A.B. Paterson College

Banjo and Friends

Early Childhood Centre Newsletter

October 2026
Volume 7, Issue 10

Inside this issue

Welcome!	1
Kangaroos	2-3
Lorikeets	4-5
Wombats	6-7
Outside School Hours Care	8-9
Education Leadership	10
What's on in Our Community	11
Support Networks	12
Recipe of the Month	13

Important Dates

- 5 November – Diwali
- 25 November – Lorikeets Graduation Ceremony
- 26 November – Wombats Graduation Ceremony
- 27 November – Kangaroos Graduation Ceremony
- 3 December – Classroom Christmas Parties
- 4 December – Staff Professional Development Day (Service Closed)

A.B. Paterson College
Banjo and Friends
PO Box 460
Helensvale, Qld 4212
1-5 A.B. Paterson Drive
Arundel, Qld 4214
Phone (07) 55 614 155
Fax (07) 5574 5422
Enquiries elc@abpat.qld.edu.au
www.abpat.qld.edu.au
ABN 38 010 996 997

Welcome to our October Newsletter!

For children and their families, the transition to school is a significant milestone in a child's education. By working together, Early Childhood Teachers and Educators, families, and school staff, help children experience a positive transition to school.

At Banjo and Friends, we use a range of strategies to plan for and support each child's transition to school, including:

- sharing information about each child's learning and progress with families throughout their Kindergarten year
- discussing expectations of transitioning to school with children and families
- encouraging children and families to become familiar with their new school environment
- planning and facilitating transitional visits within the new school environment
- collaborating with schools to build shared understandings of effective early years pedagogy and practice that can provide continuity of learning across settings
- collaborating with key stakeholders to value diverse perspectives and capabilities and promote familiar ways of knowing, being and doing as children move into school
- recognising individual needs and providing tailored support for children if required.

Transition Statements play a key role in the sharing of information between early education and care services, families and schools. Transition Statements help families and schools to understand the child's learning, strengths and interests, to successfully plan and prepare for each child to experience a positive start to school.

Transition Statements are written from a strengths-based perspective to provide a point-in-time summary of each child's knowledge, skills and dispositions for learning across the five learning and development areas, and to support transition and continuity of learning into school. Children and families have had the opportunity to contribute to their Transition Statement, and in the coming weeks, each family will receive their child's individualised Transition Statement along with Consent Form 2, which will allow us to share each child's Transition Statement with the child's school.

Tegan Carroll
Banjo and Friends Centre Manager

Kangaroos Classroom

As we head into our final term, our Kangaroos children are getting ready for an exciting new chapter as they prepare to start Prep next year. Although the transition to school is becoming more of a focus now, the children have been building important school-readiness skills all year through their everyday routines, play, relationships and learning experiences.

When we think about school readiness, it is about so much more than knowing letters and numbers. We want our children to feel confident, become more independent, build friendships, manage their feelings and feel comfortable having a go at new things. These everyday skills will help them feel ready to take on new experiences and settle into their school environment.

A big part of our day in Kangaroos is following familiar routines and expectations. From arriving in the morning and putting belongings away to joining group time, moving between activities, eating, packing away and getting ready to go home, children have many little opportunities to practise the skills they will use at school.

While these routines might seem simple, they play an important role in helping children feel safe and settled. Knowing what comes next helps them feel more confident, while repeated practice gives them the chance to do more things for themselves. Gradually, children learn to manage their belongings, follow familiar steps, move between activities and take greater responsibility for their day.

This connects with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF V2.0), which encourages children to develop independence, confidence and a strong sense of identity. As educational theorist Lev Vygotsky recognised, children learn through relationships and the guidance of others. When we model a routine, offer a gentle reminder or help a child work through a task before letting them try independently, we are giving them the support they need to build these skills over time.

Alongside our daily routines, we spend lots of time helping children understand how we keep ourselves and our friends safe and how we show respect for one another. We practise listening when others are speaking, using gentle hands and kind words, respecting personal space, taking turns, waiting, sharing and making thoughtful choices.

Of course, these skills do not develop overnight! Children are still learning how to manage big feelings, cope when things do not go their way, and work through disagreements with friends.

