Dear Milford Lodge Families & Friends,

Welcome to all of our new children, families & team! We have enjoyed a lovely first few weeks, with many new children straight into exploring everything that Milford Lodge has to offer – from kitchen hands through to pony rides. It is wonderful to have so many confident little people join us.

We have an exciting term ahead, with the much-anticipated opening of our new kitchen & dining room! This building will be a wonderful addition to our licensed space, as our family mealtimes are such a large part of our history and philosophy. It will also be very exciting to continue to offer our various kitchen hands experiences within this space.

Looking forward to an awesome 2020!

Happy Reading...

x Team Milford

Team Milford – 2020

Property Owner: Margaretha Prendergast
Approved Provider: Justin & Molly Stewart (Jumofini Pty Ltd)

Nominated Supervisor / Responsible Person: Molly Stewart
Educational Leader / Responsible Person: Nancy Andrews

Avocado Cottage:
Starr Johnson
Kristin Tyson
Karen Bird

Wandiny:
Sharon Knight
Marianne Tiffney
Tyleia Marsay
Ann Wilkins

Library:
Mary Leonardo
Kristen Zimmerlie
Susan Forrest
Josiah Walker

School House:
Sharna Ward
Louise Stickland
Bec Draggett
Madisyn Hill

Art Shed:
Andrea Dreschler
Catrina Hayes
Tiffany Hawke
Caitie Taylor-Hayes

Kitchen:
Larisa McIntyre
Steven Tribe

Relief Team:
Jayne Hurd
Alison Stevenson
Elya Curtis
Olivia Caddy
Isabella Turner

School Based Trainees:
Pippa Draggett
Chloe Molkentin
Emily Noyes
Amy Frost
Leah Urban
Ebony Townsend

Team News

Pristine will be away on Maternity Leave for the duration of this year. We wish her and Oliver all the very best on their newest adventure: parenthood!

Casey has decided to take some time off to go home to South Africa, and when she returns will be looking to move into teaching in Primary School.

Migi has also moved home to Korea for a time, before returning to focus on her music.

Molly Bale has decided to pursue a career in nursing.

We would like to thank Ravena for the past 4 years in our kitchen. Ravena has in fact hung up her chef's hat and will be working in a different field.

We wish all of them all the very best on their next adventure.

Steve and his family have returned from their adventure in the Northern Territory – Steve is very excited to be returning to Milford Lodge, which just so happens to be one of the most fun places to work on earth! 😊

We would like to welcome Josiah to the Library this year. Josiah and his family have just moved from Sydney for a 'sea change' – Josiah plays guitar and piano, and will be a wonderful addition to our music experiences.

Andrea has returned to start this year in our Art Shed – and is absolutely buzzing with ideas to implement within our garage space this term. She is very excited about all thing's woodwork, tinkering – and basically everything that we want our garage to host.

Caitie has also joined the Art Shed team, and has already very calmly and quietly built some lovely relationships with the children in this space.

Madi completed her traineeship with us last year, and has since gained experience in a few other services. She was absolutely over the moon to re-join the team in 2020 in the School House, alongside Sharna, Louise & Bec.

Kristin has joined the Avocado Cottage and brings decades of experience and knowledge and adores being with the babies.

We love that we always have a fabulous blend of long-term employees and also new employees who bring new ideas and offer views with fresh eyes.

Did you know that later this year we will be celebrating 10 years for Karen!

A few team statistics:

- We have 13 employees who have been at Milford Lodge for over 5 years, many of whom are fast approaching ten years!
- Apart from the family, our longest employed team member is 13½ years
- Our oldest team member is 65, and our youngest is 15
- Between us we have approximately 380 years of experience

Educational Program & Practice in 2020

By Nancy Andrews

Every teacher, every caregiver, holds in his or her hands the power to shape a child's entire future

~ Pam Schiller

As we have many new families join us at this time of year, we usually share an outline of our spaces and Educational Program and Practice.

