



42 Isabella Drive, SKENNARS HEAD NSW 2478

Ph: 66 87 5961 Fx: 66 87 6706

Email: admin@stannesldcc.org.au or
narelle@stannesldcc.org.au

Dear Families,

Everyone here at St Anne's (all of our educators, Sharni in the Office and Mark in the kitchen....and me of course) would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of our new families to St Anne's for 2017. We further extend this warm welcome to all of our families who have returned to St Anne's following our Christmas break. We trust Christmas for you and your family (albeit a little while ago now) was full of opportunity for you to spend time together as a family with some elements of relaxation!

Our foyer notice extends the hope to all of you that 2017 be kind to all of us and that we all contribute positively each day in some way.

The start of each year is always busy with children settling in to their new routines in their new rooms, embarking on building new relationships with new teachers and some new peers, and for our newest children (especially for those in the Pebbles Room in the Nursery), difficulty as they separate from their family and start becoming familiar with those caring for them in their family's absence.

We have a strong focus at the start of each new year to help children "find their rhythm" and build a sense of belonging in their new room—if you think there is something we need to know that will help us and your child please let us know. You have already shared a lot of information in the "About My Child" document which we thank you for—the more information we have the better we can support individual children. Our partnership with you is very important to us!

Here is an excerpt from our Centre's Parent Information Booklet that might help:

How to help your child settle in

Before your child's first day at St Anne's (if time allows) we encourage you to make as many visits as you would like to help your child become familiar with the setting, the people in it, sounds and smells within it, their group room, the bathroom and the outside learning area.

It's important to familiarise children with the environment and routines and to be given support through any worries they may have. Often what seems simple to us as adults, gives children the most anxiety, in particular routines like toileting, eating, rest time, and, who will they play with.

It is helpful if you learn the staff's names and use them in your conversations at home with your child so that your child gets the sense that you (the most significant person to them) feels comfortable with the setting and the people who are going to care for them in your absence.

On your child's first day and when you are ready to leave:

Make sure your child is involved in an activity with a staff member close by or, in the direct company of a staff member

Say goodbye to them happily and confidently and leave without hesitation

We encourage you to ring anytime and as often as you want, to ask how things are going for your child.

Your confidence in us (or alternatively, your anxiety) is quickly transferred to your child through your body language and your words.

It is VERY usual for parents to feel anxious, upset, torn, and unsure when leaving children in care with adults you may not know, particularly if it is for the first time, and particularly if your child has had a previous experience that was not so positive. Please let us know how you are feeling; your feelings and thoughts matter to us and knowledge of your emotional disposition helps us support you and your child to the best of our ability.

St Anne's can seem a busy place but we are NEVER too busy to help you, answer any of your questions, and do anything we can to make sure your child has a very good start to their early childhood education and care.

Please read on to make sure you are as informed as you can be.

*Yours as we educate and care for children together,
Narelle Dewhurst.*

Centre Director.



*St Anne's turned 7 years old on
Wednesday 27 January.*

PLEASE put your child's name on EVERYTHING!



It is so much easier finding the owner of things when there is a name!

Please share your thoughts with us!

Your thoughts, your opinion, your concerns, your feedback (both positive and negative) is always WELCOMED and ENCOURAGED.

(eg. ideas, thoughts, feedback in relation to your child's educative programme, the centre menu, information/articles for the Newsletter, policies)

You can do this in any of the following ways:

- **Verbally** to Sharni at Reception Office, to Narelle (Centre Director) or to any of the educators.
- **In writing**—email or post or put into the 'drop box' (the slot in the upper desk at Reception)
- **Use the Feedback Form** available in the display holder on the upper desk at Reception
- **Talk** to any one of the staff team members
- Write us a note using the **Message Slips** clipped to your child's room's Communication Diary.

This will help us meet your child's and your needs in the best way possible!

Choose water as a drink

Tap water is not only thirst quenching, but it also contains fluoride which helps make teeth stronger.

Water is:

- cheap
- readily available
- a thirst quencher without any kilojoules or sugar
- essential for the optimal function of the body

Toddlers need around 1 litre of fluid a day and preschoolers around 1.2 litres each day to stay hydrated (more in hot weather). Most children enjoy drinking water if they get into the habit from an early age. Make water 'the norm' in your household by always having water available for children and drinking plenty of water yourself.

Ref: *Munch and Move Newsletter Snippets*



St Anne's CARPARK "rules"

- Drive VERY slowly (5kms) as you enter and leave the St Anne's carpark.
- Do not get out of your car and leave it with the engine still running while in the carpark.
- Do not leave children in your car while you come in to St Anne's.
- Children MUST be in an appropriate child car seat and restraint for their age, BEFORE you leave the carpark.



