Thank you to all those families who attended our working bee on Sunday 25 March. We managed to top up the sandpit and lay some mulch. Participation in one of our working bees (or at a Bunnings BBQ) is a great way to get to know your kinder community. It also allows us to reimburse your maintenance levy.

Our kinder has a Healthy Food policy. Fresh fruit, vegetable sticks, cheese and sandwiches are ideal lunch box fillers.

The children love getting outside at this time of year, so please keep up the sunscreen before kinder.

News from the President:
Gosh first term has gone quickly, hasn’t it?! I hope everyone has settled in well and that some new friendships are starting to form – in the kinder room and outside it!

It has been a busy start to the year for the committee. We met for the first time the day before term started to revitalise the kindergarten’s philosophy, which has now been finalised. We have called it our “Purpose Statement” and it goes hand in hand with our new “Principles”. You will be seeing it around a bit more – let us know what you think!

Most of our committee members are new this year, so they have had a baptism of fire into the world of the National Quality Framework and Standards and also to Universal Access. We have been working tirelessly on the first step of implementing the reforms, which means producing a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for our service. This involves a disciplined and thorough self-assessment in which we identify our strengths and areas of improvement relating to all of the new Quality Standards and Elements. What we would like to do now is form a focus group from within the kindergarten community to objectively review our QIP, so our parents and carers have an opportunity to review and comment on our assessment of ourselves! If you are interested in being involved, we need 8 to 10 people from various groups across the kindergarten. Please let me or any of our staff or committee members know. The time commitment will not be great, nor will the work load!

There are many changes happening within the Early Years sector. We not only think it is important for parents to be aware of them, but essential. Early in term 2 we will be holding an informal information evening to talk to parents about the reforms and how they will be affected by them, and also our timetable for next year. We are looking for as much input from parents as possible about what they want for their four year old 15 hour timetable in 2013.

To finish off, I found this quote the other day:

‘Do not train children to learning by force and harshness, but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each.’

I thought, that sounds just like what we do at South Kingsville. In fact It sounds like what all the early years professionals are talking about when I go to all those seminars. I thought it must have been a quote by one of them. Then I scrolled down

Plato 400BC.

Even back then he knew the best way to teach kids!

Mel Shahanan, President.
Off to a great start

**Kookaburras:** The children have settled into our routine and friendships are being formed. They are very social, with lots of imaginary stories being invented and acted out!

The start of the term saw us follow the children’s fascination with the worm farm. The children began digging around in the worms and carrying them around like pets. We discussed the important part worms play in our gardens, which lead on to conversations rich in language about recycling, why we have different bins, composts and plants.

From here we dug out potatoes, made Mr Potato Heads, cooked vegetable soup, and planted vegetables. We have started growing broad beans inside to investigate the root system of plants and how stalks begin to sprout.

By allowing children to explore and investigate their world around them they become socially responsible and learn respect for their environment.

Around the room: the children have been busy creating amazing racing car tracks, ramps, roads and buildings with the blocks and matchbox cars. They have been working together well and being very accepting when others wish to join in.

The home corner transformed into a fairy princess castle with material being draped with wands, dress ups and lots of sparkle.

The children had lots of picnics in every corner of the kinder! Story lines were acted out with lots of negotiating as to who was going to play who. This self-initiated play is full of enthusiasm and energy.

Painting, drawing, clay, stories, singing, pasting, climbing, digging, riding is also all in a day’s work!

— Elissa & Dawn

**Rosellas**

We are already off to a great start, with everyone settling in and coping with the long days. For some it is still a bit too long, but they are handling it. There are many new friendships forming and the dynamics of the group is lovely.

There are many play spaces in our Kinder room and everyone has been busy deciding where they would like to play and what they want to do.
If your child has an interest ... please let us know

As our program is an emergent curriculum we change the activities to reflect the children’s interests and needs. As a result, you will see many changes to the room on a fairly regular basis. You may also see an activity out for a longer period, when the children request it. If your child has an interest or something special they would like to add to our program, please let us know so we can incorporate it into our learning environment.

One of the first activities the children pursued this term was mask making, inspired by a particularly creative game of dress-ups. We talked about what materials we would need to make the masks and settled on some paper ‘faces’ that we found in the store room, with feathers, lace and sparkly jewels to add some bling!

The children have also enjoyed exploring rainbows — reading books, singing songs and discussing colours and the reasons we see a rainbow. They have also been painting some beautiful edicol dye rainbow paintings. These are displayed on our wall above the bag hooks, so have a look for yourselves.

