



# KCCC ANNUAL REPORT 2017





## ANNUAL REPORT 2017

This report presents progress towards achieving the objectives of our strategic plan and KCCC vision and aims for the future.

The purpose of the Annual Report is to:

- provide an overview of the cooperatives operations for education and care
- communicate how the centre is performing
- highlight key achievements
- highlight performance and statistics
- provide a summary of KCCC's financial position as at 30 December 2016

If you would like further information on any aspect of this report, please contact Sigi Hyett, the General Manager of the centre, on 9376 4565.

## KENSINGTON COMMUNITY CHILDREN'S CO-OPERATIVE (KCCC)

Kensington Community Children's Co-operative is unique in its cooperative model. We are a not-for-profit community-based model governed by a committed group of parents with extremely dedicated and qualified staff.

We offer education and care to children from 6 weeks to school age as well as Sessional and Integrated Kindergarten programs. We are a 140 place centre with 52 dedicated staff.

We provide a safe and nurturing environment in which we stimulate enquiry, invite discussions, engage the senses and offer choices for children to learn, discover and grow. Our natural setting is an integral part of our program and we encourage and foster sustainable practices.

A parent-governed cooperative that has been proudly educating and caring for children from Kensington and surrounding areas since 1982.

## OVERVIEW

KCCC was established in 1982 in Henry Street, Kensington as a 35-place long day care centre. In 1996, when demand far exceeded the capacity of the Centre, the City of Melbourne (CoM) built the facilities in Altona Street, alongside the existing Kindergarten. The service relocated to its current 140-place facility, which includes 80 places for 4-year-old funded Kindergarten.

## KCCC MISSION

KCCC is a not-for-profit community organisation that values and supports children and their families. We provide quality early childhood education which helps children grow, develop and learn in a safe and stimulating environment. Our natural setting is an integral part of our program and we encourage and foster sustainable practices.

## GOALS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- To provide an integrated quality children's service that plays an active part in our community.
- To create an environmentally, social, friendly and sustainable enterprise.
- To be pro-active in engaging families to contribute and benefit from the program.
- To ensure all staff have consistent and available professional learning opportunities.

## VALUES

**IN RELATION TO CHILDREN:** We value the uniqueness of each child, their interests, learning styles, and backgrounds.

**IN RELATION TO FAMILIES:** We recognise and value the primary role that families play in their children's life.

**IN RELATION TO STAFF:** We value all staff at KCCC, acknowledge their commitment and support their continued professional growth.

**IN RELATION TO OUR COMMUNITY:** We value strong partnerships with members of our community, show respect regardless of background, and acknowledge their role within our service.





# NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

The National Quality Framework (NQF) was the result of an agreement between all Australian governments to work together to provide better educational and developmental outcomes for children. The NQF introduced a new quality standard in 2012 to improve education and care across long day care, family day care, preschool/kindergarten and outside school hours care services.

The NQF aims to raise quality and drive continuous improvement and consistency in children's education and care services through:

- the National Law and National Regulations
- the National Quality Standard
- an assessment and quality rating process
- national approved learning frameworks
- a regulatory authority in each state and territory responsible for the approval, monitoring and quality assessment of services in their state or territory
- a national body – ACECQA, which guides the implementation of the NQF and works with regulatory authorities.

The delivery of the NQF is guided by set objectives and guidelines to ensure consistent and effective function. The objectives of the NQF are to:

- ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending education and care services
- improve the educational and developmental outcomes for children attending education and care services
- promote continuous improvement in the provision of quality education and care services
- establish a system of national integration and shared responsibility between participating jurisdictions and the Commonwealth in the administration of the National Quality Framework
- improve public knowledge, and access to information, about the quality of education and care services
- reduce the regulatory and administrative burden for education and care services by enabling information to be shared between participating jurisdictions and the Commonwealth. ■

## THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE NQF

- The rights and best interests of the child are paramount
- Children are successful, competent and capable learners
- Equity, inclusion and diversity underpin the framework
- Australia's aboriginal and torres strait islander cultures are valued
- The role of parents and families is respected and supported
- Best practice is expected in the provision of education and care services



# MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

Reflecting on the past year has certainly been a pleasure, as it provided opportunities to identify our achievements, challenges and accomplishments, of which there were many.

One of our key areas of focus, and one that is embedded in our values, has been KCCC's desire to create a service that is not only connected, but also inclusive. It is evident that throughout this past year this has been achieved, as our community connections and relationships continued to be strengthened, and this has supported inclusion at many levels.

We commenced the year with our welcome breakfast where we had a large number of families, children and staff all coming together sharing stories with each other, fostering a sense of belonging, wellbeing and joy. It was such a thrill for our children to be part of the children's choir that launched the 10th anniversary of the Kensington Community Festival. Emotions ran high for everyone involved, some families were thrilled to have all their children, from kinder to school, singing together. The feeling of warmth and connectedness was certainly evident within our community. This connectedness continued throughout the year, where we saw a large number of our families and staff give up their weekends to attend working bees, other social events and participate in our programs.

Children, staff and families led many of the diverse cultural festivals this year. Celebrating our diverse cultures through events such as Diwali, Eid, Naidoc week and Easter (just to name a few), supported inclusion and provided a platform for meaningful learning, where children discovered the many different ways of being and doing. This builds

a community of citizens who are empathetic, kind, anti-bias and inclusive and develops social connectedness.

The commencement of our specialist programs such as yoga, sports and cooking, saw educators share their own skills and interests and has promoted a positive attitude to health and wellbeing. Programs such as our intergenerational program, aimed to address ageism at both ends of the age spectrum, is certainly achieving this. Our small group excursions to the Maribyrnong river is an extension of the mosaic we created, which has made this more meaningful for the children, as they entwined Wurundjeri knowledge and stories while connecting to the river and our community.

Our capital works achievements this year were highlighted by the completion of our refurbished yard. It gives me goose bumps and I smile as I watch the children jump out of the apple tree that grows with the children. The refurbished yard has many improved areas, the space has not only broken down the barriers in terms of age, but also in terms of its use. It has now become an area for all children to engage with the environment in their own way, that children can enjoy as they play, rest, learn, problem solve, create and develop.

Our staff team, are of course our biggest asset (apart from the children). We have continued on our journey of critical reflection and quality improvement through reflective practice and professional learning opportunities. Our teams have presented at state wide conferences, forums, participated in exciting professional learning and are leading innovative programs. This distributed leadership is evident as the staff team are empowered and enthusiastic about coming to work and applying new knowledge. Our team is excited for the

future at KCCC where the rights and best interests of the children are principal.

Our financial situation continues to be an ongoing concern, and gives me confidence that we will continue along a path of sustainability, that can provide high quality education and care into the future.

There are of course always challenges in keeping a centre operating at a high level of quality education and care for our children. With the support of the board of management, sub-committees, families, children and staff, the challenges become opportunities for new or improved ways of thinking, doing and moving forward. As a community cooperative where families, staff and community work together for the best outcomes for children, we have this year embedded high quality education with the rights of the child at the core.

