



# Possum Post

WARRANDYTE AND DISTRICT PRE-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION INC.

Term 1 - 2020

## President's Report by Joanna Laidlaw

Hello dear Warrandyte Kinder community,

If you are reading this – Yay! So nice to talk to you via Possum Post. 😊 I welcome all Kinder families to Warrandyte and District Preschool and especially those that are joining our community for the first time. I believe that the time spent at kinder is very special and really important for the development of our children. So much is learnt through play, exploration and interaction together with our dedicated staff.

It is my wish to dwell on the positive aspects of the year to date, despite the fact we are living in very challenging times!

The Warrandyte Kinder building and garden underwent extensive renovations and cleaning after the hailstorm on 19<sup>th</sup> January and although this caused considerable work for Manningham Council, contractors, our Kinder staff and committee; we have now got a cleaner, brighter and much cared for Kinder! We have new floorings, new soft fall, new sand in the sand pit, cleaner roof and gutters and new air conditioning units. The insurance pay out for our damaged equipment will go into Kinder funds and when we have a clearer understanding of our financial position, the committee of management will decide what might be spent.

Have a look at these before and after photos!



We are so fortunate to have dedicated teachers and educators that adapted to the difficult circumstances in the weeks following the storm, while still planning our programs and implementing a great start to the Kinder year. It's my impression that the children have generally settled in well and are loving being at their Kinder sessions. This has been enabled by the staff who have used their skills to get to know the children and draw on their strengths and interests.



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We held our 4 year old and 3 year old family picnics on two evenings in early March, which were another opportunity for our families to meet each other. Thank you to those who were able to come. Both nights were so enjoyable for the children and lovely that parents and staff had an opportunity to meet.



Now just a few weeks later, with lifestyle adjustments due to COVID-19, we are challenged by social distancing and the heightened awareness of our health. From the start of the year, Kinder staff have put in place practices that help keep our children, staff and visitors more hygienic, by washing and sanitizing hands, and carrying out more cleaning.

The Federal Government regulations have meant that the Warrandyte Festival has been cancelled and while this a missed opportunity for our children to participate in The Parade, and for us to serve on the Kinder Stall, we had less commitments over what was to be the Festival Weekend! A big thank you to the committee members that were meticulously planning the Festival float, food, BBQs and tent setup for the stall, in particular Nat and Jane's families. 😊

Our future fundraising efforts will continue to be adjusted to the new social regulations, but we would appreciate your support where possible, by selling Cadbury Easter Eggs, ordering picture plates which the children will create, tea towels and raffle tickets.

Finally, please look out for the billboard that features our Kinder on the corner of the Warrandyte Reserve. We welcome enrolments for 2021. 😊

Thank you for your cooperation and support this year, particularly to the staff and Committee of management. Best wishes to you and your family as we move into school holidays. We will certainly let you know if there are any further notifications directly affecting the running of the Warrandyte and District Preschool.

Joanna 😊

Important Dates:	
Term 1 Ends	24 March 2020
Term 2 Begins	14 April 2020



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## 3 YEAR OLD REPORT By Lyn De Giorgio: Teacher

### February:

This year we started kinder with Interviews and a modified program. This was planned to assist the children's transition. We would like to thank all the families for attending interviews with us. Having this time is important as it allows us to start to build relationships with both the families and the children. The information shared will assist us to set the children's individual goals. Interview day was valuable to the children as it provided them with time to explore the kinder with their family present. This contributes to the children gaining a sense of security.

The second week the children attended for one hour, in their core group. This provided us with the opportunity to have one on one time with each child and allowed the children to become familiar with us and the kinder environment.

Today we had our first two-hour session. We had one group of children attend. Having the smaller groups allowed us to continue to build our relationships with the children, and for the children to familiarise themselves with the kindergarten environment without feeling overwhelmed. The longer period allowed the children to get used to being separated from their families for a longer period and gave us more time to introduce kindergarten routines and to make and establish rules.

There have been a few unsettled children and we have worked closely with their families to find the best way to settle each individual child. Some of these methods were for their parents to stay for a short time, some children needed their families to stay for the whole session, others were responsive to distraction with experiences within their interests and some children just needed their own space for a short time. To help the children gain an understanding that it is normal to be sad or scared when they are separated from their families, we have been reading the story *The Owl Babies*. This story also reassures the children that although their loved ones are not at kinder, they will be back.

Continuity has been provided by singing the "The Goodbye" which we sang on orientation day and using the fish they made with a family member to sing "all the fish are swimming in the water". To help the children to gain a sense of identity and learn the other children's, Fiona's and my names, we have been singing "I Wonder What Your Name Is?" This week we have combined this song with a ball game. The song will also provide the opportunity for the children to practice social skills such as waiting, taking turns and being respectful to others.

