

News from the Committee

What a busy start to term 2, with lots happening at MPC. I cannot believe we are already halfway through. We began the term with many wonderful conversations regarding ANZAC Day, especially after reading stories about ANZAC Day and making ANZAC biscuits. The children have enjoyed a visit from Queensland Rail, talking about Rail Safety, and many have started walking outside the gate to the Rail Bridge and Bush Park.

Almost 40 parents, many of whom were new to MPC, took part in a Play Night, gaining insights about learning through play. It was an extremely successful night. Thank you to all the MPC Staff, who made this night such a huge success. Thank you to our Events Coordinator, Caitlin Nathanson for catering this event. Please see a couple of comments from parents who attended the night:

- ◇ *Now I understand why my daughter loves coming to Kindy!*
- ◇ *I was taken right out of my comfort zone but gained new insights about my children.*

Thank you to all the mums who were acknowledged and appreciated through various conversations, children's making and events around Mother's Day. Thank you to the teaching teams who help their children appreciate their mothers. I look forward to my upcoming mummy play afternoon with my son, a memory I will treasure forever. To the teachers—thank you for the extra time and effort you put in, please know it does not go unnoticed.

What a fabulous morning at the Bush Park on Sunday 16th May. Thank you to the Brisbane City Council Creek Neighbours program for organising the great activities for the children. It was so lovely seeing so many parents enjoying a picnic under the trees and the children having such a wonderful time in this space. My family had a lovely morning.

Thank you to our Working Bee Co-ordinator Celia Finter and the families who will be participating in the upcoming working bee on 22nd May. Thank you also to the families who have been coming in for a grounds roster. These working bees and rosters are crucial in keeping the play areas for our children clean and safe. If you want to help at this working bee or any of the future working bees please see or email Chris in the office.

I would like to make a special thank you to our Marketing Coordinator, Clair Perkins who has put in a huge effort to make MPC and the upcoming Open Day well known within the community. You may have seen banners, signs and posters in many different locations as well as displays in Keperra Great Western Shopping Centre, Mitchelton Library and the upcoming event, Hills Carnival.

To continue to update MPC within the classrooms and outside in the playgrounds, the MPC Committee, coordinated by Lucy Cotterill (Grants Officer), applies for grants throughout the year. If you know of any grants or your business has any grants open currently please contact the MPC Office.

It is fair to say just with the above activities in the last few months and those still to come the staff and committee are all doing a fantastic job at MPC. Remember MPC is a community not-for-profit kindergarten which functions so well due to the contribution of parents and staff. In particular, I would like to thank the staff at MPC who excel in maintaining a caring, creative and learning environment to ensure that our children develop and grow into their potential.

Our work is however never done and I encourage your involvement to help further cement the future for MPC. Reach out to the staff, committee or myself to see how you can help.

Wishing you all a happy and safe rest of term 2 and hope all the Grandparents & Special Visitors have a lovely time visiting kindy in the upcoming weeks.

Emma-Kate Clyburn (MPC Committee President)

News from the Director (Leanne Hunter)

Well-being, simply described as how you feel about yourself and your life, is becoming a much more familiar, important and 'in need of attention' concept in most people's life. It's a key focus at MPC too. We take time to regularly assess children's well-being. Sound wellbeing results from the satisfaction of basic needs - the need for tenderness and affection; security and clarity; social recognition; to feel competent; physical needs and for meaning in life (adapted from Laevers 1994). It includes happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity and resilience. (EYLF:46)



MPC supports the well-being of children, families and community both local and global. For children to thrive and lead happy, healthy and productive lives, they need support, and so do their parents and others in their 'village' of extended family and friends.

You may have noticed the 'growing' (we'll add to) paper tree, words and photos in the central courtyard. MPC Teachers and Educators have been pondering MPC's philosophy and how we can make the actions we take every day, based on our philosophy, more visible to families. We've undertaken robust discussions at team meetings to agree on three words to encapsulate the philosophy. This was a challenging process, however, the words we believe underpin MPC philosophy are:

Relationships

Play

Well-being

There are many interconnected 'leaves' which further build a picture around the key 'branches'. With this display, we are aiming to focus on one 'branch' at a time and use photos to provide examples. The focus branch is WELL-BEING.

We are also keen to hear parent's thoughts or if you have noticed other ways the well-being of children and families are being supported.

