



from Mitchelton Pre-Schooling Centre

Term 1 2023

News from the Committee—Belinda Hapgood (President)

Welcome to the first MPC Newsletter of 2023! It feels remarkable that as I write this to you, our children have been getting to know their teachers, their rooms and their new kindy environment for six weeks already. It really is true that as we get older, time seems to speed up.

It was once explained to me that the reason that children feel time moves slowly is because every experience that they have is often a new and novel experience - the first birthday party, the first play date, the first family holiday. It's not surprising then that as our little people go about their first years of formal group interaction in a kindy environment that at times, they feel frustrated, challenged and exhausted - so much new stuff coming at them all at once!

We are so fortunate at MPC that our experienced educators are well equipped to handle the hard times that the first few weeks of another new environment can bring (and of course, hard times can extend to how we feel as parents watching our special little family members embark on yet another milestone). I hope that you and your families have navigated the early weeks of the new year with grace, compassion and care and have sought support when needed. Remember that we have all been there and had tough times and I know in the kindy environment, there are always other parents willing to offer a listening ear and words of comfort if needed.

The parent committee will soon launch our events calendar for 2023 which will provide both formal and information opportunities for families to connect outside of the kindy days. I would encourage all families to participate as much as you can in these events, they are a wonderful way of building connection and community for yourselves and your children in the MPC extended family. It was lovely to see many of you at the play date on Saturday afternoon. Remember that the parent committee is your opportunity to have your voice in how MPC operates. The committee and I are always happy to hear from parents and welcome feedback and suggestions. Feel free to email thoughts through to committee@mpc.net.au (or just catch one of us at drop off and pick up times).

Some of our heroes from our January Working Bee clean up! Thank you to all that helped make Kindy ready after the Summer holidays.



News from the Co-Directors—Anna Dutney and Louise Wood

Welcome to our first Newsletter as the new Co-Directors at MPC! The last six weeks have certainly been busy getting to know many of the children and saying hello to all the families as you walk in and out of Kindy. Don't forget to come and see us if you have any questions, thoughts or ideas.

Prior to the 2023 children starting at MPC, the whole staff spent two days of professional development. Our focus was gathering our team, setting the scene with us as new Co-Directors acknowledging the past three years and the extensive journey we have taken as a staff during the global pandemic. We are reigniting our passion after being essential workers and understanding the toll of pivoting to changes to our work. While COVID has changed our lives and the way we do certain things it's interesting to note Early Childhood Education and Care, play and socialization has been highlighted as very important within our governments.

Passion and Purpose are Power. As a team we spent time reflecting on our practice and core beliefs about early childhood education. We are focused on building our platform of life purpose. We have a positive organizational culture, shared leadership and vision our core values on Play, Relationships and Well-being.

We wanted to use this article in the newsletter to talk about **change**—change that is not only happening for you and your children but from our perspective the affects of change on staff with new leaders at the helm! This change for us means we are taking a chance to do something different and perhaps at times we are feeling out of our comfort zone and we are certainly accessing parts of our brain to think in different ways to make this work.

Our January PD Days were a great chance for us to talk about any experiences over the holidays and what emotions from those experiences we could take into our 2023 year. As adults we are able to express our feelings and learn from them—joy, gratitude, love—are things you would like to do again. Fear, sadness, anxiety are the emotions that make us want to stop, maybe reject something. They can help build our resilience and from that teach us how to plan and make changes to hopefully succeed or overcome moments that have taken us to frustration and sadness. After reading the book 'The Midnight Library' by Matt Haig over the break we looked at highlighting the opportunities in our lives that perhaps if we had not taken or if taken, would we have done something differently—what would our lives look like now? It's all about taking chances! As the new Co-Directors, we are taking on this change in our working lives and asking everyone to take a chance with us.

As families you are adapting to the change in your lives and the progression of your child into a new year in the early years of their education. This is where you are taking a chance with us to meet the needs of your child and to welcome you into our Community. We thank you for giving us this opportunity. There is a sense of freshness and excitement in the air at MPC as we welcome our new and returning children and families to MPC.

So welcome to MPC from the whole team.



Continuing our RAP journey with purpose and feeling!—

Anna Dutney and Louise Wood

After establishing our Reconciliation Plan and having it approved by the Narragunnawali facilitators last year we are now heading into the second phase of reviewing and adding to our plan. Many of our team have attended the Indigenous Insights Professional Development days that have been run by the ECEC and by Aunty Merle Cashman and her daughter Sarah Frazer. These have been fantastic PD days and having Aunty Merle and Sarah's lived perspectives gives us a greater insight into the power of Reconciliation.

