

Kinma

Kinma Newsletter - Thursday 29th October, 2009 - Term 4, Week 2

Dear Kinma Community

Last Thursday was a very sad event... farewelling... and celebrating... the life of Jordan McClelan one of our Kinma Kids.

For me personally it was extraordinary to see the families whom I met over decade ago, as they were leaving after a long stint at Kinma, as a new generation of families (of which I was a part) was coming in....

The 19 and 20 year olds who were Jordan's mates were Asheley's age (Year 6) when I saw them last.

Reflections from that afternoon.

To those who set up the space... thank you... the love, caring, deep feeling was everywhere... palpable... and held the sharing, grieving, nurturing needed.

To our gorgeous children who made the beautiful signs... your love, beautiful spirits and creativity twinkled like starlight even on a sunny afternoon

To the amazing 19 and 20 year olds, many of whom were Kinma Kids, you have grown magnificently and your sense of community and love strong and with you forever

To the honoured guests who came to Kinma to be together honouring Jordan... we are so glad we could offer a place for you to be together, with one of our own

In my last term at Kinma, after a dozen years, I feel very proud and grateful to be part of this community.... and I look forward to connecting with all of you, on hopefully happy occasions, as the years progress.

We are part of something very special.....

With much love and many blessings, Brynnie (Asheley (11) and Jarrah (14)'s mum)

THIS TERM

20 Oct	First Day Term 4
9 Nov	Sculpture By the Sea - Meet at school as usual as we will use a bus as transport.
10 Nov	Parent Meeting for Primary - Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n Roll, 6 to 8 pm
19 Nov	Talk Over Tea - What is Progressive Education?
18 Dec	Last Day Term 4

Working Bee - Sunday November 8

This is the last Working Bee for the year. Please come along and help us to dust off the cob webs, and tidy the Preschool and Primary.

The lists of jobs to be done are outside the Primary kitchen and the Preschool sign-in desk.

 **Bendigo Bank**

4471- Kinma



127 Coolowie Road, (PO Box 147) Terrey Hills, NSW 2084 * Phone: (02) 9450 0738 * Fax: (02) 9450 0748
enquiries@kinma.nsw.edu.au * www.kinma.nsw.edu.au * Office Hours: 8.30am – 3.30pm Monday to Friday

Preschool News

With any change that we experience at Kinma or in life, a thoughtful transition process can be a way to ensure a successful move into the unknown. Nothing is completely unknown and whether it is children starting Kinma preschool or preschoolers moving to Kinma primary or another primary school, we put a lot of thought into how to best support this. Drawing on knowledge and skills already established within the individual

For the children who are staying with us and joining Kinma Primary this has meant a weekly journey down to the primary school. Whilst many people miss the days when we were right next door to primary school and once we left our gate we were basically in the classroom, the current positioning allows us to talk as we walk. It allows the children the opportunity to think about what is coming up and prepare themselves for the change between the two environments and spaces. As we near the door we stop and the teacher (It has been Toby this term and last) will explain to the children what is happening and what the expectation on the children will be during this time. It might be as simple as, "We are going to go down the stairs put our lunch boxes on the bench, then enter the room where Mel will be telling us what we will be doing. I will be sitting at the back and you can choose where you sit". With that we will enter the space, Mel will always greet us as a group and then individually, acknowledging those children who may be joining for the first time introducing herself and then the classroom experience begins.

The talk and walk support the 'transition' of both physical movement and entering into a new space. Whilst children are not anxious about the move it is important that any questions they may have are answered during this

time by the teacher and that they feel secure and happy. At Kinma we often highlight how important we see relationships being in our educational philosophy. This is a good example of this. The transition with a familiar person, someone the children have a strong relationship with is the foundation to success in this concept. When we join the children and take them into the primary classroom we act as a support for the children. Mel greets the children and, in a way, welcoming them to the classroom and the group as she regularly does is a way to build up the sense of belonging which we see as also being vitally important for children (and adults) when entering any new space. Mel asks that her class welcomes the children into this new space and this next part of their educational journey. All we can hope for is that all the children no matter where they are going to primary school, are entering in to a supportive environment and feel that they 'belong' in their new space.