Well-being links

<https://beyou.edu.au/> be you, formerly Beyond Blue has a range of articles and a useful search icon to access a range of articles and modules to build understandings about children's well-being.

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/parental-as-anything-with-maggie-dent/do-you-have-an-anxious-child/11918514>

<https://www.circleofsecurityinternational.com/> Videos, blogs and other resources help to understand children's emotional world.

Parents can be a great source of information which can help others, particularly when they've investigated a concern which, nine times out of ten, will be a concern of another parent. If you have sourced a website that you've found useful, could you please email leanne@mpc.net.au so I can share with other parents.

In this newsletter, there are a range of articles written by a number of teachers and educators. You will also see on the next page, some information about Executive Functioning Skills. Providing time and opportunities for children to practise these skills is a component of the programs for all groups. They are skills we all need for life across our whole life span.

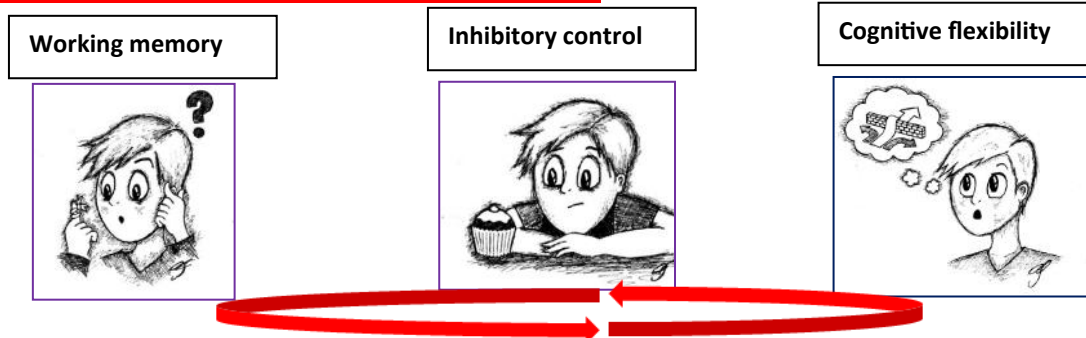
You will also see information about MPC Open Day on Saturday 5th June between 9.30 and 11.30. 'Word of mouth' is by far our best advertisement and we would be grateful for any help in spreading the word. Thank you to the parents who are helping to spread the word at the Hills Carnival. Your help is much appreciated.

Executive Functioning Skills

What is Executive Functioning?

An umbrella term used to refer to a variety of interdependent skills that are necessary for purposeful, goal-directed activity from learning to hold a crayon to engaging in more complex social play. (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000, p.116)

Elements of Executive Functioning



Working memory – the capacity to hold and manipulate information in our heads over short periods of time.

Inhibitory Control – the skill we use to master and filter our thoughts and impulses so we can resist temptations, distractions, and habits and to pause and think before we act – close links to self regulation.

Cognitive or mental flexibility – the capacity to nimbly switch gears and adjust to changed demands, priorities or perspectives. It enables us to apply different rules in different settings. (Cognitive flexibility includes problem solving, reasoning, planning, shifting)

How do Executive Function skills help children?

As adults, we prepare dinner while simultaneously helping children with homework and making notes about appointments we need to schedule for the week. We **focus** on our jobs when we need to and our families when they need us. We **remember** the phone number that our neighbour just gave us so we can write it down as soon as we find a pen.

We **take a deep breath**, rather than honk, if the car in front of us fails to move immediately when the light turns green. As adults, our **capacities to multitask**, to **display self-control**, to follow multiple-step directions even when interrupted, and to **stay focused** on what we are doing despite ever-present distractions are what undergird the deliberate, intentional, goal-directed behaviour that is required for daily life and success at work. (Shonkoff 2011)



In recent weeks our group has been talking about journeying out the front gate and into the community. In the lead up to these excursions the children have discussed and practiced walking with a partner, staying together, listening to teacher instructions and staying safe when navigating footpaths, roads, station stairs and eventually level crossings and Bush Park boundaries. Most importantly we are learning to help each other to remember what to do. We have practiced and then practiced some more! Our first excursion was a walk up the station stairs to the train bridge. The children showed Jo and I that they are ready for the next challenge! That is to take a walk and play at the Bush Park - a green zone between McConaghy Street, Blackwood Street and the creek. By the time you are reading this we will have made our first visit!