As Educators and Parents of young children, "We are the secret to closing the gap, we need to walk alongside our Indigenous Community, with respect, love and be humble" Aunty Merle Cashman A proud Ngugi woman from Quandamooka Country. These words from Aunty Merle show us that that together we can do this and there is no better time than to start now.

So how can you see our Rap in action at Kindy—

- Our Acknowledgement to Country that the children are learning
- Singing songs and doing musical experiences that have Indigenous heritage
- Exploring and growing bush tucker foods and using them to make bush medicine with Mortar and Pestles
- Reading books and listening to stories
- Learning the different symbols as a way of recording stories and daily experiences
- Creating an awareness of looking after our land and being grateful for what it gives us
- Learning Indigenous names for plants and animals and places.

There is so much in our everyday that gives us opportunities to create the awareness and to learn to appreciate the cultural heritage of our First Nations People.

If there is anything that you feel you would like to share with us, we would love to welcome your thoughts, ideas and experiences to broaden our journey. Please come and yarn with us.

The artwork in our Foyer was created by the 2022 children alongside Rhian an Indigenous woman from Wirangu woman from Nakuru country.

We hope to have Rhian come back this year to create new art from the children's storytelling.



*Thank you to the Turrbal and Yagera people for this land where we learn and play.
We will look after it every day.*

Building a sense of belonging for our Community

It was lovely to have so many of our families join us for a play at Kindy. This was a great chance for your child to show you some of the many places they spend their time at Kindy.



Upcoming parent Information Evening



Building Little People!

Ways to support Independence, Resilience and Autonomy

What should kindy kids do independently?

How much help do we need to give as parents and carers?



Join us for a 1hr session, designed to build happy, confident kids using practical strategies.

- Acknowledge kids feelings
- Encourage autonomy
- Build resilience and problem-solving
- Praise with purpose

Based on the work of Faber & Mazlish 'How to talk so kids will listen & Listen so kids will talk'

Megan Hunt is an experienced Primary School teacher of 20 years, currently supporting students with disabilities. She has 2 children, 3 step-children and is currently studying her Masters in Education majoring in Guidance Counselling. visit www.keytokids.com.au for more information



MPC presents our first Parent Information Evening for the year

Wednesday March 22

6.45 for a 7.00pm start

Put the date in your calendars now.

Unit 1/2 day children have been building safe, caring and confident peer and adult relationships in the outdoor environment through play and projects, role play, negotiation, problem-solving and shared interests such as painting, creating and experimenting with brushes and hands, building homes and offices with large waffle blocks, dinosaur worlds in the sandpit, frog and insect wet habitats, helping one another across the obstacle course, making and molding playdough, polar ice in the water-trough and through many wildlife encounters. Over two weeks the children found a variety of body parts belonging to a large beetle prompting robust discussions, questions, drawing, creating with craft and more wondering. This was followed by the discovery of cicada shells, black/white caterpillars, bug hotels, golden orb weaver spiders, bees both native and domestic, lizards, magpies and crows. The many questions and possible or knowledgeable answers gave children opportunities to share their prior knowledge with others, explore and extend shared interests amongst peers.



Different relationships and roles have evolved during inside play, building, constructing, planning, drawing, listening, reading, puzzles, singing, dancing and games. The swapping places game encourages children to remember names of peers or to ask “what’s your name”, sit next to someone new and turn-taking, whilst the sometimes very loud and hilarious shoe game supports children with co-operation, concern and respect for others, fair decision-making, similarities and differences in a playful way.

Others ways we have been celebrating connectedness has been sharing birthday treats and singing, watching/ waiting with anticipation as the crane next door lifted a variety of platforms, planks and beams, a whole group fire drill, exchanging books at children’s lending library, feeding the worms, participating in Buzz groups (show and share), and with such busy days for both mind and body our rest, relaxation and imagination time.



