We encourage freedom of thought and are inspired by children’s ideas and interests

From our President…

ANOTHER year is over and for many of us a very special chapter has come to an end.

Many families, including mine have now finished their kindergarten journey and are headed to school. I hope, like us you have enjoyed your time at Ascot Kindergarten. I know how much we will miss the kindergarten, but I am so thankful for the experiences my daughters have gained over the past four years.

There is no doubt that 2013 has been an eventful year at Ascot Kindergarten. There have been many changes and some uncertainties through-out the year. Staff has changed, the timetable will again change and the legal requirements continue to grow. It continues to be a time of change for kindergartens across the country.

I would like to thank the staff and families of the kindergarten for their help and support this year. I would especially like to thank those families who volunteered their time to help out in the kinder, whether it was by taking their turn at classroom help, a working bee or a fundraising event. Your help is always needed and always appreciated.

To the 2013 committee and the fundraising subcommittee, my thanks to you all for the meetings you attended, the decisions you made and your amazing work through the year.

For those returning in 2014, I am sure you are looking forward to another fun year next year.

As I leave the kindergarten, I want to wish new president Sophia Karanatsios and her new committee all the best for 2014. To Steph and all the team, my many thanks for all your support and guidance over the past two years and best wishes for the future. I will miss you all.

From my family to yours, we wish you all the best for the Festive Season and a wonderful New Year.

With warmest regards,
Karen Lyon
President
2013 Ascot Kindergarten Committee of Management.

A tribute to our outgoing President…

To Karen, we bid a tearful farewell. Through two years in the role of Ascot’s Committee President, she has guided us through a great many challenges. Two years as President may seem like a grand commitment indeed. But Karen was an avid fundraiser prior to her Presidential role, dedicated to providing the funds to update resources and maximise learning for all the children.

Karen has seen us through significant DEECD changes, such as Universal Access (15 hours for 4 year olds), that have required a total overhaul of timetabling and staffing arrangements. She has had a finger in every pie, from finances to working bees and baking for cake stalls. Karen has shown us that every contribution to the kinder holds significant value, leading to developmental opportunities for the children.

From her role as parent to manager, Karen has respected the educators’ jobs and taken every opportunity to learn about early childhood education. She has kept the committee positive, with many a laugh (and a few tears at the AGM). All her decisions are based on upholding the rights of the children. Karen’s commitment to caring for our kinder community creates a strong sense of belonging for us all. Thank you Karen, for your strong leadership, open mind and passion for this community.

From the Ascot Kinder Committee 2013.

Karen juicing fruit with children on Kinder Duty
From the Educators…

We are near the end of a busy and exciting year. At the end of Term 3 we said goodbye to Vikki who has been part of the kinder for many years. We wish Vikki well for her future and thank her for all her contributions. At the beginning of Term 4 we welcomed Carol Roe to our educational team. Carol has joined the team with great passion and enthusiasm and she has settled in so well, it feels as though she has been here all year. We look forward to her continuing on next year.

All four groups have had many fun and interesting experiences this year. Outdoors; children have explored the miniature world of all the mini beasts that live in our garden. They have collected and observed bugs and worms and carefully removed snails from our vegetable patch. There have been dinosaur digs and fossil play as children discovered insects and dinosaurs frozen in coloured ice. We have seen pirates go on treasure hunts and make maps and swords and hats. There have been builders and engineers working on construction sites and initiating pretend working bees to fix and paint the kinder. There has been a focus on teaching children to use real tools during their construction and deconstruction play and the importance of playing safely. Children have challenged their gross motor skills by climbing higher and jumping from trees. An interest in outdoor cooking has continued which has extended into cooking and preparing food in the indoor environment for children to share. We have harvested vegetables and herbs from our garden and made salads and vegetable platters. We have made fruit salads and fruit juices, fruit smoothies and nori rolls. Indoors; during the rainy weeks in particular, we have built cities and train tracks, made cubbies and camp sites and tall towers and castles. Small worlds have been created by children for fairies and bugs and frogs and dinosaurs. There has been a renewed interest in art and creative activities like painting, collage, weaving and necklace making. This year we observed a very strong interest in Halloween and children celebrated in the streets and at kinder, dressing up and trick or treating and decorating the kinder. We can’t wait to see where the children in 2014 will take us and what fun we will have!

