WEEK 1 - January 29th, 2013

Dear Madge Sexton Kindergarten Families,

WELCOME: Welcome to the 2013 Kindergarten year! A big welcome back to existing children and families and a special welcome to all of our new children and families. I do hope that everyone has had an enjoyable break and has had some time to make some special memories with their families and friends. I was very lucky to spend a long vacation in Bali with my family over the holiday period and am now feeling very energized and ready to work hard with the Madge Sexton Kindergarten staff team, children and families to implement another exciting year of learning.

SOME SAD NEWS: A few weeks ago we received some sad news that Helen Madge Sexton, the founder of Madge Sexton Kindergarten, had passed away at the age of 88. In 2012 we had begun researching the history of the Kindergarten and had made contact with some of her family, so we were able to contact them to pass on our condolences. We were honoured to be invited to attend her funeral which was held last week at St Joseph's Catholic Church in Willunga, where she is now buried, beside her husband and daughter. Tennille, Kalinda, Jo and I attended the funeral and were welcomed by her five sons, who gave us an even more in-depth insight into their amazing mother, as well as a precious photograph of her at the opening of the original Kindergarten in 1955. (This will be on display along with more information very soon). The family asked for money to be donated to Madge Sexton Kindergarten, in their mother's name, in lieu of flowers, which was such a wonderful gesture. We hope to use this money along with our outdoor environment plans to create some kind of artistic structure in her name, that the children can use in their play. We will keep you posted as these plans develop. The four of us walked away from the funeral feeling very sad, but so proud to be a part of Madge Sexton Kindergarten, as Helen Madge Sexton was an amazing, talented, inspiring, generous, creative, intelligent person. We all hope to continue making a positive impact on the lives of young children in her name.

STAFFING: 2013 welcomes 2 new members to our team. Emma Shaw (Early Childhood Worker), who was a regular reliever in 2012 is back in a more permanent capacity and will be with us every Monday. We are all very excited as we think she is pretty awesome, as do the children. We also welcome Jonette Thorstensein (teacher) to Madge Sexton Kindergarten, who has been placed for 10 years, replacing our permanent teacher Christabel Gollop who retired at the end of term 2, 2012. Jonette comes to us from Seaview Downs Kindergarten with a wealth of experience and is looking forward to becoming part of the Madge Sexton Kindergarten community. Please make Emma and Jonette feel very welcome. 2013 staffing is as follows:

Leanne Lovett (Director) > fulltime
Jonette Thorstensein (Teacher) > fulltime
Tennille Langeluddecke (Teacher) > Monday-Wednesday
Janet Clarke (Early Childhood Worker) > Mon am/Tue/Wed
Jo Frichtard (ECW/Atelierista/Preschool Support) > Mon-Thur
Kalinda Glatter (ECW/Atelierista/Finance) - Thurs/Fri
Naomi Budgen (Early Childhood Worker) - Friday
Emma Shaw (Early Childhood Worker) - Monday

CURRICULUM: A Term 1 Curriculum Overview will be placed in your pigeon holes this week so that you can see what learning we will be working on throughout the term. We would love it if you could help us to create exciting learning experiences for the children if you are able to contribute in anyway! We aim to develop partnerships with you in our Kindergarten learning program, not just superficial parental involvement!

As part of our literacy goals, this term we will be concentrating on certain sounds at our literacy table and will be asking children to bring in an object that begins with that sound to consolidate their learning. The first two weeks of term this sound is ‘s’. If you would like your child to bring along something beginning with ‘s’ ensure that it is an object that is suitable for other children to touch, hold, etc.

TERM PLANNER: Very soon you will receive a Term 1 Planner in your pigeon holes so you will know all of the important dates of things that will be happening at Kindy. We are still waiting to finalise a few dates for some events, but it will be there late Week 1/early Week 2. Some special things happening this term will include cooking, a possible excursion to a recycling depot and an incursion from Onkaparinga Council, Harmony Day open day and Healthy Lunch Days.

GOVERNING COUNCIL - AGM: A letter will come home shortly inviting interested parents along to our Annual General Meeting where we will be electing a brand new Governing Council Committee as our 2012 Committee Member’s children have left us for school. Please have a think about whether this is something that you would be interested in, it’s a great way to get to know what is happening at Kindy and help to shape and improve the Kindergarten.