Milk

Milk is a healthy option for children as it is a great source of protein and calcium, which help to build strong bones and teeth. Children need at least 6 'child' serves of calcium rich foods a day. A serve equals a half glass of milk (100ml) or a 20g slice of cheese or a mini tub of yoghurt (100g).

Babies and young toddlers should drink full cream milk because they need the energy (kilojoules) it provides, whereas children over 2 years of age should drink reduced fat milk (around 1.4 – 2% fat) as they are now eating a greater variety of foods that can meet their energy needs. Reduced fat milk contains less fat and kilojoules than full fat milk but the same amount of protein, calcium and vitamin D.

Q and A: Things that you might need to know

Where do I take my child if I arrive before 8.15am?

All children gather in the 'early start' room—the Shells Room (over the hall from the Reception desk). Children will then be collected by their educators and taken to their 'home room' at 8.15am.

Where will I find my child in the afternoon?

Nursery children (Pebbles and Pippies children) will stay in their Nursery area until 5pm. They will then be taken to the Shells Room (the 'end of day' room) to be collected by you when you arrive.

Shells, Rockpools and Seabirds children will start their 'mixed age group' play in the Preschool outside play area around 3-3.30pm. Children who are at the Centre at 5pm will then all gather in the Shells room ready for you to pick them up.

Signing your child in and out.

This is a regulatory requirement and so is VERY important that you remember to do it.

It is a good idea to Sign your child in as you walk into the Centre upon arrival, AND, sign your child out as soon as you come into the Foyer to pick your child up. Sunscreening your child upon arrival will also ensure your child is 'sunsafe' for their first few hours at the Centre.

How can I tell my child's teacher something if they have not started work when I bring my child or if they have left when I return to pick my child up?

The Nursery children each have a communication book. That is your way (and our way) of communicating if we don't get to see each other personally. Of course you are very welcome to also make a phone call during the day to speak to your child's educator (s), OR, use a 'message slip' from the plastic pouch above the educators' desks.

The Shells, Rockpools and Seabirds classes have 'communication diaries' that sit on top of the children's bag cupboards. You are welcome to write a message in the diary OR, clipped to those diaries are the 'message slips' for more private communications. Just write your message and leave it on the teacher's desk in the room, OR, give it to one of the other educators to give to your child's teacher, OR, put it into the 'drop box' at Reception. Sharni will clear the drop box in the morning and pass the message on to your child's teacher.

How do I know what my child has been doing during the day?

This is communicated differently in each room although each room DOES have a "Day Book" or a "Daily Experiences" book on display either just outside their room or in their room on top of the children's bag cupboards for you to read some of the experiences your child's class have been engaged in during the day. Each room also displays their weekly or fortnightly 'Programme'. You are invited

and encouraged to read this so you can see what has been planned for each day AND what other experiences/activities may have emerged spontaneously and have been recorded.

Please just ask one of your child's educators where the 'display' spot for that programme is so you can check it regularly.

We also invite YOU to contribute to your child's educative programme by talking to us about your child's interests, or a particular event or experience that has been meaningful to your child within his/her family—your child's teachers will then be able to extend on this within the Centre programme. Conversations with your child's teachers about their current learning and development and how you would like to see that supported are also valuable in relation to a collaborative partnership with you in planning for your child's on-going learning and development.

If my child is sick or away do I still have to pay and can I have a "make up day" at another time.

Your child's enrolled place is maintained by you paying fees for that place. If your child is away you do need to continue paying fees. We do not implement "make up" days at St Anne's.

Please read the Fees Policy for more detailed information in relation to Fees and Attendance. Just ask and we can email it or copy it for you.

What will happen if I am late to pick my child up?

We really appreciate you being at the Centre BEFORE 6pm. Centre close time is 6pm. Please read this excerpt from the Fees Policy.

10. Late Fees

10.1 It is important that all children be collected from the Centre prior to closing time. Staff are rostered to finish work at 6pm. Please ensure that you arrive with sufficient time to complete all tasks at the Centre and be off the premises by service closure time.

10.2 We understand that a parent may be delayed and unable to be at the Centre prior to closing time through circumstances beyond their control. Please call the Centre to let staff know what is happening and your estimated time of arrival.

10.3 If a family is late more than 3 times within a calendar year, the family will be asked to "show cause" why the child's placement should not be terminated.

10.4 A late fee of \$10 for each 5 minutes (or for each part of a 5 minute period) will be charged for children not collected by Centre closure time. This is used to offset staff payment for over-time which will be incurred.

Who gets 'priority of access' to enrol?

Priority 1 -A child at risk of serious abuse or neglect

Priority 2 –Children of parents who pass the work/study test with Centrelink

Please read the Parent Handbook for full details.

Where do I find a copy of the Parent Handbook?