What to expect when starting the year! Shirley, and Jo (Unit 1 /3 day group)

With the first half of Term 1 already over, the children are beginning to settle into their days, their groups and into Kindy life in general. At this early stage in the year, a goal the Teaching Teams work towards is for everyone to feel safe and secure and to build a sense of belonging. We do this by keeping consistent and very predictable routines, and by taking time to get to know each other- learning names, talking about our families, sharing stories from home, and making connections through familiar play experiences. You will notice that the spaces and equipment in the indoor and outdoor areas are set up to encourage imaginative play or with experiences that children can access independently. Our intention is to provide a variety of choice, to encourage self-motivated play, investigation, and exploration, and also to develop an understanding that we believe each child to be capable and independent decision makers. Children quickly gain a sense of personal ownership and learn to take social risks outside of their normal comfort zone when they feel they are valued. For example, this may be that they are learning to climb over playground equipment they haven't tried before, or maybe they are learning to accept that when you forget your hat you borrow a spare hat from Kindy, or that at rest time children practice the tricky art of quietening their minds and bodies. We are practicing understanding that things don't always go your way! We take everything slowly, with the aim that the children will embrace new challenges with positive mindsets. Through encouragement and measured guidance, exciting new skills begin to develop, even in these early weeks. Children begin to realise new potentials in the way they play and in their connection with others. They are actively encouraged to be brave and take risks, either when learning to speak to the whole group for the first time, or perhaps sitting beside someone new and asking their name. Saying goodbye to parents in the morning is often difficult, but again, learning to practice emotional regulation, and realizing parents will always return in the afternoon takes bravery.

Sometimes at this stage in the term, we may see some children become oppositional and reactive to Kindy expectations, or perhaps be emotional and teary. Tantrums, challenging behaviour, or emotional dysregulation are perfectly normal both at Kindy and at home and can sometimes be strategies children use to get what they want. Perhaps they just don't know what else to do. Remember the children are experiencing lots of new learning and adjusting to Kindy life at the moment. They are working very hard at 'doing the right thing', so when they get home, they are not only tired but probably ready to let out their emotions. Again, this is normal behaviour.

With our group, the teachers use a variety of strategies to support children if they are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulties adjusting.

We discuss with the whole group why '..... is feeling sad or angry or confused'

We reinforce that '..... is still learning to

We celebrate 'having a go' at something new!

We acknowledge that it is hard to be brave sometimes.

We encourage effort- to keep trying and not give up.

We acknowledge hardship. Sometimes it takes a lot of practice to learn something new.

We talk about helpful and caring ways to support others at Kindy and practice ways to cat with consideration towards others and ourselves.

We learn about being fair, safe, and kind, and talk about what those words mean.



If you are feeling you need to discuss any concerns you may have about your child's adjustment to Kindy life, please do not hesitate to speak with your child's teacher. Communication is the best forum for a successful transition for your child.

Discovering the Citrus Swallowtail caterpillars on the Kindy lime tree.

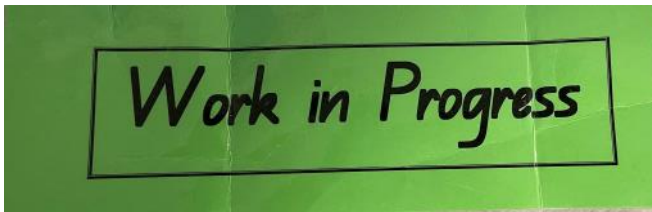
The skills and learning behind all those things on the take home shelf!

Louise, Janette, Jo and Jules (Unit 2 /3 day group)

How do you affectionately, with interest and enthusiasm say "What is that?", when your child knows exactly what it is and what it is used for!!!! Even as teachers throughout the day we are thrown into this dilemma!

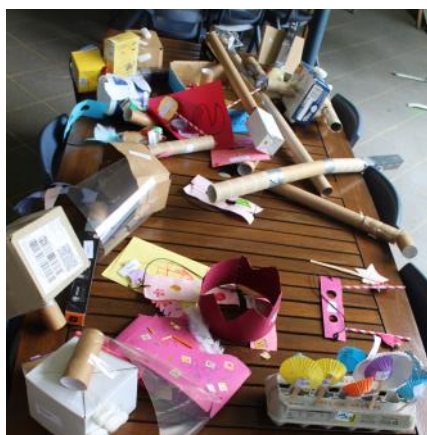
To give you a helpful tip...we will often say "What a great design, tell me about it?"

So where is the learning and skills development involved in these amazing creations - and there is SO much involved to get to that finished product! Often there can be tears, frustration before the joy of the finished product happens. Being brave and asking for help may or may not have happened. For some the continual renovations to the creations can go for days! When this happens the 'Work in Progress' sign helps the frustration of needing to move on with something else in the day and so the child knows their work is respected and waiting for them at another time.