Thank you to all our stakeholders, children, families, colleagues, the City of Melbourne, the Department of Education and Training, ACEQA, Community Child Care and our facilitators for the support that you have given KCCC this year.

Special thanks to the Board, subcommittees and the wonderful team of staff and, of course, our children who are so very precious and make it all worthwhile. It has been a pleasure to work and learn together, with a willingness to continue to review, grow, reflect, inspire, be inspired, teach and continually strengthen the focus on outcomes for children.

Thankyou ■  
**Sigi Hyett, General Manager**





# KCCC BOARD

## FELIX OHLE MESSAGE FROM THE OUTGOING CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Firstly, I would like to thank Julie Stobo for her contributions as Board Chair throughout 2017. Julie stepped down from the Board late in 2017 and on behalf of my fellow Board members and wider KCCC community, I would like to extend a huge thank you for her fantastic work and contribution.

Since joining the Board in 2015 when my daughter Beatrix (Trixie) started in the Yarragum room, I have witnessed tremendous progress across the KCCC. The KCCC has worked hard to bed down the changes made over recent years, including the introduction of multi-aged rooms and in all areas, a deep focus on quality and advancing early childhood education and outcomes.

I acknowledge Sigi's contribution, working in partnership with the KCCC team, who has been instrumental in leading many of these changes and demonstrating amazing energy and passion in her engagement with parents, children and KCCC's wider stakeholder community.

In terms of 2017 highlights, the completion and opening of the new playground was certainly a significant event. It is wonderful to see how the children and educators have enjoyed and embraced their new environment.

For the educators, seeing the new tools, methods and initiatives they have adopted, like the excursion and sports programs for the children, has been fantastic and I'm certainly excited about 'what's next'.

For our family, being able to participate in some of our children's adventures via Storypark has been great and seeing all their fun activities does make me smile.

The relentless work from our various committees continues to make a difference to our center. I would like to acknowledge the Fundraising and Community Engagement (FACE) committee and their relentless efforts in managing events such as the movie night, trivia night and cake stalls, just to name a few. Their commitment in raising funds for investments, such as the new kitchen or playground equipment, continues to ensure the KCCC develops and evolves for our children.

From a governance perspective, working alongside Sigi, the Board and KCCC team has been a real pleasure. The diversity of our Board members, in representing our KCCC community, has ensured a rich and thoughtful level of discussion and decision-making, which has been a cornerstone of continued progress.

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to everyone involved in supporting the KCCC in 2017 and beyond. I'm confident the KCCC will continue to provide excellent education and community outcomes, that will further grow the centre's already outstanding reputation.

I extend a huge THANK YOU to everyone involved, for going the extra mile and supporting our Kensington Community Children's Co-operative in one way or the other. ■ Felix Ohle



I'm confident the KCCC will continue to provide excellent education and community outcomes, that will further grow the centre's already outstanding reputation.

Felix Ohle

# KCCC BOARD PROFILES



**FELIX OHLE** CHAIR  
Lucien (Gumnut) Trixie (Acacia)  
Felix has been on the KCCC Board since May 2015. Shortly after joining the board, Felix took on the position as the Treasurer which he held until late in 2017 when he took on the role as the Chair. Born in Hamburg, Germany, Felix studied international business and economy and has worked in the petrochemical industry for over 20 years in Europe, the USA and for the last 6 years, in Australia where his wife Sarah grew up. Felix loves the community feel of Kensington which he calls home and sees the KCCC as an integral part of it. Being able to participate and contribute to the Kensington community has been the main reason he joined the Board three years ago. He feels privileged to work with the Board and KCCC team and is proud to see all the progress that has been made over recent years.



**JOHN LALOR** SECRETARY  
Claire (Integrated Apple Tree Kindergarten) Hannah (Banksia)  
John joined the board in 2016 and has lived in Kensington for over 10 years. As an experienced senior product manager and holding a senior management position, he has extensive experience implementing online systems, marketing programs and improving business process. Outside of work John enjoys getting out on his bike and in the warmer months escaping to the river to go water skiing.



**SCOTT TATULASCHWILI** TREASURER  
Max (Gumnut Room)  
Scott and his family have been a part of the KCCC community since 2011. Their third son, Max, has followed in his two brother's footsteps and is currently in the Gumnut room. Scott and his wife Carla have always been so appreciative of the wonderful care and learning opportunities that KCCC provide. They are confident that when at the centre their children will really be cared for and, they will have fun.

Scott volunteers his services to the KCCC Board to ensure that his family and many others like his in the wider Kensington community can continue to enjoy all that KCCC offers. Scott has worked in large organisations in accounting & finance, auditing, banking and superannuation. As a qualified Chartered Accountant, he works to support Senior Leaders, Audit Committees and Boards in reaching their strategic objectives. His experiences have also included internal and external audit, risk, statutory and regulatory reporting, management accounting, board reporting, finance operations, asset and inventory management, business planning and forecasting, tax and business partnering. Scott enjoys spending time with family and friends, playing golf and actively participating in the community. He is involved in coaching at the local Auskick and the Flemington Colts Junior Football Club.





# KCCC BOARD PROFILES



## KYLIE YOUNG DIRECTOR

Charlie (Acacia) & Abigail ( Banksia)

Kylie and husband Alex have been Kensington locals for 6 years and share two beautiful children, Charlie and Abigail.

Professionally, Kylie has spent the last 15 years in the financial services industry. Kylie works for one of the major banks and leads the company's interactions with the conduct regulator, ASIC. Effective governance and decision making are of particular interest to Kylie, with prior roles including responsibility for executive level governance for the UK banking regulator.

After 3 years as a KCCC member, and watching Charlie thrive in this supportive and creative environment, Kylie has developed a strong appreciation for the important role the Co-operative plays in children's lives. The dedicated staff, the community spirit of the members and the learning approach are key ingredients of what makes the KCCC unique. Kylie is passionate about contributing to the board and its forward plans, so that the Co-operative continues to create the best opportunities for children to grow and have fun.

Kylie enjoys spending quality time with family and friends, especially large gatherings that provide her with an excuse to get creative in the kitchen.



## ANTHONY TRANTINO DIRECTOR

John (Integrated Apple Tree Kindergarten) & Max (Wattle)

Anthony's dad to 4 year old John and 18 month old Max. He and his wife Ali moved to Kensington some years ago now because they really love the community focus in a suburb so accessible to the city.

Anthony works in the energy industry as a Program Manager overseeing many construction projects on the east coast of Australia. He has strong skills in engineering project management, contractor management, and is driven by delivering projects efficiently and in a cost effective manner.

Anthony grew up on a 300 acre cattle farm in Gippsland and moved to Melbourne after studying Mechatronic Engineering at Monash university. He brings an abundance of practical skills, he and his son John love rolling their sleeves up, putting on their tool belts and getting stuck into a good working bee!