Many in our group visited this space last year. Some however have not, so we are mindful that these children will need our support and reassurance to encourage their developing sense of independence, of bravery to have-a-go at something new and to connect with nature through real experiences. Here the group will feel the freedom of just running!

The space offers opportunities for exploration, observation, wondering, imaginative play and physical challenge. There are spaces for children to sit quietly and ponder, to watch birds, insects and lizards go about their day, or to watch the sunlight hit the water in the creek, in the hope of seeing fish, turtles, tadpoles or eels swim by. The creek may give us opportunities to think about rubbish

management, discuss the quality of the water and the health and safety of the animals living there. The trees will provide challenging climbing opportunities and

wonderful shade for our Base Camp Mats.

The children will practice ways to assess their own risk and challenge themselves, whether they are tree climbing, balancing on windy buttress roots, or walking along the bouncy branches of the 'Secret Hide-out Tree'. We

can make collections while there, categorizing leaves, seed pods, sticks and barks by size, shape, number and colour, and to learn a little about the trees themselves- who lives there in the tree hollows, between tree branches, on leaves and dug into the ground in hidden spots. We plan to play hard and most importantly we plan to return!

A special thank you to all those families who joined in Our Celebration Day at the Bush Park last Sunday. By all accounts it was very successful morning!

Thanks also to Emily and her team from Creek Neighbours for organising the event.

(See some photos on page 12)



All children are different and come to kindy with a range of different personalities, life experiences, learning styles and influences from their families around them. It is not unexpected then when children have different risk appetites. Our aim is to support children from where they're at, without any desire to make them all the same. We appreciate the differences as the world needs many different types of people.

When we establish our physical and psychology environment, we try to provide many opportunities for children to practice positive dispositions such as listening, watching, willingness to try, perseverance, self-regulation, resilience, executive function skills and more.

Some children are huge risk-takers, others are extremely timid and most fit on a continuum in between. Some children are influenced by watching to see how parents respond to risk and some children regardless of gentle pushing and encouragement, find trying something new extremely difficult.

What's risky for one child could be very easy for another and it's not a 'one way or the other' in terms of risk-taking for every situation. Some children may be willing to try tricky physical challenges but be very hesitant to draw something new or talk in front of a group. Regardless of the scenario, we look at where children are at now and think about ways to encourage stepping out of their comfort zone. Sometimes a gentle word of encouragement or seeing other children have a try is enough for a child to take the first step.

Breaking down a task and encouragement for each step slowly builds confidence. Celebrating moments of success both small and big help to highlight that feeling of satisfaction and achievement. Remembering together that feeling of success can sometimes be enough to encourage having-a-go with something new in a different domain.

On the other hand, pushing too hard may elicit a negative response however there will be many more opportunities to try in the future willingness to try can be enthusiastically acknowledged then. 'Still learning' and 'Not yet' are powerful phrases to say often which acknowledges that one day with time and practice, a new skill, task or experience will be successful.

Really understanding and accepting that F.A.I.L really does mean First Attempt In Learning forms a strong part of the psychological environment where children feel safe to have-a-go.

One way we practice this is guessing the museum item hidden under the lycra. For some children, having a guess was a big step particularly in a group situation however, because we've practised so often and modelled being wrong and 'no big deal', everyone is now willing to have-a-go.

There is no better feeling than persevering at something difficult and finally having success to remember and build confidence to be willing to give another tricky thing a go. We'll be practicing all year in a variety of ways.



Practising jumping down from up high is tricky and very satisfying to master!



Speaking in front of the group is easier when you are excited to share some news!



Trying to cut is more motivating when it's a part of the play —making leaves for a shady tree ready for a picnic!

What a fabulous opportunity for all the children to have a story read to them by an astronaut in the Space Station. In this ever growing world of technology these children were transported from the Kindy environment into the aeronautical world of Space through the magic of satellites. This is a moment in itself to think, WOW, how amazing the engineers, and mathematical and scientific minds have given hours of work that have gone into being able to do this! Neil Armstrong's, "One small step..." has truly enabled mankind to continue to do great things.

So where is the learning – nearly 2 million children took part in not only listening to this story and all the information from the words in the books, but the other information shared by the astronaut and the visual information of the Space Station in the background. Collectively joining together as a group to take part and holding their concentration, the internal wondering and questioning in their minds that will flow into conversations about space and the technology involved in this. The future play scenarios and conversations that will arise and the research that will be revealed and absorbed during this process. There is so much more...

