



Welcome to all our families for the New Year at Brenbeal!

It is great to see our families returning from holidays and our new families who are just starting out as members of the Brenbeal community. Thank you very much for accepting (or choosing) Brenbeal as the education place for your child.

I would like to welcome our new Kindergarten teacher, Angela, who will work alongside Linda, Saritha and Leo in the Kinder Room. Angela has also been appointed the Educational Leader in our Centre. Her main role will be mentoring, guiding and supporting our educators and engaging with families about the educational program.

All our newsletters will be emailed to families throughout the year. Please read our newsletters as they contain information about your children's learning and their experiences within the rooms. Newsletters also contain information about Brenbeal events, important information regarding policies and procedures, and any updates on regulation or legislative changes affecting early childhood education and care.

Upcoming events

Welcome Picnic – this Sunday!

We would like to invite all the families to our Welcome Picnic which will be held this Sunday 18th February 10 am-1pm at Brenbeal. It will be a great opportunity to meet other families and learn more about Brenbeal and our upcoming Annual General Meeting.

Staff Professional Development Day – centre closed 1 March

Brenbeal will be closed on Thursday 1st of March when all staff will be participating in professional training. Families are not charged for this day. Each year two days are set aside for all educators to attend professional development training.

Annual General Meeting – 19 March

The AGM will be held on Monday 19 March, 6.30pm at the Centre. Brenbeal is a not-for-profit organisation and so relies on families to support the operation of the service including through joining the Committee of Management. Joining the Committee is a great way to get involved and help Brenbeal to maintain the very high standard of care and education your children receive. If you would like to find out more or express your interest in joining, please contact myself or our Chairperson Frances Waugh (president@brenbeal.org.au).

Reminders

Brenbeal Libraries

Children's and parents' libraries are set up in the foyer. Please feel free to borrow books for yourself or to share with your child, and return them next time you are in. As a parent, you have the power to boost your child's learning potential by making books an integral part of their lives. Reading books to your child helps to develop a stronger relationship with you. It is also thought to improve language and communication skills, concentration and academic performance, as well as promote more logical thinking and openness to new experiences.



'Our valuables should never be left in the car' – Awareness Campaign

Over the last few months the Victorian Government has been promoting the awareness campaign "Never Leave Kids in Cars". This campaign reminds parents and carers that "our valuables should never be left in the car." The campaign prompts parents to take their child with them whenever they get out of the car, just as take their everyday valuables.

The Facts:

- Even on mild days, the temperature inside a car can quickly become dangerously hot.
- A child's body temperature rises three to five times faster than an adult's.
- Large cars heat up just as fast as small cars.
- Leaving car windows down slightly has little effect on the inside temperature.

Some practical suggestions to make checking the back seat make a habit include:

- leaving an everyday item, such as a bag, phone or wallet, in the back of the car
- placing their child's bag in the front seat
- keeping a soft toy in the child's car seat and placing it in the front seat whenever the child is in the car.

More information and translations into other languages can be found at www.education.vic.gov.au/kidsincars

Sun Safety

In these summer months it is important to remember to be SunSmart. Our environment, Policies and procedures provide sun safety for children in our care. We ask parents to apply sunscreen to their children as they come into the service (located in the foyer). Educators will regularly reapply sunscreen throughout the day. If you wish your child to wear an alternative sunscreen to what is provided, please ensure that you provide this. Also please remember to bring your child's hat (labelled) every day and a washed drink bottle refilled with water. Clothing should also protect shoulders.



Smoke Free at Brenbeal

With the upcoming Welcome Picnic, we remind all parents and carers that we are a smoke free centre. Smoking is banned within centre grounds and within four metres of entrances to all Victorian childcare centres, kindergartens and preschools. The purpose of this smoke free legislation is to protect children and young people from the harms of secondhand smoke and to reduce role modeling of smoking behaviours to children and young people.

Brenbeal Facebook Group

Don't forget to join our closed parent's group to keep in the loop!

Thank you and please don't hesitate to come and say hello or chat with me about anything.

Krystyna

Acting Manager



From Brenbeal's Educational Leader

Hello everyone, my name is Angela. I am the new Kinder Teacher and Educational Leader at Brenbeal Children's Centre. Having taught for over 10 years, I am very aware of the responsibility that I have in ensuring the highest standard of teaching and learning in all areas. Since my appointment, I have had the opportunity to visit all rooms and to get to know the management team, educators and many families. So firstly, I would like to say a big thank you to everyone for making my transition to the new role so smooth.