Anthony enjoys cycling, skiing, hiking and camping, the you may see him on his cycle commute to the centre with John and Max in tow. Anthony also enjoys his reignited passion for Lego!

Anthony's family will be part of the KCCC community for many years to come and he play an active role as a director on the board.



## JACQUI POLA DIRECTOR

Annika (Boronia) and Elijah (Yarragum)

Jacqui is a mother of two children at KCCC, Annika and Elijah. They have been members of KCCC since April 2015 and couldn't be happier with KCCC for their children.

Jacqui is a teacher at Clifton Hill Primary School. Being in education for more than ten years, Jacqui is passionate about children and their learning. She strongly believes in the learning through play model. Predominantly Jacqui has worked in the early years of education, being a Prep teacher for many years and being involved in and leading kinder/school transition programs.

Jacqui's expertise in school settings include being the treasurer and secretary for an AEU (Aus. Education Union) sub-committee, facilitating professional development and leadership position in Literacy and Numeracy coaching. Jacqui has presented at a conference in QLD at QUT on an adapted numeracy PMP (perceptual motor program) and is familiar with the Early Years Learning Framework.

Jacqui and her husband have lived in Kensington for over ten years and have embraced the Kensington community life. They feel honoured to live in such a close and caring community who look out for each other.



## REBECCA ROBINSON DIRECTOR - CASUAL

Dashiell (Integrated Apple Tree kindergarten) and Arabella (KCCC Alumni)

Rebecca joined the board in 2015 and during this time has been a Director as well as led the Fundraising and Community Engagement sub-committee. As a teacher, Rebecca strongly values the importance and impact of a good education from the early years into adulthood. Rebecca has worked in education for over fifteen years, and currently teaches English to young female refugee and asylum seekers.



## KATE WALKER DIRECTOR - CASUAL

Amelia (Banksia)

Kate and her family have been part of the KCCC community since Jan 2017. Kate really enjoys playing a part in helping KCCC achieve its strategic objectives and ensuring it continues to be a leading childcare care centre.

Kate has a background in HR and specialises in organisational culture and driving employee engagement, enhancing organisational effectiveness through diversity and inclusion, strategic planning; and leadership / talent development. She is passionate about future workforce trends and what this means for early childhood education.

Kate is a big advocate for KCCC and welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the board.



## CAROLINE INNIS

Maggie (Alumni) Bea (Acacia) & Joe (Wattle)

Caroline and her family joined KCCC in Jan 2016. Her children Bea (Acacia) and Joe (Wattle) love the educators, environment and activities that KCCC provides. Maggie (Alumni) who has started prep this year loves coming back to KCCC to pick up her siblings and give her former educators a run down of her day.

Between wrangling three young children Caroline works as a lawyer for a small law firm in Niddrie. Her work revolves around helping people with making their wills and assisting with probate applications. Her favourite part of her job is chatting with her clients, administrative staff, café owners and anyone who will listen to her. It's a juggle, and the balls often drop, but thankfully she had the good sense to marry a Scotsman who is an excellent cook, so at least the kids are well fed and talented highland dancers.

Caroline joined the Board this year as a casual member and has been valued member of the KCCC board. Caroline brings a wealth of knowledge and skill to the board. ■



## HIGHLIGHTS 2017: EMBEDDING INTEGRATED SERVICE DELIVERY

- In 2017 KCCC continued the organisational review of the structures, processes, rosters, staffing and budgets
- Our practitioner review examining values and beliefs about children of different ages and their capabilities
- Practice review considering how values and beliefs affect practice (impact of pedagogy).
- Consolidating and strengthening programs and practices.

The KCCC leadership team continued with the critical review of rosters, staffing, conditions, and responsibilities of all educators and support staff working in the service.

The enrolment processes and the local demand for services have continued to be part of the ongoing organisational practice. Reflections throughout 2017 continued to be the foundation for the ongoing practice review across the service and the long-term commitment

of critical reflection, in partnership with families and with the support and leadership of researchers and consultants.

The key focus for KCCC has continued to be relationships with children and with a particular emphasis and regard for the learning of children.

Very young children's learning is subtle. This means that supporting and extending their learning requires adults to pay close attention in order to figure out what children are trying to do and communicate and what they're demonstrating they've learned or are interested in learning. (Anne Stonehouse, 2017; What, why and how? Pedagogy with very young children, p. 5).

The model of continuous improvement that is designed for an integrated service working within a community has led to the following outcomes, which the service has consolidated and strengthened this year.

- Multi-age rooms
- A refurbished playground area, accessible by all rooms, and integral to the program
- A renewed practice focus that keeps the child central to all decisions.
- Small group excursions that strengthen relationships and support intentional teaching practices.

### Multi-age rooms embedded in 2017

The multi-age rooms have allowed for more equitable systems for families enrolling children under three years. Room groupings are available for children from 12 months to three years, which means there has been a reduced waiting time based on children under three, for example. Children aged between 13 and 36 months have access to enroll across 4 rooms as opposed to one specific aged room. This approach also broadens educator knowledge about the capabilities and interests of young children under three years.



Embedding practices in our multi age rooms has meant that children have had fewer transitions and more time to build relationships with the staff, particularly as they can remain in the same rooms for each year. This has strengthened children and family relationships with the teams

**Critical thinking about values and assumptions underlying pedagogy, and different perspectives and possibilities, continues to be encouraged.**

### Extended time for uninterrupted learning

The staff as a whole worked towards slowing down the pace within the service, by reviewing how many interruptions occur to children's learning throughout the morning, day and week. This has been a shift from routines leading the program to routines fitting into the program. This meant that we have been able to think more about observations,

listen more carefully to the children, and tune into their signals and cues, pausing to reflect on children's temperaments, learning styles, and preferences. This is particularly important for children and families at orientation and when settling into the service. It also means there were more opportunities to discuss and learn with families, exchanging information about children's learning, and listening carefully.

Educators across the program reported that they felt less stressed in getting things done and more able to engage in conversations and activities with children, which connected to their professional learning. ■



## HIGHLIGHTS 2017: SHARED LEARNING ACROSS THE GLOBE

Our international sister school exchange program moves from strength to strength each year



**In 2015, KCCC launched its sister school and staff hosting program with Frederiksberg in Copenhagen, Denmark. This year the program which has provided opportunities for educators and support staff to work overseas to exchange ideas, programs and practices, has strengthened and has certainly had positive and lasting effects on children's learning and relationships with families.**

It isn't every day that educators in early childhood education and care can connect and collaborate with peers across the globe. Since 2015 Kensington Community Children's Co-operative (KCCC) has had the opportunity to connect with a number of early childhood education and care services in Denmark as part of a multidisciplinary approach to collaboration and shared learning.

Our international sister school exchange and staff hosting program reflects two ideas central to our service

philosophy; continuous improvement and collaboration. As a community co-operative we place a high value on quality outcomes for children, which are linked to family and community engagement and relationships. We endeavor to create a professional learning community that is informed by shared knowledge. These values have helped us strengthen programs and practices, which have resulted in improved outcomes for children and educators.

