



Autumn 2024

Kindlings

Acknowledgement

Kindlehill is situated on Dharug and Gundungurra land; we pay respects to the traditional custodians whose cultures and customs continue to nurture this land.

We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart, Truth telling about the impact and legacy of colonisation, a Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Australian Constitution and a process of Treaty making.



Kindlehill School

Kindlehill is a K-11 school with a philosophy in Rudolf Steiner Education

www.kindlehill.nsw.edu.au

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I am excited to share with you our 2024 *Kindlings*, featuring our music program Gurunggu Bayumi, Children, Toward the music. Music is both Art and Science. It invigorates, lifts, and inspires. It has been part of the history of this land, part of the story of Kindlehill and we want to continue its tradition and build upon it by sharing with the next generation.

This edition also shines a warm light on our High School and Senior School, Buran Nalgarra, and the deepening relationship of students toward Earth that sustains us, and the thinking and storytelling that shape what happens on it.

Erica Chaperlin,
Acting Principal

Front cover artwork:
by Aurelia Johnson, Year 7 student



Giinagay

(Hello in Gumbayngirr),

My name is Flinn Donovan, Lilli and Felix's Dad. I have been playing the didgeridoo for 30 years give or take. My dad gave me the didgeridoo, after my aunty Dolly Mundine asked our cousin Jon Mundine to give him one. I picked it up and would take the deepest breath in my belly (diaphragm) I could then blow out some sounds in a rhythm.

I did this for a year or so, then while studying a degree in Fine Arts at the Uni of Western Sydney I went on an art camp to Bendalong. My family and I had gone camping here years before when I was a little fella, so I knew all the nice quiet spots in the bush and on the beaches so this is where I would go to play. Walking back to the campsite, I was playing as I walked along the bush track and the natural movement of my body while walking got my breathing rhythm in sync with the didgeridoo and then I started circular breathing. This is the process of squeezing air from your cheeks to making a sound out the didgeridoo while breathing into your diaphragm with your nose. That's how the didgeridoo player can keep the sound of the didgeridoo going without seemingly stopping for a breath. As soon as I got back to the camp, I showed my mates and we all started shaking a leg around the camp fire and I have never stopped loving the joy it gives me and others when I play the didgeridoo.

The didgeridoo, a wind instrument with a rich history spanning over 1,500 years, holds a significant place in the culture of Aboriginal tribes, particularly those of Arnhem Land in Northern Australia. It has since become widespread among many other Aboriginal groups. Within Aboriginal culture, the didgeridoo serves as a vital component in ceremonial as well as in informal settings, often complementing chanting, singing, and dancing. The music produced by traditional didgeridoo players is deeply intertwined with the earth and spirituality. Its resonant tones mimic the sounds of the natural world, including animals and humans, carrying profound cultural significance.

Yaarri yarraang
(goodbye in Gumbayngirr).



The Kindy Garden

I often hear visitors to our Kindlehill Kindy comment on the beautiful gardens, the soft rounded Kindy room and the toys that are hand made with love. Our Kindy space allows the young child to freely engage in imaginative and creative play, a consciously held element of the Steiner early childhood curriculum.

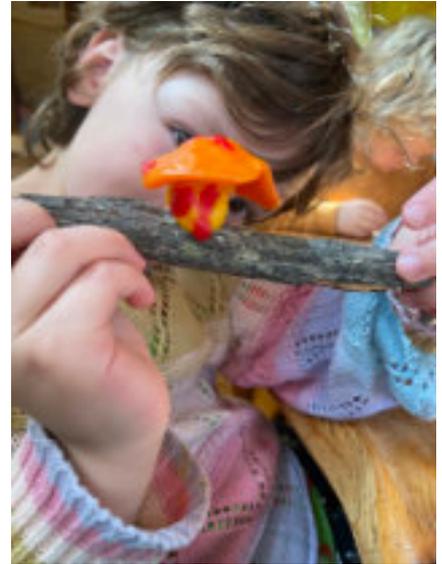
With opportunities for free unstructured play, the children learn to negotiate and self-regulate. In the world of play they learn how to treat friends and better understand how they wish to be treated by others. They experience another point of view through friends and through the world around them. This is the true work

of the young child. Studies have shown that children who do not experience unstructured play with other children may struggle with resilience, self-control, and social interactions throughout their lifetime (Hywood; 2022).

