



Elder Street Herald

Welcome to Elder Street for 2011

This week marks our 4th week of fun for 2011. By all accounts everyone is settling in well and we are enjoying lots of cuddles and getting to know each other—parents included!

We would like to officially welcome:

Possums: Eamon, Madison, Oliver P, Harrison, Zane, Annabelle, Isabella, Matilda, Amelie and Ava P.

Joey's: Axel—who started on w/s 24th and,

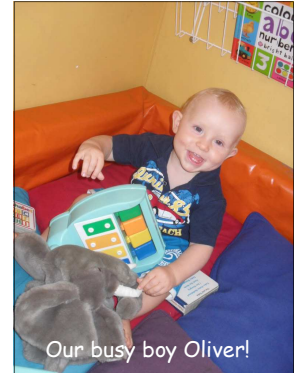
Wallabies: Rachael and Mali

It is great to have so many of our new parents chatting and getting to know staff and other families and also feeling comfortable to call up and check on how the

children are going throughout the day. All these positive interactions can only make the transition to a great partnership with the centre all the more easy. We will put out a Settling In questionnaire at 8 weeks from when we opened and encourage parents to give us any feedback they feel we could benefit from. We have included our standard article on Settling In in this edition. We have always had great feedback about these tips and hope that it will help families feel at ease.



Isabella is always happy....



Our busy boy Oliver!



Amelie has settled so wonderfully!



Harrison reading with his bro Levi



Little Madison having a ride....



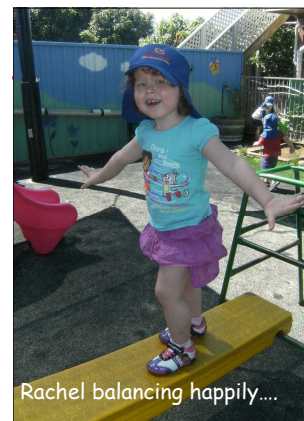
Ava just loves exploring..



Action man Zane!



Mali enjoying the dinosaurs



Rachel balancing happily....

NB: As our newsletter is available on our website, only children whose parents have signed permission for this to occur will appear in our newsletter.

Settling in at Elder Street—tips for transitions....

Here are some tips for any families who may be now or in the future facing a little bit of a relapse with the settling in process. This tends to happen sometimes when the toys and excitement of a new place wear off and the morning tears or comments like "I don't want to go to school" start surfacing. For children under 3 yrs, it may be a little while before the tears totally disappear, but there are some ideas for getting into a routine if you are having problems and just don't know what to do. Here is a sample routine that may help your morning transition when preparing to say good-bye for the day:

- On the way to the centre talk about the fun things that may happen that day
- Use the carer's names in your conversations in a positive way ie, we can tell Shelly about the funny book we read last night"
- When you come into the centre greet the staff and encourage your child to do the same
- Either carry or lead your child to their locker and involve them in the morning jobs of putting away bed bags, washing hands and then lead them to a carer
- If carers are busy (which is often the case during morning drop off) stay with your child and point out some interesting things in the room or playground. When available a carer will approach you for your morning welcome.
- **This is the crucial part!** If you plan to stay for a while, please let us know and we will come back to you when you are ready to go. When this time arrives we suggest that you have a phrase to use each day ie, okay bye honey, mum/dad will see you this afternoon, have a great day, I love you" and leave without hesitation.
- **Your child will more than likely cry—this is very normal.** It is not advisable at this stage to take your child back or decide to stay longer as this will only prolong the agony for both of you and make it more difficult for your child to settle

Story continues on page 4.....

The importance of solids and moving to a cup for milk..

The great nutrition program that we follow Good 4 Kids Good 4 Life has some wonderful information on healthy eating and drinking for babies as well as preschool children. One important start to a good foundation for eating well is to ensure that the move from bottle to cup and onto solids is done properly. The use of feeding bottles with teats is only recommended until the age of 12 months for developmentally able children. Between the ages of 6 and 12 months, infants are moving from liquid foods to solid family foods.

Infants need to learn to eat their foods, not just drink them. It is also interesting to know that around 12 months of age children's growth slows down substantially and as a result, they usually have smaller appetites than before. Too much milk combined with not enough solid food, increases the chance of iron deficiency, which can have a negative effect on the normal development of young children.

SOLIDS: It is recommended that solids be introduced from 6 months and no later. It is also important that the

texture of the food given changes from fine strain/purees to fine mash within the first month.

6-7mths: Pureed texture

7-9mths: Finely mashed to mashed with soft lumps and soft finger foods

9-12mths: Coarsely mashed food with lumps, finely chopped finger foods.