Kangaroos Classroom

These moments give us valuable opportunities to guide them, help them find the words to express themselves, and encourage them to think about how others might feel.

The EYLF highlights the importance of children developing a sense of belonging and learning to contribute to their community. Through these everyday interactions, our children are discovering that they are an important part of a group, that their friends have feelings and needs too, and that we all have a role in making our environment a happy and safe place to learn. These experiences will help them build new friendships and become part of their school community.

We are so proud of how much our Kangaroos children have grown throughout the year. Each child is on their own journey, and school readiness will look a little different for everyone. We do not expect every child to be able to do everything independently before starting Prep. What matters most is that they are developing the confidence to try, the ability to ask for help, the skills to build relationships and a growing understanding of the routines and expectations around them.

These skills are built in the little moments that happen every day: putting a bag away, listening to a friend, waiting for a turn, trying again after something feels difficult or proudly completing a task independently. Over time, these small moments add to meaningful growth.

Families can support these skills through simple everyday routines too. Give your child opportunities to do things for themselves, such as putting their shoes on, managing their belongings, opening their lunch box and drink bottle, packing away toys, helping with small jobs and making simple choices.

You can also practise taking turns, waiting, following simple instructions, respecting personal space and talking about feelings. When something is difficult, try giving your child some time to “have a go” before stepping in to help.

These everyday moments may seem small, but they are helping children develop the independence, confidence and resilience they will need as they take their next big step into school.

Jingjing Zhang
Kangaroos Early Childhood Teacher

Lorikeets Classroom

As we move further into Term 4, our Lorikeets are getting closer and closer to an exciting milestone - Kindergarten Graduation and their transition to Prep! While we are busy learning letters, numbers, shapes, sounds and developing early literacy and numeracy skills, we are also placing a strong focus on something just as important: independence and self-help skills.

Preparing children for Prep is about much more than academic learning. It is about helping children develop the confidence to say, "I can have a go!", the persistence to keep trying when something is tricky, and the confidence to ask for help when they need it. The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.

Throughout Term 4, we have been intentionally creating opportunities for the children to practise everyday skills in meaningful and achievable ways. We have been encouraging children to put on and take off their shoes, manage their belongings, practising opening lunchboxes and their drink bottles, put on jumpers, practise buttons and zips, wash and dry their hands, pack away resources and take responsibility for their own personal items.

Everyday self-help tasks provide children with opportunities to develop much more than practical skills. When a child learns to button their shirt, open their lunchbox or put on their shoes, they are also developing fine-motor strength and coordination, hand-eye coordination, problem-solving skills, concentration and attention, persistence and resilience, confidence and self-esteem, decision-making and independence, responsibility for personal belongings, self-regulation, patience and a sense of competence and agency.

Research and early childhood practice consistently recognise that children learn best when they are actively involved in doing things for themselves. Allowing children time to attempt everyday tasks gives them valuable opportunities to practise, make mistakes, adjust their approach and experience the satisfaction of achieving something independently.

One of our recent experiences involved practising with Prep uniform shirts. The children were encouraged to put on the shirt and attempt to fasten the buttons independently. We added a floor-length mirror so the children could see themselves while completing each step. There were certainly some tricky moments! Some children commented that the buttons were difficult, while others asked educators for assistance. However, rather than completing the task for them, we provided encouragement, prompts and support before allowing the children to have another go. The excitement and pride shown when a child successfully connected a button was wonderful to see. These moments may seem small, but they represent important steps towards independence and confidence.

Lorikeets Classroom

We have also been developing independence through our Lunchbox Independence Station, where children practise opening and closing different containers, drink bottles and lunchboxes. This can be a surprisingly challenging task for young children! Different clips, lids and zips require different hand movements and levels of strength. Through repeated practice, children develop the coordination and problem-solving skills needed to manage their own belongings more confidently.

We encourage children to: - “Have a go first, then ask for help if you need it.” This simple approach teaches children that asking for help is not a failure - it is another important independence skill.