For some children the making area is a place of comfort and security away from the 'busyness' of the bigger play that is going on. For others it is the go to place to make the creation that is needed to transform them from A to B and beyond! Throughout the early days we have been learning how to use—scissors safely and effectively, tape machines, hole punches, holding pens and placing lids on the ends to keep them safe, different types of glue and whether clear sticky tape is strong enough to hold big things in place. Discussions are about what box or colour paper will be used, do you need string, ribbons or paint it to finish. Some children will draw a design first or need to look at a picture in a book or on the computer to assist with the creation. Some will watch closely as someone else makes something and then they will say, "I want one of those too!". The process to get to the end product is enormous, even when it may be a tiny piece of paper with nothing but a name glued to it. That piece of paper may have been A4 size and the endless cutting and holding of the scissors the correct way may have taken a very long time and little muscles will have worked very hard and have become tired at times to get to the end product. The 5 story box creation with so much glued or stuck to it also deserves the recognition of time and effort and whatever it's purpose may have been or what it still can be used for is important.

The sense of accomplishment when a child independently does a skill that they have found tricky is a joy to behold! So the next time you look at the take home table or shelf with piles of 'stuff' on it...remember the skills and learning involved to have it look like that!



One day
you're young
and cool, and
the next day
you are
collecting
cardboard
tubes for
telescopes!

thisiswhyiteach.ec



After our first week of Kindy, a personal Facebook memory popped up for me, from eight years ago. It was a photo of my eldest child on his first day of Kindy at MPC.

As I looked at this photo, I was transfixed thinking eight years ago I was a Kindy parent like you...

The photo allowed me to recall the emotions I experienced on his first day of Kindy and reflected on your first weeks as parents and children of 2023.

I instantly empathised with you and remembered the emotions I felt as I dropped my son off for his first day. Until, starting Kindy I had been with my son every day since birth and now I needed to entrust him in the care of his Kindy teachers.

I remember feeling excited for my son knowing it was time to further build his social interactions and early education. Little did I know that the relationships I would create with his teachers and other parents and the relationships he would build helped us to grow as a whole family.

The skills and strategies we learnt as a family that year were powerful!

Fast forward to now, I'm so grateful to be part of the MPC team of professionals who value, lifelong learning, continued professional development, play and well-being. I know personally and professionally the dedication the staff have in building meaningful relationships with children and families.

In our group this year, we have returning families and children who have existing relationships with Vanessa, Pam and myself and new families to the centre. We aim to nurture and build our connections throughout the year by; accepting who you are and who your child is, respecting everyone and ourselves, understanding you are your child's first teacher and have valuable information to share. We aim to have transparency in open and honest communication, about the observations we've made of your child in a Kindy environment. And not step away from the hard or tricky conversations.

We aim to listen to your opinions and encourage you to spend time at Kindy on parent visiting days, working bees, playdates or attend MPC planned events.

We thank you for trusting us with your children and consider it an honour and great responsibility.

We look forward to helping your child build their own relationships with their peers and become an integral member of our group.



Being able to regulate behaviours and emotions is not an innate skill.

Kim, Megan and Angela (Unit 3/3 Day Group)

Being able to regulate behaviours and emotions effectively is not an innate skill. So many of us want to teach our children how to regulate and manage their emotions and reactions. While they can learn this, it takes time, practice, perseverance and patience - just like learning any new skill. You may already be familiar with the terms 'self-regulation' and 'co-regulation'. Self-regulation is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions, attention, behaviours and reactions. This involves resisting highly emotional reactions, calming yourself down, paying attention and having the ability to adjust expectations. In children, self-regulation may look like learning to respond appropriately to disappointment rather than having a tantrum.

Continuing to do what parents want them to do (keep walking to kindy) and not what they want to do (stop and watch the beetle/train) is hard. Managing their feelings in the moment is tricky for them. Parents and care givers have a role in supporting their child to develop self-regulation skills, through a technique called co-regulation where you support a child through the tricky experiences and help them to learn how to cope. Children learn to regulate their emotions and behaviours through experiences and practice. You can help build this skill by helping a child to label the feeling, offer understanding rather than sympathy and then move through the feeling by supporting what is required in the situation. For example, on the walk to kindy you might say, "You want to keep looking at the train and you feel frustrated that you must keep walking. I understand - it's fun to watch the train, but we need to keep walking to kindy so we get there in time to do a puzzle." You might offer a distraction (I wonder how many steps it will take us to get to kindy?) or offer an alternative such as stopping to watch the train after kindy or waving to the train as you continue walking.