We have been using reflective language to discuss play and behaviour so that the children can take ownership of the rules and gain an understanding of the consequences of unsafe play.

We have kept a very simple program with experiences all within the children's interests. Some of the children have enjoyed the feel of the cool paint on their hands so we have added finger painting to the program.

### March:

The children have continued to settle well into the kindergarten environment and program. A couple of new children joined our group since we first started. We have used the "I Wonder What Your Name Is" song to introduce them to the group. To assist concentration, we have added a ball game, and we have been using photos of the children. The children are really enjoying this song and the Goodbye song as they enjoy hearing their names. Familiarity with their peers and growing confidence in the group has assisted the children to say their names and saying the names of their new friends.

With the whole group attending full hours, we have asked for parent helpers. We have averaged at least one parent a session. Thank you to all the families that have volunteered their help. It is important to have family helpers as their presence provides a sense of continuity between home and kindergarten for the children, and it provides an opportunity for us to build relationships with families.

Another way we have supported continuity and reciprocal relationships is through our Family Night. Thank you to all the families who attended, we loved having the opportunity to get to know everyone. It was also lovely to see our families getting to know each other and hopefully building lifelong friendships. By attending the children were given the opportunity to gain a sense of



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community as they witness their families coming together. Unfortunately, family holidays, sickness and cool wet weather impacted the attendance. We understand how busy everyone is and things happen that are out of our control.

We have continued to provide an indoor /outdoor program to assist the children to settle on arrival to kinder and to help minimise the risk of spreading infection.

With the outbreak of Coronavirus for the wellbeing of the children and staff, we have been supporting the children's awareness of good hygiene practices. We used glitter to show how we can pass germs from one person to another and we floated glitter in water and dipped our fingers in to demonstrate how soap can affect germs.



We have also taught the children about personal space by pretending there is a bubble around us. We have suggested if they get too close to someone, they will burst their bubble or other children's bubble. Teaching this also helps the children understand not everyone likes people in their personal space. By disturbing someone's personal space they can make them feel unhappy.







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Offering a progressive snack time has worked well for those children who need something to tide them over until we have a large group time. During this group time, the children who have not eaten have been encouraged to do so while they listen to a story. We will be encouraging progressive snacks more next week as we feel for the children's wellbeing, we need to limit our large group experiences.

To provide the children with a sense of identity, we program to the children's interest. Some of the children have found classical music soothing as they deal with separation from their loved ones. The children have experimented with painting and drawing to music as well as dancing with ribbons. Providing the opportunity to practice listening skills, spatial awareness and gross motor skills and build an understanding of movement and positioning.

After observing the children enjoying the sensory experience of putting paint on their hands, a finger-painting experience was set up. To create a calm atmosphere the finger paint was scented with lavender. Some of the children enjoyed the sensory experience of smearing the paint onto the table with their hands. While others enjoyed placing the finger paint on the table with a spoon. This led to an experience that provided an opportunity for the children to spoon and scoop finger paint mixture into jars. We extended the children's learning by changing the paint to gravel. By doing so, the children could transfer their learning to a solid resource. Engaging in these experiences has supported the children to build on their fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and understandings of capacity.

The children's interest in cars has led to them constructing a road with a wooden track. This experience was so popular a road mat was added. Excited by this new experience all the children moved from the track to explore the mat. To solve the problem of everyone being in the same area we encouraged the children to make their own car mat. The children used trial and error to join enough paper to create a large map and worked together looking at the plastic map to design and drew their road



cricket was very popular, whilst playing the children were able to support each other's learning as they observed the actions of others. They practice social skills as they negotiated rules, became aware of fairness as they took turns and practiced their listening skills.

The children are very confident in the outdoor playground. The climbing equipment has been supporting gross motor skills as the children use the area to their own ability. The children have also been thinking about safety. They have been encouraging their friends to take turns and to start at the end with the green end of the monkey bars. To wait for adult supervision when attempting to climb something that is a bit risky and to land in a safe manner when jumping from a height. We are so proud of the way they are taking on the responsibility of looking out for theirs and others safety. We are also proud of the way the children are working together and encouraging each other. By having a go and taking risk the children are building resilience and disposition that help them to persist with difficult tasks.



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Bike riding has also supported the children to take responsibility for their own safety. We have encouraged them to take charge of their safety by helping them to think about how they can keep their head safe by wearing a helmet. They also considered respect for others and the environment by making rules to help take turns and thinking of way to look after the bikes, helmets and their own sunhats.