If you have any further questions on this subject or would like to read, *Caring for Infants—a Guide to Feeding 0-12 months*, please ask staff or myself.

Kids and Safety Section—Windows and falls

A reminder about the danger of falls from windows for all families. Falls are the most common form of injury in children and with around 8000 children being taken to hospital each year due to a fall, it is remiss to think it can't happen to us. Some areas to check up on at home:

- *Ensure windows cannot be opened anymore than 9 cm except by an adult,
- *Remember that flyscreens give no protection and are not strong enough

to hold a child in,

- *Keep objects that a child can climb on or stand on away from windows, including furniture such as beds and cupboards,
- *Be aware of hazardous windows when visiting other homes and supervise your child
- *Ensure balcony railings meet safety standards ie, no gaps wider than 9cm-12.5cm, at least 1.3 metres high

*Have no parts that can be used as a foothold for children to climb onto or over a balustrade

*Keep objects that a child can climb or stand on away from the balcony edge

*Don't put lightweight furniture on a balcony—children can drag it to the edge

*Lock doors and windows to balconies when not in use.

www.health.nsw.gov.au/childsafety

Fees

Now that we have settled in and most of the families accounts have sorted themselves out, it is time to remind families of our Centre's Fee Policy. This policy states that fees should be paid on time and not fall into arrears by more than 2 weeks.

Important points regarding payment of fees:

- Continued failure to pay fees within a set timeframe can jeopardise enrolment at the centre
- Fees paid by cash or cheque need to be paid by 10am Friday morning



at the latest

- Fees paid by direct deposit need to be set up to come out by Wednesday night at the latest. This allows the fees to reach us before the end of the week. Due to the 2 day delay it takes for most banks other than the Greater Building Society, we often do not receive fees until the following week.
- Fees are billed each Monday morning for the week ahead. Which ever way you choose to pay your fees, we ask that you are not in a

position where you are paying for the week, fortnight or month just past.

We appreciate your assistance with this matter and remind all families that they are always welcome to speak to myself or Kim at any stage to discuss their account situation.

Elder St ECHC banking details:

BSB: 637 000

Account #:
781333085

Please see further information on page 5 explaining Child Care Benefit, Child Care Management System and Child Care Tax Rebate

Home port folio pages....

To make sure that we are honouring our Centre Philosophy, which states "*We believe that children's development is influenced by the social and cultural context in which they live. We therefore strongly support the development of partnerships with parents based on mutual respect. We value and welcome their input and involvement in the centre.*" we are always looking for way to bring more of the children's home life into the centre. To help with this we have designed some **Family Port Folio Pages** and set up an area for parents to access these pages easily. As you walk

through the first gate in the centre you will now see on the wall 4 document holders with different sheets in each. These are for families to take whenever they want and complete at home with their child and bring back into the centre to include in their child's developmental port folio folder. The 4 sheets are "My Bedtime Routine", "This is my Family", "Family Holiday and "Our Family Xmas".

It is a lovely way of seeing how the children's lives are connected from home to centre allowing the children and all in their lives to build strong

relationships with them and help them with their very important sense of self and belonging within the community.

Thanks!!

"Your child's portfolio is available for parents to look through anytime from the shelves between the Nursery and the Preschool Room"

Some things that we need you to know.....

For those who are new or those who may have simply forgotten, here are some very important reminders.....

1. **Drink bottles should only have water** in them. Following the Good For Kids, Good for Life guidelines, juice or cordial are not recommended or allowed at the centre.
2. Sun Safety—please dress children in clothes that are sun safe, most importantly with **sleeves that fully cover the shoulder and upper arm.**
3. Please ensure that no food items, lollies, or medication are left in your child's bags.
4. Please label all belongings including shoes, drink bottles, clothes, dummies, blankies etc
5. Parking in Elder St—it is very important to be considerate of our neighbours when parking, **please do not park on or too close to neighbouring driveways**
6. Safe footwear—**THONGS ARE NOT ALLOWED**
7. Preschool Wallaby children need to have 2 flat sheets for their sleep bag. The fitted sheets are very tricky for them.
8. **Please ensure we have your most recent contact numbers for home, mobile and work—this is very important!**
9. **BED BAGS!!** Some of our little friends haven't brought one in so far this year. We need them each day they attend and they need to be taken home at the end of the attendance week and laundered — THANKS!!!!

Elder Street Early Childhood Centre

136 Elder Street
Lambton NSW 2299

Phone: 49 539300
Fax: 49 539782
E-mail:
elderstreet@optusnet.com.

Settling in at Elder street continued from page 2....



