

June Newsletter

Caring for Children. Not for Profit

We begin today and would like to acknowledge the Noongar or Bibbulmun People, the traditional owners of the land on which we are gathered here at Blue Gum, and we pay our respect to their Elders, both past and present. We also extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here in our community

From the Front Desk

Hello Parents, Grandparents and Friends of Blue Gum

It is lovely to be enjoying some sense of normality without masks, proof of vaccination and the like. I am enjoying seeing the excitement from educators and families at having the freedom to finally hop on a plane to visit loved ones. It is so wonderful, and if you have a much-needed holiday planned to see your family whom you have not seen since before COVID I am so happy for you.

Of course, with the easing of restrictions, and opening of borders we have experienced a lot of COVID. It does seem that no matter who you talk to these days either they and or their family has been sick with COVID. I can say without hesitation that I, and the team here at Blue Gum have managed the influx with relative stride 😊, plans were put in place early to sustain quality educators despite the necessary isolation periods.

I want to thank all our families who participated in the survey, it has been overwhelmingly positive. As a Community Based Service, we are fortunate to be in the position that we can offer you fully qualified educators in an environment that has higher than the required ratios. Please continue to check the front board daily to know which educators will be in your child's room for the day. It continues to be necessary for us to have a re-shuffling of educators within the rooms.

It is unfortunate that parent evening was cancelled, at this stage a new date has not been set and I will keep you informed when this finally goes ahead. In the interim, you can make a mutual appointment with your key educator to come in and have a visit if there is anything you wish to discuss, or any concerns that you may have. I hope that parents have always felt welcomed despite the need to make changes due to COVID



Last Chance To Order
Photos For Photo Day!



Orders must be placed
by MIDNIGHT Friday
24th June



Use of Wet bags

We are encouraging
the use of Wet Bags
instead of plastic
bags to help our
environment



Exciting Months
Ahead

NAIDOC Week, Pyjama
Day, Sustainability
Week, Weather Week
and Book Week are
some of the things you
can look forward too at
Blue Gum!

As it is now winter with the bad flu season upon us, we will continue to do the door drop off and pick up, this is not indefinite and will be reviewed later. However, it is hard to argue at the benefit it has been for some of our children. I see such independence in getting their bags ready, and hardly blinking in the mornings as they happily go into their classroom.

Thank you for your continued support in keeping sick children at home until after the isolation period has passed, we are so grateful.

Some of you may have already heard that after 4 years with Blue Gum our ECT Chelsea Cornelius is leaving us, her last day is July 7, 2022. Chelsea is not going to another service; she has been offered a role which will help advance her career in mentoring, we wish Chelsea all the very best for her future.

I am employing another ECT Samantha Walker to fulfill that role in Kangaroos, Samantha is coming in on Tuesday June 28, 2022, to introduce herself to the room and spend a day with the Kangaroos. Samantha's official start date is yet to be advised.

Hongmei Zhou our educator who is currently in Kangaroos will be moving to Joey room 3 days a week (Mon, Thurs, and Fri). As of this Monday June 27, 2022, Kathy McGinty is moving from Wombats to be in the Kangaroo room. Kathy is going to be doing some orientation with Gill and Chelsea before the new ECT starts. Hannah Butler who has been doing relief work for us will now be working in Wombats permanently from June 27 to replace Kathy.

I sincerely thank you for your patience with all the educator changes within our rooms, if you have any questions or queries please do not hesitate to ask, I am here to help.

Thank you for continuing to choose Blue Gum 😊

Warm regards

Jane
Director



Dear Families

It is that time of year where your Blue Gum Committee meets to finalise the budget for the Centre for the following financial year. For 2021/2022 we are anticipating a small loss of around \$30,000. If you are interested in finding out more about this year's financials results, you are welcome to attend our AGM later in the year.

Important context for the budget deliberations, the Fair Work Commission raised the minimum wage for some workers by 4.6% from the 1st of July 2022. At Blue Gum whilst not all staff are on the minimum wage, over 2/3's of our budget is related to staff entitlements.

Blue Gum's management during COVID has been exceptional and that has been through the leadership of Director Jane Brenzi, the efforts of our wonderful Educators and the organisational structure in which we operate. Our value proposition and strategic approach sees Blue Gum carrying staff greater than ratio requirements for a variety of reasons. Over the past 3 years this has been a point of difference versus other early learning and childcare providers who through lower staffing levels have had to close rooms and turn children away as they cannot safely care for them with the COVID impacts causing significant staff absences.