I originally come from Shanghai, China. Recently, I relocated from Newtown Geelong to join the Brenbeal family. I was the Kinder Teacher and Group Leader of my previous centre. I really enjoy teaching young children and supporting their learning in these most important first five years. This encouraged me to constantly work on self-improvement in the education industry and in 2014 I completed a Masters of Teaching (Early Childhood) Degree.

My priority as the Educational Leader this year is to ensure that Brenbeal continues to improve the quality of our program to beyond exceeding. We aim to help our children enjoy a safe, fun and meaningful day through providing well-planned play-based learning experiences. Not only do I want to get to know the children, families, educators and the local community, but also begin to build an excellent team to work alongside. This is to ensure we are able to meet the needs of all our children, and to ensure they achieve the five key learning outcomes which underpin the Early Years Learning Framework: Children have a strong sense of identity; are connected with and contribute to their world; have a strong sense of wellbeing; are confident and involved learners; and are effective communicators.

In the meantime, please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any queries, concerns or there is anything I can do to help and support you with your child's learning. I know how vital working in partnerships with parents and families really is to ensure that Brenbeal is a positive and rewarding experience for you and your child.

Fundraising update:

Thank you to everyone who volunteered time, baked, barbequed, bought and sold items (hot cross buns, bulbs, tea towels, pasta, picture plates etc) and who participated in any way in our fundraising efforts!

Last year was our most successful year to date! \$5800 was raised to go towards the garden upgrade project. This includes \$500 from the Christmas raffle. Dress Up Day raised \$80 for new dress ups for the children. Many dress-ups were also donated recently so we plan to buy a clothes rack with this money.

There are still a few 2017 tea towels remaining, so drop into the office if you'd like to buy one for \$15!

The first fundraiser for 2018 will be **Alligator Pasta** as it was such a hit in 2017. Stay tuned for more news on this soon!



Staff in the Spotlight

Each newsletter we will profile some Brenbeal staff members so you can get to know them a little better. First up is our Acting Manager Krystyna who recently clocked up 20 years at Brenbeal, and our new Education Leader, Angela.

Krystyna – Acting Manager

Tell us something about yourself - where you grew up, your family.

I was born in Poland and spent my schooling and early working life in Bialystok in the east of the country. In Poland I worked as a kindergarten teacher. We came to Australia in 1996 where I undertook English classes and early childhood training. I commenced work at Brenbeal in 1998 as an assistant in the babies room and became assistant manager in 2006. I have two grown up children, a daughter and a son, and a beautiful 18 month old granddaughter who means the world to me.



Tell us a funny or unusual fact about you that we can share with our children.

I can do a really good Polish accent :)

What do you enjoy most about your role at Brenbeal? I really enjoy the interaction with the children, families and staff. What is most enjoyable is getting to know the children and watching them progress from babies to fully functioning individuals able to express their own opinions.

What is your favourite thing to do outside of work? Spending time with my granddaughter would be number one. Keeping in touch with friends and relatives around the world is important and travelling within Australia and overseas is high on the agenda. Also teaching the Polish language to children in Polish School every Saturday is a very enjoyable activity.

Angela – new Kinder Teacher and Educational Leader

Tell us something about yourself - where you grew up, your family. I was born and raised in Shanghai China so Mandarin is my mother tongue. I am the only child of my family. For the past ten years, I have really enjoyed teaching young children and supporting their learning.

Tell us a funny or unusual fact about you that we can share with our children. I can lick my elbow even though many people say it is impossible to do so!

What are you looking forward to at Brenbeal? Working with Linda, Leo and Saritha to deliver the Kindergarten Program. I will really enjoy having such a proactive and passionate team. As for the Educational Leader role, I look forward to sharing ideas with Brenbeal's educators and the management team who are so friendly and welcoming.



What is your favourite thing to do outside of work? I enjoy cooking and learning Spanish. I also enjoy supporting my community through my church, e.g. by delivering meals for people who are in need, or working with schools to renovate their grounds on the weekend, and then surprising the children and the staff the next week! These are the things that I love to do outside of work.



Welcome to all our families and children in the Wallert Room!