Volcanoes and dinosaurs were an interest which came about when a one of our Rosellas came into Kinder wanting to make a volcano. The children all helped to make a play dough volcano and we then watched as the volcano erupted after a little science experiment involving bi carb soda, red dye and vinegar. Everyone got to have a go and they loved it!

From here our discussions turned to dinosaurs, so we set up an imaginative prehistoric play area.

On Friday a couple of weeks ago we made veggie soup using celery from our back yard – it was so good the children want to make more. We will make pumpkin soup next time and have talked about how long it might take to grow pumpkins in our garden. It may be a while before our pumpkins grow, so we planned a small excursion to our local green grocer to buy all the ingredients we needed. Parent help permitting, we plan our little shopping trip will take place on Friday 23 March.

We have a student teacher, Rebecca, spending Tuesdays with us for the next 5 weeks and every day for another 5 weeks after that until 8 June. Rebecca is a fourth-year student at Victoria University studying for a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood and Primary Teaching. Many of our children have already taken her under their wing, but please feel free to have a chat and make her feel welcome.

Finally, a reminder to all parents that Kinder duty is an important part of our Kindergarten program and we love it when you can come in and join us.

You don’t need to stay for the whole session, but any time you can spare is of help and your children love it too! Just write you name on the calendar which is always with the sign-in book, or let us know on the day and you can come and join in the fun!

— Emma & Dawn
Cockatoos and Lorikeets

The three-year-olds have had a great start to the year, with the children enjoying themselves and settling in well. It has been wonderful getting to know them all and (and their families) over the last few weeks and are all looking forward to a fun-filled year.

Both the groups have been busy exploring different painting techniques, such as butterfly prints, hand painting and, of course, the very popular easel painting.

The Lorikeets have been thoroughly enjoying stories and songs with voices becoming a little louder each session, while the Cockatoos have been very involved in imaginative play, with lots of ‘master chefs’ preparing scrumptious meals in the home corner.

All the children have been involved in extensive exploration of the outdoor area and most recently have been building on their balancing and climbing skills. What a wonderful start to Kinder!

— Janine, Dawn & Rachel.

We value your input into your child’s learning at kindergarten. Please feel free to look through your child’s portfolios, reflection book, and planning documents. If you have any ideas, talents or interests please let staff know. If you would like to speak with an educator about your child’s progress please feel free to make a time. The children’s portfolios are a reflection of your child’s learning journey this year. Please feel free to add photos, stories, special pictures, holiday adventurers etc…….

Term dates:

Term 1 finishes on Friday 30th March.
Term 2 commences on Monday 16th April.
Term 2 finishes on Friday 29th June 2012
Fundraising
Dear Families,

Firstly, thank you to those families who supported the Kinder by purchasing the “My Family” Stickers – hopefully you all enjoy displaying them proudly on your car windows!

You will have all now received the information and order form for our final fundraiser for this term which is the First Aid Kits. We hope that everyone will get behind this one as not only is it great for raising much needed funds for the Kinder but also great peace of mind for families to be prepared for all of those little accidents that inevitably happen when you have kids. And don’t forget the kits would make fantastic gifts too!

We were lucky enough to have a box of “Little Eats” Cards donated to us which showcase 52 of the best places to eat in Melbourne with kids. These awesome boxes of cards are available for purchase just inside the Kinder door, if you wish to buy some, please just take your cards and leave your $9.95 in a labelled envelope in the cash box In brief

Next term we will be running our usual Mother’s Day Raffle and we are already busy trying to get some great prizes to give away. If you have anything that you would like to donate as a prize for our raffle we would really appreciate it (the more prizes for our wonderful Mums, the better!), please just pass it on to your child’s teacher.

Thank you all for your support!

— The Fundraising Committee

Educational Philosophy
We exist to help guide our children to discover their own potential – to develop the confidence, resilience and happiness to belong to and shape their own world.

Our Principles
We believe in: the educational and developmental power of a play based and emergent curriculum.

We believe in: fostering free-thinking and creative minds.

We believe in: The critical role of working with the families for the development and growth of the child.

We believe: developing the whole child – nurturing the child’s well-being through an independent mind, a healthy body and their understanding of their place in a sustainable world.

We believe: the core principle of respect and care – for yourself, for those around you (by embracing differences) and for the world