Globally, pressure on the cost of living is a topic of discussion for all families. Your committee is composed entirely of parents of children who attend Blue Gum and so we are keenly aware of the financial pressures faced by local families at this time. However, operating expenses continue to rise, and we must budget for anticipated increases in wages, food and systems that allow us to continue to provide the offer we have committed to in our current Strategic Plan. The rise is necessary to offset these increases and prevent the centre operating at a loss.

I would like to advise you the Committee has confirmed that as of Monday July 11 there will be a modest fee increase of \$5 per day. From this date, daily fees will be increased to \$126 per day and \$605 per week respectively. If you could please ensure that your direct debit payments are altered accordingly to accommodate the increase, it would be greatly appreciated.

We are committed to continuing to provide leading care and education for the early childhood sector and to be an employer of choice for those who work with us. We know that you have choices and thank you for choosing Blue Gum to provide that care and education to your children.

Regards
Rebecca Reeves
Chairperson



Photo Day, Class Photo Times

Monday 27th and Tuesday 28th June 2022

Joeys 9:00am

Possums 9:30am

Wombats 9:45am

Koalas 10:15am

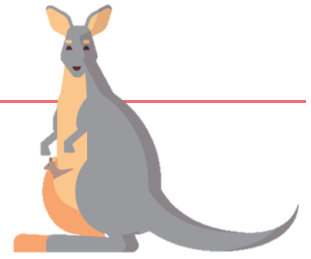
Kangaroos 10:30am

Order for Photos need to be placed by

MIDNIGHT FRIDAY 24TH JUNE

through the website

whippersnappers.com.au



From The Joeys Room

To the Joeys families,

Firstly, I would like to start off by thanking you all for ensuring that your children's belongings are labelled, this limits misplaced items and any confusion throughout the day. Now that we have begun Winter and still strive to get outside as much as possible, the children tend to go through a couple more outfits during the day. It is evident in our curriculums and observations how much your children enjoy being outside, how can we resist when they stand at the blinds pointing to the rain with big smiles on their faces!

On that note I am continuing to hand out the last of the permission slips for excursions to the Blue Gum reserve, the school oval, the shops and Riley's café. We have, in previous years, taken the Joeys for a trolley ride over to Riley's to enjoy a baby chino. Last week we managed to get some of the children out on short bush walk, which they loved. A lot of the children show interest in bird watching, it is one of the most said words amongst them at the moment. Bird!

I would like to add that as we have reached the middle of the year and most of our children are getting that little bit older, we will slowly start transitioning their routines to practice what they do in the following rooms i.e., drinking from cups, sleeping on beds not in cots and extending their self-help skills. If you have any queries or questions please speak to us, Jane, or Rachel for more information.

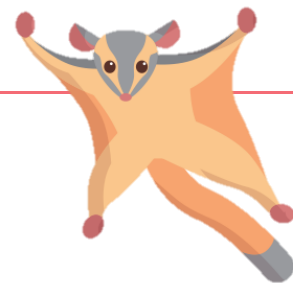
Don't forget how handy and readily available story park is to send notes to the team.

Unfortunately, we have had to say goodbye to Loretta in the Joeys room, but we are glad she has not gone too far! Loretta has now started working in the Wombats room which she is finding is an exciting change. We will miss Loretta's enthusiasm and humour, but we look forward to having the lovely Hongmei with us in the coming weeks.

I would like to remind you all that although we still have some covid restrictions with drop offs and pickups, we can set up a time to have a meeting or phone call to discuss changes in your child's routines etc. if needed.

Thank you,
Abbey, Di, Sian, and Loretta.





From The Possums Room

Hello Families,

Wow! We are already halfway through the year, time sure does fly. The Possums have been growing up so fast, showing us their independence and their love for learning new and exciting things. It has been wonderful to experience some beautiful bonds forming between the children in the Possums Room. Encouraging positive communication and interactions is currently a high priority within our room.

As you may have realized already the Possums room has gone through some educator changes. Paige has moved to Wombats, and we welcomed Deb into Possums full time. The Possums have coped with these changes well and have been enjoying doing lots of messy experiences with Deb.

Through the last few months from our last newsletter the Possums have been doing lots of learning. They learnt about different emergency services and their role in our community during Emergency Services Week. During this week they were able to explore and sit in a fire truck which was a big hit and they created cards to give to the ambulance officers as a thank you for all their hard work. We also had Nature Play Week and the Possums enjoyed learning all about nature and the bugs and insects. They are loving exploring and playing in our Possums Garden Centre that is filled with a variety of bugs, insects and nature items.