Somewhere in amongst our small Kindy audience, there will be minds driven in this direction in their working life or perhaps just in their ever growing fascination for the world of space as it continues to be explored.



Have you seen... MPC Digital Technology statement?

Who is the Statement for?

A Statement on technology and young children provides a framework and reflection tool for teachers, educators, children, families and committee members to inform decisions and understand technology use with and for young children.

Why develop a technology statement?

Changing technologies and the rate of change are ever increasing. Intentional decisions about each technology and the benefits, challenges and risks need to be made in context of place (MPC) and time. As Chip Donoghue, a world renowned early childhood and technology researcher, responds when asked about screen time for young children, “It depends”. This technology statement is in

response to the complex and ever-changing nature of technology and aims to be a tool to support decision-making when considering the needs of individual children, the community of children, families and educators.

This statement, aligned with MPC philosophy and policies and the Early Years Learning Framework, is a ‘living document’ which can be reviewed and changed as information, improved practices and deeper understandings emerge.

Context considerations when making decisions. Adapted from Koehler Tpack

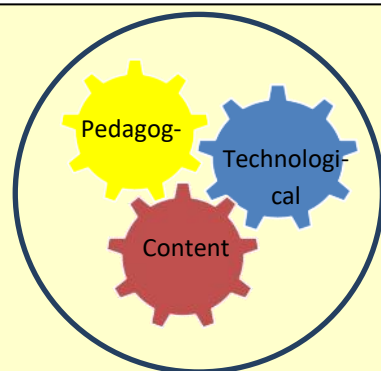
What frames this statement?

Technology and media use must be grounded in pedagogical principles. With guidance, these various technology tools can be harnessed for learning and development; without guidance, usage can be inappropriate and/or interfere with learning and

development. Child development, Brain, Learning and Play theories, based on scientific research, are paramount when making decisions about technology use.

All screens are not considered equal.

Technology is just like any “tool” we use in learning. It is not inherently good, nor inherently bad. It is something that educators must consider and make reasoned decisions about. (Engage more deeply; Extend beyond the eye; Enrich peer experience; Do something I can’t do normally.) Kate Highfield ECA LiveWire Forum 201



Questions to influence decision making?

Is the technology/ interactive media used:-

- to support learning and to expand young children’s access to new content?
- intentionally, within the framework of developmentally appropriate practice, to support learning goals established for individual children/community of children?
- to strengthen relationships (adult/child; child/child)?
- age appropriate, individually appropriate, and culturally and linguistically appropriate?
- to integrate into the environment, curriculum, and daily routines?
- supportive of existing classroom developmental and educational goals rather than distorting or replacing them?
- passive and non-interactive? if so, does this support individual/group learning goals?
- socially isolating? if so, does this support individual/group learning goals?
- impacting on outdoor play or reducing physical activity?
- contributing to or detracting from appropriate behaviour and attention?
- enabling thinking: research, revisit, revise, plan, communicate, represent, create?
- ethically sound?

References and links

Family Engagement in the Digital Age Chip Donohue accessed at

<http://www.econference.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Donohue-Family.pdf>

<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/our-work/digital-business-kit/live-wires/>

<http://drkristygoodwin.com/2015/11/17/kids-attention-in-a-digital-world/>

<http://drkristygoodwin.com/2015/11/03/balancing-kids-screen-time-with-green-time/>

<http://www.fredrogerscenter.org/initiatives/digital-media-learning/about-digital-media-learning/>

The full statement can be accessed at: <https://mpc.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/MPC-Digital-Technology-Statement-for->

Do you know the anatomy of a spider? After observing a large spider from the Queensland Museum and listening to children's thoughts. A situation arose where some children believed the spider had 12 legs.

"1,2, 3,4,5, 6,7,8,9,10,11,12!"

"No. Spiders have 8 legs.

"But there is 12"

"They might be fangs"

"What are those? (Pointing to the leg like structures beside the fangs) "

"Maybe arms"

With all the discussion we decided to find out what the 'arm like' structures could be. Are they feelers? We discovered the arm like feelers are called Pedipalp. Pedipali are the second pair of appendages attached to most arachnids. Spiders use their pedipalp much like arms to hold their prey.