Small everyday tasks are powerful learning opportunities. When children practise dressing, pouring, packing, opening containers and caring for their belongings, they are strengthening the same skills they will use throughout their school day. For example: -

- Putting on shoes - coordination, sequencing and persistence
- Packing a bag - organisation and responsibility
- Opening a lunchbox - fine-motor strength and problem-solving
- Doing up buttons - hand-eye coordination and concentration
- Pouring a drink - control, coordination and independence
- Packing away - responsibility and awareness of others
- Washing hands - self-care and following routines

Families can make a wonderful difference by providing opportunities for children to practise these skills at home. We understand that sometimes it is much quicker for an adult to do something for a child, particularly when everyone is rushing in the morning! However, allowing a little extra time for children to have a go can make a big difference to their confidence. You might like to encourage your child to: -

- Dress themselves, including buttons, zips and shoes.
- Open and close a lunchbox, container and drink bottle.
- Pack their bag for Pre-Prep.
- Carry and look after their own belongings.
- Put dirty clothes in the laundry basket.
- Help set or clear the table.
- Pour their own water using a small jug.
- Help prepare simple foods.
- Pack away toys and resources after play.
- Ask for help when something is genuinely too difficult.

Most importantly, celebrate the effort rather than expecting perfection. Saying, “You kept trying even when it was tricky!” or “You worked that out yourself!” helps children recognise their own learning and builds a positive attitude towards challenges.

As educators, we want our Lorikeets to leave Pre-Prep feeling capable, confident and ready to embrace their next adventure. We know that children will not always get things right the first time - and that is perfectly okay!

Sometimes the most valuable learning happens when something doesn't work. We can encourage children to pause, try another way, ask for help, take a breath and try again. These experiences build the resilience, self-regulation and confidence that children will carry with them into Prep and beyond.

“I can try. I can ask for help. I can keep going. I can do it!”

Kristy Chapman
Lorikeets Early Childhood Teacher

Wombats Classroom

As we approach the latter part of the year together, I reflect on the year we have had thus far and look ahead to what the future will bring. For many children, their journey will lead to Prep next year.

One of my passions in teaching is developing children's social and emotional skills so they can exist more harmoniously with their peers, teachers, siblings, and families. Teaching these skills is a significant part of our year together. I teach both intentionally and in the moment as situations arise. I catch children being kind to their friends. I pause, notice, and let them know what I saw. When disagreements happen, I take the time to talk with the children involved, brainstorm solutions together, and teach negotiation skills when turn taking and sharing are not going as planned.

Ultimately, my goal is for children to develop strong friendship skills, resilience when things do not go their way, respect for others, and the ability to follow directions and work cooperatively within a group.

Research consistently shows that social and emotional competence is one of the strongest predictors of a successful transition to school. The Queensland Department of Education highlights that positive transitions are supported when children develop a sense of belonging, confidence, wellbeing, and positive relationships.

Similarly, both the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guideline (QKLG) and the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) recognise identity, wellbeing, connectedness, resilience, empathy, and respectful relationships as essential foundations for future learning and success at school.

One of my favourite quotes comes from renowned early childhood theorist Urie Bronfenbrenner, who said: *"Every child needs at least one adult who is irrationally crazy about them."* This quote reminds us that strong, supportive relationships help children feel safe, valued, and confident enough to take on new challenges. As children prepare for Prep, knowing they have caring adults beside them makes a tremendous difference.

Families can support social and emotional development at home by:

- Encouraging children to talk about their feelings and helping them name emotions.
- Supporting children to solve simple problems before stepping in.

Wombats Classroom

- Practicing turn taking, sharing, and patience during games and family activities.
- Building independence through everyday tasks such as packing bags, dressing themselves, and managing belongings.
- Reading stories and discussing characters' feelings, choices, and friendships.
- Maintaining predictable routines that help children feel secure and confident.

As the year progresses, I continue to see the Wombats grow in confidence, kindness, resilience, and independence. These skills will support them not only in their transition to Prep, but throughout their lives.

Miia Summersfield
Wombats Early Childhood Teacher

Outside School Hours Care

What an amazing Vacation Care program we have shared together! Over the holidays, OSHC was buzzing with excitement as children participated in a wide range of engaging activities, incursions, creative experiences and special event days. It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces each day as children connected with friends, explored new interests and created lasting memories.