We would love some more family input from our families and welcome you to send pictures through email or Story Park to let us know what you and your families are getting up to, learning and exploring. We will also be sending home family input sheets for you to add some interests or learning your child has, so please be on the lookout for that.

We are going to be looking at all the different cultures and languages we have in our Possums room.

Please email or Story Park and let us know what cultures you have in your household and what language/s you speak at home. We would love to know any celebrations or holidays that you observe so we can bring it into our Possums room too. Pictures of your family celebrating these holidays/celebrations would also be greatly appreciated.



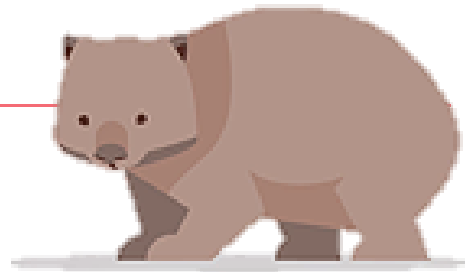
If you have any questions or ideas that you would like to share with us, please don't hesitate to use Story Park as a way of communication at any time

Many Thanks

Kat, Rowan and Deb

From The Wombats Room

Dear Families



We continue to focus on the Wombats emotions along with building their resilience when confronted with situations with their peers. Wombats have been finding their voices as we support them by role modelling the words and being present to support them. We also are also talking to them about how it's important to listen to their peers' words.

Since our last newsletter the Wombats have 'immersed' themselves in the experiences for Emergency Services Week along with some of the children seeing firsthand an 'olden day fire truck and experienced sitting in the back. Reconciliation Week where the Wombats are encouraged to be involved in experiences through art, puzzles, story books and music. Nature Week was also very busy with crafts using natures gifts from our very own garden, story books about 'Bugs' along with using old tree branches for the Wombats to practice their large muscle strength and encouraging them to think outside of the box in 'what else' we could use them for (shovels, drawing in the sand, a muscle bar, walking sticks just to name a few and allowing the Wombats to use the mini trucks to explore the little sandpit with sand and gravel. (These experiences are planned for the whole of Blue Gum)

For the Wombats 'intentional teaching' they continue to strive in recognising their colours and counting and we've noticing them contributing to discussions using counting and colours.

Self-help skills will be a big focus in the up & coming months where we encourage the Wombats to gather their utensils for their meals along with serving themselves. Another focus in August will be learning about 'Safe Safety' and applying their own sunscreen safely without getting it in their eyes.

Some of the Wombats have begun their toilet training if families would like support in this area, please let us know. We just ask for pull-ups to begin with and loose pants, so they are easily to grab hold off and to allow them to pull down. We will monitor this for a couple of weeks and communicate through Storypark on your child's efforts.

We ask families to still provide 'HATS' to keep the Wombats in a good routine.

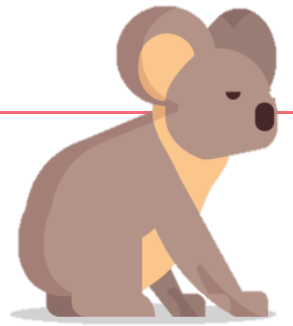
Can you believe it almost July and we will be setting up another 'all about me' forms shortly. We love reading these and they support us when starting a learning journey, child interest and family input for your child. It's also a great way for us to see your family aspirations and wishes. - So have your say.

We would also like to invite families to come in for short meetings during the day to find out 'what questions or concerns do you have'.

Until next time
The Wombats



From The Koalas Room



Dear Families,

The time is just flying by, and it seems most of us have either had or know someone who has had COVID! We hope if you have had it, that you have recovered and are now back into good health.

As we have moved into Winter, we are asking for extra jumpers/ Jackets to wear and of course hats! 😊 as we will still be making the most of our wonderful garden space and trying to go out as much as possible to blow the cobwebs away.

We have recently celebrated a range of wonderful events and experiences and we are trying to give you as much feedback on our daily curriculum and community posts, so you won't feel you are missing out 😊

In May we had Emergency Services Week, which is always a big hit with our children. Our Tuesday children have especially enjoyed our visit from the Fire Engine and got to go on a very special ride in the Fire Truck, which took us around the local suburbs. We all had so much fun, and we had some wonderful helpers ringing the bell!!