We are very proud of our back-to-back Excellent rating first awarded in June 2016 and again in May 2019. The Excellent rating is the highest rating an education and care service can achieve under the National Quality Framework.

The awarding of the Excellent rating by ACECQA indicates that services are embracing continuous quality improvement and practice, and are evolving over time to improve outcomes for children and families at the highest level. It also recognizes providers who are champions of quality improvement, innovative leaders beyond the service, and are raising the bar on quality education and care for Australian children. There are over 17,000 Early Childhood services in Australia and less than 18 had been awarded this back-to-back accolade.

The beginning of each year is when we generally have a transition to different rooms for some children and staff. This time coincides with the Kindergarten children moving on to prep. Some families may only be familiar with the traditional concept of children ''moving up'' to different rooms at the beginning of each year based on their date of birth. For the past 5 years we have allocated "Home Rooms" to children based on where the child chooses to spend the majority of their time whilst here and we also try to place siblings in the same room unless one happens to be in the Avocado Cottage or enrolled in the kindergarten program. It is not unusual for some children and staff to stay in a particular room for up to two years either so please don't be concerned that your child ''wasn't ready '' if they are staying in the same room this year. There is evidence-based research surrounding the benefits of being with the same educator for numerous years and our whole team has truly embraced this practice and we delight in seeing first hand on a daily basis the improved outcomes for children this practice brings.

Our aim is after consulting with families and initially allocating your child a ''homeroom'' where they place their belongings each morning, children will be assisted to settle in and form relationships with the 4 staff allocated to each of these rooms as well as the other children of course. These carers will get to know your child extremely well and will share information on a daily basis with you regarding their sleep, appetite, friendships or which experiences they have joined in with on a particular day. We anticipate that after a few weeks a small number of children may gravitate to other rooms based on their interests and friendships. If this happens we do of course offer flexibility for homerooms to be changed. Children will be introduced to their ''primary caregiver/key person'' during their orientation visits and a gradual introduction helps to support their emotional security.

All children are supported to pursue their own passions and interests, to play, explore, invent, question and communicate in productive collaboration with others in an environment designed to act as the '3rd teacher' (Ceppi & Zini 1998)

At the start of each year we try to ensure that at least one carer from each room transitions to the next room with the children. We were able to facilitate this for the majority of children this year.

Room Names

Avocado Cottage: this beautiful room is the homeroom of our youngest babies from 6 weeks of age. It is now very normal to have older siblings and ''helpers'' spend time in this room, which is always lovely to observe. There is no upper age limit when babies transition to other rooms, consideration is given to their developmental needs as well as gaining an insight into which space they are drawn to when they grow in confidence to explore and connect with others throughout the day.

School House: This room is suited to older infants from 15months that generally only have one daily sleep. As with every child, sleep and rest will be offered whenever a child requires one. Again, there is no upper age limit. This room has a beautiful open veranda area dedicated to art and crafts. You will find an abundance of dramatic play materials including a home corner, dress ups as well as plenty of baby dolls & teddy bears in this space.

Wandiny: Home to our large collection of wooden blocks as well as many construction /manipulative resources. This room tends to be the room that we place siblings together in if they are close in age. We have seen the benefits for families having just the one room to drop bags off and communicate with staff.
This is a mixed age room.

Art Shed: Children have free access to a large assortment of art and craft materials/clay/make your own play-dough station/jewellery making/felting etc. along with an endless supply of recycled materials to name but a few of the creative experiences on offer in this space.
This again is a mixed age room.

Library: Our Queensland Government funded Kindergarten program. This beautiful environment is our newest room having only opened in January 2017. The main aspect about delivering a Kindergarten program is that children in the year prior to prep (who will turn 4 by June 30) have access to a bachelor-qualified teacher for a minimum of 15 hours a week.

Milford Lodge is very fortunate to now have 4 Early Childhood Teachers employed in various roles throughout the service.