### **A little bit of background. Thoughts and ideas**

During 2014, one of our KCCC board members and parent at our service, Malene Platt, shared her story of the challenges her family faced as they transitioned from a Danish early childhood education and care setting to an Australian one. Malene spoke about the differences between the approaches to programs and practice, and the challenge this posed for her two young

“The Educator exchange program to Copenhagen (Denmark) was **a once in a lifetime** opportunity and it filled my knowledge with new ideas and **inspiration** and flourished and upskilled me professionally and personally.”

Shazia, Gumnut Room Leader

“This opportunity really was one of a lifetime and certainly filled my knowledge bank with new ideas and **inspiration**. Alongside connecting with some wonderful people and gaining **new friendships** with people from across the globe. To consolidate everything I learned and gained both professionally and personally will take some time.”

Melissa, Pedagogical Leader

children. As a young Danish migrant to this country, Malene's experience resonates with many of the KCCC diverse and multi-cultural families. Experiencing settling into a new country, its language and customs, while continuing to speak and practice those of the birth country can pose a challenge as well as an opportunity.

At KCCC we saw this as an opportunity. To go to school in two countries and learn two languages and differences in customs and traditions certainly enriches learning and development for children and this continues into adulthood.

This started us thinking about the possibility of creating an exchange or host program similar to those in other sectors and professions, as a way of bridging cultures and learning from one another through exploring different early learning settings and approaches. We began to consider the opportunities for educators to learn from each other and how this could benefit all staff and children, their families, the community, and the broader early childhood sector. As our conversations progressed, we realised a sister school that included an exchange program or host placement that enabled educators and support staff to live and teach in another country would provide benefits to KCCC.

### **Research and development**

Over the course of the year, our informal discussions quickly became more

structured; we moved to professional conversations that reflected on the programs, curriculum, practice and procedures across the two countries. This fueled our enthusiasm and inspired our research about Scandinavian early learning and standards and helped us consider what could be adapted to benefit our own program to make it contextually relevant to our community.

In early 2015 an opportunity came about to visit several Danish early learning services with the aim of linking with those services that demonstrated cultural diversity and were leaders in best practice in Early Years Curriculum. This visit facilitated relationship building, collaboration, learning and teaching; where practice, ideas and initiatives were shared.

### **International sister school exchange and staff host program**

In early 2015, KCCC launched the sister school program, partnering with Frederiksberg in Copenhagen. Our services are aligned in many ways, including service structure, setting, programs, goals, culture and policy. Both of our services also have a community board with high parent involvement, which are central to the collaborative partnerships that underpin our respective service philosophies. We also considered Frederiksberg an exciting and inspiring service for our sister school due to their development of forest kindergarten

programs, as well as their innovation in the city centre. Each of our services has hosted educators for between three to eight weeks, with families from our services providing accommodation to host staff. These staff host placements have enabled the educators to not only learn about programs and practices, but also to immerse themselves in everyday life and culture, which fosters intercultural understanding.

### **The aims and objectives of this partnership include:**

- Sharing pedagogy, program and curriculum ideas and resources
- Increasing intercultural understanding and supporting whole service improvement
- Communication through ICT
- The establishment of a staff exchange/host program to support building educator capacity.
- Staff Exchanges are a means of broadening knowledge and experience and contribute to an organisation's overall capability. Many organisations across the world have long recognised the benefits of staff exchange programs – sharing skills, ideas, best practice and developing their staff.



## HIGHLIGHTS 2017: SHARED LEARNING ACROSS THE GLOBE

### Benefits and results – 2017

2017 is the fourth year of the exchange program, we can see and track the benefits for both the children and educators at KCCC and Frederiksberg. Some of these are:

- Embedding multi-age groups and the refurbished shared yard
- Sharing information about the integrated shared yard space and educators' areas of engagement with children
- The ongoing excursions using our Danish pram (where seats are at a high level and children are seated facing each other) to support interactions on excursions between children and educators
- Investigation and implementation of project-based dialogic reading program to support early literacy
- Professional learning opportunities and critical discussions that support reflective practice
- Roster review that has enabled the

### implementation of regular excursions

- Establishment of small, project-based regular excursions that support the same group of children with the same educators and at the same location for a period of time that supports strong relationships, persistence, conflict resolution and strong community connections. These include locations such as, the Maribyrnong river, public transport, the park, schools, local shops and our intergenerational program.
- Reflecting on what sleep routines look like in the programs at KCCC.

As our two early-years services partnered across the globe and through our host visits, we were able to share knowledge, skills, expertise and information between our services to strengthen understanding of curriculum and developing programs and staff.

When we first embarked on this journey our aims were initially very focused on

what we could gain. However, we quickly realized that the benefits were two way. Sharing our knowledge, pedagogy, program and curriculum ideas and resources was also of immense value to the teams at our sister school.

Frederiksberg gained knowledge and understanding about our indoor/outdoor programs and what impact this has on children's rights. We shared a lot of information about our sustainability practices. The team at Frederiksberg have now implemented some of our practices such the implementation of a worm farm and composting.

The Frederiksberg team were very keen to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. This equally gave us an opportunity to gain more of a cultural understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. It was interesting to identify that many of the values of the Danish Hygge which is the Danish art of living, align with some Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander values and the Victorian

Early Years Learning Framework such as belonging. Experiencing belonging is integral to human existence. (The Early Years Learning Framework). At the heart of Hygge is an experience of belonging and a sense of connection (The book of Hygge, Thomsen Brits).

### The importance of relationships

Our teams were very empowered when they quickly recognized the amount of knowledge and skills they could share. This has provided them with an additional sense of achievement and value knowing that by sharing their knowledge and skills they have impacted services and children across the globe.

This year Shazia from the Gumnut room and Melissa the Pedagogical Leader participated in the Educator Exchange/ Host program.

Shazia and Melissa participated in dialogic reading sessions: These sessions were held in a special room which is equipped with a variety of books for

different age groups. Each book comes with a variety of props, games, and a teacher's tool which gives prompts for conversations, identifies key words, includes pedagogy info page, props, art material and a variety of games. Dialogical reading sessions are a perfect opportunity for children and educators to spend time together discussing a book; they provide the children with the time and space to talk about the book; what it means to them and share their experiences and knowledge

Language (speech) focus groups: These sessions were run by an educator with training in speech development and held once a week for children who had been identified that may benefit from the program. The main learning was that each time a book is read it is followed with an activity or experience so the children can relate the context of the book to their own experiences.

A highlight of the program that Shazia observed and focused on, was learning

and developing children's understanding about emotions, expressions, feelings, and social cues. Shazia gained experience in the use of Emotional dolls as props to demonstrate, discuss, and work with children on strengthening their ability to recognize and develop understanding about different feelings, emotions and expressions.

