2011 seems to have begun with a rush. As most of last Newsletter was taken up with the reports of the Governing Council Annual General Meeting I would like to share some information with you. At the end of 2010 we bade farewell to Beata Nalepa who left Kilparrin after 15 years to work next door at SASVI. Beata has been a wonderful teacher and staff member at Kilparrin and we wish her well in her new position. Naomi Ryan has been on accouchement leave this year. Her baby daughter Rose Melody was born on Monday night. We welcome Jenny McGinn to Kilparrin. Although Jenny was appointed at the end of 2009 she had already accepted an exchange teaching post in England for 2010 and consequently deferred starting with us until this year. Jenny is teaching at KELC and as a Statewide Support Service teacher works with babies and their families in early intervention. Jenny was formerly the Director of the Briars Special Education Preschool and already is making positive contributions to Kilparrin. We also welcome Marina Gallop who joins our staff and with Karly together contribute their superb Auslan signing skills as a bonus to our school. The Statewide Support Service teachers are presenting their first professional development program for the year today. Teachers from across the state are attending the Education Development Centre to participate in a program designed to augment the support offered through support visits over the year. Temporary Relieving teachers have attended an induction to introduce them to Kilparrin pedagogy and practice. We have held our open night for families to meet their child’s teacher, the Annual General Meeting and the Building the Education Revolution (BER) opening ceremony to acknowledge the completion of the Kilparrin building project. In February, with Kay Berry Smith Principal of SASVI, I attended the Vision 2011 conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. While in KL we visited the Malaysian Association of the Blind and specialist schools for children who are blind or vision impaired. I could not help but compare our conditions to those I visited and we certainly are fortunate in South Australia not only in our school facilities but also in the design and amenities in our public places and spaces. In KL it is a test of agility to negotiate the footpaths, traffic, roadways, shops, rest rooms and even in my case the shower in the hotel room. With reduced vision or mobility, independent movement would be impossible and indeed I saw no one out and about without another person to support them. I was very fortunate to meet with practitioners and researchers who are investigating the effects of vision impairment on people’s lives and are working on projects to reduce its negative effect through such means as technology. Next week Prof. Dr. Paul Pagliano joins us beginning on Tuesday with our Parent workshop. Have a wonderful long weekend. Alison McWilliams Principal
CLASSROOM NEWS  
Focus: Literacy

ORANGE CIRCLES

We have been very busy in the Orange Circles class so far this term.

As part of our literacy program we have been going shopping once a week to the Park Holme Shopping Centre where we purchase the ingredients for our cooking lesson. We then use the ingredients we have just purchased to do some cooking. The learners have been involved in choosing the recipe that we are going to cook, helping with the development of a shopping list and then finding the ingredients when we are shopping.

In literacy we have also been reading a number of pirate books and looking at different maps. We started with pirate maps and then moved on to maps of our school. This has included taking photos on the way to the library and back to the classroom so we can create a digital map of how to get to the library and back again.

All of the learners have been enjoying the mapping activities and looking at different maps.

Karen & Bruna

GREEN TRIANGLES

It has been good to meet with parents over the past two weeks to discuss your child’s shared learning goals, and share with you the weekly timetable. As can be seen from the timetable, experiences to promote literacy and communication skills are implemented each morning, beginning with morning group time.

This term, there is a focus on awareness of ourselves and each other, name/photo recognition and making song choices using the tactile song cards. This looks different for each learner, such as feeling their name in Braille, matching their photo to their name card, looking at their photo and accessing voice output devices.

The learners seem to be enjoying hearing their voices amplified when using the microphone too.

We have also been focussing on listening skills. As a class, we have spent time in the outside play area, at the local shops, and at the local library discussing the sounds in these environments. Towards the end of the term we will be going on an excursion to Westfield Marion, which will give us more opportunity to talk about what we can hear as we travel by bus and explore the shops.

Predictable routines and smooth transitions between learning experiences continue to be an important part of Green Triangle’s day, as it helps them feel safe and secure and helps them predict what may happen next. This includes using object cues to associate them with what is going to happen, such as offering the learner a spoon to touch when it is time to eat.

As we did last year, we have been making weekly visits to the Park Holme library for a story or two and toy borrowing, which the learners seem to enjoy, followed by the opportunity to explore the toys/equipment we borrow back in the classroom.

We will also be spending time with Gloria in our school library on Friday mornings, listening to a range of stories including accessing book boxes, which include accompanying props to help develop understanding of concepts/content.

Rachel, Jess and Lyn
**PURPLE STARS**

The learners in the Purple Stars class are having a very busy start to the year indeed. All of the learners have settled in nicely to our classroom routine. This has been encouraged and reinforced with the use of a tactile schedule during our ‘Good Morning’ sessions.