There is one on the display shelf in the Centre's foyer AND a copy has been uploaded on the Centre's website. Go to: www.stannesldcc.org.au, click on Information then Parent Handbook.

When does my child transition to the next room?

Children cannot transition into the next room, even if they are of the appropriate chronological age, if there is no vacancy. When a vacancy occurs a child will be able to transition into the next room, if of the appropriate age AND if both parent and teacher believe it is in the child's best interest educationally and emotionally. It needs to be viewed that there is nothing competitive about moving into the next age group room. We will encourage parents not to think of the transition as a 'graduation' or an indication that the child has more developed skills and abilities.

Children do not HAVE to move into the next age group room just because they turn that age. Just as children at school do not move into Yr 1 from Kindergarten as soon as they turn 6, or move into Yr 2 from Yr 1 as soon as they turn 7. There will be children in the Pebbles Room who may have turned 1yr, children in the Pippies Room who may have turned 2, children in the Shells Room who may have turned 3, children in the Rockpools Room who may have turned 4, and children in the Seabirds Room who may have turned 5....the change of chronological age does not necessarily mean a change of room—which cannot happen anyway until there is a space.

Also, consider....children are 1 UNTIL they turn 2, they are 2 UNTIL they turn 3, they are 3 UNTIL they turn 4, and they are 5 until they turn 6! So if for example, the room is for 2-3 year olds, they could be in that room until just before they turn 4!

The 'biggest' transition time is at the end of a year when the Seabirds children who have turned 5 move into Kindergarten at school. Their transition to school then leaves a number of spaces in the Seabirds Room, which in turn allows children in all rooms to also transition into their next room.

Educators (as are school teachers) are very aware of this and their approach to learning programmes is responsive to the children in their room, their individual competencies and skills, no matter what age.

We are also aware that some children will strongly benefit from the challenges a new room and age group will bring...if it is not possible for the transition when the child turns that age it will be something to anticipate as soon as it IS possible!

Some parents present the thought that children are disadvantaged if they are not able to transition when they turn a particular age. We don't see that the child is disadvantaged if not transitioned immediately. If educators saw it as a disadvantage then children would undergo transitions each time they had a birthday no matter what stage of their education they were up to.

Does my child have a place to leave his/her belongings?

Each child will be allocated a bag cupboard in their room for their belongings (bag, shoes, clothing, rest linen etc.) Due to the number of children enrolled at St Anne's and the variety of patterns of attendance it is likely that children will need to SHARE the bag cupboard with a child who attends on another day. Therefore, we ask that you EMPTY out your child's bag cupboard in between days of attendance and non-attendance.

Please take home your child's bag, rest linen bag, shoes, drink bottle etc. and art/craft work that they may have stored in their bag cupboard, to leave a space for the child who is sharing that bag space when your child is not in.

Just to reiterate:

- **Take home everything in your child's bag cupboard in between their days of attendance and non-attendance.**
- **If there is art/craft work in your child's bag cupboard please take that home for them as well. If any art/craft work needs to stay at the Centre the educators will have stored it in a safe place.**

Should I put my child's name on belongings?

YES! This is extremely important. There are lots of children at St Anne's and they do not stay JUST in their own room all day. It is likely that they will leave particular belongings in other parts of the Centre or in another room eg. a toy that they bring from home, their shoes/thongs/sandals, their drink bottle. Educators are as vigilant as they can be but cannot follow each child from spot to spot gathering their belongings... SO....we rely on the children having their names on those belongings.

It is also likely that 2 or even 3 children will have the SAME shoes, drink bottle or clothing item. It is likely that a child or a child's parent may pick up something that looks like theirs but isn't theirs!

SO PLEASE.... put your child's name on EVERYTHING!

Where do I find my child's soiled or wet clothing?

To ensure good health and hygiene, clothing soiled or wet from a toileting accident, is knotted into a bag and put into a "Soiled Clothing Bucket". For Nursery children this is kept in the Nappy Change Room, and for Shells, Rockpools and Seabirds children this is in the Centre's Laundry just next to the Kitchen, and is also noted next to the child's name on the Sign In-Out sheet that there is "Laundry to collect".

Excerpt from 'Raising Children Network' webpage re Settling your Child into Care.

Your feelings

Beginning child care is a major transition and can be both an exciting and emotional time for families – both children and parents. Although it's difficult, it's important for you to **be positive with your child about the experience**. Children have an amazing ability to pick up on when their parents are worried or anxious, so try not to share your worries or anxious feelings with your child.

This doesn't mean you can't show your feelings though – you might like to share them with your partner, a friend or a family member who can give you some support during this emotional time.

Gently encourage your child to play with the toys and do some activities while you're there.

Have positive conversations with your child about the new environment, friends, carers and activities.