Melissa observed practices to support sleep and rest routines that supported a focus on groups and more opportunities to engage with the non-sleeping children. During these practices, Melissa observed minimized disruption to the children's environment by not having to transform all rooms for sleep time each day. This really resonated with Melissa's values and practice coming from New Zealand where children had a designated sleep room.

Melissa and Shazia were really excited about the possibilities and initiatives for KCCC from this experience.

Shazia and Melissa were involved in the forest kinder and they had the opportunity

“There is a big focus on **sustainability**, natural resources, sunscreen and the environment. There are lots of discussions about nutrition, healthy eating and **nutritious foods**. The children at **KCCC are very independent** and provided with a lot of choice. There is a lot more structure at Frederiksberg, particularly around routines times such as meal times.”

Anne Sofie, Frederiksberg, Denmark





# HIGHLIGHTS 2017: COMMUNITY CONNECTION

## 2017 Trivia night success!

The evening was a great success and raised \$9482.45! We had 120 people attend on the evening which provided a great opportunity for community engagement, making new friends and catching up with old friends.

The Trivia Night has two main purposes; the first being, to raise funds and awareness of specific projects that are being undertaken at KCCC.

This year, the fundraising was targeted to contribute to the refurbishment of the playground space. Specifically, the money raised at the trivia night helped fund the bike path and the purchase of new bikes and helmets.

The second main purpose of our Trivia Night was to strengthen the connections between KCCC families, and continue to build on the strong foundations of the KCCC community.

With 120 people attending the event in 2017, we believe this to be a true indication of the vibrant, generous and well-connected community that exists at KCCC.



TRIVIA NIGHT



WELCOME BREAKFAST

## Dental screenings

Partnership with COHealth continued in 2017 to enable dental screenings for the majority of children at KCCC.

Having the dental screenings at KCCC provided the children with a familiar environment and trusted educators enabled the children to approach their screenings with a sense of security and calm. Dental technicians and staff provided children with information and education on oral health, healthy eating and drinking and of course dental screening.

The overall statistics showed that the children attending KCCC have a high level of oral health hygiene.



KCCC AND COHEALTH DENTAL SCREENINGS



EASTER EGG HUNT

## Partnerships with Maternal Child Health

Our relationship with the Maternal Child Health (MCH) Nurses, Monica and Briody continue to strengthen. KCCC staff have had the pleasure of participating in the new mums group this year. We have provided information sessions about early childhood education and care at KCCC, enrolment processes, service provision, waitlist and application procedures and government requirements. These information sessions have been invaluable to the families who are first time parents seeking information about access to early childhood education and care.



# HIGHLIGHTS 2017: COMMUNITY CONNECTION



## 3 ½ year old checks

To support KCCC families and particularly parents struggling to find a time to fit in their child's 3 ½ year old development and health check, we worked in partnership with the Kensington MCH Nursing team to offer early morning appointments. The checks could be completed at the time of drop off to KCCC.

The children were also able to have their four year old vaccines completed at the same appointment. This once again supported children to be in a familiar environment moving from one room within the building to the MCH area.

The 3.5 Year check is an important one

and covers the following aspects

- Completion of an eye test
- Kindergarten enrolment
- Helping your child to eat healthy food
- Taking care of your child's teeth
- How play helps learning and development
- Behaviour, getting along with others and relationships
- Social and emotional development for age
- Family relationships and well being
- Safety including sun and water safety
- Immunisations



FESTIVALS

## Kensington Community Festival

KCCC once again joined in the fun of the festival. Our stall provided a wonderful opportunity to engage with our community where we offered "POT A PLANT" activity which connected with our sustainability philosophy and connecting to our community.

The kindergarten children were thrilled to join the children's choir on the day to help launch the 10th anniversary of the Kensington Community Festival. The Festival was a great day of free activities, food stalls and entertainment and opportunity to connect with our community.



BIGGEST MORNING TEA



BOOK WEEK

## Storypark

The introduction of Storypark this year has provided a reciprocal platform where educators and families shared stories and special events about the children. The secure, private online space has enabled families to be involved and up-to-date with their child's program and development and increased family participation in their child's program and development. ■



DIWALI



"Thanks for getting me hooked on **storypark**. It's so lovely to read what's happening in my child's day (with the added detail of someone who knows him well). I'm sure he would have loved having the **one on one** with you as part of his update on his day usually involves mention of you. Thank you."

KCCC Parent

"We've **read books** about sea animals to our son before he goes to sleep every now and then. Glad he can **identify the sea creatures** at child care. Thanks all."

KCCC Parent



WORKING BEES



"Thanks to all her educators. It means a lot to us to see how well you have documented her progress. It puts us at ease."

KCCC Parent



"Jimmy has **loved** going to the river this year. We hear a lot about it at home."

KCCC Parent



# HIGHLIGHTS 2017: INCLUSION – SMALL GROUP EXCURSIONS AND SPECIALIST PROGRAM

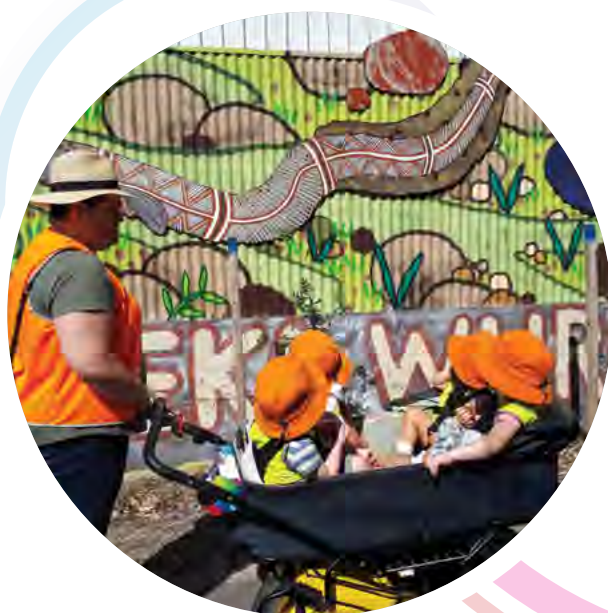
One of our key areas of focus, and one that is embedded in our values, has been KCCC's desire to create a service that is not only connected, but also inclusive. For KCCC, inclusion means fairness and equity for everyone, and this requires us to listen and notice; to be responsive to the individuals and groups that make up our service community. When addressing inclusion, we have taken an anti-bias stance and considered the multiple ways in which children and adults can potentially be excluded, whether long term or short term. By considering all members of the community we are better equipped to create spaces where no children or adult suffer from disadvantage. Shifting the environment and attitudes as much as possible to give everyone what they need to flourish, is an ongoing task. However, the simple act of being aware that some of us have more advantages, disadvantages, constraints or benefits than others, is a good starting point.

2017 was another year in which we explored what an inclusive service looks and feels like, and to draw on our learnings and teaching from our work in 2016, including connecting with the Wurundjeri Tribe; working with our Sister School in Denmark, including the concept of Hygge; and from our 2017 training around the revised Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VELDF).