A sense of wellbeing has been supported with a relaxation time. During this time the children are taught breathing techniques and are encouraged to use their imagination to imagine they are surrounded by bubbles whilst listening to Scott Browns Bubble song.





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## 4 YEAR OLD GROUP REPORT By Ronnie Pedersen: Teacher, Nominated Supervisor and Educational Leader

We have been providing table top games to encourage turn-taking, observation, memory, understanding of same/ different (classification), keeping order, and the amazing skill (for this age group) to say "Pass" when they don't have an appropriate card and they have to miss a turn. This is an important skill for children to learn. Some children will just get up and walk away, whilst others will persevere. This is a learned skill and the fact that you don't always win! and that's O.K. (Good life lessons being learnt here as well!!). If a child wants to walk away, we ensure they stay until at least that particular game has finished. That is fair to all, and good manners. That is how games should be played.

Following on from the community interest in Chinese (Lunar) New Year, the children were able to follow and extend their interest in designing and creating a magnificent Chinese Dragon with enthusiasm, energy and concentration! There was so much discussion on how it should be built...what kind of box to use, what colour it should be, how to cut out teeth, how to make fire come out of its mouth, and so on! There was a lot of intense work happening by the crew! After completing the head, the children wanted poles to go underneath, so we got the rods from our outdoor construction set, and tied some long soft material to the 'head....and off we went!! Nearly all of the children participated, either under the dragon, or playing some drums or tamborines for effect. To give some 'life' to the dragon the children needed to be reminded to push their poles up and down! The children were able to manipulate objects and experiment with cause and effect, trial and error, and motion.

The children explored the many different forms of families there are. It is really important to be aware not to emphasize that there is always a mummy and daddy living at home together, BUT that usually there always is a mummy and a daddy somewhere...both of whom love their child, no matter what the circumstances. Children of this age really need to know the feeling of security in their own situation (but then, don't we all?). This is also where extended families are so valuable.

This was followed through by inviting all of our families to a Family Night. A time to meet, establish, and renew Kinder. relationships. Thanks everyone for coming and making it such an enjoyable night for your child. A great time was also had by little brothers and sisters, and big brothers and sisters. Thanks to all who were very mindful of everyone's safety!! This demonstrates a sense of identity, plus also a sense belonging and comfort in our environment. Thank you to all for taking the time to make this special for your child.

We finally got into the Kitchen Garden to tidy it up after the storms. There was much weeding and pruning to do. And after Lisa, Lucy, and Marisa topped the beds up with mushroom compost, the children were able to plant some dwarf broccoli and brussel sprouts. (With the current pandemic, there was very little choice of seedlings at the nursery!)

To support the children's understanding of how Germs spread, and the need for vigilant hand washing, we used a bowl of water with cracked pepper floating on top (to represent the germs). We also had a bowl of detergent at the side. The children put their finger in the 'germy' bowl and saw how the germs coated their finger. By swishing it around in the soapy bowl, it displayed how the soap disperses the 'germs'. We reflected on how easily it is to wipe/spread germs on to other surfaces (toys etc.) but washing our hands regularly can prevent this. Next week I may also do the experiment where you once again put pepper (or glitter) in the water bowl, and then put a finger with soap on it and illustrate how the germs are repelled away from the soap. Another one is to put glitter on the palm of your hand and then use that hand to touch something else to see how easy it is to transfer germs.

We are being VERY mindful of not creating fear in the children. They should be protected from the trauma that many are facing now. They only need a limited amount of information to satisfy their needs





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With all of the 'doom and gloom' that is surrounding us now, it is important to keep routines and happiness in the world for children. They understand that there is sadness, but let's give them something to look forward to! Although the Warrandyte Village Festival was cancelled, we had already started on our hats and shakers. We Educators thought it best to follow through with this and still provide a sense of community for 'our' children. And the children thoroughly enjoyed themselves!...especially making the mess with flick painting our hats!! And don't they look fantastic!!



The shakers were also attacked with gusto!!! Using reflective tape and cardboard cylinders that we got from Resource Rescue provided a great starting point for amazing shakers!!! The children recognized their individual achievements, and begin to recognise that they have a right to belong to many communities. As we were unable to take the children out of the Kinder grounds to celebrate with the rest of the community, we did 'our own thing' around the bike track!!!! On Wednesday, we were lucky to have Sandi Miller from the Warrandyte Diary come and take a few photos, whilst on Thursday we were lucky enough to have a few parents arrive in the car park a little earlier and the children were able to brighten their day with their rendition of "We Are The Kinder Kids" song!! This would most certainly have brought a smile to anyone's face if they had seen the children's joy!