In the classroom Mel will often read a story not only longer and more word heavy than something the children might be used to, it also takes many pauses asking children maintain concentration to not only the story but the discussion, and contribute. The preschool children have shown themselves to be very attentive and ask questions showing a comprehension and attention to the details of the discussion and the story, which has been great to see. We also need to acknowledge Mel is a passionate and engaging storyteller and this helps the children. At the completion of the story the children will have a written task. Last week this involved making their own books. One of the preschool children at hearing this replied "I can't write", Mel passed this comment onto the group, she went to explain that sometimes books have no words, other children joined in agreeing

they had seen or own books that have no words, by engaging the class in this discussion it not only allows for other contributions from the learning community, it also helps to answer any other children's concerns about what 'writing as story' means and whether or not they can do it. Mel is showing these children writing a story is not just construction of letters and words, sometimes it is about putting thoughts on to paper, maintaining a theme, passing on a message, pictures, drawings, (this list could go on forever). One of the great things about Kinma is this acknowledgement there is not one-way to do or understand anything. The children are allowed to express themselves in different ways.

The children drew pictures and an adult scribed the words they wanted added to their page to explain their story, some of the children told a story, others listed things and drew them on each page. Most of the children also attempted (with great success) copying words written out for them on a separate piece of paper to add to their work. All the children showed they were able to understand the concept of a book and writing a story. Interestingly the child who said he could not write ended up having the most words to be scribed onto each page. This was important for him to be able to see he was very literate and now the journey begins to be able to write those words himself. Something it appears he will have no shortage of enthusiasm in doing. The children then leave their books and go out for morning tea. This does mean this experience is over, the children hold on to the books or put them away to be added to or revisited at a later date. There is no fast finishers or children having to finish before they can go to morning tea, it is about pacing yourself and learning at that pace. Each child gets something different out of this experience.

Preschool News

This idea of extending experiences for children is being mirrored in preschool. As we support these soon to be Kinma Primary school children as well as all children who are interested in joining in but especially those going to primary next year) to participate in longer more focused activities. Each day, time is made to do this whether it be a card game, small group activity or literacy experience. Through the relationships we have been able to build we can support the children to extend their knowledge and skills in a given area. In recent times we have encouraged children to write more as part of their play and use more literacy and numeracy ideas. Whether through making signs for the sand pit or the birthday invitations that have been coming out thick and fast out of the 'birthday area' in the 'Blue' room, the children are being asked to take their understanding to the next level.

The picture below is part of a play experience that involved children making a train and travelling around to different places, Ferdinand took on the role of the ticket seller in this play, but to do this he needed to make tickets. The Group followed

Ferdinand inside where a discussion about how to make tickets took place. Ferdinand drew an arrow on his ticket. Then he wanted to draw \$20 but explained to Toby that he does not know how to draw that number. Toby wrote \$20 on top of the page and Ferdinand copied it. He then got some tape and stuck the pages together. This is one example of many where children are encouraged to start participating in literacy experiences that extend their skills and knowledge. A copy of a train ticket has also been included to see the comparison, but on the day Ferdinand used his memory to construct what needs to go onto a ticket. (a dollar amount and arrow were seen as vital). He now acts as someone other children can go to for information if they want to make a ticket.

Whilst we do believe literacy and numeracy to be a very important part of what we do and of school in general, what we know from our collective experience as teachers and the research into what is most important for children entering primary. It has not been found that being able to write names or count to a hundred is most important (not

saying they are not important) but Self esteem, having confidence to try new things, knowing it is ok to make mistakes and being good at making and maintaining social connections are the most important skills for success not just at school but also for life. So transition to school does not begin in the term before school it begins from the day children are born, and when our newest children join us, until the day they leave we consider these ideas, they influence our philosophy and practices. We foster these skills not just so they will be ready for school but so they are ready for life.

Have a great week.

Deb, Jenny, Christine, Felicity, Celine and Toby



Mel's News

We discussed as a group what we would like to learn about this term. There were a number of things such as: Aboriginal people, nature, space, science, Egypt, butterflies, how do the movies make things look real, germs and diseases and animals. We discussed how it would be very difficult to fit all of these things in, so we decided to combine the study of Egypt and nature for the first part of the term and then do Science for the second part of the term. The children that were keen to learn about space and butterflies are going to do their own individual project and teach the others in the group some of the things that they learn.

So we have begun our study of Egypt. The children have brought in some books and we have learnt where in the world Egypt is. We learnt about the climate of Egypt and that the country is 90% desert. The children decided to create their own Egypt. We learnt about the Nile River and how it is the longest river in the world. Zac and some helpers painted the Nile River onto our Egypt. Others are gluing sand and pebbles to imitate the desert and others are making pyramids and the Sphinx to place in our Egypt. If you would like to you can come and check out our Egypt in the classroom. Maja and Jazzy are going to show all of the children how to write their names in hieroglyphics.