The library is a quiet space for reading, puzzles and board games.

We have a large collection of both fiction and non-fiction books including books in different languages. It is the perfect location for families to enjoy sharing a book at the beginning of each day.

This room hosts a large collection of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) resources also, including a light box, overhead projector, an ever-growing collection of magna-tiles, as well as our new range of STEM wooden building blocks.

Nearby is our **Garage** - previously used by Molly's dad Harry, this space holds very special memories of a man who would spend hours in here building or repairing play equipment for Milford for many years. This undercover area has a large collection of wooden blocks, made for us by The Men's Shed in Buderim, an abundance of loose parts as well as our woodwork and tinkering station.

The Ballroom: this stunning space is primarily used for daily music, singing and dancing experiences. Our piano is the latest addition to this space which also hosts beautiful handmade African drums, a marimba as well as a wide variety of musical instruments. Children from the Art Shed and Library use this room on a daily basis to rest and sleep in also.

The Dining Room: The very heart of Milford Lodge! Nobody can resist walking through this space of a morning attracted by the wafting aroma of our daily meals and home baking. Our chefs Larisa and Steve are more than happy to support families with their child's individual dietary needs including intolerances and allergies. We encourage you to allocate time to chat with the chefs to ensure your child's dietary needs are met.

Please remember to email any dietary requirements for our records as well as sharing these with the educators in your child's room.

The dining room is used for children's baking experiences as well as our very popular ''Kitchen Hands ''. This experience has grown from a child simply helping the chef by peeling stickers off a box of oranges to a daily routine of prepping the vegetables for lunch i.e. chopping mushrooms, husking sweet corn, top and tailing beans etc. to making the morning tea sandwiches/pancakes and delicious sushi for the whole service on a weekly basis.

Our Animals: Interactions with animals are an integral part of our Educational Program and Practice. Providing young children not just with opportunities to see and be near animals, but by giving them the chance to be actively involved in caring for animals is vitally important. I think the children who attend Milford Lodge today will hold precious memories of pony rides on Macca, collecting the eggs from the chickens each morning as well as playful times with Cocoa our guinea pig, the beautiful birds in the aviary and last but not least Lola – Molly's beautiful Boxer dog who comes for a play from time to time. A small group of children brought Lola for a walk around the neighbourhood last year and we had lovely comments from parents thanking Molly for allowing their children to do such ''normal '' things whilst attending day care. It is unique opportunities like this that make Milford Lodge such a special place. Families are welcome to take Cocoa home for the holiday periods. Max and Georgia looked after him over Christmas and thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity. Vera & Alfred were very eager to care for Cocoa over the Australia Day long weekend. Let Molly or Nancy know if you like to care for Cocoa sometime this year.

Documentation:

We use Australian Learning Tracks framework to record our intentional teaching plans. We love writing Individual and group learning stories as well as documenting in project books where children's voices and ideas are recorded and educators document their plans to scaffold children's learning.

Children in Avocado Cottage & School House will continue to have an A4 display "Magical Moments" folder capturing their wow moments and developmental milestones.

Learning stories will be emailed home as they occur for example a small group outing or an experience your child has participated in on a particular day. Each room will keep a record of Learning Stories sent to families so please let us know if you are not receiving anything so we can follow it up. Can we suggest that you create a folder on your computer to save all the documentation relating to your child's year at Milford Lodge? At the end of the year you could always print this out if you wish for those who like a tangible record of their child's year. I really feel that this approach suits Milford Lodge's ethos of spending more quality time with children as opposed to sitting in a back office

typing on a computer about them and decorating a scrap book of their artwork gathered over the year.
All rooms will choose a selection of photos taken over the week to compile a weekly news email, which will be forwarded to families on a Friday afternoon making visible the fun and learning that has occurred across the week.