One of the highlights of our program was the range of exciting incursions that offered learning experiences. The Lab Kids Gross Science Incursion was a huge hit, with children becoming young scientists as they explored fascinating experiments, made predictions and discovered the wonders of science through hands-on activities. The children were equally enthusiastic during our Zootopia Way Creative Dance Incursion, where they moved, danced and expressed themselves through fun and energetic routines. Our My Athletix Incursion encouraged children to stay active while developing teamwork, coordination and confidence through a variety of physical challenges and games. We also enjoyed travelling the world with the Wandering Banana Around the World Incursion, where the children learned fun facts about different countries and cultures while participating in interactive activities.

Messy Day remains one of the most requested activities, giving the children opportunities to explore, create and experiment without worrying about getting messy. From colourful creations to sensory experiences, the children embraced every moment. Crazy Hair Day was another memorable occasion, with children arriving in style showcasing their wild and wonderful hairstyles. Those who came with regular hair were just as excited to create their own crazy looks once they arrived at OSHC.

Children also enjoyed getting creative in the kitchen during our Choc Ball Cooking Activity. Measuring ingredients, mixing, rolling and decorating their delicious treats was a wonderful hands-on experience that combined learning with a tasty reward. Many children proudly shared their creations with their family.

The final day of Vacation Care was the perfect way to finish an action-packed program. We headed to the Elderslie Theatre for our special Movie Day, where they enjoyed the unique cinema experience while relaxing with friends.

Outside School Hours Care

The theatre seating and large screen made the experience extra special and provided a wonderful opportunity to reflect on all the fun we had enjoyed throughout the holidays.

Creativity was another strong focus throughout our program. Children spent time participating in a wide variety of arts and crafts activities, expressing their ideas through painting, drawing, collage, construction and design projects. Popular favourites such as Hama Beads and Loom Bands kept many of the children engaged for extended periods as they carefully designed colourful creations to take home.

Our Dress Up Day was a fantastic celebration of children's hopes and aspirations and was suggested by the children. Inspired by the theme of "Little People, Big Dreams," the children came dressed as who they would like to be when they grow up. It was wonderful to hear their ambitions as they confidently shared stories about their future goals with their peers and educators.

While the activities and incursions were certainly highlights, some of the most valuable experiences occurred through the connections children made with one another. Throughout the program we saw friendships grow, new children welcomed into groups, and wonderful examples of cooperation, kindness and inclusion. Whether children were working together on a craft project, encouraging one another during active games, sharing laughs during incursions or simply spending time talking with friends, these social connections helped create a strong sense of belonging within our OSHC community.

We would like to thank all of our families for their ongoing support throughout Vacation Care.

Bec Rogers
OSHC Coordinator

Educational Leadership

We are continually reflecting on our practices to ensure they align with our values of sustainability, quality education and children's agency. Over recent months, we have been taking intentional steps to reduce the use of paper-based templates throughout our classrooms and daily operations.

One of the most noticeable changes has been our move away from template-based colouring sheets, tracing activities and structured craft tasks. Instead, children are being offered a wider range of open-ended materials and creative experiences that encourage imagination, problem-solving and self-expression. Loose parts, natural resources, recycled materials, paint, collage items and construction materials provide children with endless possibilities to create, explore and represent their ideas in meaningful ways.

By moving away from predetermined outcomes, we are placing greater value on the creative process rather than the finished product. This approach supports children's agency by allowing them to make decisions, take ownership of their learning and express their unique ideas and perspectives. No two creations need to look the same because each reflects the individual child behind it.

Our commitment to sustainability extends beyond creative experiences. We have also been reviewing the documentation and administrative processes used throughout the service. Where possible, paper-based reports and records, including wellbeing and medical documentation, are being transitioned to digital platforms. This not only reduces paper consumption but also allows for more efficient communication, improved accessibility and secure record keeping for families and educators alike.

These changes are helping us create a more environmentally responsible Service while ensuring educators spend less time managing paperwork and more time engaging with children. Every sheet of paper saved contributes to a more sustainable future, and every moment gained allows educators to focus on what matters most: building relationships, supporting learning and responding to children's interests.