This term, we are focusing on literacy and communication. The learners in the Purple Stars class communicate through speech, vocalisations, body language, sign, picture symbols and personal communication devices. The learners in the class are given as many opportunities and as much encouragement as possible to use these varieties of communications throughout the day. The most important session of the day for the learners in the Purple Stars is ‘Good Mornings’. This allows the learners to greet each other appropriately and engage in different forms of communication.

Literacy is also a major focus in the classroom. The learners in the Purple Stars really enjoy book boxes. Book boxes allow the learners to be immersed in the story as a variety of tactile and noisy objects are offered to reinforce the concepts in the story.

One story in particular that the learners enjoy is *The Doorbell Rang* by Pat Hutchins. All of the learners look forward to pressing the doorbell.

Other individual literacy activities are also being carried out with the learners to promote development in this area.

The learners in the Purple Stars also look forward to going to the school library on Monday mornings to do a literacy session with Gloria.

**YELLOW SQUARES**

With our first block of swimming at Marion pool finished, the Yellow Squares class has settled in to quite a fast paced routine which sees each morning of the week focus on literacy.

In the classroom learners practise English through reading, writing sight words, spelling and speech sound activities. Marina then conducts a story telling session using English literature and translating it into Auslan for communication. At the same time, but in the pre-orientation and mobility courtyard an intensive interaction experience takes place with a push towards the imitation of new speech sounds.

Swimming of course continues throughout the year for those learners attending sessions at Minda pool and is a very popular activity! The swimming instructors use literacy in the pool with constant communication about important spatial awareness concepts and songs about movement.

Wednesday is the Yellow Squares cooking day beginning with a literacy block which will see learners create the shopping list of ingredients and then locate them in the supermarket. So far our mini pizzas, Vietnamese cold rolls and fruit skewers have also been enjoyed.
by the learner’s families and Kilparrin staff!

Although literacy is the focus of our English/LOTE (Languages Other Than English i.e. Auslan) lessons, it is important to note that it is present throughout the day. We provide our learners with a language rich environment at all times and encourage learners to extend and build upon the literacy skills which they already have.

The Kilparrin staff are attending a 10 week signing (Auslan) course at the moment to build their communication skills and it is great to see increasing levels of Auslan use around the school. The use of Auslan in the school supports our learners in their English literacy learning. Keep up the good work everyone!

Jess W and Marina

KILPARRIN EARLY LEARNING CENTRE

Literacy learning at KELC

Kilparrin children at KELC have been settling in to their new preschool environment over the first half of this term, and have focussed on ‘Belonging’ right across their learning. Our Literacy activities have included encouraging natural interactions between the children and their peers. Nasser and Dylan have been greeted by many children on their arrival, and will reach out to touch others when they join group times on the mat. Similarly, when the KELC children are exploring gloop and playdough during sensory learning, a number of their peers come along to see what they are doing, talk to them about it, and join them in their play.

During Primary Care group time, Nasser and Dylan sit on the mat to share the songs and story for the day. Their connection and engagement with the story is supported through tactile cues such as a toy animal relating to the book, which makes the experience more immediate and meaningful.

The use of body signs also supports literacy learning at KELC. Nasser and Dylan are cued to activities and changes by the use of Universal signs (for example, a tap on their chair before moving). In addition, the hand sign for ‘finished’ is conveyed by moving the adult’s thumb left to right in the child’s hand. An important part of this communication process is always waiting a while for the child to process the information before moving or finishing.

We are fortunate to have Krystyna join us from Kilparrin every fortnight for a Music session. This is part of our literacy learning as the children listen, follow instructions, respond with vocalisations and actions, and interact with other adults and peers. The ability to remember and recall is a valuable literacy skill, and it is wonderful to see the children smile as Krystyna begins to play the ‘hello’ song on her keyboard.

These are just a few examples of literacy learning at preschool. Literacy also includes many ways that children express themselves through movement, listening, vocalisation, augmentative communication, mark-making, and above all, playing and having fun.

Jenny and Kay

MUSIC

At Kilparrin we have four classes: Green Triangles, Orange Circles, Purple Stars and Yellow Squares. During group music sessions one of the songs that we practise reinforces belonging to a particular class.

We use our special green, orange, purple and yellow beanbag scarves. Each learner is expected to listen to the song
and when a particular colour is called they pick up and shake the appropriate scarf in time to music.

First we use our scarves in one class group, then we practise all together as we all belong to Kilparrin School. All these activities provide great opportunities for the development of listening skills and also reinforce learners’ awareness of themselves and others.

Another song, which requires learners to listen, pick up and play the appropriate percussion instrument, is *Family Band*. We use tone blocks, maracas, bells and a drum. We play and listen to one group of instruments at a time then all the different instruments play together. This activity gives us some idea about the way an orchestra works and that it is made up of many instruments.