With all of the abnormal situations occurring this term, we have still to do a practice Emergency Drill – as per Regulatory requirements of this being done once a term, for different scenarios. We will do this as soon as practical when we are allowed to be conducting an excursion out of the Kinder grounds!





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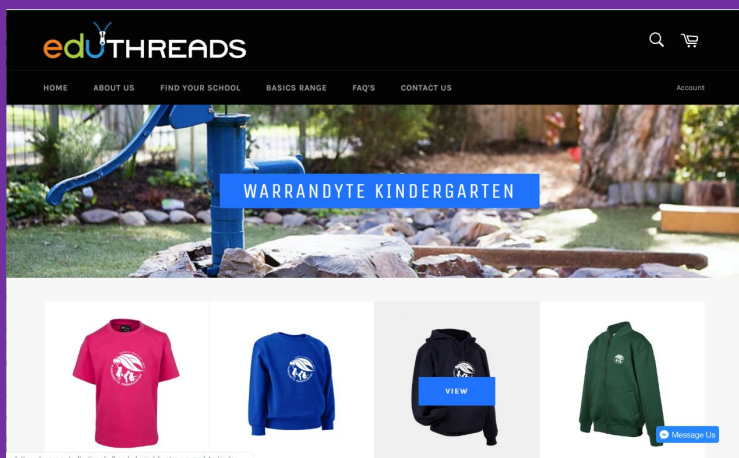


OUR FAMILY TO YOURS

**Do you shop at IGA?**  
Choose Warrandyte Kindergarten and scan your Quinton's Rewards card everytime you shop to donate points to our kinder!

## ***New Kinder Uniform Supplier***

*Don't forget to visit [www.eduthreads.com.au](http://www.eduthreads.com.au) to check out the range of uniform items and available and purchase some at any time!*



***Do you have something you think should be included in the next possum post?***

Email [wkpossumpost@gmail.com](mailto:wkpossumpost@gmail.com)



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## Fundraising

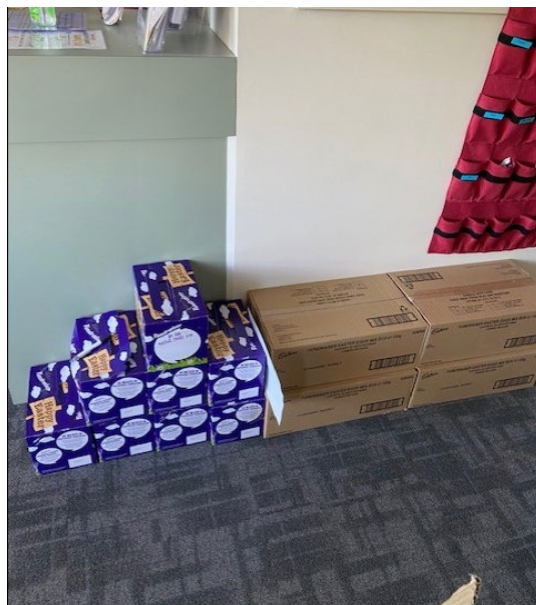
### Cadbury Easter Egg Fundraiser

As you all know Cadbury Easter Egg Fundraising Boxes are now available for families to sell, each full box contains 20 units at a cost of \$4 per unit or \$80 for a full box. The box includes milk chocolate eggs, crunchie eggs, and caramel eggs.

If you have not collected a box yet please contact our President Joanna Laidlaw at [president.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:president.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au) to arrange this. We are also willing to arrange sale of smaller units of chocolate if required!

Money for the eggs you have taken home needs to be returned to Kinder by the 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

Thank you and happy fundraising!





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## SENSORY RECIPES TO TRY AT HOME

### SOME OF THE RECIPES THAT WE USE FOR SENSORY EXPERIENCES AT KINDER:

#### PLAYDOUGH

4 cups plain flour  
1 cup salt  
4 tablespoons cream of tartar  
6 tablespoons of oil  
4 cups boiling water  
Food colouring

- Mix all dry ingredients together.
- Add oil and food colouring.

(If wanting several colours from this one batch, add colourings when kneading, after separating into several balls)

- Add boiling water.
- Mix well.
- Turn onto bench and knead until smooth. (TAKING CARE AS THE MIXTURE WILL BE VERY HOT STILL).

#### FINGERPAINT

Mix about 1 cup cornflour with a little cold water to make into a paste. Add approx. 2-3 cups boiling water, stirring constantly, until desired consistency. If the mixture doesn't thicken to your liking, put into microwave for a minute, or alternatively, cook on the stove, as if making a sauce!

