

## Parent Forum Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2009

### Agenda Items

Present: Mrs. Katherine Checuti, Ms Kieran Spoelder, Mrs. Kristy Ward, Miss Kelly Hardy Maree & John Ley



- **Complaint Handling**

Approximately 8 weeks ago we had a visit from the Ombudsman office in regards to the Handling of child care complaints. We are pleased to report that we have minimal complaints and those that we do receive are quickly responded to so that we can support families the welfare of the children in our care. As a result of legislative requirements we have discussed this issue at our last staff meeting and compiled a folder for each room so that staff can record any complaints or concerns that parents or staff raise and the resulting solutions. Parents viewed this format and agreed that this was a constructive method that meet parents need and centre needs. Mrs. Ward raised the location of the folders and requested that they be stored appropriately so that they were not for general access. Miss Kelly instructed that these folders would be kept under cupboards or in a location away from general access to children and families to respect the privacy of parents and staff.

- **Fee Increases.**

Fee increases have been raised in the May and June Newsletters. We have not increased Fees for 12 months; but the cost of the business has been increasing. General discussion took place to raise the fees now and in January. Mrs. Checuti and Mrs. Spoelder stated that they would prefer increases once a year instead of an increase in Jan. Parents felt that an increase of \$2.00 or \$3.00 would have a minimal effect. Maree explained that most families would have a government increase of approximately \$1.50 a day, so in real terms the increase will only be at best \$1.50 and that families will also be able to attain their childcare rebate as well, which will be available after the 27<sup>th</sup> July.

- **Fundraising**

We have raised approx \$300.00 Easter Raffle. \$130.00 Mothers Day Raffle. Chocolate Raffle \$1200. Total \$1630.00. We have purchased Outdoor tables \$200.00

Room Resources \$600.00 and will purchase a new slide, possible house and bikes for outdoor use. Tents etc. We have been purchasing items from the recent toy sales and will conclude purchases at the conclusion at the month when the Target sale commences.

Outdoor. Miss Emma is finding out about an outside blackboard near the sand pit. We are concerned about weather and would love to get this completed. We just need to purchase the correct wood product.

Our insurance claim was rejected for stolen items, but we will replace these with fundraisings and additional funds from the centre.

Mrs. Wards offered balls for the centre, - Thank you

- **Family Portraits**

These will be completed on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September. We will be having these posted to the centre in the coming weeks for parents to collect and book. \$10.00 will go towards the centre for each family portrait taken.

- **Preschool Photos**

Same photographer as last Year. Discussion for indoor and outdoor. Miss Kelly raised the possibility of bad weather. Mrs. Ward, Spoelder and Mrs. Checuti expressed that the background for the walls were bright and were better for the photographs. Perhaps if the day permitted children may go outside for individual photos.

- **Dental Hygiene**

Visit from Little Grinders 13<sup>th</sup> July at 10.00. A certificate will be provided to the centre. Mrs. Ward was pleased that this was happening and expressed that it is a difficult task to complete and that if the message came from preschool it would assist parents. Maree expressed that we would also be using the Colgate Palmolive Dental Health Kits for children and has for parents as resources.

- **School Readiness**

Many local schools are now inviting parents to participate in their school transition evenings. St Michaels has forwarded an invitation to parents for Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July. We will display this information for families in the foyer and on the door to the Busy Bees room for parents to view. Miss Kelly encouraged families to take up these opportunities so that together we can prepare children for kindergarten.

**The Busy Bees room has already undertaken the commencement of the ready to school program for children so that they can write their name, identify colours, shapes, and number.**

- **Staff in Service – Directions**

John and Maree expressed the vision for the centre after accreditation and the need to have continual improvement by revisiting our policies and programming so that we remain a quality centre. Maree expressed the need to move staff forward by acknowledging the work that they are completing well and having all staff at the centre moving in the same educational direction.

John spoke about the next two staff meetings – In-services with Sue Hasting and how we would be making changes to programs and portfolios so that children's dialogue was recorded to reflect developmental stages. Mrs. Spoelder expressed that it is nice to hear statements that your child expresses.

Mrs. Ward raised having photos taken of the children and email to parents during the day. Maree and Kelly raised the staffing and time involved in this. Presently this would not be a service that we could offer as it would take 5 hours each day to complete.

- **Philosophy Statement**

We revisited our Current philosophy with the following changes:

Parents open to make suggestions at any time

Social skills for children to be included

Concept of the centre expressed in relation to Theme stimulus on a weekly basis.

Explanation of a learning environment that focus on literacy, numeracy, discovery, exploration and craft.

Acceptance and invitation of all cultures. Strong relationships between centre, staff, families, children and community.

This will be updated and viewed so that all parents are aware of changes on the coming weeks.

- **Policies – Reviewed Head Lice**

Reviewed Policy in light of current cases at the centre. Maree asked parents about the spraying of water on a tree for the children. All parents Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Checuti and Ms Spoelder expressed that they were happy that the centre and staff had been so proactive in minimising the risk to other children. Mrs. Ward commented on how it was great that staff had attended on the weekend for a thorough clean and washing of all hats and sleep / linen so that the centre was off to a good start on Monday for children arriving.

- **General Discussion.**

**Toys Catalogues for parents – Modern Teaching and Educational experience – Mrs. Spoelder suggested this so that parents can view additional resources as it is difficult to find additional resources that are educational for children at times.**

**Portfolios for children – Miss Kelly expressed how important it was that parents respond to the portfolios so that we can develop a link with families. Miss Kelly suggested a week where they were displayed in each room so that parents can respond and record a comment in their child's portfolio as it has been challenging getting some portfolios back from parents.**

**John spoke in relation to the website and having the newsletter and photos upload.**

**Miss Kelly and parents spoke about resources for the back – Purchase additional tents, play equipment, slide for outdoor areas.**

**Mrs. Ward would like to have a section in the newsletters that gives some examples of what children are enjoying eating at the centre for their lunches so that other families might try these foods with their children.**

**Miss Ward spoke about additional extra curricula activities. Maree spoke about Miss Emma organizing a structured dance session for the Bees and Possums room. Mrs. Ward spoke about Fitness classes and Miss Kelly explained that the room included these activities in their daily program. Miss Kelly explained to the families that Mrs. McFadden was investigating a muscle class and how this might be available to families.**