Part of our unstructured and free play in the Kindy Garden is also experienced through music and singing, using our voice, our bodies and breath, and as a way to further develop auditory, comprehension, early reading, and numeracy skills.

Together we experiment with tempo, rhythm, tone, and variation. Our music is not about perfection, but rather a shared experience with friends. Our percussion instruments can be played as softly as a breeze or as loud as a tempest. It can be the gentle flutter of a butterfly wing or the screech of a cockatoo across the sky. In Kindy, our learning is always deep, nurturing, and true to the young child. It is learning for life and helps our children land with a gentle step in this wide and wonderful world.

Kirsty Edwards



The Sweet Flute – Recorder in the Primary Years

Music in all its forms holds a deeply significant place at Kindleshill School. Music awakens and nourishes the inner life of children and adults alike.

At Kindleshill we introduce the sweet flute recorder in Class 1, adding to the singing, speaking of verse, musical movement and bush bands of the Kindy Garden. The seven-year-old children begin to learn some simple elements of music through the recorder such as active listening, discerning tempo, rhythm and melodies. The children learn the names of the notes and basic terminology.

By involving the cognitive, emotional and will aspects of the child through the imagination, the exploration of music will stimulate the child's capacities in a multiple of ways including the dexterity of the fingers.

The recorder is initially taught through simple call and answer techniques with verses and stories associated with the notes and with the children's environment. For instance to practice the note 'B' we sing of the 'Big Blue Butterfly'. A class current favourite tune has the lyrics 'cheese and tomato on a pizza base is called a margherita' which was composed after a cooking session at school. This song now has two parts as we 'warm the oven' before cooking the pizza.

As the children journey through primary school, the bigger recorder siblings are introduced to the alto, including the tenor and bass recorder, allowing for and more parts as well as adding to our current ensembles.

As Plato once said, 'Music gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything', and the sweet flute recorder easily serves this purpose.

S'haila Bernard
Class 1-2 Teacher



“Music can change the world.”

— Ludwig van Beethoven



When I received the wide-eyed Kindy graduates into my primary school boat we sang

Do you hear the whisper of the wind? What does she say? She calls your name with all of the promise and excitement of sailing together to new horizons.

That is our class song, written by me, for those particular children, sealing a bond to travel and support each other, together.

There are so many glorious songs, and I love to dip into this infinite pool to share with my class. But to write a song for these children, for this moment, in our little familiar place in the world, is so special.

At Kindlehill, we craft stories for the children, similarly drawn from that moment in time, with a desire to take them on an important journey. My now older 11-12 year olds say, ‘Was that a true story?’ and they laugh when I predictably,

always say, ‘Of course!’. And of course, to carry the burden of the storyteller, the story must always contain universal truth.

The same can be said for song writing. When I wrote *Footprints, pressed in the sand*, gently walking on this sacred land it carried my yearning to take my children, and myself, on an ever-deepening path of discovery of Country and its sacredness. Since that time, it has manifested in so many lessons and class trips, weaving through the life of the class.

There are other songs that are not quite as deep and meaningful, but still play a vital role in the life of the class. When we performed our Punctuation Players play, based on one written by Lynn many moons ago, each element of punctuation had its own melodramatic personality. Carlos Capital had a predilection for arrogantly naming things and then stealing them. His song contains every form of capitalised word, starting slowly and accelerating to a madcap crescendo.

Still a favourite of the class. We all love a cad – booo!

The best way to harmonise a class, feel good, warm, and ready to meet the world – and class work – and to put a flush in the cheek and a sparkle in the eye is, you guessed it, singing. Magical childhood; primary school is the time for healthy circulation, breathing and warm feeling. Nurtured well, at adolescence these children have their feet planted on the Earth, hands raised to the Sky, and a song in their heart, ready to face the world in all its shades of light and darkness, and ready to ask, with confidence – What is my place in the world?

Who taught the birds how to sing? Who weaves the light on fairy wings? Birds are singing at the break of day, carrying love the light weavers play.

John Daniel
Class 5-6 Teacher

Supporting Students Wellbeing

The vibration of sound waves in the air is received by your eardrum and your nervous system tunes into the frequency. Each water molecule in your body resonates with and responds to the quality of this sound. We experience music on so many levels: as it creates an ambiance, as it celebrates a special occasion, as it moves us to dance. When we make music together as a class or a small group, our bond with each other deepens and we find new resonances within our relationship, new ways of expressing the human condition. This shared expression reminds us of our humanity and our interconnectedness as a community.

Whilst some music education is tuned to honing the ancient craft of making music in a refined and carefully perfected way, there are also spaces in Steiner education for the folk tradition. This is the music of the people, where we find rhythms and chords together, we raise our voices – even if we don't quite know the words – and create a song and a vibration which goes out into the world, reverberating across hill and vale, over lake and river, subtly influencing the energy surrounding us.

In my role at Kindlehill, I use sound and music to foster relationships and establish or shift energies. For some neurodivergent students, they can find a sense of belonging and an outlet for emotions and feelings which they might not otherwise be able to express. For anyone, it is an opportunity to experience firsthand the connection between the body, mind and spirit. Through music making, the body both expresses and receives; it is a nuanced way for us to connect with ourselves and find our place in community.

It is never too late to start making music, whether it is to begin learning an instrument or singing. Studies show that music learning increases neural



connections and nourishes neural plasticity at any age. It is also a wonderful way to avoid getting bogged down in the mundanity of day-to-day tasks and opening to a flow state. When we are in the flow state, we create a foundation for healthy change within the self and thus within society,

According to ecstatic dance pioneer and author Gabrielle Roth, in her book, *Maps to Ecstasy*: "In many shamanic societies, if

you came to a medicine person complaining of being disheartened, dispirited, or depressed, amongst other questions, they would ask: "When did you stop dancing? When did you stop singing?"

Susanne Evans
Student Support

Music Tutors



Music has always played a very big role in my life. I was fortunate to go to a primary school with a very good band program which had me playing the clarinet at age 10. I chose the clarinet because my grandfather used to play it. He would practise in the clothes closet so that no one could hear him!

I loved band and continued playing in various school ensembles right through to the end of high school. What I loved about band the most was lots of young people coming together to make music. It was fun, social, exciting and rewarding!

I then continued my love of music completing a Bachelor of Music degree in clarinet performance at the Canberra School of Music. This is where things got very serious with lots of practise! After graduating, I explored my fascination with the shakuhachi (Japanese bamboo flute) and studied in Japan.

I've been teaching and sharing music with students for over thirty years now, including nine years at Kindlehill, and it continues to be very rewarding. Music is



like my friend: it's a constant companion in my life but like any friendship, it can have its ups and downs. This is what I try to impart to my students, that even though it can be challenging, when you put the effort in, playing music is really fun and the skills that you learn now will stay with you for the rest of your life!

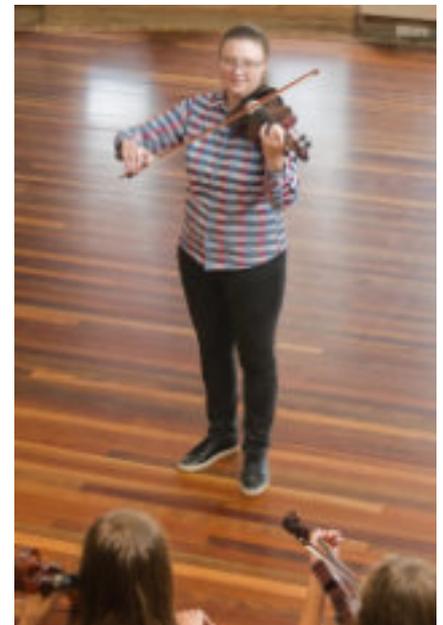
Bronwyn Kirkpatrick



Growing up in a large musical family, I was always surrounded by music and creativity. Mornings were filled with the sounds of practice from multiple instruments in different locations of the house. There was a schedule for use of the piano and we would only make our way to school once everyone's practice routine was complete. This resulted in a lot of late notes but above all, a deep respect for, and love of, music.

I was fortunate to have been shown by my parents that music was something to be shared and enjoyed with others and one's community, rather than a solitary pursuit. From a young age I had the opportunity to play in a local string orchestra where I first experienced the excitement and fulfillment that comes from connecting with others through music. To me, this is what is so special about music – its incredible ability to break down barriers and connect people. It doesn't discriminate against age, gender, ethnicity, or location.

Music is a means of expression that is beyond words and a vehicle to the heart.



Proficiency with a musical instrument allows one to create and sculpt sound in a way that connects deeply with other people. It allows one's imagination and creativity to run wild. Music is powerful and this is what I love about teaching: I am awakening a power in every student.

Elizabeth Cooney

Music Tutors



I grew up in more or less a musical family. The guitar, however, didn't feature much until I was around fifteen-years-old, as my parents evidently considered the 'music' that I was interested in not so worthy of serious musical pursuit, God forbid fashioning a career out of, let alone building a life around. In the process of flexing my musical muscles, learning to stay true to my muse, and eventually striking out on my own, I confirmed that listening to and making music brought me not only comfort through good and bad times, but also, having learnt to play just a bit, more than a little satisfaction and self-validation.

Many years later I now deeply appreciate the lifelong friendships I enjoy with many kindred musical buddies all over the

world. Music has afforded me so many life affirming and musically rewarding travel and cultural experiences – from touring and performing in the farthest flung remote regions and Indigenous communities of Australia, to the large commercially driven music festivals in all States and Territories as well as overseas. Working with students of music generally, and of the guitar in particular, brings me much satisfaction as I am often privy to that special moment when the music lights up for them, as it did for me many years ago.

Steve Grieve

Practice with Purpose

At Kindlehill, the focus for learning music is about accessing a way to understand the world and to contribute meaningfully to the ways in which we communicate about it. It is also a beautiful way and, more importantly, a way for children to engage with the social deed of education. Through learning in small groups and our focus on ensemble work, children have the opportunity to play together, to listen to each other, to accommodate and adjust. An important part of that is taking care of ourselves to be ready and be prepared for contributing to this big beautiful thing called music.

A part of that is practice. It would come as no surprise to anyone that research indicates that the more students practise something the more competent they become; the more competent we are at something, the more we engage and love it. The world opens up and becomes expansive; new languages, skills and knowledges are unleashed which catapult us into universes of beauty and magic. It's a beautiful thing!

However, I think many of us can relate to being somewhat coerced into doing something over and over until we despised the whole thing and dropped it at the earliest opportunity. For too many, learning a musical instrument is one of those opportunities that soured as a result of being forced to practise, and that failure to practise leading to a lack of sufficient achievement and satisfaction.

It's a shame. It's a whole other universe and language that we become isolated from. And it's a worthy pursuit.

So how do we manage this little conundrum about practice and learning and the problem of the joy being squeezed out of it?

One recommendation is that for something that requires practise, setting a goal is useful and should be personally meaningful. It's specific, observable and achievable. This is relevant for group sessions at school and individual practise sessions at home.



In developing the habit of practise, establishing a routine is critical in the early years. Whilst children don't need to spend a long time playing their instruments, it is important that it does happen. The depth and development of the practice comes as students mature.

This links to the importance of effective feedback; specific comments on how they have improved rather than vague statements such as 'that's so great' are both useful tools for learning and also highly motivating. Occasionally listening to your child play at home and asking them to show what they are learning are good ways to provide feedback.

Self-reflection is what turns an experience into deeper learning. Students who have

goals and get feedback about how they are going are also thinking about, and noticing for themselves, where they are improving and where they need support. This is incredibly empowering and motivating. These are authentic ways to practise. It's practise with purpose; it's relevant and authentic.

In Steiner education these practices are supported by things such as the craft. Typically, these are not quick things but have all sorts of smaller goals built into them and they take a little while to complete. Challenges are an important foundation for learning how to learn.