This term we will continue to read for the first half an hour. If you can spare 20 minutes on any morning to come and read with someone in our class, it would be much appreciated. We spend the first fifteen minutes reading on our own and then for the last 15 minutes we can read with others in the group if we would like to. We are also working in small groups to study words and learn how to write many words. We are learning about chunks of sounds and the beginning sounds of words. The "Ants in the Apple" group learnt the

letter 'n' this week.

Children were very excited for swimming some saying 'I couldn't get to sleep last night because I was so excited about swimming'. They all jumped into the pool happily and feedback from the lessons afterwards was positive. So if we can please remember to pack swimming gear every Thursday that would be great.



Michelle's & Suzanne's News

Dear Families,

For those of you that haven't met me, I'm Suzanne! I was very excited when Julie called me to ask me to come back this term and I've not been disappointed!

We had a great first week back. We spent some time getting to know each other and the children have worked exceptionally hard on their inquiries and we are almost ready to display them! We are going to invite the other 2 groups in to see our hard work and we would love for you to come and see the results of our investigations too! We'll let you know when they are up!

We have been using money as the basis for our Maths work this week and to help us do this we had great fun creating a Kinma shop in the classroom where the children made all the items and priced them up too.

This week we have started to think about the theme which is 'A Great Place to Live'. The children have begun by thinking about what they think would make a great place to live (in an imaginary way initially) and this will lead us into thinking about real life situations. Lidia and Sabreen chose to research a country of their choice to see how it compares to our country instead.

Please keep sending in any recyclables for the children to use in 3D construction model making. They are enjoying this at the moment!

Have a great week,

Love Suzanne



Juli's & Ineke's News

The older group's room was privy to a special few moments last week. Out of the tragedy of Jordan's death and funeral, came his parents' request to hold the wake on Kinma grounds. His family and friends gathered; tree planting by his favourite basketball court, sharing stories of Jordan, writing and drawing about him, watching footage of the amazing 19 year old's life. As the afternoon was drawing to a close, a group of 2000 year 6ers asked if they could check out their 'home' at Kinma - the Older group's room. Others followed. Some 20 students stood in a circle, reminiscing, remembering a friend who is no more. Their warm memories of Kinma were so wonderful to hear. As I stood among them, shortest by far, they asked me what it felt like to see them all gathered back here. Deep joy, I tried to express without crying, marred only by the realisation of how fast 'time' seems to pass and the weight of responsibility to 'live such time' richly. Jordan certainly did that and perhaps it was one of the messages he came to earth to deliver.

This did not translate to filling days with a myriad of 'things' and 'events', rather to live the core of who you are in relation to the community of whom you are a part. Jordan lived in his core a lot of his waking hours and I feel it's worth sharing because in trying to describe Kinma to people, that is my goal for each child. The staff here learn with the children in the hope that they can allow them to keep connection with the core sense of their being or if they have lost that connection for some reason, to guide them to the strength to reconnect to it. Interestingly, what I think happens in this process is that the parents who accompany each child on this journey, likewise face the challenges of such reconnection. There are glimpses of happy moments in childhood and there may be pain in what did not happen. Issues may arise which challenge the

hows and whys of life. This can be most uncomfortable. Perhaps it takes this discomfort, this unease, to grow into the next stage of one's being.

As I looked at each of your children this week, I looked with fresh eyes. After seeing the students from 6,8,10 years ago, I caught a glimpse of our current older group standing in some years time in such a circle. I wondered where their journeys would be taking them. On Tuesday afternoon, following an interesting dialogue on human rights and the children's interpretations of the value or lack thereof the Hammurabi code, as the oldest record of such, they had settled into their inquiry process.

They brought me back to the present:

- James building an Aztec temple
- Ash writing a script for a play she will either stage or film
- Tammy sketching the plan for her canvas (while interviewing people regarding their food tastes for the yr 6 farewell dinner)
- Olie on the phone to his dad, organising a meeting for the afternoon to plan the Blue Mountains walk which he will lead (November 20th by the way - 6am start)
- Jo-jo researching how to properly and responsibly care for a pet rat
- Jess torn between reading Twilight and researching her latest recipe using saffron
- Lana explaining the challenges she is facing in preparing materials for the class to teach them how to make a terrarium to Julia, a visiting Masters student who had heard about Kinma from Ineke and wanted to get a 'feel' of the place
- Josh recording in image and lively text all the characters in his favourite computer game
- Jasper - away - but were he here he would be reading about weaponry or lecturing us regarding his latest

strongly felt conviction

- Yaz investigating the Polya problem solving methodology after finishing the creative solving almanac
- Nick just starting out on designing a gameboard 'real time' version of his favourite Playstation game after deciding that the 'brain' heavy research on the 'brain' was too much and
- Alana creating patterns out of buttons and dreaming up her Halloween costume (as her inquiry stuff was at home)

all richly living now and with a little luck somewhere near their core.