At the start of June, we have celebrated Reconciliation Week and participated in some wonderful art and craft, group time discussions, music and movement and even improvised with the bamboo tubes to create some amazing beats with the tapping sticks! Our children have enjoyed this week of exploring and developing an awareness of our Indigenous people and some of their cultural celebrations, amazing artwork, and stories.

We have just recently explored Nature Play Week, which has been a wonderful time for us to connect and appreciate nature and natural resources. We have explored with paints to create our amazing artwork using sticks and twigs from the garden, we have planted some succulent leaves and are busy taking care of them and hoping they will soon grow little shoots for us to replant and eventually take home. We also had time to explore with clay, which our children have really enjoyed. It was very cold and needed lots of strong muscles to manipulate the clay in to balls and we have enjoyed using the many cutting tools that enable us to cut and create with the clay. We are also looking at making some bird feeders to add to our garden space to encourage the birds to come into our garden, and not take the food scraps from our meal trolley!!! 😊

We are very impressed with how well our Koalas are progressing with their social and emotional skills and developing their communication and assertive words. We are encouraging kind words and assertive words rather than using our hands to settle disagreements. We are noticing that our children are enjoying our role play Hair Salon and I am too!! I am often in their getting lots of pampering, it is bliss!! 😊 they are so knowledgeable about each of the brushes and I am enjoying seeing how they are engaging with each other and sharing ideas and communication as they take turns with some of the resources. We have set up a dolls house and small world people, block play and many number and fine motor experiences for our children to explore, make choices and challenge their knowledge and skills.

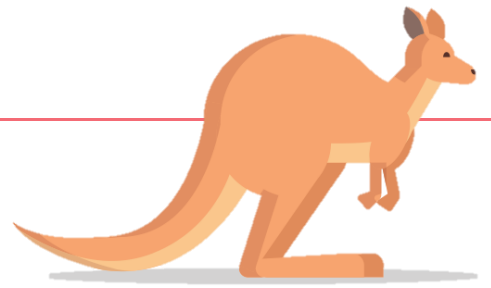


If you have any questions or ideas that you would like to share with us, please don't hesitate to use story park as a way of communication at any time.

Many thanks

Gill





From The Kangaroos Room

Dear Kangaroo Families

Hello winter! As the weather is getting colder the children have been enjoying starting their days inside nice and toasty. The children have been having morning tea inside and having free play between Koalas and Kangaroo's. Then the children are going outside just after nine. Please remember to bring warm clothing for your children. There is a saying "There no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothing".

Our last Newsletter was April, since then we have been up to lots in our classroom. We had emergency services week where the children learned about the variety of services, and what they do for the community. We also went on a real fire engine, taking a joy ride down to the river. Later in May, we had Reconciliation Week. In our classroom we explored the Aboriginal flag, Torres Strait Islander flag and the Australian flag. We discussed what the colours mean on each of the flags and discussed the land that our centre is on. We referred to our beautiful display on our wall with the long neck turtles and the saying "Here we stand on Wadjuk land". Recently we have had Nature Play Week, the children really enjoyed exploring clay and interacting with a variety of natural resources. Over the next two months we will be having Naidoc Week, Pyjama Day, Sustainability Week, Weather Week and Book Week.

Deasy has now commenced her maternity leave. The children have been missing her and often talk about how she's at home growing her Baby. The Kangaroo's will soon be warmly welcoming Kathy from Wombats into Kangaroos, to the children's excitement.

Sadly, this is my last newsletter as I will be embarking on my new adventure in July. I am sad to say goodbye to the children, to the Blue Gum community and our beautiful team. I am grateful to have been the teacher here for almost four years. I truly believe I struck it lucky with Blue Gum Early Learning and Childcare.

Regards

Chelsee





From Our Educational Leader

Hello once again from me,

Well, we made it! Here marks the halfway point of '22. It's been a journey getting to this point and as always, I wish to thank the wonderful families for helping us work through the trials and tribulations of navigating COVID. The children for continuing to brighten our days, come rain, shine or COVID! And I hope you don't mind, but I would like to acknowledge the hard work, dedication and over all fantastic team of Educators that makes up Blue Gum. With out going into too much detail, COVID has certainly shared the "love" amongst the Educators and I'm so proud of how well we made it through. So, whether we work full time, part time, casual or relief, well done! And we couldn't have done it without you.