- when you do leave. After you have left the carers will involve them in the days activities and they will settle.

This is all normal separation anxiety which will settle down with time and nurturing. Of course all children are different, some don't look back from the first day. However, these other award winning performances are more likely to be for your benefit and thankfully the tears do miraculously disappear when you walk out the door.

As we advise all families on enrolment and throughout your time at the centre, please feel free to ring and check how your little one is going whenever you feel the need.

Understanding of Centre Policies Agreement

This document that asked parents to sign to agree that they have either read our centre policies or are happy to read them over time and have a general understanding of what is expected of them on different centre issues was given out late last year. We are still waiting on a few to come back and ask that if you haven't returned it to please do so as soon as possible. New parents will receive one with their 8 week settling in survey.

Birthdays and Arrivals

January

Oliver P turned 1
Amelie turned 1
Lucy turned 2
Lara turned 3
Xanthe turned 4

February

Henry turns 1
Axel turns 2
Sam T turns 3
Joshua turns 3
Emily J turns 3
Will R turns 4

Happy Birthday Everybody!!!

Congratulations to
Michelle and Bob on the
arrival of their beautiful little girl
Tara Rossin.
Tiernan (Wallabies) is
a very, very proud big
brother!

Final words.....

Please see our last page for information about Child Care Benefit and a tear off part if you would like to receive our news by email.....

Last reminder is that Elder Street's pick up time is 5.50pm as we need to be off the premises at 6pm for licensing compliance.

Next bi-monthly news we will be talking about....

Buy and Sell, Equipment Levy, Illness and Exclusion—any questions on any topic in the meantime please call the office on 49539300 :)

Don't forget to have a quick read of our Parent Involvement Policy on the very last page of our newsletter—we welcome anyone who would like to join our Policy Review Committee.....

Help with the Cost of Child Care—FAO, CCB, CCMS & CCTR

Some of you will be familiar with all these acronyms and others may be still scratching their head. As our centre is "approved" care that is also accredited, we are able to pass on many rebates to help with the cost of fees.

CCB—Child Care Benefit—if you earn between \$0-\$125K for 1 child in care, \$135K for 2 children in care and \$145K with 3 children in care, you are entitled to reduced weekly fees. To receive this, parents need to contact the Family Assistance Office (FAO) and obtain a Customer Reference Number (CRN) for themselves and another one for each child. We then use another system that only approved children's services can use to process this benefit. This is called:

CCMS—Child Care Management System—once we have all CRN's and dates of birth of the parent linked to the child, we are able to send off enrolment data via this system to the FAO, this is known as a "formal" enrolment. The FAO then send us via the internet directly into our accounting system, information about your family's entitlements. This information including your CCB percentage, eligible hours of care (either 24 or 50hrs), the number of children using care (ie, 1 or 2 child %) and our flat rate is used to calculate your weekly reduced fee. If your family is entitled to CCB our system puts an "E" for estimate on your account. Each week our software will estimate what your reduced fee will be based on whatever reduction was received the week before. For families that earn over the figures given or families that wish to pay full fees and then claim their benefit as a lump sum when they complete their tax return, they are known as "F" full fees or "L" lump sum. The final benefit available to all families is:

CCTR—Child Care Tax Rebate—this covers up to 50% of out of pocket child care expenses with a rebate of up to \$7500 (indexed) child per year. This is paid quarterly or annually. If you wish to receive this payment quarterly you must claim ccb as reduced fees (even if you receive a zero reduction). This means you must provide all the information mentioned previously (CRN's, date of birth etc) even if you have been advised that you will not receive reduced fees. If you do not provide this information within 28 days after enrolment to the centre, the FAO will deem your child's enrolment exited, this is known as an "informal" enrolment. Informal enrolments have no data attached that the FAO can use to track your child care usage and therefore will not allow a claim to be made. Another common scenario is that you have provided the child care centre with all CRN's etc, but have not actually rang the FAO and registered for child care related benefits. This is as simple as ringing 136150 (you will wait a while!) and asking to register. If you are told by the FAO when you go to claim that they are waiting on usage from your child care centre you should tell them that Elder Street uses CCMS and therefore reports usage weekly. This means that the FAO receives all the data they need every week from us for families that have provided all the necessary information and have a formal enrolment. CCTR payments are deposited directly into your bank account by the FAO.

If you have contacted the FAO to update income etc, please let us know so that when our weekly report comes through we can see what your new fees will be.

We urge parents to bear with the long phone cues when calling the FAO and make sure that you have registered correctly for any rebates you may be entitled to.

Would you like to receive your Elder St Herald and other news via email? Please fill in and return to the centre:

Name:

Email address: