

National Playgroup Week 2022 - Dave's Angels Playgroup

Dave's Angels Playgroup is a long running Playgroup situated in the heart of Burnside, operating out of the Church Hall of St David's Anglican - Parish of Burnside. The Playgroup is run by Naomi Le Poidevin (Coordinator) and Julie Denman (Administrator) and a dedicated group of volunteers.

The playgroup focuses on literacy, sensory and physical play, the nurturing of children and families, parental support, and wider community links. We anchor into a local/national/community calendar of events and offer support with any parenting issues as they arise, often offering referrals or literacy/support links and resources.

Each week, the Playgroup ensures that stories, shared songs, musical instruments, and group discussion time occur. We address gross motor skill development with ride on toys, cars, bikes, trikes, outdoor space, sandpit play, slides/crawling runs and an array of sensory activities (water play etc). Fine motor skills are also considered with puzzles, toys, role play opportunities, and playdough/craft/sensory trays (where age appropriate).

The feedback we have received throughout 2021 and now 2022, is that parents and families love the connection the children have with each other, the range of activities on offer, and the space in which they (as parents) are made to feel valued, included and welcomed. Our playgroup strives to be a welcoming, enjoyable, and safe space for everyone.

For me as a coordinator, the connection with children and families is a privilege and incredibly rewarding. I have the unique opportunity to see families and their children each week over many months, to nurture children and their development and watch them reach milestones and conquer new challenges. All as we know at lightening speed. It is a joy.

COVID-19 has impacted families tremendously. It has altered the ability for families to connect locally, interstate, and abroad. Altered fertility and pregnancy plans, changed birthing plans, first birthdays and that first year or two of mothering and raising a little person.

During 2021, Dave's Angels Playgroup nurtured a group of families whose babies were entering their 3-12 month age. It was a beautiful time but also a very unknown one for the families, off the back of so much COVID-19 uncertainty. We worked as group, amidst all the everchanging COVID restrictions, providing a COVID safe space for families to connect, play, and watch their little babies grow and all reach their first birthdays throughout the course of the year. It was a magical 2021. A very niche group that was just what was needed at that time. Now this same group is entering their 14month+ toddler years and it's a whole new experience, one that we are all embracing with love and adventure.