This year we were excited to implement our small group excursions and projects which have fostered positive, trusting relationships and being inclusive. We examined our learnings from Denmark and this led us to seek different ways to work in small groups. Our excursions in the large pram, a pram that was specifically purchased for the high inward facing seats, gives children and educators the opportunity to talk together as they explore the local environment.

Small group work supports all children and can be particularly valuable to those children who are uncomfortable in a large group, or simply need the time and space to feel a sense of belonging. The trips out in the pram have certainly facilitated some caring relationships, as Nicole explains "creating those groups and keeping the groups together throughout the year; on excursions and their dialogical reading groups, has helped them to form close relationships. We continue to see them supporting and helping one another in their day to day interactions".

In 2017 we appointed Paula as the outdoor excursion educator who led the excursion program that commenced in the Waratah room with the under 3's group. The use of the four-seater pram that KCCC brought over from Denmark has supported engagement for children as they sit opposite each other and at the same level as their educators.



## Local knowledge – Excursions to the Maribyrnong river

Many of the children's small group work has involved going down to the Maribyrnong River, which has given the children further opportunities to work on building their understanding of the local area and its history. It has been a chance for us to extend on the mosaic we created with the Wurundjeri Tribe and make it more meaningful for the children, as we could entwine Wurundjeri knowledge and stories with the children's own knowledge and stories, the river being a perfect place to draw on these connections. Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of being and doing, has been something that throughout 2017 we began to become more comfortable with and a continued source of learning.

## Melbourne train stations

The trains have been the children's ongoing interest as they often view and hear the trains from our playground. Together with the children we chose the trains as our second destination for the small group excursions. We were also aware that public

Children are not the people of tomorrow but people today. They are entitled to be taken seriously. They have a right to be treated by adults with **tenderness and respect**, as equals. They should be allowed to grow into whoever they are meant to be – the unknown person inside of them is hope for the future.

Janusz Korczak

transport is a crucial and vital part of the community. It has social, economic and environmental advantages. Public transport fosters a sense of community by allowing opportunities for interaction while traveling. Environmentally, it reduces pollution and road congestion as there are fewer cars on the road.

Riding trains was a good opportunity for children to be exposed to public transport to foster their sense of belonging to the community. It promoted continuity of learning extending the children's current knowledge of trains from home to KCCC and to the community.

## The Intergenerational program – KCCC & Dousta gala Lynch's Bridge residential care facility combating ageism

The implementation of our intergenerational program was a big highlight of 2017, with Tania and Bridie

taking a lead role in building a warm relationship with the residents at Lynch's Bridge. The program was a way of addressing ageism at both ends of the age spectrum. Once again, the same group of children visited the residents each week, as this helped to foster meaningful relationships. It is something that grew over the year, and the residents, children and staff looked forward to the visits.

Bridie: "When I first started going to Lynch's Bridge, I didn't really talk much to the residents. I didn't really know what to say as I looked at them like 'old people'. Now I have made many friends, I talk to them all, I no longer see them as 'old people' I now see them as just people".

## Sharing our skills – Yoga, Sports and cooking programs

2017 saw educators share their own skills and interests through the start of some new initiatives. Gloria shared her interest in Soccer, Tessie her love of yoga and Mai her passion for food and cooking. These initiatives were followed and a regular trip to the YMCA and Unison community kitchen ensured that children from across the centre have the chance to reap the benefits of Gloria's soccer skills, Tessie's yoga techniques and Mai's culinary expertise. Being engaged in different sport, exercise and nutrition programs supports trying new skills, practising current skills, working collaboratively, taking the time to be in the moment and helping to foster a positive attitude to health and wellbeing.

Healthy body, healthy mind, supporting the children to explore and be active. ■



Children are highly motivated to play in risky ways, they are very good at knowing their own capabilities and avoiding risks they are not ready to take either physically or emotionally.

Grey, 2014

Our community orients towards "...thinking that moves beyond generalisations and clichés, because being attentive to unexpected events necessitates creative thought and unprecedented pedagogical responses."

Berger, 2016





## HIGHLIGHTS 2017: CAPITAL WORKS

### A SPACE FOR EVERYONE

KCCC are privileged to work with children with additional needs and there is a great richness to any community that values diversity. Children with additional needs teach us that there are many different ways to 'be' in the world, they encourage us to think about how the world works and recognise that it often favours the typically developing. It was therefore important for us to consider and adapt the physical environment to include all children and to remain open and understanding in our thinking.

The garden refurbishment has provided numerous ways to support all children to play a part in the KCCC community. The space broke down the barriers in terms of age, but also in terms of its use; it has now become an area for all children to engage with the environment in their own way.

After 2 ½ years of planning the refurbished playground area has been created, which is accessible by all rooms,

and is integral to the learning program. The refurbished outdoor area is a central feature of the integrated model to improve everyday learning.

The children are able to move freely between indoor and outdoor spaces throughout the service. The outdoor space has been designed for children of all ages to explore and investigate. The Apple tree for example; in a favourite area, has had an updated risk-benefit assessment that ensures the climbing tree has an adequate safe fall zone, free of hazards and sufficient tan bark. Children are supported to explore and make judgments on how high they can climb. Educators across the service are confident in actively promoting independence and exploration.

This refurbished playground has enhanced the education and care program for the children by providing boosted quality and developmentally appropriate spaces for play and learning.



After 2 ½ years of planning the refurbished playground area has been created, which is **accessible by all rooms**, and is integral to the learning program.

Sigi Hyett, General Manager

The outdoor refurbishment has improved the outdoor space by including a range of different natural features to include a variety of surfaces and a bike path, grass, enhanced sand pits, soil and two digging patches, edible gardens to support a variety of different planting. Trees and plants that attract birds and insects, feature rocks, a dry creek river bed and a hand water pump.

The refurbished playground opening was certainly a highlight of the year. Commencing with a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony from the Wurundjeri Tribe Elders and opening by the honourable Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood and Addison from the Boronia room.

Special thanks to the City of Melbourne, Jeavons Architects, MAC builders, KCCC Board, our families, children, staff and wider community of Kensington for their support in making this refurbishment possible.

The refurbished playground is a central feature of the integrated model to improve everyday learning and to:

- strengthen responsive relationships between adults and children
- identify opportunities for small group collaborative learning
- provide opportunities for exploration and creativity
- encourage judgement making and promoting independence
- provide greater support for building friendships between children.



This approach has supported the staff to focus on the learning with very young children and broaden their awareness of children's capabilities. It avoids expectations about capabilities according to age and takes into account children's individuality.

The indoor-outdoor approach across the program has strengthened responsive relationships between educators and children. Opportunities identified are for small-group multi-age collaborative learning. ■





# FINANCIAL COMMENTARY 2017

2017 has seen Kensington Community Children's Co-operative (KCCC) continue to achieve the financially stable business result demonstrated in recent times.

