

## **Monitoring, Assessment and Reporting at Kinma**

### Our Beliefs

*“Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself.”* (John Dewey)

When your child joins Kinma, they bring their whole self with them, not just their schooling self. They have already amassed an array of experiences: joyful moments, sad times, a range of firsts, frustrating incidents and insightful episodes. These experiences have shaped who your child is, how they decide to do what they decide to do and...why. At Kinma, we join in your child's learning journey. The teachers spend much time observing and assessing your child: how they learn, who they choose to mix with and how social interactions unfold, where they feel comfortable and where they do not, the situations that facilitate learning and those that pose challenges.

We look, we listen, we learn...about your child, from your child, with your child. Assessment is embedded in this relationship and is integral to our programming.

### Monitoring and Assessment

Your child brings his/her world into Kinma. We observe. Based on our observations, we join in your child's learning by providing appropriate stimuli to facilitate further learning. In this way, observations provide teachers with a rich monitoring and assessment tool.

When your child enrolls at Kinma, a number of staff observe her/him both within the classroom and outside in the playground. Observations focus on your child's interactions with other children, adults and the physical environment. Assessments are made of your child's behaviour plus their literacy and numeracy development. Over the course of the school year, further assessments are made. These are compared with the individual's assessments from earlier in the year. In this way, individual progress over the year is documented. This is known as developmental assessment.

Monitoring and assessment assist children, parents and teachers to be aware of the individual's:

- changes over time
- perceived strengths and weaknesses
- interactions
- concerns
- approaches to learning
- needs to be addressed

We monitor and assess children's development in various ways:

- observing (not inference) children at work and play (this is perhaps a teacher's most profound tool, often constituted as a kind of mental checklist, which derives from a knowledge of content and processes relevant to school, a knowledge of childhood and knowledge of the individual child). Observations are undertaken by a number of staff at different times. A team approach allows for as much diversity and support as possible. All observations are forwarded to the group teacher. These observations are collated and discussed with staff, children and parents at appropriate times.
- anecdotal notes
- collecting work samples for portfolios. Portfolios contain significant pieces of work and provide a longitudinal view of your child's development and progression. Other work is sent home at the conclusion of a unit of work.
- child's, teacher's and peer's assessment of various pieces of work
- self-assessment (children reflect on themselves and their learning process: what experiences do they enjoy, what do they excel at, what experiences do they dislike, what poses a challenge? Self-assessment can take various forms: labelled diagrams, written responses, diary entries and verbal responses.)
- teacher-student conferences (teacher and student discuss a piece of work the student has just completed. Conferences allow teachers to identify and address needs in context.)
- learning outcome continuums (these are government based programming documents)
- skills checklists
- group discussions and feedback
- photographs

## Reporting

Reports are one outcome of monitoring and assessment. The aim of reporting is for the teacher to communicate their understanding of the child to the parents. Reports are often followed up with formal or informal discussions, allowing parents, teacher and child to build a common understanding of the child's development. From there, the aim is to develop an agreed pathway forward for the child's future education, highlighting both the child's strengths and weaknesses.

Reporting is a dialogue involving teacher, parents and child. Each has an active role to play. The information and generalisations contained in reports are supported by a variety of other means of informing parents, including:

- weekly newsletters
- letters as reports
- classroom displays
- class or school meetings
- informal discussions
- parent information evenings (held each term)
- performances

There is some flexibility here to allow for additional reports, however the basic arrangement is:

- 2 formal interviews per year (at the beginning and middle of the year)
- 1 formal written report (at the end of the year)

The format these reports take is responsive to the changing needs of students and staff.

### Transition from Group to Group

When considering a child's transition between groups, many factors are taken into account. These include both the child's needs and the school's structure. The child's emotional, social, academic and physical development will influence this decision. Consultation takes place between the child, parents and teachers to ensure that the child is in the most supportive learning environment.

When your child moves to a new group, the previous teacher will discuss and pass on any relevant information to your child's new teacher. Your child's portfolio, anecdotal notes and letters are also exchanged and read.

### Developmental Stage Statements as Safeguards

The teacher's knowledge of your child grows as the child grows, largely through observation. As a teacher gleans more information, they are better able to tailor a supportive, appropriately challenging learning environment. This process never stops. The teachers are aware of your child's changing needs as they pass through different developmental stages. Such stages are not hard and unbending. They are general guidelines to aid teachers in planning appropriate learning experiences. The teachers use various developmental stage statements (NSW Board of Studies documents, Department of Community Services guidelines and other relevant developmental continuums) to guide their programming and assessment for each individual. [see attachment A]. This enables decisions to be made about the best ways to facilitate further learning for each individual. We do this to ensure that children are progressing commensurate with their ability. If we notice a discrepancy between a child's potential and the developmental stage statements, then we:

- clarify our understanding of the areas of need, through focused tasks and observation
- consult with parents (this is ongoing)
- provide opportunities for skill development
- continue to monitor skill development. Record observations in anecdotal notes.
- Consult specialists if needed.

It is this core mix of observation, communication, respect, facilitation and stimulation which roots the learning process at Kinma in the NOW. It is this process that allows each learner to continue the unique learning journey with which s/he has entered the school.