At the end of this year we will say goodbye to Katie and wish her well and welcome Blair Woodman to the team. We are already making plans for a fabulous 2014 and can’t wait to start a new journey with our wonderful Ascot Community!

Steph and the team

Farewelling Katie,

We are all very sad to see Katie, teacher of Red and Yellow groups, depart at the end of this year. As a new graduate, Katie came to us with a passion for creative, open ended learning and has strived to incorporate this into her teaching. She has made a huge impact on Ascot, and only part of it is her commitment to quality early childhood education. Katie played a role in writing our philosophy and incorporating sustainability into the program. She has shown herself to be a dedicated member of her educational team and the kinder community. It is clear why the children in her groups adore her and their families will no doubt miss her.

The committee would also like to thank Katie, for coming on board when she did and jumping in at the deep end. There is much to learn, and the time commitment is significant. Working with parents as committee members has its own challenges. I hope that Katie leaves us with the feeling that we have opened doors and we wish her success in Stockholm. Maybe we’ll even get her back one day so that we too can benefit from the wisdom garnered from this journey!

Goodbye Katie and thank you.
Fundraising Wrap Up for 2013

For me this year as Fundraising Co-ordinator has been a great way of meeting other families in the Kinder community in an interactive way, as well as helping to raise funds to maintain facilities and to purchase much needed items for the children to improve their play and learning experiences.

The Welcome BBQ in March is the biggest event on the Ascot Kinder calendar where the children and families get to mingle, share a meal in a relaxing and fun way, as well as raising funds. This year, the face painting and popcorn were a definite hit with the children!

Gold coin Mother’s Day gift wrapping at Moonee Ponds Central was also a fun, social event for volunteers to spend a couple of hours helping out, and the shoppers were very appreciative of our efforts.

Our Ladies Movie night was held at The Sun Theatre. The evening included a complimentary glass of wine and a chat before the movie, The Great Gatsby. It also included great door prizes for some lucky movie-goers. What a great way to spend an evening!

The Bunnings BBQ held at the new Maribyrnong store, the week after the Grand Final was a fantastic day and a great success! Lots of great volunteers from the kinder community had a ball selling sausages in bread, all the while raising money for the kinder.

These are just some of the fundraising activities run over the course of the year. Overall it’s been a fantastic year and I really must give HUGE thanks to all those involved in the Fundraising Subcommittee, and to Shannon, all of whom have helped out immensely. Also thanks to the lovely volunteers in the kinder community who have generously donated their time to help out in the various activities throughout the year.

Sophia Karanatsios

From the coordinator…

Just a quick note from me to say thank you and goodbye. Thank you to the 2013 Committee of management. Especially to those who will be leaving at the end of this year. A special thank you to Karen and the staffing committee who have worked so diligently this year and coped so well with the many changes and challenges we have faced. As a small community kinder and a sector operating under a changing government and updated laws and regulations it is no easy task. Thank you to the children for making our job so special and important and for bringing so much knowledge, creativity and enthusiasm to our program. Thank you to the families who have helped in so many ways throughout the year – you all know who you are! Welcome to our new families and committee members for next year! Thanks to Tara Usher our administration officer, for all her help and support during the year. She is an invaluable part of the kinder and although many of you may not see the work she does, please know that she is helping the kinder enormously. Thank you to Katie, Jenny, Megan, Vikki and Carol. I am very proud of our educational team and where we are heading and look forward to an exciting and productive 2014!

Happy Holidays! Enjoy the festive season!

Steph

Important Dates and Reminders

Monday 9th December
Term 1 fees due
Enrolment forms due

Monday 16th December
Last day for Red Group

Tuesday 17th December
Last day for Blue Group

Wednesday 18th December
Last day for Green & Yellow Groups

END OF YEAR PICNIC IN THE PARK – a celebration for all families

Jellis Craig are proudly associated with Ascot Kinder and will donate 10% from your property sale fee to our kinder.
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