I've recently been reminded of how user friendly our Storypark platform is, and what a benefit it is for families. We get to share all sorts of information with you about your children. Using Storypark we are able to keep you updated on your child's daily routines. We know how important staying informed on their sleeping habits is for example, having this in site can help parents navigate something as simple as the bedtime routine in the evening. We share the daily experiences with you. Giving you firsthand information on their days, who they played with (including photos so you have the opportunity to put children's names to faces), what toys and resources they have the opportunity to use (which also offers great inspiration when it comes to Christmas and Birthdays of toys they enjoy using and may like for home), as well as the learning which takes place. You are able to see the connections between these Daily Curriculum and follow along on the journey we take their learning. We provide you not only with written updates, but photos too, so you can see snip-it's of them at play. We provide individualised observations, clearly documenting the ongoing learning that is specifically planned for your children. We link this learning to the Early Years Learning Framework, as well as Theorists which are regularly referenced in Early Childhood Development. You can share and have direct contact with your child's Educators, sending notes directly to them as a way to keep those lines of communication open through out your working day. We encourage you to share with us information about what is going on at home, photos of outings your child has been on and enjoyed, so we can attempt to extend their learning while at Blue Gum, again all being sent down Storypark. We use it as a Community Notice board, so each and every admin user for a family can stay well informed of events, staffing, menus, and updates. All of this can be located, at your fingertips on your mobile phones. If you allow access on your mobile devices, you can even add calendar events from the Storypark event notification, straight to your phone's calendars. This communication tool has never been more important as it has been in the last few months. Blue Gum made the tough decision to limit the access the families could make to the rooms, to best protect the children and Educators. We knew that you would miss stepping foot in the rooms, and we know its not going

to be forever, but while we had to do it, at least with the ease of Storypark you could stay connected to us here at Blue Gum. Finally, if a time comes when you need to leave us here at Blue Gum, all your child's learning and documentation can still be accessed by you after they have left us. And if you do relocate to another service who also use Storypark, you can connect the account so your child's new team of Educators can see the past learning and use it as a tool to create a smooth transition to their centre and continue with your child's further learning. How cool is that!

There is certainly a lot jam-packed in this newsletter and a lot to digest. Even though it is a lot, we feel each piece of information we add, is of value and offers the opportunity for our families to continue to learn and stay informed.

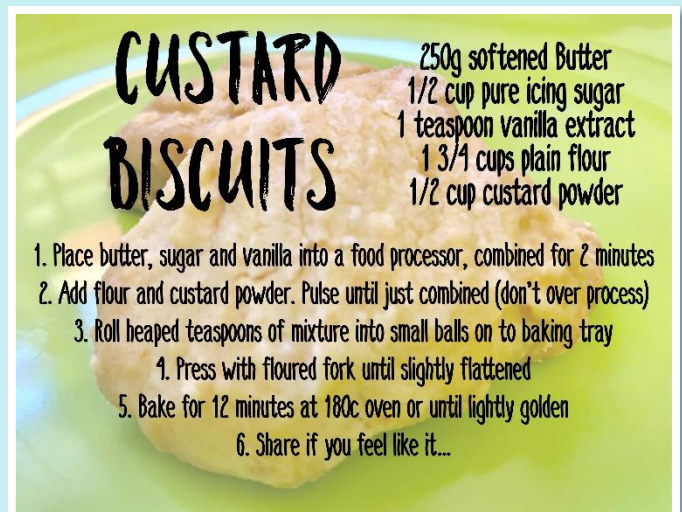
Well, I feel I have said enough this time round. As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you need further support, more information or simply want to say "Hi".

