



## March 2020 Edition

### From the Office

#### COVID-19 Update

As you are aware, we are currently facing some challenging times in the wider community. On advice from the Government, our Occasional Care service along with all Cire Children's Services remains open. I can again confirm that we have not had any cases of COVID-19 amongst our children, families or educators.

Our primary goal is to ensure the health and safety of our children, families and staff.

We follow the strictest of hygiene practices and our primary goal is to ensure the health and safety of our children, families and staff.

Our services are cleaned daily with hospital grade cleaners and disinfectants and our educators are conducting a clean and disinfect of doorknobs, taps, light switches and all surfaces at regular intervals across the day.

We have the following hygiene practices to enhance infection control measures:

- We have hand sanitisers at the service entry and outside each room.
- Educators and children wash their hands on arrival to the service and at regular times throughout the day, including (but not limited to), before and after meals, after toileting, after blowing their nose.
- Surfaces including doorknobs, gate entries, table tops, chairs, benches and iPads are cleaned and disinfected regularly throughout the day.
- All toys are disinfected daily and for the younger children we have a mouthed toy bucket where toys that have been mouthed by children are immediately placed, so that they can be disinfected to minimize any spread of infections.
- As an additional precautionary measure, educators only will use the iPad to sign your children in and out of the service.

- We follow strict exclusion periods as set out in Staying Healthy in Childcare. If children are sick please keep them home and if educators are sick we also enforce exclusion periods.
- We are enforcing social distancing by adults in line with Government guidelines.
- We are also using intentional teaching and educational expertise to implement social distancing practices for the children (where possible). Our activities and experiences are spread out across the room and on different tables to further encourage this.

These hygiene practices have been part of our everyday practice and are valuable learning experiences for the children. We have increased and enhanced these practices due to the current climate with these added measures is in place to protect children, families and educators.

As you would also all be aware, on Thursday the Australian Government made an announcement regarding free childcare. Whilst we are still seeking clarification regarding some aspects of the package, this is fantastic news for families. This initiative will ensure that children can continue to have access to early education and care which is so important for children's development. It also ensures that working parents still have access to quality care for their children and do not have to rely on family for care including grandparents who may be more vulnerable to COVID-19.

We understand and can appreciate that many families are nervous about the current situation but I can assure you we are working hard to continue to provide high quality and safe environments for our children, families and our team of wonderful educators who have worked tirelessly through these challenging times. We will continue to offer support to you and your family and will update you regularly.

## Mwaka's News

Thank you to all the families that have been proactively supporting our service demonstrating best hygiene practices with your children to stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

We have implemented some discussions about the virus to the children that are still attending using some age appropriate fact sheets to help explain the virus to them and offering preventative strategies.

This month we welcomed new children into our service. The children have been transitioning into the learning environment very well. We are watching with pride and joy as they develop new friendships with both educators and children. Separating from your child is one of the most challenges experiences for parents so we would like to support you in every way possible.

We are intentionally teaching the children to respect nature by involving them in our sustainability practices. We have some new plants in our yard and also have some new play equipment.

The children have been doing a great job caring for our plants and have loved getting involved in all aspects of gardening.



We want you to feel involved in your child's development as much as possible so feel free to communicate with us let us know of any challenges or concerns and general updates you or your child may be having outside of our service include holiday adventures or toilet training progress.



We have been able to grow our own grass in the room with the children enjoying the sensory aspect of real grass in their activities, touching it, running their hands through making comments about how soft it is.

## Recycling

We have three recycling bins in our rooms ready to be filled with your recycled craft donations. If you have any reusable items that we can use in our craft experiences including, cardboard, plastic bottles, wool, fabric, pine cones, wood off cuts, please bring them into the services so we can get creative and make some wonderful items with them. Please remember that we are unable to use toilet rolls, egg cartons or milk cartons due to allergies and hygiene reasons. If you are not sure what can be brought into the service please check with one of the educators. We are also planning to use plastic bottles for gardening experiences including a vertical garden like the one pictured below.



We would also welcome some plant cuttings to use in these if you have some. We can use succulents or anything that will grow.



## Harmony Day

We celebrated Harmony Day, a celebration of our cultural diversity and a day of cultural respect. It's held every year in March and coincides with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of racial discrimination.

Children were invited to come dressed in some cultural attire or bright coloured clothing. Some children participated in a group painting activity and others joined in dancing some multicultural music.



## St Patrick's Day

St Patrick's Day was also celebrated with children and educators wearing green, we danced to some Irish music and coloured in some Irish clovers. We practiced some simple Irish words with the support of one of our Irish families.

Thank you Rachael for providing us with some fantastic resources to use.



## Bear Hunt

Our Children's Service at Chirnside Park have joined in the Bear Hunt. If you're out on an errand and in the area drive by and you might catch a glimpse of our two cheeky bears just hanging around out the front.

## Looking for Rainbows!

Our Children's Service at Chirnside Park have joined in the Rainbow Trail. The children collaborated to create a huge rainbow to display at our Centre showing that "we are all in this together"!

## Cire Children's Services Facebook Page

Cire Children's Services now has its own Facebook Page. Please follow and like our page.

Here is the link:

<https://www.facebook.com/cirechildrenservices/>

## Please label your child's items

Just a reminder for all families to please label children's items including lunch boxes and drink bottles etc. this helps us keep track of child's belongings and even helps your child to recognise their name. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Also, please note that we are a nut free service so we cannot have any products containing nuts. This includes certain nappy rash creams (sудо cream, bepanten).

We look forward to seeing you all soon and we hope you are staying safe.

From Rebecca, Mwaka, Cherry and Tracey

## Dates to Remember

28 March – 13 April – School holidays

Friday, 10 April – Good Friday Public Holiday  
(Service Closed)

Sunday, 12 April – Easter Sunday

Monday, 13 April – Easter Monday Public Holiday  
(Service Closed)

Tuesday, 14 April – Curriculum Day, State wide

Wednesday, 15 April – First day of Term 2

Saturday, 25 April – ANZAC Day

