

Dear Families

This is our last newsletter for the year. It's hard to believe it's almost over when it seems like it began just a short time ago! We've loved 2023. The year has seen many positive changes for our Centre. We gained some great new staff members, had a new roof installed and now have a new lock up area for the bins out the front. Our team has worked hard to make the Centre a safe, happy place for children – including by reviewing our policies and risk assessments, lots of discussions in team meetings, observations in Storypark, daily reflections and staff training in various topics including safe food handling, child protection, first aid and behaviour support training. As the year draws to a close, we are looking forward to a break and will return from 8 January for another great year.

We really appreciate you, our wonderful parents and carers. Thanks for your support and friendliness each day when you drop off and collect your children, thanks for your feedback, your donations for those people who generously donated toys, games etc, and thanks for entrusting your children into our care. We hope you enjoy the summer break up ahead, the time spent with your families and loved ones. We look forward to seeing you back again in the new year for those returning.

VACATION CARE

Our summer holiday [vacation care programme](#) is ready and published on our website. You can make all bookings online except for bookings for the following day when it's after 6pm and same day bookings. Those need to be made by contacting us directly. We've kept our special events local and in-house – this is due to the high cost of travel and is also in readiness for a long, hot summer where we want the children to enjoy their time and not get overheated in the summer that's predicted. We've planned some great activities which we're sure the children will love.

2024 KINDERGARTEN CHILDREN CAN ATTEND VACATION CARE

Children starting in kindergarten in 2024 are very welcome to attend vacation care in the January school holidays. It helps to build their confidence in the school age environment and is a great way to become orientated to the service before they start in school. We have a lot of helpful information in our [orientation flier](#) but please feel free to contact us directly if you'd like to talk through any concerns you may have about your child's first day.

ENROLLING NEW CHILDREN FOR 2024

If you have a child who will be starting school next year, now is the time to enrol him/her via our parent portal. We are taking enrolments now so don't hesitate to complete enrolment to ensure you reserve the bookings you need. We have step-by-step instructions on our website for [how to enrol a 2nd child](#) if needed.

RE-ENROLLING YOUR CHILD FOR 2024

For those who haven't already done so, remember to re-enrol your child for next year. There is no automatic re-enrolment at our service. If you haven't completed re-enrolment, that means we don't have any bookings reserved for your child for next year. Re-enrolling is a quick, simple process. For families needing permanent bookings, visit your parent portal account – click on the ENROL tab and then RE-ENROLMENT. Verify the bookings, verify the agreement and submit. For families who just need casual or vacation care only, we mailed a link to you recently. Please let us know if you didn't get yours.

NEW STAFF UNIFORMS

We're loving our new pink uniforms. They're cool and breezy for the hot, summer months and best of all, we can be easily spotted wherever we are. This makes us very visible to motorists when we're out and about taking and collecting children from the bus stops. We think it was a great move.

CCS AND ABSENCES

If your child doesn't attend our service in person for 14 weeks, their CCS enrolment is cancelled. It is easily renewed when you need it, so that's not a problem, but what *can* be a problem is that Centrelink goes back to the child's last day of physical attendance at the service and deducts all CCS paid from that date to the date of the CCS enrolment cancellation. If your child had any absences during that period, CCS will not be paid for those absences and you will be charged the full fee. This process is charged through the service's fee payment system but bear in mind it is a Centrelink policy, not a policy of our service. Families sometimes get caught out by this policy when they decide to move on and cease using the service. They can then get an unpleasant surprise when they get charged for full fees on absences some weeks later.

ADDITIONAL CCS

Additional CCS (or ACCS) is made available by the government for families in certain situations. To be eligible for this you must be eligible for Child Care Subsidy. And you need to be 1 of the following:

- an eligible grandparent getting an income support payment
- transitioning from certain income support payments to work
- experiencing temporary financial hardship
- caring for a child who is vulnerable or at risk of harm, abuse or neglect.

Click [HERE](#) for further information.

CHRISTMAS PARTY

We're looking forward to our [Christmas party](#) on Friday 15 December. All children who attended during the year are welcome to come along and enjoy games, music, jumping castle, a slushy machine and lots of delicious food. Please feel free to stay and enjoy the festivities or collect your child later at 6:30pm. All your child needs in order to attend is a booking for that afternoon.

FOOD IN VACATION CARE

If your child will be attending in the school holidays, please be sure to pack plenty of nutritious food. Many children get hungrier in vacation care than when at school because they are more active and not sitting down for long periods at a desk. Children also need an extra meal, which is afternoon tea. We find many children have run out of food after lunch and end up starving by afternoon tea time.

You can find some awesome packed lunch ideas [HERE](#), including help with foods for fussy eaters.

In summer it's a great idea to pack food in cooler bags or to use ice bricks or frozen poppers to keep food fresh. If your child's lunch includes cold meats, salads, cheese and other foods which can spoil, it is essential to keep them fresh.

FAMILY FEEDBACK

If your child won't be back next year, please keep a look out for our exit survey which we'll send you via email in the new year. We'd love to hear your feedback as it's one of the best ways we can reflect on our service and improve.

FAREWELL TO YEAR 6

Our year 6 special events were lots of fun this year, as always. Those children moving off to high school will be fondly missed by us. We will always remember them and please bear in mind we are also a safe place for ex-Tanderra high schoolers if they ever need our help or support.

LOST PROPERTY

Please remember to check the lost property basket carefully in the front room before the end of term as all items will be disposed of when the school year ends.

Thanks for reading! We wish you a safe and relaxing Christmas. Look forward to seeing you in the New Year. From all the Tanderra staff: Suzanne, Aunty Simone, Brodie, Pheobe, Sharon, Dallas, Callum, Hallam and Tom