Investment into our facilities, people and programs; ensuring we remain accessible and aligned to the needs of our community; and approaching all activities with a child-first mindset, have enabled us to continue to offer a successful and sought-after service that looks towards greater success in the future.

For the 12-month period January-December 2017 the KCCC operating revenue was \$3.75 million and a net surplus of \$152k was achieved.

The operating result for the year was driven by continued levels of high occupancy as well as effective management of labour costs and operating expenses.

## Occupancy

The impact of occupancy on our financial result is significant and is, therefore, a key

driver to our success.

Coupled with its financial impact, high levels of occupancy, ensures we are serving our community's need for early education and care to our maximum capacity.

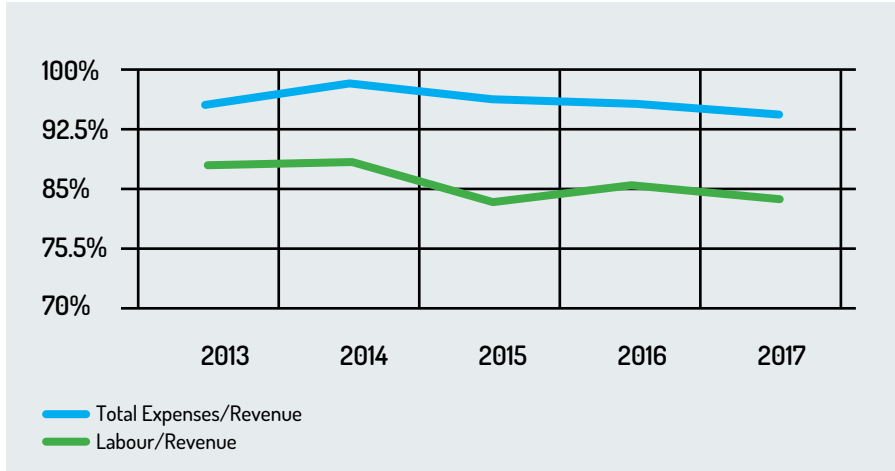
KCCC is a 140-place centre offering programs for children aged between 6 weeks and 6 years old. There are 9 children's rooms at the service with varying size capacities and age groups as outlined in the table below:

<b>Long Day Care Room Capacity</b>	
<b>Yarragum</b> (Babies) .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Gumnut</b> (Toddlers) .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Wattle</b> (Under 3 year olds) .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Banskia</b> (Under 3 year olds) .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Waratah</b> (Under 3 year olds) .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Boronia</b> (3-5 year olds) .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Acacia</b> (3-5 year olds) .....	<b>16</b>

## Kindergarten Room Capacity

<b>Tea Tree</b> (4-5 year olds Sessional).....	<b>36</b>
<b>Apple Tree</b> (4-5 year olds Integrated).....	<b>44</b>

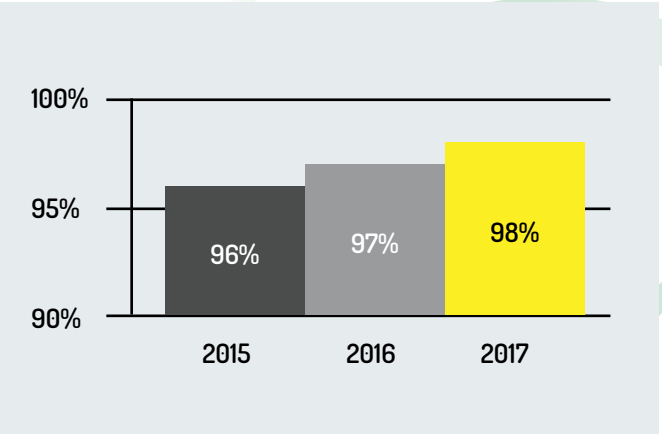
PERCENTAGE OF EXPENSES TO REVENUE  
2013 - 2017 COMPARISON



During 2017, an average occupancy of 98% was achieved at KCCC. Well more than half the year saw occupancy levels of 99% and 100%, however, the orientation processes that occur at the beginning of every year will always affect final annual average results. In total 289 children attended KCCC at some time during 2017 from 244 different families.

A comparison of the average occupancy level for the last three years is illustrated below. It can be seen that KCCC has continued to improve this business metric over that period.

AVERAGE ANNUAL OCCUPANCY  
2015 - 2017 COMPARISON



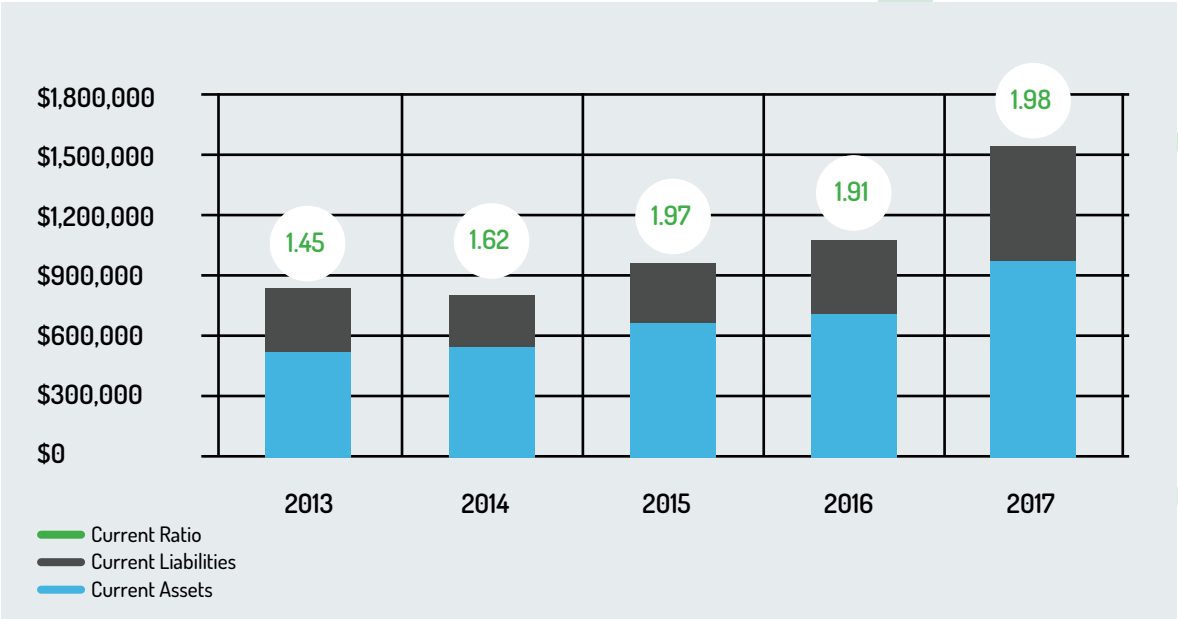
## Labour Costs

Employees are the key resource in providing quality education and care to children at our service. At KCCC we are proud to provide employees under the Victorian Early Childhood Teachers Agreement and the Professional Childcare Standard with above Award conditions and support all staff in their ongoing professional development. Highly qualified and engaged employees, aligned to the service goals and objectives, will continue to result in successful business operations for KCCC as well as positive outcomes for our children and families.

