

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Thank you for coming to the 2023 Annual General meeting of Rose Park Community Childcare.

### The year that was

In many aspects 2023 has been a nicer year to navigate than the previous few years. With COVID numbers reducing radically, we have only had a few educators off sick for our self-imposed mandatory 5-day period. Our educators currently still test three times a week in an effort to keep your children well. The tests are being supplied by the education department, who still strongly encourage educators in the early years to test three times each week.

As you would all know, coming back together as a society, has led to a lot of illness throughout the nation in many industries, including childcare. I am sure we are all hoping that we will build up our immunities again and enjoy being well. Staffing can be tricky at times and jokes are often made by others about 'Sarah changing the roster again'. I want to thank those educators that are incredibly flexible. Those that give up their RDOs, offer to come in around their appointments, swap days with others without complaint. It makes my job so much easier. I am so thankful that so far, we have not had to use agency for anything, but the kitchen for Kim's extended leave. With the reduction of casual educators across the nation, I can't always promise that we won't use agency, but will continue to try very hard not to.

### Staffing

RPCC currently employs 19 permanent staff members, including educators, a kitchen manager and management staff. I would like to thank the staff for their commitment to their work, throughout the last year. The staff are also very thankful to the Board for valuing their work, but giving them all a gift card at Christmas and paying for a wonderful Christmas dinner event last year.

Lisa has continued in her role as assistant director this year, spending more time in the office as the overall workload has increased for childcare. Lisa has been instrumental in clearing out the cellar and culling many years of unneeded documentation, as well as helping with the renovation plans in recent months. Thanks Lisa.

Thanks to our Kuula/under twos team consisting of Kylie, Em, Maddy, Masuma, Ama for part of the year and Alice who is currently covering Ama's maternity leave. Sarah, Vic, Tracey and Jess – our Wadlha/Wallabies team, and to Jacinta, Rachel, Karilyn and Deb as they have continued their roles in our Tarnta/Kangaroos room. Payel, Georgie and Tahira have worked across all rooms this year in part time roles. Thanks to our Kitchen Manager Kim, for all the preparation, cooking and working around allergies that you do. Thanks to Deb (mostly) and Lisa (on occasion) who both fill Kim's role when she is unable to. It's a tough job.

I am also thankful that we have some dedicated casual workers –Yu-Ting, Thi, April and Ying. Unfortunately, we have said goodbye to a couple of long-term casual educators as they have found permanent positions elsewhere. Thanks to Lucy (who finished her teaching degree and is now working as a teacher in the country), Corina and Lindsay.

Kylie continues to work in her role as a leader in quality improvement. She always has many tabs open as she constantly thinks about what we can do next. Kylie and I finished reworking the quality improvement plan late last year, which was an exciting achievement. We feel that it tells the story of all the improvements that we have made over the years and where we hope to head in the future. We have also made the National Quality Framework and our philosophy more evident by making a display area for all families to see, as we work through the standards. Kylie continues to bring well researched new ideas to the table, like Outdoor Sleeping. Kylie is an advocate for your children, the RPCC educator team and quality community long day care. Thanks Kylie for all that you do.

One of the objectives from our strategic plan is to embed sustainability practices. Em and Kylie meet together every few months and look for any improvements that can be made. They have led the Service through the 'Small Green Steps' program. They are always thinking of how we can be more sustainable. Thank you both for your willingness.

This year we have updated and republished our Reconciliation Action Plan, also known as RAP. Karilyn, Kylie and Sarah one of our current parents and myself are part of that committee. We have been able to tick off a lot of the actions that we had agreed upon last year. It also shows how we embed Aboriginal perspectives though the everyday curriculum. We celebrated Reconciliation and NAIDOC week with some wonderful provocations, culminating in visits from some of the children's elders, which was the theme of NAIDOC week this year. We had the murals painted by Scott Rathman, which is a beautiful addition to our frontage. We thought we had been able to link up with an Aboriginal elder, but unfortunately, he is a very busy man and unable to help further. If you know of anyone with Aboriginal heritage that may be willing to come to the site and talk/undertake a provocation with the children for a small stipend, please let me know.

Thanks to Jess, Maddy, Jacinta and Alice, as well as one of our parents, Sarah for being on our Social and Fundraising Committee. We have planned a number of events this year including a Paint and Sip night, which was a first for us. This committee is also in charge of fundraising and we were able to pay for the murals due to past fundraising efforts.

I am thankful to those educators who have the larger roles as mentioned above, but I am also thankful to those educators who do those things that nobody has asked them to do. Thanks to those who see things that need to be done and do so without fuss.

We have been back to taking students through the year from many different RTO's. This has helped us to gain casual educators like April, Thi and Lindsay. It is a great way to see what they are like before hiring them.

Some of the professional development topics that educators have attended this year have been: A day with Quality Area 2, children's behaviour, embedding Aboriginal perspectives, Little scientists, outdoor curriculum design, keeping children safe and first aid.

As a team, at educator meetings, we have had numerous sessions including; Trauma-informed practice, Uncle Tamaru focussing on embedding Aboriginal Perspectives, SIDS training, manual handling, and boundaries for educator wellbeing. We also had the opportunity for Pooraka CCC to visit here earlier in the year and we visited them in August.

In the first week of October, Kylie and I have the opportunity to attend the Early Childhood Australia Conference for the first time. These conferences attract delegates from all around the country and this year it is being held in Adelaide. We have 11 streams of learning to choose from over the three-day event. We are very excited and thank the Board for making it happen.

## **Utilisation**

For the first half of this year, utilisation was lower for longer than previous years at that same period. It took longer for numbers to increase after the beginning of the year exodus to school and kindy. I am pleased to say that numbers have increased dramatically in the second half of the year and we look to being full until the close of 2023.

## **Licensing and Compliance**

RPCC is regulated under the National Quality Framework (NQF), Education and Care Services National Regulations and Education and Care Services National Law which is administered by Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) at a national level and Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board (EECSRSB) at the state level. The ESB is taking a lot longer to assess Services and one recent article said that it may even be as long as 10-12 years. We were last assessed in 2017. We as a team are continually working on ways to improve the quality of our service and will do this whether we are assessed or not, as I mentioned earlier.

The Service's Food Safety Program was audited by the Eastern Health Authority late last year and only had a couple of tweaks to do. We are due again in November this year. There have been some changes in the law around requirements for food safety. Lisa attended a full day training to become a food safety supervisor – one of the new requirements. There will be some other tweaks behind the scenes in the coming months.

## Board

This year the Board has consisted of Nick as the chair, Nikki as the secretary, Rachael as the deputy chair, Michaela as the treasurer, Angela and Kyle. I would like to thank them for their volunteer contribution to the Service and their support of myself in my role. Their role is not an easy one, but this Service has been in great hands throughout it all. This year four of our members will not be renominating. I would like to thank Kyle for his commitment to the Board over the last year. I would like to thank Nikki for her three years on the Board, most recently as secretary and Michaela for her two years, most recently as treasurer, on the Board. And last but definitely not least thanks to Nick, who has been a member of the Board since 2018. He was heavily involved in the yard redevelopment in 2019 and then as chair for four years, he has led the Service through some tough times, but also some exciting times – especially through the internal renovation process. Thanks Nick for all of your dedication and hard work for RPCC and your support over the years.

We, as a Board and staff team, look forward to a continued focus on quality improvement and building stronger partnerships with our families. It makes such a difference to our childcare community when we have input and support from parents/caregivers and their families. Without your valued and continued support, we would not be the Service we are today.

Sarah Rogers  
Service Director  
September 2023