After making the statement "I learnt something today!" I heard a child say "But you're an adult!" This was a great conversation starter for our group to discuss that everyone including adults are ALL still learning. In our room we have many conversations about the things we can do and the things we are still learning.

This week we held discussions about National Sorry Day which will be celebrated on May 26th. This day gives people a chance to come together and take steps towards healing for the stolen generation. Our local Sorry Day ceremony takes place in Teralba Park. Our discussions revolved around the story "Sorry, Sorry" by Anne Kerr.

We talked about:

* Indigenous Australians- Why we say our morning acknowledgement " Here is the land"

- Sharing
- *Listening to others
- *Understanding feelings of others
- * Learning to work together.

Sorry Day is a wonderful community event which is close by kindy at Teralba Park. I intend going next Wednesday at 6.50am to lay a hand printed wreath made by the children. You're welcome to join me.

I recommend it to feel a connection to land and community and as another opportunity to have conversations with children. All MPC families are welcome to attend.



First step—making the handprints!



The children love to have special people in their lives visit kindy! Over the next couple of weeks, Grandparents and special friends will be visiting kindy and the children delight in having someone to show around their kindy. This includes you, their parents.

Throughout the year, you are welcome to come in and spend time with your child either for a short visit or a longer time. The children are active decision makers and often make up their own games which may involve defining a space with blocks or poles, making and collecting any props needed and interacting with each other. You may like to join in play with your child and other children, support children in making area, read a story or push a swing. You may have a special skill you would like to share with the group e.g. you may play an instrument, know some yoga moves, enjoy gardening or be an expert at folding

paper planes etc.

There may also be the opportunity to walk with your child and their group to our bush park area as some groups begin to visit and spend time in this space. When visiting, your child may act a little differently, e.g. demanding of your attention or wanting to be near you rather than stay with the group. If this happens your child's teachers will give you some clues to ease the situation. You may also notice that your child plays different games, follows different interests or is more independent than they are at home. This is a great opportunity for you to see your child in a different environment and to gain a better understanding about what happens during our kindy days.

Staff really appreciate having another set of hands and an extra set of ears to listen to and talk with the children. Many of the children will love to have an extra person to talk with also and your child will love to have that time sharing their kindy day with you. Let your child's teacher know if you would like to stay and play one day.

News from Before & After Kindy Care

Investigating together is a great way to build connections with each other.

One morning the children noticed a "bee" on the edge of the garden. This prompted questions:

Was it a bee or something else?

Why was it only walking around and not flying?

Was it drinking the water that we had used to water the plants?

Was it hurt?

How could we keep ourselves safe while watching what it was doing?



B&A Care often allows for time to have these relaxed conversations which often lead to new knowledge, not to mention building their sense of connection to each other and this place.

News from Playgroup

A number of new families have been enjoying the beautiful weather in our lovely shady playground.

"Look what I found" is heard frequently as children discover new things they're interested in. The sand-pit is a favourite along with lots of climbing.

Jo loves watching the children become more and more familiar and relaxed while parents chat to each other knowing their children are in a great space to explore, challenge themselves and have fun.

Future dates this term:

- 29th May
- 12th June
- 26th June

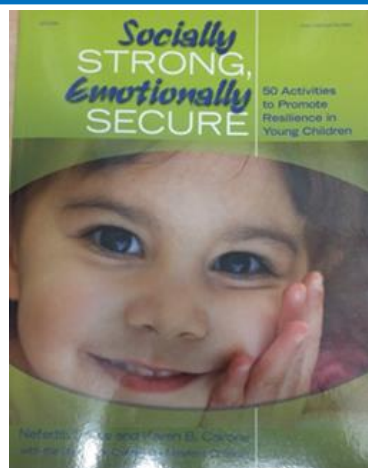
\$10.00 per session—pay on the day - card or cash.

A day at kindy poses many challenges to little children and I would like to share with you my thoughts about a 3 year old perspective. While you have seen how well they arrive, unpack, say goodbye and begin their day on the mat with a puzzle, after you leave the next 5 ½ hours are full of decision making, negotiating, cooperating and communicating.