Tips for saying goodbye

Despite your best preparations, your child might still find it difficult to separate from you. He might get upset and start crying. You can help by acknowledging your child's feelings, giving him words to help express himself, and comforting him. You could also try the following tips:

- Talk about an activity you and your child will do together when you get back home, such as playing in the garden or reading a story.
- Establish a goodbye routine, such as three kisses and a bear hug, high-fives or some other special gesture meaningful to your child.
- Let your child know that you or another familiar grown-up will be back to pick her up at a particular time, or after an event that your child understands, such as sleep or snack time.
- Keep the goodbye brief. After your goodbye routine, gently but firmly say goodbye to your child. Staying around to comfort your upset child can sometimes prolong distress and even make it worse.
- Allow your child's carer to gently lead him away to do something he enjoys, such as feeding the fish or watering the garden.
- If you're feeling distressed after seeing your child upset, call the centre about half an hour after you leave to see how your child is. Most children stop crying shortly after mum or dad goes.

- If your child's distracted when it's time for you to leave, you might feel tempted to sneak out without her noticing. This can make children more upset. They realise you've gone and haven't had a chance to say goodbye. It's best to let your child know you're going and say that you'll be back later.

My child isn't settling

Your child might settle happily in his new setting within a few days or few weeks. Some children keep getting upset after the first few weeks. Others might settle initially and then later get upset (often when the novelty of the new environment has worn off).

In all cases, stay calm and let your child express her feelings. Listen to what your child's saying. Is she showing signs of separation anxiety? If so, it's worth sticking with it for a little while, to give your child time to adjust. It's also important to communicate with the centre's staff – you can work together to develop settling strategies that you and the staff are comfortable with. The centre's group leader should be able to suggest some ideas that have helped other children in the past. As difficult as it might be, try to stay positive about your child's transition to care.

The Foyer Noticeboard

The Noticeboard above the Sign In-Out desk displays various information that may be of interest to you. Some of the displayed information is a 'regulatory requirement' and other information may have a more general purpose in relation to the Centre community or the broader community of Ballina and Lennox Head.

Please take a moment to familiarise yourself with the information displayed. On it you will find such things as:

- The Centre Weekly Menu
- The Staff team Monthly Roster (so you can see which staff team member is in the Centre at a particular time)
- The Centre Governance (hierarchy of management)
- The 'responsible person' (or Certified Supervisor) in charge of the Centre at any given time throughout the day
- Food Exclusion Alert
- The chart of recommended periods of exclusion for children with an infectious disease (as recommended by the National Health and Medical Research Council)
- The daily maximum UV index alert

St Anne's Staff Team for 2017



Narelle Dewhurst—Centre Director (Mon to Fri)

Sharon Melenhorst—Assisting Director (Tues to Fri)

Pebbles Room (0-1's room)

Deb Wilkinson—Room Team Leader (M/T/W/Th)

Brooke Moore (M/T/W/Th/Fri—Acting Room Leader Fridays)

Sam Manley (M/T and Fri)

Karen Moriarty (W/Th/F)

Shae Williams (Pebbles Educator on Maternity Leave)

Pippies Room (1-2's room)

Lucy Jackson—Room Team Leader (M/T/W/Th)

Nicole Rodda (M to Fri—Acting Room Leader Fridays)

Anne Lake (M/W/Th/F)

Sharon Melenhorst (Tuesdays)

Helen Callan (Fridays)

Shells Room (2-3's room)

Kaylene Nuttall—Room team leader (M/T and Th/F)

Robyne Earl—(M to Fri—Acting Room Leader Wednesdays)

Jess Quinnell—(Mon to Fri)

Stephanie Batson—(Mon to Fri)

Tayla Russell (Wednesdays)

Helen Callan—Additional Educator (Mon to Thurs)

Rockpools Room (3-4's room)

Ange Kirwan—Early Childhood Teacher (M/T-Team Leader)

Sharon Melenhorst—Early Childhood Teacher (W/Th/F-Team Leader)

Taryn McKenna-(Mon to Fri)

Carol Barlow-Additional Educator (M/T)

Kim Major-Additional Educator (W/Th/Fri)

Seabirds Room (4-5's room)

Fiona McFadden—Early Childhood Teacher (M/T/W—Team Leader)

Annalise Smith—Early Childhood Teacher (M/T and Team Leader on Th/Fri)

Jodie Cowan-(W/Th/Fri)

Carol Barlow-Additional Educator (Wednesdays)

Team Support Educators

Tayla Russel (M/T)

Leessa Tsikleas (W/Th)

Simone Frears (W/Th/F)

Centre Kitchen

Mark Latter (M-F)

Office Administrative Assistant

Sharni Donnelly (M-F)