Educators will collect and gather information on individual children. All educators in the service will be encouraged to contribute to this ensuring we gather multiple perspectives of your child. At the end of each term educators from each room will be responsible for putting together an individual summative assessment ensuring that everything that has been collected is analyzed in relation to the Learning Outcomes in the Early Years Learning Framework. Examples of information gathered will be jottings, photos, anecdotal observations, learning stories, samples of your child's work and information shared by the child's family.
Molly came up with the wonderful idea a couple of years ago of having a black board outside with planned experiences on offer on a daily basis. Families are encouraged to read the board with their child and perhaps let someone know at drop off time which experiences their child would like to participate in. Educators will discuss with children over morning tea the different experiences on offer on that particular day and support them to try different things.
Although we ensure we verbally communicate to families on a daily basis and offer 1:1 private conversation whenever needed we would like to dedicate school holidays to setting aside time for you to come in and meet with your child's carers to discuss your child's learning and development. Last year we printed a roster for parents to choose a suitable time slot for them to have this conversation so we will continue to implement this practice.
You may wish to make a note in your diary that for Term 1 week beginning 6th April will be when we offer these 1:1 conversation. I am also always available for a chat to discuss any questions you may have regarding our Educational Program and Practice. I am here Tuesday – Friday so please feel free to email me to arrange a suitable time.

Planned Spaces: Another exciting project that our team is embarking on this year is to plan and document for particular spaces throughout Milford Lodge that we felt were not given the focused attention that these spaces were deserving of. Our plan is to have two team members from different parts of the service collaborate on chosen areas which they will then document what the children are engaging in whilst in these spaces and will then compile a planning and reflection document at the end of each term that we will share with families. Some of these areas include: The Garage, the Lagoon/Creek Bed, Back Sandpit area behind the Wandiny room, The Ballroom, the Dining Room and Art Shed.
Snippets of what occurs in these spaces are already shared in the Weekly News that each room shares but we think we are ready to delve deeper in the Wonderings and Possibilities of these amazing spaces. We would LOVE some family input into any of

these areas that you may have an interest in whether this is just sharing ideas or coming in to spend time with us on a regular basis. We are aware we have many bi lingual families this year so one idea would be to come in and read a story to a small group. We also have many yoga teachers so maybe a yoga session in the morning or afternoon might be something you would be happy to share? You may love gardening and be willing to help us maintain our beautiful gardens? If you are musical why not spend time in our beautiful Ballroom? There are so many possibilities and we really hope you consider how you can join us on this new exciting venture.

Milford Lodge Outside School Hours Care

OSHC can be utilised in many ways by all families with **school** aged children, some parents may need to use our services every day because of work commitments, others may need to use our service once in a while for an appointment that they just can't fit in during **school** time or in an emergency situation e.g. car breaking down and they cannot get to **school** to collect their child/ren.

Our daily fees are: Mornings 7.30am – 8.50am -$10
Afternoons 3.00pm -5.30pm -$20

Child Care Subsidy can be applied for those families eligible.

School Aged Children are also welcome to join us for full days during the school holidays where we have vacancies. Please let us know with advance notice what days you are looking for during the holidays.

Our latest outings to Cotton Tree on the local bus have been amazing.

Professional Development

This term has been another busy few months for educators participating in professional development mainly taking place in the evenings or at weekends.

October ~ November ~ December (2019)

- Educational Leaders Network meeting at St Andrews School
- Yarnin' Up on Country with Aunty Beverly Hand & Sally Lawrence
- Narragunnawali Reconciliation Forum Sunshine Coast
- Early Childhood Education & Care Network Session-Unpacking the AEDC Local Community Data.
- TAFE Mooloolaba Industry Breakfast Meeting
- Milford Lodge hosted a Study Tour for Niki Buchan Natural Learning (30 pax)
- USC Twilight Seminar: Getting Students off the Stress Freeway
- How to take charge of feeling overwhelmed as an educator-Green Beginnings
- Local launch of Our Land Our Stories with Sally Lawrence at Maroochy Botanical gardens
- Mandatory Reporting- NAPCAN - Coolum Surf Club