Warm regards,

Rachel



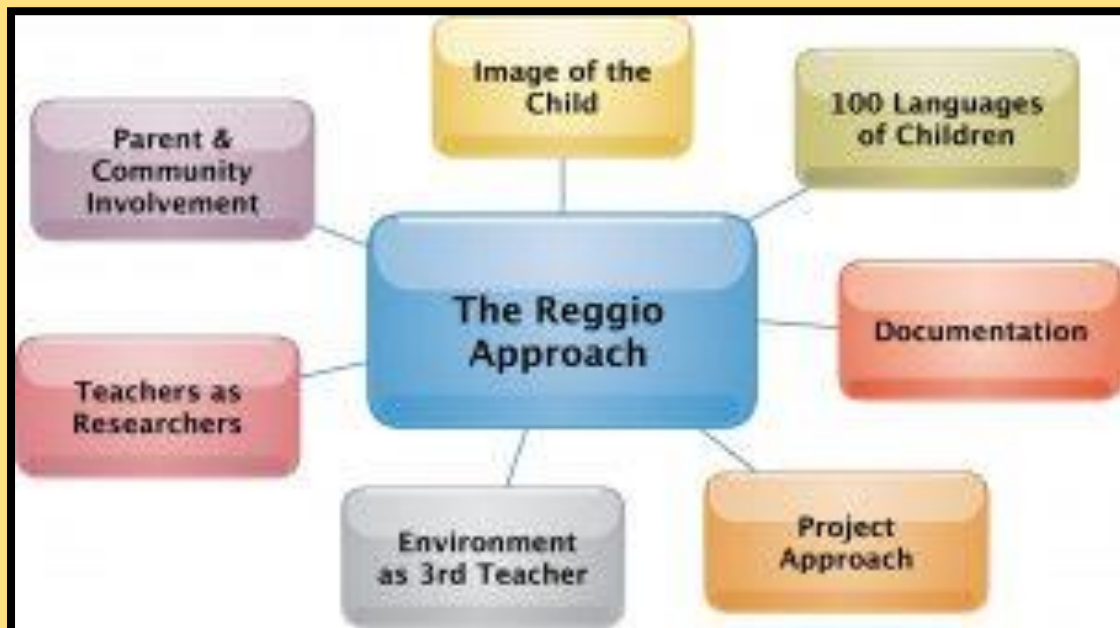
From Our Kitchen



Reggio Emilia - Reggio Emilia Theory

The Reggio Emilia approach is an educational philosophy and pedagogy focused on preschool and primary education. This approach is a student-centred and constructivist self-guided curriculum that uses self-directed, experiential learning in relationship-driven environments. The programme is based on the principles of respect, responsibility and community through exploration, discovery and play. At the core of this philosophy is an assumption that children form their own personality during the early years of development and that they are endowed with "a hundred languages", through which they can express their ideas. The aim of the Reggio approach is to teach children how to use these symbolic languages (e.g. painting, sculpting, drama) in everyday life. This approach was developed after World War II by pedagogist Loris Malaguzzi and parents in the villages around Reggio Emilia, Italy. The name of the approach therefore derives its name from the city.

- **Children are competent, active learners** who engage with activities using a variety of resources (Theorist Reggio Emilia)
- **Creative Arts**, Creative arts provides children with opportunities to use expression through art as a medium for communication (Theorist Reggio Emilia)
- **Natural Environment**, the use of natural materials as a way for children to explore the world that they live it. Giving them a sense of value and respect in their community (Theorist Reggio Emilia)



Get To Know Our Team



Loretta Hayter

Loretta has recently joined the team in Wombats, after 5 years in Joeys.

Loretta works 3 days a week, Monday, Tuesday, and Friday.

Loretta has a passion for working with children and has done many wonderful things during her time at Blue Gum.

She is an asset to the Wombats Team



Kathy McGinty

Kathy has been working at Blue Gum for roughly a year now in our Wombats room, we are thrilled that she will be now making the move to Kangaroos! Kathy is a ray of sunshine, she always has a positive outlook on any situation and often reminds us that a new challenge is simply a new opportunity



Paige Campbell

Paige is returning to the Wombats Room, 2 days a week. She will be working Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Paige has been at Blue Gum 10 years this year and recently just completed her Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care. We are so proud of her achievements and hard work!



Deb Burns

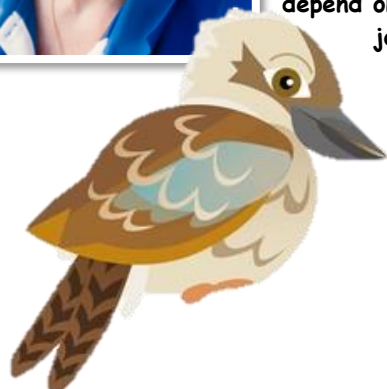
Deb is in the Possums Room fulltime alongside Kat and Rowan.

Deb loves to get creative and has set up some wonderful experiences for the children to investigate! She isn't afraid of a little mess, and we can always depend on her to get in and join the fun!



Hongmei Zhou

Hongmei is a recent addition to our Team, and we are thrilled to have her. She has recently been working in Kangaroos, but will be making the move to Joeys 3 days a week, Monday, Thursday, and Fridays



Hannah Butler

Hannah is the newest member of our Blue Gum Team, and we are thrilled to welcome her to the Wombats room. You may be familiar with Hannah as she has been a student here at Blue Gum and one of our regular relief educators. Welcome Hannah!!