## Operating Expenses

Providing all staff and children with the resources and operational tools necessary is another critical factor to our business success. Effective and efficient purchases practises have continued to occur throughout 2017 and as a result these costs have remained at a stable percentage of revenue received.

CURRENT LIABILITIES/ASSETS RATIO  
2013 - 2017 COMPARISON



## Long Term Financial Viability

The ability for KCCC to repay its financial obligations can be measured through the Current Ratio - calculating the percentage of current assets compared to current liabilities. Management of our future benefits and future obligations ensures we continue to be in a position where we have financial capacity to meet our business requirements and informs our decision making around investment in other areas of the service. The graph below shows the current ratio sits at 1.98 at the end of 2017, representing a strong financial position for KCCC.

## The future at KCCC

With the support of the City of Melbourne, and investment from KCCC, 2017 saw the creation of a new and upgraded outdoor play space in the main yard of our service. The upgrade of the nappy change facilities is planned for 2018 together with continued investment in equipment and furniture for children that creates a welcoming, calming and encouraging environment.

The introduction of iPads and technological tools that support Storypark communication about children's learning and experiences; and investment in excursion programs that collaborate with

other local Kensington organisations, drive our key activities and direction in the near future.

The 2018 budget forecasts a modest net surplus and allows for learning and development opportunities for our staff that have been funded through grant funding in recent times. Continued high occupancy and an ongoing focus on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of our processes will be key drivers to our success in the year to come and beyond. ■





## OUR STAFF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Our commitment to ongoing reflective practice and professional learning to ensure we stay abreast of changes and developments in the early years continued. Heather Barnes an early years expert continued to support the staff team in 2017. A series of professional learning sessions were developed where staff were engaged in both theoretical and practical sessions on the revised Victorian Early Years Learning Framework. This work included highlighting and identifying opportunities to engage in concepts and practices linking Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), minimising the missed opportunities for early learning. This is an ongoing professional learning commitment that educators learn together and transform their pedagogy.

Our work includes understanding and practising conversations with children that are based on reasoning and discovery. We looked at how to use everyday examples such as children playing in the sandpit baking 'cakes' We use mathematical and scientific language and concepts, for example hypothesizing, discussing weight, mass, and exploring the changing states of matter involved in cooking. We discuss how matter changes from solid to liquid (melting) and liquid to

solid (baking process).

Educators purposeful conversations scaffold children's learning of mathematical and scientific concepts.

### Kccc team sharing and inspiring

Throughout 2017 the team have consolidated and strengthened the practices and programs that awarded the service an exceeding rating of the National Quality Standards at the end of 2016

Our team has been fortunate to share the practices and programs now embedded at KCCC with the larger Early Years Sector and visiting services to KCCC. Sharing our child focus approach to program and practice has provided another level of professional development for our educators who are an empowered, confident body of learners sharing their knowledge. in 2017 KCCC we have been proud to share our work through several publications.

- **The Victorian Early Years Exchange,**
- **Early Learning Australia's, Preschool Matters,**
- **Community Child Care's Round table**
- **2018 the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority's We hear you blog.**

Throughout 2017 KCCC has hosted

tours and sessions for other Early Years Services who are transitioning to Integrated service delivery and multi age settings. This has provided the opportunity for other services to see and talk about evidence based programs in action outside their own service.

### Cultural diversity

At KCCC we are fortunate to have such a rich diversity of culture which brings together a diverse range of people, knowledge and skill. We have continued to promote our community harmony and celebrate the many cultures that make our community so vibrant. Throughout the year we have engaged in many activities and celebrations and events such as cultural diversity week, Diwali, Naidoc week just to name a few. The children learned so much and expressed joy when together with staff as they participated in wearing traditional clothes, sharing stories, music, rhymes, sharing recipes and cooking and dancing.

### Staff tenure awards

Congratulations to Cherie and thank you for 25 years of dedication and commitment to KCCC, children, families, colleagues and the early years sector. ■

## STAFF TENURE AWARDS



## KCCC PRESENTATION AT THE 2017 EARLY LEARNING AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Our teams presented at the Early Learning Australia Association Conference in May 2017.

The Conference reference committee received a record number of applications last year, almost double that of 2016. Therefore, being selected to present reflects on the high quality of our application amongst a competitive field of applicants. The significant increase in applications also underlines the regard in which the Conference is held throughout the early childhood education and care sector.

Our team of dedicated staff, presented to an audience of approximately 50 peers on our journey to an integrated service with the 'Child in Focus'. The feedback from the audience was very positive and our Early Childhood peers asked lots of questions and were very interested in some of the practicalities of Multi age grouping, indoor/outdoor play and the

large shared yard.

The team received lots of positive comments from attendees and our Facebook feed.

Having the opportunity to share our practice with other services was certainly an honor and highlighted the community spirit and positive outcomes for children that KCCC continues to strive for.

It is also an opportunity for our teams to engage in professional learning at a different level.

Through the sharing of ideas, knowledge, pedagogy, curriculum, and experience, our teams and service has been enriched and its capability improved. By celebrating the benefits and ongoing critical thinking and shared learning we continue to strive for continuous improvement and best outcomes for children, families, educators and communities. ■



Absolute **pleasure**, enjoyed hearing from such passionate educators – you have a **great team**.

Congratulations your **staff were terrific**, what a journey you have had. Well done!

So, so proud of you all! I'm sure everyone found your journey **interesting and inspiring**. You were all so professional and it will encourage other educators to tell their story at the conference in future years.

Quotes received from some of the audience that listened to the KCCC presentation:





# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all our stakeholders, we value the strong partnerships with our community and stakeholders and acknowledge their commitment and role within our service. ■

Thank you for your contribution to KCCC this year.

Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority

Catharine Hydon

City of Melbourne

City of Melbourne – Early Years Services

City of Melbourne – Maternal Child Health

City of Melbourne – Access to Early Learning

Co-Health Community Health

Community Child Care Association

Bev Plowman

Danielle Bryant

Early Childhood Australia

Early Learning Association Australia

FKA Children's Services

Flemington and Kensington Bowling Club

Fredriksberg Folkeboernehave

Gilda Howard

Gowrie Victoria

Heather Barnes

Jellis Craig

Jobs Australia

KCCC Board Members

KCCC Sub Committee Members

KCCC Families

KCCC Staff

Kensington Children's Network

Kensington Community Network

Kensington Neighbourhood House

Large Community Services Network

Lynch's Bridge, Dousta Galla

Royal Children's Hospital

The Venny

Toby Ansell

United Voice

Urban Communities

Victorian Government Department of Education and Training

Wurundjeri Tribe

YMCA, Kensington