Here are some examples:

- I stand up to change my puzzle and when I go to sit back down someone else is on the circle I was sitting on. Hayley tells me to pick another circle but I won't be next to the person I wanted to sit with anymore.
- Hayley has asked if I would like it to be my turn to count the children today and I really want a turn but I say no because everyone is watching and I might make a mistake.
- Everyone is busy playing inside and I really want to join the playdough table but there is someone there I don't want to sit near so I choose another space to play in even though I don't really want to play there. I watch the playdough table and when that person leaves I go over to join the others.
- I ask someone if they will play with me but they say no. Do I have the confidence to ask Hayley or Jordy to help me or do I go somewhere else?
- Someone else has a toy I really want so I take it off them and they tell an adult what happened. Then I have to give it back and ask if I can have a turn when they're finished. Why do I have to wait and why can't I just have it now?
- It is time to stop for morning tea and an adult has said to go to the toilet and wash my hands. I feel brave and say I don't need to go to the toilet so they say just washing my hands is ok. I am glad I was brave.
- I have a piece of cake in my lunchbox that I pick up to eat but an adult reminds me to have some healthy food first so I put it down and have my fruit.
- It is time to pack away inside and I left a lot of resources in the area I was playing in and now I have to pack them away. I am glad there are other people to help me with this and we work together to get the job done.
- We begin our yoga session and I haven't had my turn rolling the yoga ball yet and I ask Hayley if I can have a turn now. She reminds me that if I call out and ask the answer is no and asks someone else who was able to wait patiently for their turn.
- It is time to get ready to play outside so I get my hat from my bag and wait on the veranda mat with everyone else. An adult makes me go back to my locker because I forgot to put my bag back and it is sitting on the ground next to my locker.
- There is a new physical challenge in the playground today and everyone is having a turn. When it is my turn an adult helps me but I can't do it yet. They tell me to keep trying and don't give up.
- The bells are ringing at the end of outdoor time and I keep playing on the swings, they are a long way from the bells so maybe the adults won't notice me still here!
- We are listening to Hayley read a story before lunch to calm us after a busy outdoor play session and my friend is sitting next to me and talking to me and I can't hear the story so I move away from them.
- At lunch time I eat my sandwich then enjoy the yummy cake I kept from morning tea.
- It is rest time and some children are asleep but I don't sleep. Hayley reminds me that after I have done some resting I can have a resting bag with toys to play with or a book.
- It is rest time and I really want to get to sleep because kindy has made me very tired but some children are still coming in from lunch and are making a lot of noise.
- I get woken up after my sleep and I still feel really sleepy. An adult helps me go to the lounge chair which we call the 'sleepy chair' until I am awake enough to go to the toilet and put my shoes on to go home or go to after kindy care.
- Some days I go to after care and some days I get picked up at 2.15. I can't remember what is happening today so I ask an adult and they tell me, I didn't need to worry after all.

So much to learn!



Socially Strong, Emotionally Secure is a book in the Parent Library. The authors, Nefertiti Bruce and Karen Cairone, define resilience as *the ability to recover from or adjust to misfortune or change, bounce back, and overcome the odds*. They believe that adults can help children build protective factors which serve as buffers for children in challenging situations. The protective factors to which they refer include:

- * **Attachment** – the mutual, strong, long-lasting relationships between a child and significant adults in his/her life;
- * **Initiative** – the child's ability to use independent thought and action to meet his/her needs;
- * **Self-control** – the child's ability to experience a range of feelings and express them using appropriate words and actions.

The authors provide specific activities for parents to do at home as well as tips and food for thought.

Sustainability

What do you think?

Sustaining ourselves is a part of the broader understandings of sustainability. *Good health and Well-being* is in fact number three in UNESCO's key sustainable development goals. 'Ourselves' includes everyone; children, parents, teachers and educators as well as anyone in your child's village of people who love them.

Sustaining children's well-being encompasses a range of considerations across physical, social and emotional domains. These images exemplify moments where well-being is key!



Bush Park photos from the Celebration Morning 16/5/21



Can you help spread the word!



OPEN DAY

Saturday, 5 June
9.30am – 11.30am

Where we help your child
develop a love of learning

- ✔ Learn about our 2 or 3 day kindergarten programs
- ✔ Talk to our highly qualified and experienced staff
- ✔ Ask about our Before and After Kindy Care
- ✔ Look through our rooms and explore our natural and leafy play spaces



Apply
for 2022
and beyond!
Enrol at
mpc.net.au

Your local community
kindergarten



Lady Gowrie QLD
Community
Kindergartens



29 Kedron Ave Mitchelton
(next to the train station)
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