This journey is ongoing, and we will continue to explore other ways technology can support our sustainability goals. As we review current practices, we will look for additional opportunities to move documentation, communications and administrative processes online where appropriate. By embracing digital solutions, we can further reduce our environmental footprint while maintaining high-quality systems that support children, families and educators.

As we continue this journey, we remain committed to creating learning environments that respect both the voices of children and the world they will inherit. Through thoughtful, sustainable practices and a focus on children's agency, we are helping to foster capable, creative and environmentally conscious learners.

Tegan Findlay
Educational Leader

Mayor's Christmas Carols

City of Gold Coast's Mayor's Christmas Carols returns for its 15th year, bringing festive magic to HOTA, Home of the Arts. Save the date to enjoy two sparkling nights of live music, family fun, and Christmas cheer.

Leading this year's stellar line-up is ARIA Award-winning singer Samantha Jade, joined by powerhouse DJ Havana Brown!

There's plenty to delight the whole family, with performances from The Royal Navy Band Queensland, Warner Bros. Movie World's Looney Tunes Christmas Show and, of course, a special visit from Santa himself.

For ticket information, please click here!

Getting there: Consider using public transport or active travel. Plan your trip with Translink's journey planner. Parking may be limited. For metered parking, use the EasyPark app to start, end, and extend your parking direct from your phone to avoid fines. For more information visit City of Gold Coast's Parking page.

Price: Free

When: Saturday 28 November and Sunday 29 November, from 6:00pm to 8:30pm

Where: HOTA Outdoor Stage and Parklands, 135 Bundall Road, Surfers Paradise, 4217

Little Tummies, Big Energy

As the weather warms up and we welcome the joy of spring and summer, it's the perfect time to think about fresh, colourful and healthy foods. Next year, your children will begin bringing their own lunch to prep, and we'd love to share some simple tips to make this transition fun and nourishing.

Spring and summer bring so many vibrant fruits and vegetables, such as juicy watermelon, crisp cucumbers, sweet cherry tomatoes, berries, and stone fruit like peaches and nectarines. These make perfect, bite-sized additions to your lunchbox. Not only do they look inviting, but their high-water content also helps keep children hydrated during warmer days.

Water is the best drink for growing bodies, especially in the heat. Please remember to pack a water bottle each day. Drinks like fruit juice or soft drinks are high in sugar and not recommended for everyday use.

A balanced and healthy diet includes:

- Fruits and vegetables – seasonal and colourful for maximum appeal
- Grains – wholegrain sandwiches, wraps, or leftover pasta salad
- Protein foods – lean meats, eggs, beans or lentils for lasting energy
- Dairy or alternatives – cheese cubes or yoghurt

Why not make picnic basket prep a fun family activity? Try preparing a tray of cut veggies or baking some mini savoury muffins together. Children love to feel involved, and it helps build healthy food habits. It will spark conversations with them and help them begin to understand the importance of balance and variety in their meals.

- Pack it the night before and keep it in the fridge overnight.
- Use insulated bags with ice packs to keep food safe on hot days.
- Keep choices simple and easy for little hands to manage, bite-sized fruits, veggie sticks, or wraps cut in half.

As we enjoy longer days and brighter skies, let's celebrate this new season with nourishing foods that help our children grow, learn, and play. Thank you for supporting your child's journey towards independence with their well-being decisions. Small steps now will make a big difference next year.

Source: Raising Children Network. Packing healthy lunches for children; Healthy lunch box ideas for children. Retrieved from raisingchildren.net.au

Egg-Free Zucchini Slice

Ingredients

- 4 rashers bacon
- 1 onion
- 1 cup self-raising flour
- 2 zucchinis
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup rice milk

Method

1. Prepare a baking tray with spray oil.
2. In a bowl grate the zucchinis, add flour, bacon, and onion, and mix well.
3. Add rice milk (any milk can be used). Mix well until you get a similar consistency to a muffin batter.
4. Pour into a baking tray.
5. Place tray into oven at 180 degrees for approximately 50 minutes – until brown, not soft.