Emotional self-regulation refers to the ability to manage disruptive emotions and impulses - to think before acting. Feeling emotions is healthy. Learning how to process emotions and respond with appropriate behaviour is important for well-being. One of our transition games we have played a number of times this term, is the Dice Game. One child rolls the dice and then counts out the number of children on the dice to move to the bathroom or outside. Then the next child in the circle gets to roll the dice and count the children. Not everyone gets a turn to roll the dice in this game. Regulation also involves the ability to bounce back from disappointment and for some children, feeling disappointed about not getting a turn to roll the dice can be hard. These are opportunities though for children to work through those feelings with support, so the next time they have that feeling they can name it and hopefully work through the feelings with less support or on their own.

We often talk about how our bodies are feeling, sometimes we might feel fast and wriggly, other times we might feel slow and heavy. Mindfulness is also part of self-regulation. One of the breathing exercises we do as a group in our room is Star Breathing. Hold one hand up and your pointer finger on other hand (we call it our magic finger). Starting from the base of your thumb, you breathe in as you slowly run your finger up your thumb and breathe out as you go down the other side. Continue breathing in as you trace up your finger and breathe out as you go down. Continue this until you reach the base of your little Finger.

Deep breathing
using your hand.



Becoming part of a group of 22 children all aged 3 takes a big adjustment. While some children have come from (and still attend) childcare, for many this is their first time ever away from the safety and security of their own home where they have been cared for by close relatives.

Our early kindy days are very busy for adults and for the children. From the moment they walk through the gate there are jobs to be done and things to remember, and they are not always fun. While we think of kindy as a fun place, the reality is that many of the learning experiences are not. Saying goodbye to their adult, choosing a space to play, finding their belongings, toileting independently, following instructions and routines, knowing how to ask for help, understanding the concept of shared resources and shared adult attention or simply packing away when you would really like to continue playing are just a few of the many challenges we pose to children during the day. With our focus on independence the children are noticing a step up from having things done for them (either at home or at childcare) to taking responsibility for themselves and their belongings. When giving an instruction we allow processing time and take a 'go slow' approach to allow the children the opportunity to work out themselves what they need to do next either by watching what others are doing or asking for help if needed. These are big adjustments for little people to make and for some this may impact their willingness to separate from you in the morning and could be why some children began the year happily and are now showing some resistance at coming to kindy. As always, we are there to step in and help.

In the early kindy weeks you will notice the room set up the same most days which is done purposely to create a sense of familiarity. Children may remember a place they enjoyed playing in last kindy day and being able to find the same space can be calming for them, particularly if they are stressed about saying goodbye to you. Our room contains areas for small group play while also allowing for individual children to have a safe, quiet space if they wish. Gradually, as the children gain independence, we are encouraging access to more resources in the room and new experiences which will enable them to make more choices in their play. With this comes the greater responsibility of packing away their play spaces when they have finished.

With only 2 short days each week it takes time for the children to settle at kindy but also for us to get to know them. Many are beginning to share stories and information from home and the sharing of pet and family photos has enhanced this home to kindy connection.





Experience the fun of **PLAYGROUP**

at Mitchelton Pre-Schooling Centre

- ✔ Welcoming all children 0-5 yrs!
(including families not enrolled at MPC)
- ✔ DATES during TERM 1 2023:
28th January, 11th and 25th February
11th and 25th March
- TIME: Saturday mornings 9.00am to 10.30am

COST: \$10.00 per family per session
Pay on the day by card or cash

Offering a stimulating, safe and friendly environment for families to
come together to play and build relationships.

29 Kedron Ave Mitchelton
(next to the train station)
phone 3355 2535 • mpc.net.au



News from Before & After Kindy Care

Before and After Care is a valuable part of our days here at MPC. It has been a case of 'if you build it they will come.' With the changing work habits and busy lifestyles, families have the need for Before and After Care has grown and now it is definitely thriving here at MPC. Numbers are growing and we are making changes to the way care may look. On our heavily booked days we are lucky enough to be able to spread the children across the playgrounds. The staff will be happy to let you know which playground your child is using. This experience also gives the children a chance to try new play spaces and connect with other children. Please remember to sign your child in and out at the folder in the inside courtyard area. When you are dropping off in the morning please take them to complete the jobs they need to do for the unit they are in and then take them to the staff to welcome them. When collecting in the afternoon, please see the staff for any notes or reminders that they may have for you. If you are making permanent bookings please fill in the booking sheet and for casual booking please talk to the teachers or the office staff to check numbers.