till next week
juli and Ineke

Minutes from the Whole School Meeting: 23/10/09

1. Care Time (Older group)

The older group have been thinking about how to make care time work better. Some suggestions and questions they came up with are: Do we need to have it everyday? Could we have it on Wednesdays and Fridays or Fridays and Mondays or three times per week? Should we change groups?

Discussion was held in the meeting and children voted on seeing how it went for next week because if everybody cleaned up after themselves there would no need to have care time at all

2. Interrupting Games (Daniel, Hunter and Alex)

People are being silly and trying to distract others from playing games. It was already decided at a previous meeting that if people say 'stop' to someone then they need to stop.

If this is happening to you, it was decided that if someone doesn't stop when asked then you could go to an older student or to the teachers for support.

3. Leaving Animals Alone (Liam)

There were concerns about people disturbing animals and trying to stir up ants nests. During bushwalking some children try to move ants out of the way. This is disturbing them. It may be easier to call out to others to warn them that there are ants on the path.

4. Dogs at School (Reece)

People have been bringing in dogs to school and sometimes the dogs are fighting and people are scared of them and they can wee on our bags.

Is it a school rule that dogs can't be brought into the school?

This was discussed and children decided that it was a rule that dogs can't come into the school and into the classrooms. They are not allowed past the basketball court and they can only be brought into the school if the teacher gives permission.

Living Sustainably

The Cruelty Free Festival is on this Sunday, 1st November, at Belmore Park, Hay St, Haymarket, from 10 am to 5 pm. Entry is free. There will be cooking demos, yoga, meditation, entertainment, and 50+ stalls of cruelty-free food & products. More information is available at the festival's website.

www.crueltyfreefestival.org.au

Snack Attack

Snack Attack is our weekly meal prepared by parents in our primary school kitchen. This happens on a Wednesday and is served in preschool and primary.

Children enjoy the ritual of sitting together, having social interaction over food and it's a good opportunity to try new foods.

Main course is \$3.50, Dessert is \$1.00 and a drink is 50¢. A vegetarian option is available.

SNACK ATTACK FOOD/MENU GUIDELINES

Preferred foods are natural, preservative-free and organic where possible i.e. homemade soups, pasta dishes, tacos, homemade pizza and rice/vege dishes. Foods preferred not to be used are highly processed and refined foods i.e. chips, sweets, pies, hotdogs, sausage rolls and high sugar foods.

HOW SNACK ATTACK OPERATES

Parents help out on Snack Attack one Wednesday per term and will be working with another parent. We get about 40 orders in primary and 20 in preschool. Meals are either prepared at home, brought in to school then heated and served, or the kitchen is open from 9am to start cooking.

The following need to be put out around the barbecue outside the kitchen window: 4 pink/blue plastic draining boards, cutlery (in grey cutlery sorter in cupboard under front counter in the kitchen) and 2 buckets (one with warm soapy water and one with warm clear water).

At some time before 12pm, the preschool meal orders and money collected need to be picked up from preschool and brought down to the kitchen so that you know how many to cater for that day. We walk up with preschool meals in time for serving at 12.15pm - the staff will serve them. Primary comes out at 12.30pm for lunch.

Kids will wash their own plates, bowls, cups and cutlery and leave them in the draining board.

Once the kitchen is cleaned up Snack Attack money is delivered to Julie C in the office.

Please take home any used tea towels which to wash them, then return them to the kitchen when clean.

If you can help out one Wednesday a term please contact Mel G.

Many thanks.

Mel G.

28th Oct	Lisa and Arianne
4th Nov	Jacinta and Gill
11th Nov	Hayley and Kim
18th Nov	Michelle and Britta
25th Nov	Mia and Sharon
2nd Dec	Marina and Cherie
9th Dec	Martine and Renee
16th Dec	Brynnie and Linda

NO-NUT POLICY

Please remember, no nuts, nut paste, peanuts or similar products are to be used in Snack Attack meals, nor brought to school at other times.