We are looking forward to being a part of the 2011 Come Out Festival and attending a performance *Instant Orchestra Workshop* at the Amphitheatre, Adelaide Festival Centre on Tuesday 29th March. Details about this excursion will be sent to parents/caregivers soon.

*Krystyna & Kristel Music Team*

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**Early Literacy Development for Learners with Low Vision**

"Children’s language blossoms when caregivers observe closely the interests of children and capitalise on these to stimulate literacy, when children are invited to share experiences and their stories, when ready help is available in reading and writing, when a listening ear is always present, and when a telling story laden tongue is available.” (Glaser & Burke, 1994: p163)

All children benefit from listening to nursery rhymes, finger rhymes and stories. There is no such thing as a child who is unable to access literacy. Children have the ability to access it the moment they are born... perhaps even before. It is important to read aloud to children daily and expose them to ‘literacy materials’ such as, picture books, story books, alphabet books, activity books even bath books. Enjoy the moment and ensure it is a pleasurable experience for everyone.

An ideal approach for helping young children have rich learning experiences is the consistent application of Lowenfeld’s (1974) principles:

- using concrete experiences
- learning by doing
- providing unified experiences.

The overriding goal is to engage young children and learners actively in experiences in which they will use all their senses to gain information.

Reading aloud to young children is a powerful way to model the use of literacy. For toddlers and pre-school children with low vision, reading aloud by parents/caregivers and teachers allows young children to engage in a near-point task that is more likely to be within their field of view than many other literacy events.

Early books used for reading aloud should have bold, clear and uncluttered pictures. Real objects associated with the story can be used to supplement pictures, so a child with low vision has the opportunity to pair tactual information with visual information.

The Kilparrin classroom teachers have scheduled a daily literacy block which meets the learning needs of each learner. The Kilparrin library has a comprehensive selection of ‘Book boxes’ and at present we are looking at assessment tools to assess each learner’s literacy level.

Reference:
*Instruction of Literacy Skills to Children and Youths with Low Vision*, AJ Koenig and EJ Rex.

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"Literacy is not a luxury; it is a right and a responsibility.”
President Clinton on International Literacy Day, September 8th 1994.

*Lea Thorpe*  
*Curriculum & Pedagogy Coordinator*
The Cybersafety Help Button

The Cybersafety Help Button is an Australian Government initiative designed to keep children and families safe online. It is an online resource that gives children and young people easy access to cybersafety help and information.

The internet offers huge opportunities for improvements in education, social interaction, innovation and convenience. Along with these benefits come risks that can make the internet unpleasant and potentially dangerous. Cyberbullying, scams and fraud, offensive content and unwanted contact are all common risks for children and teenagers.

The Cybersafety Help Button is an online resource hub that gives children and teenagers instant access to help and information on cybersafety issues 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The button is a free application available from the website of the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy. Once downloaded, it sits on the computer desktop or within the taskbar. When the button is clicked, users are taken directly to a web page where they can talk, report or learn about cybersafety issues.

The talk function gives a link to Kids Helpline. Users who are worried by cyberbullying or offensive online behaviour or content can phone or chat online to a professional counsellor.

The report function offers direct links to pages on social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter that have site-specific cybersafety information. There are also links for reporting scams, fraud, inappropriate websites and improper behaviour and for contacting the Australian Federal Police.

The learn function provides a range of cybersafety educational resources through the Australian Communication and Media Authority’s (ACMA) Cybersmart website and the Department’s Stay Smart Online website. Visitors to these sites can learn about cyberbullying, social networking sites, scams and frauds, password protection, viruses and malware, unwanted contact and inappropriate behaviour.

The Cybersafety Help Button was developed in consultation with the Government’s Youth Advisory Group and the Consultative Working Group on Cybersafety.

The Youth Advisory Group—consisting of members aged eight to 17 years—expressed the need for a ‘one-stop shop’ for cybersafety help and information.

The Cybersafety Help Button is available free of charge at www.dbdce.gov.au/helpbutton. It is compatible with all major Windows and Mac OS X operating systems and is easily installed onto home, school and library computers.

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This information was provided by DECS to schools in preparation for the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence, 18 March, 2011.

Healthy Snacks

PIZZA IN A HURRY

Ingredients:
2 medium potatoes, sliced
½ -1 tablespoon water
2 ripe tomatoes, chopped
½ green capsicum, seeded and chopped
4 black olives, pitted and quartered
¼ cup grated Mozzarella cheese

Method:
Lay potato on a round microwave-safe plate. Sprinkle with water, cover with cling film. Microwave on HIGH (100%) for 5-6 minutes or until tender. Drain well on paper towels. Overlap potato slices on a plate to form a pizza base. Cover with tomato, capsicum and olives, sprinkle with cheese. Microwave on HIGH (100%) for 3-4 minutes until heated through and cheese has melted. (Serves 2)

Children with disabilities

Intellectual disability

Intellectual disability – Resources

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