Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to Turner Preschool, the children have all had a fabulous start to the preschool year and have been very busy making friends and exploring their new learning environment. Our preschool group is known as the Munnagayis; an Indigenous word from the Ngunnawal people meaning coming together. Two other groups operate at various times throughout the week; the Gulambanys (meaning community) and the Gudgauars (meaning children). Together, this contains the essence of what we are trying to create at Turner Preschool; children, coming together in community; a vibrant, inclusive and inquiring community that work together to achieve great things.

Munnagayi Preschool Staff

Susan Hough – I am very excited to be working with you and your children this year. My professional background is in administration and customer service, in both the public and private sectors. I have a Bachelor of Arts in Communication, a Graduate Certificate in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood. I have three children of my own ranging in age from eight to seventeen. After experiencing early childhood education with my own children, I came to realise that teaching was the next step of my professional journey. Through getting to know your child and building on their interests, experiences and strengths, I will work to develop a program that provides each child with the opportunity to experience success within a positive learning environment. I believe this is achieved through a play based approach, as advocated by the Early Years Learning Framework. I look forward to developing collaborative partnerships in learning with all Munnagayi families.

Marlene Demczyszyn - I am the preschool assistant working with the Munnagayi group in 2017. I am currently working towards my Certificate IV in Education Support at the Canberra Institute of Technology. I have three very active young boys and am looking forward to working with you and your children throughout the coming year.

Early Years Learning Framework

At Turner Preschool we provide a play based program where children have the opportunity to engage in sustained and meaningful learning experiences in open ended, rich environments. The program is designed using the Being, Belonging and Becoming: Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF) which focuses on developing children’s learning under five broad outcomes;

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity
Outcome 2: Children are connected and contribute to their world
Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing
Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners
Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators
Copies of the EYLF are available at the preschool or online at https://education.gov.au/early-years-learning-framework. You will see reference to this document reflected in the preschool program, the preschool reflections and the children’s learning portfolios.

**Inquiry**

Turner School uses an inquiry approach to learning where units of inquiry are developed around ‘big ideas’ in order to develop deep understandings of key concepts. These units of inquiry begin in the preschool and are a way for intentional teaching to be embedded in the program. The preschool unit of planned inquiry this term is *Our Place*. Through group discussions, shared agreements, individual and whole group artwork, drama, puppetry, games and stories, we will be learning what it means to belong to a community, what responsibilities we have for ourselves, each other and our environment and ways we can make our preschool a special place to be. This learning also involves setting up many of the routines involved with being at preschool.

Within the inquiry based preschool learning environment children also engage in learning opportunities that are based on individual children’s interests and learning needs. These may arise as we discover interesting facts when we are reading, exploring the indoor and outdoor spaces and when the children engage in activities outside of preschool, which they share with their peers. In the past we have explored dinosaurs, the types of birds visiting the outdoor garden and how plants grow, to name a few.

This year we will also be exploring the dispositions which we will be supporting the children to develop throughout their schooling to assist them to become more successful learners. In term 1 we will be focusing on Self Management. Good self managers have the dispositions of resilience, responsibility and being reflective learners. In preschool the children will be encouraged to be responsible for their own belongings, as well as the shared toys, and learn how to set up and pack up for themselves. They will reflect upon their learning both in an informal context as they self assess their learning and also in more formal situations such as sharing their learning with their peers in a group situation. They will also be given opportunities to think and explore how their actions affect others.

**Literacy**

Within the play based preschool learning environment children are able to engage in learning opportunities that are based on individual children’s interests and learning needs. When planning for learning we use observation and knowledge of children’s interests and learning needs to plan authentic, meaningful and inclusive learning opportunities that support children’s real world experiences.

We teach reading skills in context, developing the children’s phonological awareness (or the sounds of spoken language) by listening and re-enacting environmental sounds, learning and then adapting and innovating on our favourite stories and developing the concept of rhythm, rhyme and repetition. Early in the term, the Munnagayis will make a class book *Munnagayi Munnagayi Who Do You See*, based on the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See* by Eric Carle. This book will then be used to play a circle game that encourages the children to speak in front of their peers during group time and supports children’s oral language learning as they join together to chant the text. The children will also be using and making props to retell familiar stories and nursery rhymes.

We will also begin to explore conventions of text, for example, that print contains a message, that text is written and read from left to write, that the print on a book’s cover gives the title and other details such as the name of the author and illustrator, that the cover picture generally suggests what
the book is about and that illustrations convey meaning and relate to the text on the page. The children will also be focusing on recognising and writing their own name and developing representations of their ideas through pictures, paintings and writing symbols. The children will be encouraged to recognise and write their name on their work and in the coming weeks, we will introduce an At Home / At School board at the entrance to the classroom to support this learning.

**Numeracy**
This term we will focus on colour, shape, sorting and sequencing. Children will build their knowledge of the basic colours and then have opportunities to mix and create their own. Through board games, puzzles, artwork, box construction, manipulatives and group activities, children will learn to identify simple and some complex shapes and recognise their attributes such as how many sides and corners they have. They will learn to sort objects with two and three attributes and sequence objects to develop simple and complex patterns.

Collaborative partnerships in learning between the school, the child, families and the broader community provide the foundation for early childhood educators to ‘unpack’ the interests and experiences of children in order to facilitate real world, inclusive, inquiry based teaching and learning opportunities that maximise the individual potential of every child. For those of you who are new to the school, we are keen to work in partnership with you to become a part of the Turner School community, starting in preschool. We value opportunities for all families to become involved and there will be many occasions throughout the year for you to make a contribution. You may consider being part of the school P&C, coming along to the Coffee Chats to meet Jo our Principal, joining us for a session, becoming part of the working bees to improve our outdoor space, supporting us on excursions and participating in our learning journeys, concerts and casual get-togethers. We are very excited about the year ahead and look forward to working with you to support your children. Please contact us at any time throughout the year to discuss any issues of concern or simply to ‘touch base’.

Regards,

Susan Hough and Marlene Demczyszyn
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6205 6603 (Preschool) 02 6205 6622 (Turner School)

8 February 2017

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**Special Preschool term 1 dates for your calendar**

*Please note: These dates are correct as of time of printing this letter. Please regularly check the website, as well as the fortnightly newsletters for any changes and additions, as well as whole school events.*

**Week 2**
- **Wed 8/2** Preschool parent information session and picnic – 5:30pm-7:00pm in the multipurpose room (off the preschool playground) followed by a picnic in the preschool outdoor space

**Week 4**
- **Wed22/2** Kenny Koala Incursion (Gulambany and Munnagayi groups)
- **Thurs 23/2** Kenny Koala Incursion (Gudgauar group)

**Week 6**
- **Tues 7/3** School photos (Gulambany and Munnagayi groups)
- **Fri 10/3** School photos (Gudgauar group)