What we have been doing

Over the past four weeks, our team has focused on settling and getting to know your children in the room. Our team is working passionately with your child on his/her individual routines and transitions, interacting and engaging with them. We set up activities and experiences based on the needs of your child and their interests, which we learn through observation and your contribution. Our aim is to make your child feel safe, secure and supported. Thank you to the families who returned the Orientation Form. This helps us know your child better and plan for them accordingly.

Intentional teaching - singing songs throughout the day. Children enjoy the following songs: "Old McDonald had a farm", "The wheels on the bus" and "Twinkle, twinkle little star". Many of them clap hands and move their bodies while listening to these songs. All children have opportunities to participate in a group and to interact with educators and other children.

Reminders

- Drink and milk bottles - Please label your child's water/milk bottle and bring it home at the end of day.
- Family photo - Please bring in one of your family photos for our child's self-belonging experiences.
- Ongoing Medication form – If you wish to provide nappy rash cream to your child, please fill in the 'Ongoing Medication form' and leave it with the cream to the Wallert team.

Donations we are seeking

Empty CD/DVD cases to place our family photos in.

Birthdays

Happy birthday to Evelyn who turned 1 on January 3, Maeve who turned 1 on January 16, and James who turned 1 on January 29! We celebrated with cakes and by singing Happy Birthday.



Don't forget to let us know when your child's birthday is! Sumit our cook can bake a cake to be shared in the room. (The cost (\$8) will be added to your account).

Thank you.

Lisa, Maggie, Mika & Sumi



A big warm welcome to all our Bunjil Room families for 2018!

It's lovely to see those familiar faces and a special welcome to our new friends Orla, Sadie, Maggie, Teddy and Jessie.

All children are settling in very well and finding their places in our little Brenbeal community. Some are experiencing separation anxiety but this is to be expected as they have been home with families for 3+ weeks and it's always a little difficult to say goodbye to loved ones. However as the weeks go by those children are feeling more and more comfortable and settled in their environment.

What we have been doing

Emotions:

Many children are finding it difficult to express themselves and their feelings. Children are getting frustrated with having to share, take turns or wanting attention. This is quite normal for children this age. We are addressing this by supporting our children in understanding their emotions and feelings. We have an 'emotional faces' display in the room which we use to discuss with children the different emotions they may feel and what we can do when we feel these emotions. We implement this discussion on a daily basis during group time. We continue to talk to children about "managing emotions" and encourage them to take care of their own emotional wellbeing and to help their friends manage their emotions as well. We also observe them in dealing with emotions while negotiating play. We reflect on our teaching and children's learning and plan accordingly in future.

Health and wellbeing:

We are practising healthy eating habits in the room and encouraging children to try a variety of fruit and vegetables. We will continue this through to the end of this year.

Name tags:

Each child has their own name tag for their lockers. These tags are removable and allow children to select their own locker and identify with their photo and belongings.

Routine:

Our routine has changed a little from last year. Our meal times start a bit later. Children are still having sleep times according to their needs. We are continuing the practise of having group time when the children are seated around the table before meal times. We have observed this to be more beneficial to the children as they all happily come together in one place and they are more focused and settled, making group time accessible and interesting for all children.

Birthdays

Happy Birthday to Thomas who turned 2 on January 11, and Teddy who turned 2 on January 30. We hope you enjoyed blowing out your big boy candles!



Reminders

Family photos

Please remember to supply a family photo for your child for our family tree. This is very important for children to allow them to identify with family whilst in the Child care environment. Having access to photos of important people is extremely beneficial when children are feeling upset.

Other news: Congratulations to Thu who is pregnant and is due in July!

Cheers,

Thu, Marilou, Donna & Aileen



Bunjil Room's 'Emotions board'



Welcome to all existing and new families!

What we have been doing

Settling in

What a great start to the New Year in the Bullen Bullen Room. We have welcomed children from Wallert and Bunjil rooms as well as some new faces. All of the children seemed to have settled in well to their new environment and have already formed great relationships with their educators.

Play

Some experiences we having in our room at the moment include drawing, play dough, cutting, playing in the home corner, construction, dancing and singing, playing with trains and cars, books and water play. These activities have been used to encourage children to build new and existing relationships and to help us determine where your child is at emotionally and developmentally.

