



# THE NSEYC BUZZ

*The Official Newsletter of the Northern Schools Early Years Cluster*



## Hello from our CEO

It's been an exciting and busy first half of the year for us at the NSEYC, with lots happening across our programs, especially now that we're offering 15 hours of FREE kindergarten for 3- and 4-year olds!

Our People and Culture Manager Gaganpreet, has been very busy with our continuous recruitment drive. We welcomed a number of new members to our organisation, including our new Area Manager Melanie Peters, Enrolment Officer Matthew Shehata, and two additional Family Support Workers joining our Wellbeing team, Cathy DeBono and Rebecca Sica.

Early this month I was fortunate enough to attend the Education State Conference in Melbourne. The conference was focussed on the consultation of the Best Start Best Life reform for Early Childhood Education. The Victorian Government is investing \$14 billion over the next decade to improve outcomes for our youngest children. This includes 15 hours of free kindergarten for all eligible 3 year old children by 2029.

We are proud that at the NSEYC we are well ahead of this reform agenda and are already offering 15 hours of Free kindergarten for all our 3 and 4 year old children. Enrolments are now open for 2024, further information in this newsletter.

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Furthermore the 4 year old kindergarten program will transition to a Pre-Prep program over the next decade, increasing from 15 hours to a universal 30 hours a week of play-based learning. Visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/best-start-victoria> for more information on the Best Start Best Life reform.

We are certainly leading the way in Victoria to strengthen outcomes for children.



**Sigi Hyett,**  
**Chief Executive**  
**Officer**

# ENROL NOW FOR KINDERGARTEN IN 2024



## Enrolments are still open for 2024!

Kindergarten places are filling fast for 2024, so it's important you register as soon as possible!

Remember, if your child is attending 3-year-old kindergarten this year, you must submit an enrolment registration to secure a place in a 4-year-old program in 2023. And if they are currently attending 4-year old kindergarten and will go to school next year, you must enrol at the school. **This does not happen automatically.**

Visit our [website](#) for more information about how to enrol. You can also pick up enrolment forms from our office, our kindergartens or school offices. If you need any assistance to register, please contact our office on 9306 1662.

## Important dates and events for Term 3



- 7th to 13th August - Dental Health Week
- 12th to 20th August - Science Week
- 19th to 25th August - Book Week
- 6th September - Early Childhood Educators' Day
- 7th September - Indigenous Literacy Day
- 8th September - NSEY Conference (our services will be closed on this day)
- 9th September - RUOK? Day
- 8th September - International Literacy Day

## School term dates for 2023-24

|              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| Term 3, 2023 | 10 July - 15 September  |
| Term 4, 2023 | 2 October - 20 December |
| Term 1, 2024 | 30 January - 28 March   |
| Term 2, 2024 | 15 April - 28 June      |
| Term 3, 2024 | 15 July - 20 September  |
| Term 4, 2024 | 7 October - 20 December |

## ENROLMENT CHECKLIST

Once you have registered your child for kindergarten and been offered a place, you will receive an invitation to an enrolment interview at the kindergarten. When you attend your interview please ensure you bring the following documents:

- ☐ Your child's original birth certificate
- ☐ Your child's current Immunisation History Statement
- ☐ If your child has an allergy or illness, a Medical Action Plan signed by your child's doctor.
- ☐ A copy of your health care card/pension card or accepted visa details (if relevant)
- ☐ Medicare card details
- ☐ Copies of parent/guardian qualifications (such as a Certificate, Diploma or Degree). This is required to ensure funding from the Department of Education and Training.





# Early Years Awards nominations

## Recognising excellence amongst our teams

We nominated Michelle Ives for Early Childhood Teacher of the Year in the Early Years Awards, for her excellent program and leadership at Glenroy Central Kindergarten.

I am humbled to be nominated for Early Childhood Teacher of the Year by my Early Years Management (EYM) organisation. Although I know there is always more to learn, it is an opportunity to reflect on my career and acknowledge the many ways I go above and beyond for children and families, while supporting others to do the same.

The VEYLDF Practice Principles underpin the way I work with children, families and other professionals each day. I encourage critical reflective practice with my team. I have strong, trusting relationships with children and families and regularly draw on their knowledge and culture. I provide rich learning experiences that challenge children at all levels of ability and respond to each child's interests and needs. I use a combination of child-led learning and intentional teaching across a range of domains, linking in with our co-located school and drawing on my partnerships with other professionals (such as Allied Health) to incorporate therapeutic strategies within the program.