January ~ February ~ March

- An Introduction to Steiner Education -USC
- Emotional Regulation Information session-Bush Kids
- Talk, Read, Sing, Play Early Literacy Conference at USC Keynote speaker: Nathan Wallis
- The Caloundra Early Years Early Years Educators' Coalition Conference-Meridan State college
- Guest Speaking at TAFE sharing our Educational Program & Practice
- Educational Leaders Network Meeting
- Mandatory Reporting Training at Milford Lodge

Yarnin' Up on Country

With thanks to Sally Lawrence and Aunty Beverly Hand for a wonderful day ☺

Thanks to Alexandra Headlands Surf Life Saving Club for loaning us one of their IRBs to bring Santa to Milford Lodge, and to Santa himself!

We enjoyed a visit from local MP Brent Mickleburg to collect the wonderful donations from our families for the annual Christmas Charity Appeal held by his office. (LEFT)

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We are thoroughly enjoying the regular visits from our friends from Bromilow Aged Care (BELOW).

SAFETY NOTICES

CAR PARK: Please remember that our car park is ONE WAY. At times we see the odd car rush into the out driveway simply because they are running late, or to beat a car coming the other way. We also see far too many cars driving through the car park at an unacceptable speed. This is unfathomable, given the worst-case scenario. SLOW DOWN!

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BIKES / SCOOTERS: As a team, we have decided Milford Lodge wold do well to have a small break from the bikes and scooters. The start of the year can be very busy, with new children sometimes requiring calmer spaces – this can be difficult to offer when our tracks have been designed for children to ride everywhere. We ask that families keep their child's bikes and scooters at home for February, after which we will slowly reintroduce them, and also incorporate the car park (between 9am and 3pm).

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SUN SAFETY: Please ensure that your child has a broad brimmed (bucket style) hat each day for outdoor play, as well as sunscreen applied prior to care. We are more than happy to apply sunscreen for you, however only if we are made aware that they have not yet had any applied. We will of course reapply sunscreen throughout the day.

This is the same for insect repellent. Due to our beautiful big trees and subtropical location, these warmer months can bring large population of mosquitoes. If you find that your child is more susceptible to bites, please do feel free to provide a more tropical strength brand – named, and hand to one of their key educators.

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FOOD: Just a reminder not to bring any food into Milford Lodge, apart from donations of fresh fruit and vegetables of course! (We always love these!) We will continue to offer our families FREE goodies from the Goomeri Bakery – please remember that these are NOT to be consumed at Milford Lodge, they are for taking home only.

We do have children enrolled at Milford Lodge with life threatening medical conditions, some of which are food related.

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MEDICATIONS: If your child requires medication during their day with us, please ensure that it has been prescribed, and that you hand it directly to the Responsible Person who will assist you to complete the required documentation.

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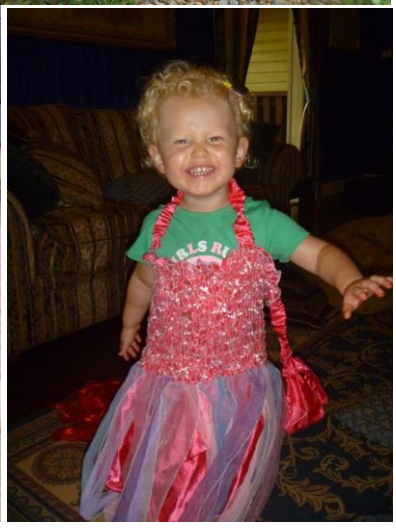
EMERGENCY DRILLS: Lastly, we do practise regular emergency drills. These are done at all different times of day with a variety of scenarios. If you are within the service during a drill, we would appreciate your assistance. We would also like to thank those families who have in the past given us such wonderful feedback in the experience!

HAPPY SNAPS



It was so lovely to see so many smiling faces back for our very first week of 2020. A great start to the year!