

## **President's Report 2021**

2021. Covid-19 life - version 2.0!

The Preschool year began like most years, and although some restrictions remained, life felt like it was returning to 'normal' again. Traditional social events such as the welcome picnic were not able to proceed, however we were able to do Class playdates after preschool as an opportunity for families to meet each other. Some classes were able to experience a live show "Pete the Sheep" at Riverside Theatre for a fun excursion, and all classes were able to participate in the Know Waste incursion. Mother's Day celebrations welcomed our mums/carers back into the classroom to spend time with the children, which was wonderful. The first half of the year was a refreshing reminder of what life was like pre-Covid-19. Unfortunately though this was not to last.

Term 3 was a term of lockdown, with The Hills Community Kindergarten remaining open for children of essential workers and those families that still required care for their children. The teachers worked hard to continue to support the children in their learning from home and continued to encourage and develop the sense of community that the preschool so strongly promotes. The children engaged in Zoom classes with the staff, and their peers, enjoying story time, dance and yoga, and sharing their art work and experiences of life in lockdown. Take home packs were prepared for the children including resources such as paint, playdough and other art and craft fun. Delivered via a 'drive thru' system in the preschool car park. It was lovely to not only have activities for the children to complete but an opportunity for them to see staff in person briefly whilst collecting the packs. Despite not being physically at preschool, the children still felt connected to their teachers and friends at the Kindergarten, and both the staff and the children did an amazing job during this challenging time. No-one was expecting that the lockdown would last an entire term! A huge thank you to the staff and families for the way they adapted so seamlessly to all of the changes, both during learning from home and on the return to the pre-school in term 4.

### **Fundraising**

As we are a Community Kindergarten, fundraising is an important aspect of the preschool and one of the tasks managed by the Management Committee. Unfortunately some of our plans for the year had to be changed due to Covid-19, we were however able to raise funds through initiatives such as Picture Plates, Gingerbread House sales and Edutreads – Kindergarten branded apparel. Further detail on our fundraising efforts for 2021 is detailed in the Social Committee Report, but I would like to thank all of those families that supported our fundraising efforts this year.

### **Staff**

The staff at the Hills Community Kindergarten are dedicated, hardworking, nurturing and kind. We are very fortunate to have such wonderful teachers and staff. I would like to thank all staff for their amazing dedication, resilience, and perseverance (Zoom lessons with 20 3-5 years olds is no easy task!). You are not just 'essential workers' in terms of Covid-19, but essential in the development of our children and their preparation for the next chapter of their lives at school.

### **Management Committee**

This year the Management Committee were busy completing a number of policy reviews including the development of the Covid-19 policy. Training was completed through Community Early Learning Australia on governance and compliance and position descriptions within the Committee were reviewed. Work also continued on the preparation of the Enterprise Agreement which is still ongoing. Similar to 2020, the Management Committee were faced with unprecedented decision making due to Covid-19 and Government health advice. Constant changes in information meant quick turn-around of the assessment of current practices. I would like to thank every member of the Committee for their dedication and hard work throughout the year. These are volunteer positions and you all went above

and beyond to ensure work was completed and decisions were made in a timely manner, whilst juggling your own work and family commitments (and home learning!). Your patience and commitment has been outstanding, thank you for volunteering your time:

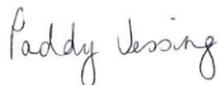
Katherine Krahe – Vice President  
Emma Pearson – Secretary  
Kula Prasenna – Treasurer

Caroline Price – General Committee  
Kylie Swinnerton – General Committee  
Nicole Wang – General Committee

Thank you to Allison McCartney for her constant support and guidance to the Management Committee over what has been another challenging year. Her dedication and hard work in ensuring that The Hills Community Kindergarten is a safe, fun and nurturing environment for our children is second to none.

I wish the 2022 Management Committee all the best for the year ahead.

To all those families whose children are leaving to start Primary School, I wish you all the best for this next chapter in your lives. I hope that you enjoyed your time as a member of our Preschool community, and are confident in knowing your children have had the best preparation for Kindergarten. To all the new families and returning families, I hope 2022 is an amazing year for you all at The Hills Community Kindergarten - your children are in great hands!



Paddy Jessing  
President