If wanted, add a few drops of food colouring...or let the children add this themselves and experiment with colour mixing.

#### SLIME

1 cup of Lux Soap Flakes...add boiling water, mixing constantly until all dissolved. This mixture will thicken as it cools. Can be kept for about one week. Colouring can be added...green for dinosaur swamp? Red for volcanic environment? Blue for ocean play? Add plastic figurines, animals, stones, beads.....whatever takes your fancy!!

Have fun!!!





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## Important Information

### Fees

Dear Warrandyte Families,

The Term 2 Kinder fees have just been sent out.

Please note as at 24 March 2020 the Department of Education and Training have indicated that Early Childhood and Care Services in Victoria may continue to operate as usual, therefore it will be necessary to collect fees to operate our Kinder next Term.

If you are experiencing any difficulty paying the Term 2 fee in full please contact Our Administration Officer Carolyn Camm: [admin.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:admin.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au)

We are all in this together, we thank you for your cooperation and understanding in this matter.

Warrandyte Kinder Committee

### Wellbeing

We recognise and understand that times like this can cause anxiety and distress so we urge you to also look after your mental health.

Please see below resources for anyone who is feeling any stress, anxiety, depression, or concern during this time.

<https://www.lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/the-facts/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>



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## Important Information

### Working with Children Checks

Warrandyte Kindergarten is very fortunate to have a large number of friends and family volunteer to help us with our activities at the kindergarten, including help during our kindergarten sessions. This involvement is something that we very much value as part of our kindergarten. However, more helpers are always greatly appreciated!

All of our helpers require a Working with Children Check card. If you do not have a card, it is a very easy process that is confidential and free.

Step 1: Complete an online application form at [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au).

Step 2: Finalise your application at an Australia Post outlet. This will include presenting one acceptable proof of identity document such as a driver's licence or passport. Australia Post will take your photo for the card free of charge.

If you need any further information or assistance in applying for a card, please speak to our Administration Officer, Carolyn Camm at [admin.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:admin.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au).

***Please ensure you have listed Warrandyte Kindergarten as a nominated location for your WWCC. People with existing WWCC can visit <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/> to update their details and add Warrandyte Kindergarten as an organisation.***

## Resources for Parents

- **Australian Parenting Network Raising Children**
  - [raisingchildren.net.au](http://raisingchildren.net.au)
- **Poisonous Plants and Children**
  - <https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/safety/poisons/dangerous-plants>
- **Value of Reading with Preschoolers**
  - <https://www.startingblocks.gov.au/at-home/reading-with-preschoolers/>
- **Sue Larkey**
  - <https://www.facebook.com/SueLarkeyTeacher/>
- **Spectrum journeys**  
[https://www.facebook.com/pg/spectrumjourneysinc/posts/?ref=page\\_internal](https://www.facebook.com/pg/spectrumjourneysinc/posts/?ref=page_internal)



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<b>Kinder Committee 2019</b>			
<b>President</b>	Joanna Laidlaw	President.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au	
<b>Vice President</b>	Andy Wilgose	Assistant Secretary	Alexandra Reeve
<b>Secretary</b>	Lisa Bairstow	Marketing	Nat Mander
<b>Treasurer</b>	Kylie Smith	Social Media	Nat Mander
Fundraising Coordinator –	Kate Misra	Market Parking	Sarah Pollard
Fundraising Coordinator – Festival	Nat Mander	IT Support	Sam Macaluso
	Jane Caneva	Maintenance	Lauren Wilgose
Fundraising Officers	Lauren Macaluso	Festival Float	Lauren Macaluso
	Abbey Jenkins		Abbey Jenkins
	Cat Duncan	Kitchen Garden	Lauren Macaluso
	Lauren Wilgose		Lucinda Gow
	Andrea Williams		
	Lucy Zigmantas	4YO Group Parent Rep	Lauren Wilgose
	3YO Group Parent Rep	Merryn Platt	

To contact committee members, please email [president.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au](mailto:president.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au) and Joanna will direct your enquiry.

<b>Kinder Staff Contacts</b>		
Ronnie Pedersen (4YO)	ronnie.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au	9844 3363
Lynette De Giorgio (3YO)	lyn.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au	9844 3363
Carolyn Camm (admin)	Admin.warrandyte@kindergarten.vic.gov.au	9844 3363

Our Kinder staff are always more than happy to talk to you about questions or concerns about your child.  
Please ensure this communication is in person at the beginning or end of a session or using the official contact details listed above only.