go to’ plumber) for transporting them free of charge for us – on his way to Lismore. If you are ever in need of a great plumber Peter Beard is your man.

## Kiosk Sign In/Out

As a legal requirement of children’s attendance at preschool we are required to keep accurate records of persons collecting children from preschool. It has been noted that some relatives are using the parents phone numbers and therefore the records are incorrect. Each mobile number identifies each individual – it is their digital signature. Please ensure that any authorised contact only uses their number and not anyone else’s. To put this in perspective ....would you allow someone to sign your name if using a pen and paper

**Additional Contacts** - Please check that you have ticked the “Collection box” in order for Authorised persons to collect your child from preschool and be activated on the KIOSK system. If the collection box is not ticked you have not authorised them and that person will not be able to collect your child.

Authorisation ☐ Collection ☒ Emergency ☐ Excursion ☐ Medical ☐ Transport ☐

The collection button above **MUST BE** checked in order to activate the digital sign-in and sign-out system. Details of someone other than parent/guardian who can collect the child and make emergency decisions on your behalf including: consent for medical treatment, authorise medication and authorise staff to take the child out of the centre.

Your child’s enrolment Form is a “living Document”. New contacts must be added to this form at least 12hrs prior to collection as their details need to be activated on the system.

Please notify your class teacher and the office if a new person will be collecting your child. If short notice/emergency change to pick up please phone the preschool as staff do not access emails etc after lunch.

## CENSUS Fortnight Data Collection

As part of the Start Strong Preschool Funding we are required to collect data for a 2 week period in August each year, this year between 1 – 14 August. In addition to the usual data in 2022 this year it is compulsory to report each child’s attendance times from 1 to 26 August 2022 (a 4 week period)

## New windows in classrooms

All the windows in the downstairs classrooms and the higher windows in the upstairs classrooms have recently been replaced. This has not only allowed for increased ventilation in the classrooms the design of the windows downstairs provides a safer environment with a large fixed picture window in the lower section and sliding sections at the top.



## ★ Important Reminders and Housekeeping ★

### Digital Sign In/Out

We ask that only adults use the digital devices to sign children in and out. We are aware that children are very capable using technology however signing children in and out of the service by an adult is a Legal Requirement. These devices are an administrative tool and not intended for use by preschool children or siblings.

### FAQ's Sheet

Please click [here](#) for our Frequently Asked Questions sheet (previously sent via email) when you are unsure who to contact or what to do.

### Afternoon Pick Up

Once you have signed your child out and collected them from the classroom we ask that you exit the preschool without delay to ensure the safety of all children. The equipment that is in the outdoor area is "closed" for the day at 2.30pm and should not be used by siblings or preschool children to prevent injuries as it is not properly set up and there is no direct supervision.

It can be confusing for the children who are still at preschool when they see others outside playing and are tempted to go outside themselves.

### Nut Free

We are a nut free Preschool – and this year Birralee has several children enrolled with severe allergies.

In order to keep the children safe and to minimise the risk of an allergic reaction, Birralee has a Nut Free Policy which includes all nuts and nut products such as nut butters, nutella etc.

Please be mindful when packing food for your child's day that it does not include any nut product which may be harmful to other children.

This applies to sandwiches, some muesli bars, biscuits and of course any loose nuts packed as a snack.



### Birthday Cakes

You child may wish to celebrate their birthday at Preschool. If you would like to bring a cake along to share with classmates on the day (or nearest Preschool day) mini cup cakes with icing are most appropriate. Please advise your child's teacher when you will be bringing in food to celebrate your child's birthday. \*\*Children with allergies or food intolerances should bring a suitable item to be kept in the freezer for such occasions. Please discuss with your class teacher.

### Food from home

As an Educational facility, we are committed to providing a healthy and safe food experience for all children. Children's lunches should contain an ice brick to keep food at a safe temperature. **WE ARE UNABLE TO HEAT FOOD.**

### Reduce single use plastic

As we continue on our suitability journey with the children we remind parents to consider using reusable containers/waxed wraps etc to help minimise the amount of plastic children bring including single use plastic bags and pre-packaged items including yoghurts in pouches.

### Staff Parking spaces

Please take note of the sign on the fence next to the main gate.

Birralee staff have two allocated car spaces at the front of the preschool; these spaces are for Birralee staff only and not for child drop-off.

Please do not park in these spaces even momentarily as staff begin at different times and anticipate their space to be free. In addition the ranger will fine anyone for parking there without a permit.