Parent communication book

We have now set up a Parent communication book located next to our sign in book. This is for parents to write down anything they would like the educators to know in the event we are not around or available during drop off/pick up. Please note that this is a communication book for all parents to use and view, and any confidential information should be discussed with an educator directly.

Birthdays

We have already celebrated a few birthdays: Felix who turned 3 and Julien and Leon who turned 2. A big Happy birthday to all of you! We also look forward to celebrating Meika's 2nd birthday at the end of this month.

Reminders

We have some general house duties to remember:

- Please bring plenty of labelled spare clothes, undies and/or nappies each day with your child.
- Please remember to label your child's water bottle. We do ask that drink bottles are taken home at the end of each day to be washed and refilled with water only.
- Don't forget our SunSmart Policy runs from the beginning of September right through until the end of April so please ensure your child has a hat with their name on it so they can take full advantage of our indoor and outdoor program.

Please don't hesitate to speak to Mandy, Snez, Ha or Kim if you have any questions or feedback.

Thank you. Mandy, Snez, Ha and Kim



Welcome to Barraimal Room for 2018!

With the children becoming increasingly familiar with the teachers and educators in the room, it has been quite a smooth beginning to the year. The children settled in really well and are able to confidently engage in many learning experiences. What a great start of the year!

This year, Linda and Angela are co-teaching in the room. We will be providing a full-day Kindergarten Program over the whole week to accommodate families with different needs. If you would like to talk to either of us, our program schedule is as follows:

	AM (8:00 - 12:30)	PM (1:30 - 4:30)
Monday	Angela	Linda
Tuesday	Angela	Linda
Wednesday	Linda	Linda
Thursday	Linda	Angela
Friday	Linda	Angela

What we have been doing

Settling in

For these first few weeks of Term 1 we are focusing on building trusting relationships with the children as well as getting them used to the new routines. At group time, Linda and Angela are supporting children's interests and concentration by singing familiar songs with puppets.

Learning Hindi

We are also spending time learning Hindi with Saritha in the afternoons. This is supported by an Early Learning Languages Australia program, some of which will be introduced through interactive tablet apps. More details will be provided in your child's information pockets outside the room.

Learning about the solar system

An emerging interest in the room is about the "planets". We have spent some time reading books and singing songs about the planets in the solar system. Many of our children can already remember some names and features of these planets. Here are links for the two songs we have been singing: <https://youtu.be/Cbei3VZjZ48> ; <https://youtu.be/JxZm1EFJ6CY>

Making our class book

We are making our class book 'All About Us' and would like your support to complete it. The book aims to help the children share their about themselves and get to know each other. Please take the time to make a page and send it in to us. The children love seeing these when we read them at group time, and the finished book is always a favourite in Book Corner. Just get your child to draw a picture, or include a photo, and jot down a few things they would like to tell us about themselves (eg. favourite toy/colour/food, family members, pets). If it is easier, you can email it to kinder@brenbeal.org.au.



Reminders

- Please check and pick up your child's ARTWORK during drop off and pick up time.
- Please keep toys at home as we do not want them to get lost or damaged in the room. If your child tends to hold them on the way, please help us to leave them in the TOY BASKET outside.
- Please provide a DRINK BOTTLE. We are unable to wash these in the room, so we ask that you take them home to be washed regularly.
- Remember to check your child's information pockets outside the room.
- Please do make sure you SIGN IN and SIGN OUT each day.

Donations we are seeking

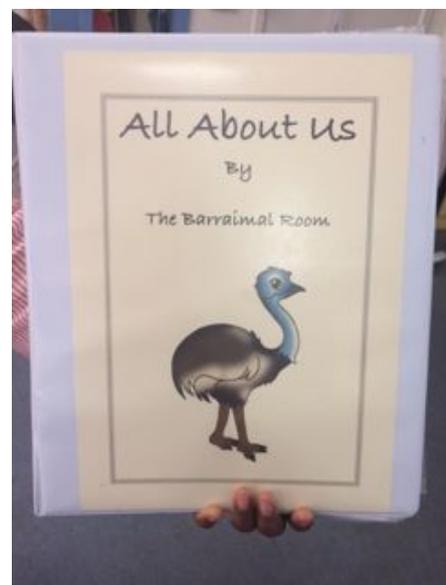
Recycled boxes and containers for box constructions.

Thank you.

Linda, Angela, Leo, Saritha



Learning Hindi with Saritha



Barraimal Class Book