Fundamentally, I want every one of my children to develop the skills and dispositions for lifelong learning, and have the right supports in place to take full advantage of their education, both at kindergarten and once they transition to school. Being in a very multicultural area with some disadvantage, I work hard to connect with families and show them I am there to support them.

I think the key is remaining open to learning and new ideas, and to keep challenging yourself to improve. Over the many years I have been an ECT I have been fortunate to collaborate with many experienced educators and professionals who have contributed to my ever-changing knowledge of how to provide a high-quality program for children. I feel a responsibility to mentor others in the same way. My current EYM organisation given me so many opportunities to learn and grow further, motivating me to be the best I can. I take every chance to learn from a variety of different people across the organisation and at the school where my service is located, which further strengthens my knowledge and practice.





## Early Years Awards nominations - continued

### Community partnerships at Lorne Street Kindergarten



We also nominated Lorne Street Kindergarten for a Community Partnerships Early Years Award, for their Intergenerational Program in partnership with Merri-bek Council.

The program brings senior members of the community into the kindergarten to form fun and meaningful relationships, and provides opportunities to play together, share experiences, knowledge and skills that are mutually beneficial. The learning, one-on-one interactions and meaningful connections developed through the program have had many benefits for children and senior participants alike.

The teachers fully embraced the opportunity by adapting their program to provide appropriate physical space and open-ended opportunities for play and learning based on the interests of the children and participants. In preparation for the program, the teaching team referred to a handbook and video provided by Merri-bek Council which gave them ideas for how to incorporate the program. They discussed the program with the children, and read them books such as “Wilfred Gordon Macdonald Partridge” and “Grandpa’s Shoes” in preparation. They communicated to families about the benefits of the program and how it would work.

The participants were encouraged to share their stories and memories of play as a child, as well as their interests and skills, contributing to an emergent curriculum that extended well beyond the actual visits. For example, one participant, Sam (91), shared stories of growing up before there were modern conveniences and technologies. He talked about his family making their own butter, which captured the children’s curiosity, leading to an experience to research how butter is made, and to make their own butter at kindergarten.

The older participants are good at just ‘being’. Despite their physical limitations they get down to children’s level, dress up, get in the sandpit, and aren’t afraid to get dirty. The program has enabled children to build relationships with other trusted adults through meaningful interactions in play. Well done to the Lorne Street team for making the program a success!







## Increased child care subsidy from 1 July



From July 2023, the Australian Government is increasing the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) for most families using early childhood education and care, which includes Outside School Hours Care. This also means some families previously not eligible for CCS will now get it.

Around 96 per cent of Australian families currently using child care – more than 1.2 million families – will be better off under these changes. No families will be worse off.

Changes from 10 July include:

- The family income limit to be eligible for CCS is increasing from \$356,756 to \$530,000 per annum.
- The maximum amount of CCS is increasing from 85% to 90% for families earning \$80,000 or less.
- Families earning between \$80,000 and \$530,000 will receive an increased CCS rate.
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children can get at least 36 subsidised hours of early childhood education and care per fortnight, regardless of their family's activity level.

Families earning below \$362,408 with more than one child aged 5 or under in care can still get a higher rate for their second and subsequent children. For more information on the CCS increases commencing 10 July, or to find out how much you could save, visit [www.childcaresubsidy.gov.au](http://www.childcaresubsidy.gov.au)

## NSEYC Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Northern Schools Early Years Cluster Inc. was held on 24th May 2023 at the Glenroy Community Hub,

All Board members re-nominated and were elected for another term.

The Board members for 2023 are:

Valerie Karaitiana - Chair

Suzie Mansell - Secretary

Felix Ohle - Treasurer

Leanne Giardina - Member

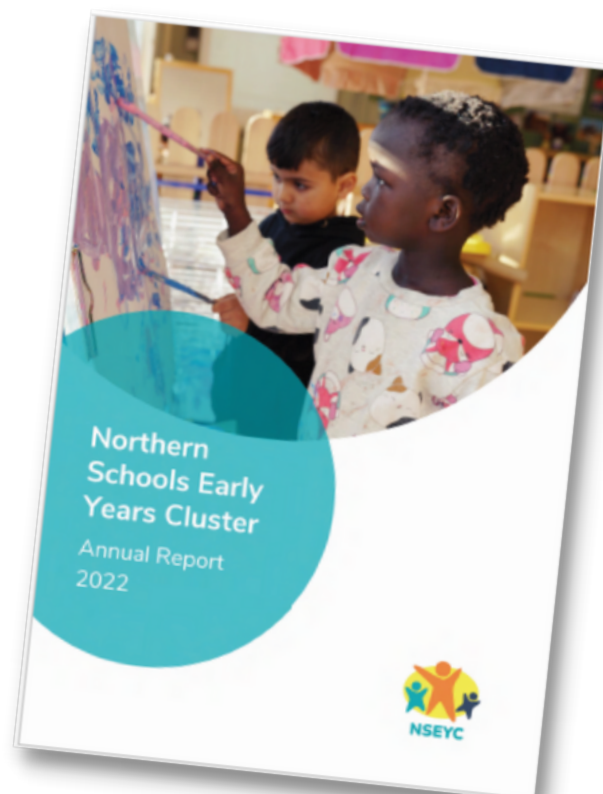
Lynne Gunning - Member

Pam Streete - Member

Kathy Townley - Member

Maureen Campbell - Member

## Download the NSEYC Annual Report 2022





## Will Will Rook Preschool featured in Department of Education newsletter for Reconciliation Week

### Uncle Jim and Aunty Kylie Berg's Visit: Weaving Cultural Connections at Will Will Rook Preschool



As part of the ongoing celebration of Reconciliation Week at Will Will Rook Preschool ( a Northern Schools Early Years Cluster (NSEYC) service), Uncle Jim and Aunty Kylie Berg graced the preschool with their presence. Their visit was a beautiful opportunity to engage the children and the team in a heartfelt yarn, sharing the significance of their possum skin cloaks and the intricate paintings adorning the inside. Aunty Kylie's presence held a special significance, as she used to visit the site when it was a KODE school, volunteering her time to read with the children and engage in artwork. The reunion with Aunty Kylie and Uncle Jim filled the atmosphere with joy and excitement as they were warmly welcomed back to the site.

With anticipation and curiosity, the children, families, and staff gathered around as Uncle Jim and Aunty Kylie unfolded the stories behind the possum skin cloaks. As they draped the cloaks over their shoulders, everyone felt a sense of honour and reverence for these tangible pieces of culture.

Amidst the laughter and playful exploration, Aunty Kylie gifted the children with a precious gift—a special lullaby sung in language. The room was filled with melodic tones and gentle whispers, as the children listened intently to the enchanting sounds. The lullaby carried with it the ancient wisdom and love of generations past, fostering a deep connection to the rich cultural heritage of Australia's First Nations people.

Through this meaningful interaction, the children at Will Will Rook Preschool experienced firsthand the weight, warmth, and cosiness of the possum skin cloaks. They were enveloped in the stories woven into the fibres, feeling a sense of belonging and pride as they embraced the cloaks.

Uncle Jim and Aunty Kylie's visit left a lasting impact on the children, families, and staff of Will Will Rook Preschool. It served as a reminder of the importance of preserving and sharing cultural practices, bridging the gap between past and present.

Through such meaningful encounters, early childhood education becomes a powerful vehicle for building bridges, fostering understanding, and nurturing a future generation that embraces diversity, unity, and reconciliation. Will Will Rook Preschool, inspired by Uncle Jim and Aunty Kylie's visit, will continue its commitment to weaving cultural connections, ensuring that every child's journey is infused with the spirit of respect, pride, and cultural awareness.





## Official openings at Molesworth St and Holy Child Kindergartens

We were excited to officially open our new kindergartens at Holy Child Primary School and North Melbourne Primary School during Term 2, with the help of Ingrid Stitt, Minister for Early Childhood and Pre-Prep, our local MPs, the school principals, Department of Education and Victorian School Building Authority Representatives. The official opening of Molesworth Street Kindergarten at North Melbourne Primary School was also attended by Wurundjeri elder Aunty Di Kerr.

Holy Child Kindergarten offers 15 hours per week of FREE kindergarten for 3- and 4-year-old children from a brand new modular building established on the school site, which opened last year. The program is led by Early Childhood Teacher Deepa Sehgal. There is also a community hub on site.

Molesworth Street Kindergarten is situated on the top floor of the new vertical campus of North Melbourne Primary School, which opened in Term 2, 2023. It also offers 15 hours per week of FREE kindergarten for 3- and 4-year-old children. The program is led by Early Childhood Teachers Audrey Calonge and Hannah Stewart-Smith.

*Photos: Top left - Molesworth St Kindergarten and North Melbourne Primary School  
Bottom row - Holy Child Kindergarten*

