

It is with pleasure that I present my annual report for the Stars 4 year old kindergarten group and the 3 year old Friday Fun Group for the Yarrowonga Preschool.

This year saw changes to the 3 year old Fun group with 5 hour sessions being offered, instead of 3 hour sessions. I was offered the position of teacher for the Friday Fun group and a 3 hour session with the Comets 4 year old group as well as teaching the Stars 4 year old kindergarten group for 15 hours a week. I also continued in the position of Educational Leader.



The Stars kinder group consisted of 30 children with a fairly equal mix of boys and girls. Julie Pritchard and Martine Schultz, who was newly appointed to the position, worked alongside me. This year's program focused on developing core body strength and motor skills with large amounts of active play and core body strength exercises were incorporated into each session. A ninja warrior course, just like the show the children were watching on TV at the time, was suggested by one of children. This proved to be an excellent opportunity to extend the children's gross motor skills as they were all eager to suggest ways to construct a course, help with building it and then were very motivated to climb and work their way through it. We also regularly went out into the local community, visiting community groups, such as the CFA, library, local school etc. as well as visiting nearby parks, playgrounds and walking tracks. A session at the gym was a highlight as the children were able to work their way through a very interesting obstacle course and then complete a variety of exercises with the support of one of the gym instructors. All these experiences provided the children with further



opportunities to develop their core and motor skills, while also developing their skills across other domains. The outings also reinforced our presence in the community with members of the community regularly stopping to admire and chat to educators and children as we made our way to the various venues.

My 3 year old Fun group consisted initially of 22 children. This number increased to 26 from the beginning of term 2 due to a high demand from families. Jenny Hardman worked alongside me and Shanae Pettit joined our team when our numbers increased. This group of children displayed a strong interest in literature and educators regularly spent time reading stories to individuals and small groups. To extend this interest and support further literacy development, storytelling using puppets and props and dramatization of stories was incorporated into the program. These children also enjoyed watching the building work with bobcats, diggers and trucks that was taking place across the road at the school.



We were fortunate to have had several students work with us over the year. Jasmine Ammer a fourth year student from Swinburne University completed a 4 week placement in the our room, Nabila Mahboob, a Certificate 3 student from the Yarrowonga Neighbourhood House completed her practical placement with us over approximately 3 weeks and Lauren a Year 10 student from Genazzano College completed a week's work experience with us.

As educational leader I worked with staff to update our Emergency Management Plan and together we held regular evacuation drills throughout the year. I also worked with staff to update our Quality Improvement Plan and initiated a larger emphasis on recycling and sustainability at the Centre. As a result of our discussions at teacher and staff meetings we are now trying to; purchase more sustainable products for our Centre and program, reduce the amount of printing we do, model sustainable practices and to teach the children about recycling and sustainability. Families are also being encouraged to pack their children's food in washable containers or to use bees wax wrappers and to supply email addresses so that information can be shared electronically.

For me personally the year was challenging as I had finally made the decision to commence my early childhood teacher validation. As I hadn't completed any formal study since 1987, getting back into submitting papers for formal assessment was quite scary. With Corina's support, I completed the 8 standards and submitted my work. While I found the validation experience onerous and stressful, it did have benefits particularly in relation to encouraging me to reflect on my teaching practices and to make changes as a result of this reflection.

In conclusion I would like to thank all my co-workers, particularly Julie, Martine, Jenny and Shanae who I have worked directly with this year. Their support, friendship and professionalism throughout the year has enhanced the quality of the program that we offer to our families. Thank you also to our Parent Committee for their fundraising work and assistance with the day to day tasks that keep our Centre operating smoothly. Further, thank you to all the GRPSA staff, in particular Corina and Sue for their ongoing support and their work in ensuring that our service meets the needs of our community. To the families who use our service, thank you for entrusting the care and education of your children to us. They are all amazing and unique individuals and I have enjoyed getting to know them and working with them this year.

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