Sustainability

It is great to see the bins filling with all your recycling! We are adding the bread tags again and also looking at other possibilities. It was so funny to hear the dental bin humming as we left the other day...one of the electric toothbrushes had been turn on!



What do you think?

THE PLASTIC PIRATE'S 8 RRRRRRRR'S

- Recycle**: Close the loop and remake.
- Refuse**: Don't consume what you don't need to.
- Reduce**: Reduce consumption of energy and materials.
- Re-use**: Share with others. Find new uses for old objects.
- Repair**: Fix or upgrade your objects rather than throwing them away.
- Re-gift**: Share, and be a part of the gift economy.
- Recover**: Energy and materials recovery. And upcycle!
- Rethink**: Be mindful of your consumption, your relationship with 'things' and your relationship with the Earth.

Ocean Legacy Foundation OceanLegacy.ca

Young children are both current and future citizens with already existing capabilities to shape sustainable societies. Investments to build their awareness, values, knowledge and capacity for sustainable development will serve to set the world on more sustainable pathways now and into the future (UNESCO, 2014, p.78).

Sustainability in Action

Thank you to the children from the Unit 1/3 Day Group that helped to clean up Kindy's little part of Australia. With tweezers in their hands they carefully scoured the front of Kindy both inside and out and found lots of rubbish to pick up!



Parent News and Advertising Opportunities

What's new?? This page is for you to advertise something! Send your items in for our Term Newsletter and we can add them here.



St Peter Chanel Primary School
2023 OPEN DAY
Wednesday 22 March | 9.30am to 10.30am

Discover a truly unique, faith-filled learning community creating a better future

- See classes in action
- Trial a lesson
- Join the Principal's school tour
- Discover your child's spirit
- Meet students and teachers

St Peter Chanel
Catholic Primary School, The Gap
P 07 3300 1202
E pthegap@one.catholic.edu.au
@SPCTheGap

www.spcthegap.qld.edu.au

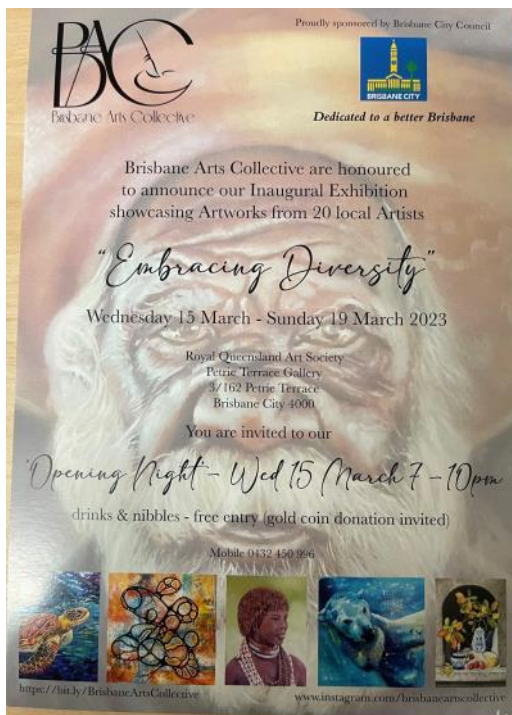
A Brisbane Catholic Education School

Register now

MPC Enrolment Lists - 2024 and beyond are OPEN!

- ◆ Do you have younger children?
- ◆ Do you want the option of sending them to MPC?
- ◆ Is their name on the Enrolment Waiting List?

Do it now!you will then have peace of mind, knowing you don't have to think about it any-more. It's easy. Complete a form online or collect one from the office. Complete an additional form if you are considering MPC 3's group. **MPC does not have a sibling policy**, and offers and choice of groups for new enrolments are allocated in strict waiting list order.



Brisbane Arts Collective are honoured to announce our Inaugural Exhibition showcasing Artworks from 20 local Artists

"Embracing Diversity"
Wednesday 15 March - Sunday 19 March 2023

Royal Queensland Art Society
Petrie Terrace Gallery
3/162 Petrie Terrace
Brisbane City 4000

You are invited to our
Opening Night - Wed 15 March 7-10pm
drinks & nibbles - free entry (gold coin donation invited)

Mobile 0432 450 996

https://bit.ly/BrisbaneArtsCollective
www.instagram.com/brisbaneartscollective

Did you know we have a Parent and Community Notice Board for you to advertise on.