BOXES: At the end of last year we observed and reviewed the “box-making” that has been happening in our Atelier and have found that the box construction that children were doing was not as productive or educational as other forms of making and creating could possibly be. So we have decided that we no longer require cereal and other junk boxes to be
brought in, and instead we would like shoe boxes which we will save to use for diorama projects. Please be assured that there will still be many opportunities and experiences available for children to make, manipulate, create and explore with in the atelier.

CAYHS VISIT: CAYHS 4 year old check appointments will be held in the OSHC room at the school on Tuesday 26th February. These are generally offered first to children who are going to school first and notes will go in pigeon holes, however if you would like an appointment please see staff.

LITERACY PACKS AND PARENT BOOK BORROWING: Literacy Packs and Parent Books are available for families to borrow. There is a borrowing book that you need to fill out each time you borrow. Please only borrow one Literacy Pack at a time and on returning give to a staff member so that we can check that all contents have been returned and sign it off as returned.

PLAYGROUP: Our very new Playgroup is up and running and operates on Fridays from 9am-11am in the school OSHC room. Please see staff if you would like any more information.

NEW PARENT WELCOME: Dates for our "Parent Cuppa n’ Chat" mornings will be on the Term 1 Planner. These are held a few times and are a great way to welcome new parents into our Kindergarten community, make connections and support networks, settle anxious parents nerves, give new parents the opportunity to find out all the nasty things about the teachers without us hearing you (He he he!) and effectively informed!

REMINDERS:
FRUIT AND LUNCH
Please pack your child's fruit time food and lunch time food separately. Lunch boxes go in the crates on the verandah and fruit time foods and water bottles go in their bags where they can access them. Remember when your child stays for a full day they need 2 lots of fruit (morning and afternoon) and their lunch food. Please help your child by telling them what each food is for and labeling it for them. Please send your child along with a water bottle; no fruit juice or cordial is necessary. PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER WE ARE A NUT FREE KINDERGARTEN.

Please check your wrappers etc. to ensure that you are not sending your child with things that contain nuts. Foods that state "may contain traces of nuts" do not apply. We also ask that children do not bring muesli bars to Kindy.

CHILD CARE CHILDREN
Kindergarten staff work hard to communicate needs with Child Care centre staff, but ultimately it is up to parents to ensure that there child has adequate food packed in their child’s Kindy bag. It may be useful to tell your child which food is for child care and which food is for Kindy. It may help child care staff if parents label their child’s food this way too. Unfortunately the Kindy does not always have spare fruit for children resulting in some children having no fruit at all. If your child gets dropped off and picked up by child care it is your responsibility to negotiate with the childcare provider to check your child's pigeon hole for notes. Kindergarten staff cannot put notes etc., in your child's bag due to time/supervision constraints. Eventually with the development of our website we are hoping to keep working parents more effectively informed!

SIGNING IN
Please support the Kindergarten staff to safely look after your child by ensuring you sign your child in and out of Kindergarten each day. Thank you to those families who have been doing this. Childcare providers have been following this procedure everyday which we appreciate immensely.

CANTEEN FOOD LIST
Lunch orders available for your child on their full days at Kindergarten. An updated Kindergarten Canteen List will be in your pigeon holes shortly. Staff have worked collaboratively with Megan and Tash in the canteen to ensure we provide you with a healthy, varied list of foods and beverages. Please note that the Kindergarten list is different from the School list so please order only from the Kindergarten list. Bags are available from the Kindy or the Canteen. It is the parent’s responsibility to put the canteen orders in at the Canteen, we do not have sufficient staffing to do this as we need to be supervising children. If you want more information, please see a staff member.

RED DOT NOTE & FIRST AID PROCEDURE
Remember if there is a red dot next to your child’s name on the Sign In sheet it means a staff member needs to catch up with you about something. If your child is involved in a “first aid incident” you will receive a note in your child’s pigeon hole. If it is serious you will receive a phone call.

Okay, I think that covers it for now! LOOKING FORWARD TO A GREAT TERM,
Leanne Lovett on behalf of the Staff Team: Tennille, Jonette, Jo, Kalinda, Janet, Emma & Naomi