The beautiful and deep learning of a Steiner Education is that there are generally multiple ways to practise a skill.



All of the longer-term projects, including gardening, woodwork and craft, support our sense of diligence and application. In music, students practise as a group, and there is ensemble work and individual practise at home.

In practice at home, it is worth considering ways these can be diversified, though it does require families to understand the value of music and how practise relates to it.

There are some fun ways to diversify the experience of individual practise, including making a game out of it:

- rolling the dice to see how many minutes you need to play;
- picking a card to choose which piece of music to work on;
- making a paperchain out of the various goals achieved and watching it grow; and,



- setting up a domino for each minute practised or task completed and at the end, knocking the dominoes over.

These are ways we can ready ourselves to make the most of accessing another art form, and our connection and sense of belonging to other humans.

The world, we feel very sure, needs more of that.

Erica Chaperlin

Parent's Perspective



The music program at Kindlehill is one of the many things for which I am truly grateful about my boys' education at Kindlehill.

My sons, Otto and Finbar, participated in the music program from Years 1-10 and it was a formative part of their learning and development. I had no idea when they first embarked on the recorder and then the violin, how pivotal this experience would be for them.

Watching and hearing them find their way with an instrument has been a joy – Otto on the clarinet and Finbar on the guitar. It has given them both such pleasure to slowly build their skills and find the freedom to improvise. As they developed a small repertoire and their confidence, they started busking – a wonderful learning experience and surprisingly fruitful endeavour (Leura's the spot!)

I am not a musician but remember vividly the moment when I realised that it's also given them another language – watching them sitting on the couch, stuck on a piece, frowning at the piece of paper in front of them and looking for the answer in the notes rather than the instrument in their hands was a moment of wonder! Those black and white marks on the page (that I have only the most rudimentary understanding of) were the key to the sounds they were making, and a language shared the world over.

Music is magic; it speaks to our heart, it makes us move, it soothes, it celebrates, it tells stories, it opens the door to a place of rest and reflection, and it is universal. Bronwyn and Steve have inspired my boys and invited them into a world of creativity, mathematical magic, expression, and play.

Practice is the key and both boys took a second private class a week because they loved it. They are completing Year 12 this year but they both keep up their weekly lessons with Bronwyn and Steve and those sessions are a joyous window in their week. So, thank you and hooray! What a gift.

Georgia Adamson

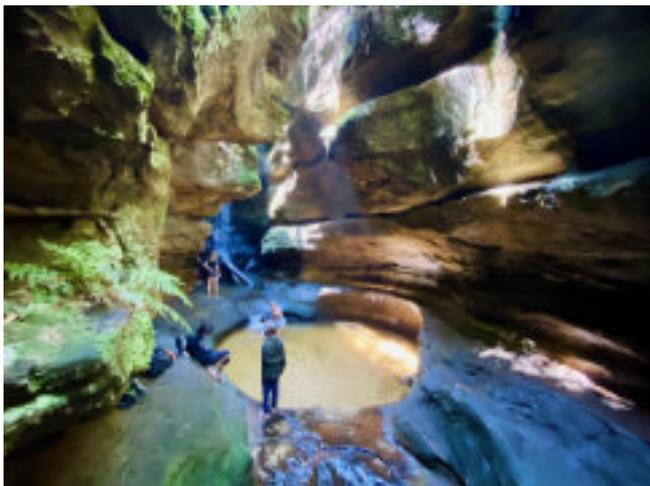
High School Wellbeing and Outdoor Education

Each week a group of High School students come back rosy cheeked and little wilded from Wellness Wednesday with Roman. This day is part of our Wellbeing Program that centres on connection to place, others, and self. Roman takes out small mixed groups for an afternoon of adventure in our stunning local environment and teaches some bush skills like navigation, firemaking and first aid.

The simple act of firemaking teaches so much! First, we need to know the fire ban status and what that is all about, then we have to read the local environment – where is a safe place? Where will you find wood? How will you manage this respectfully? How will you clean it up so no trace is left? It takes a lot of responsibility and awareness to make a fire. Then there is the actual lighting of a fire – can you use a flint? It takes skill and patience!

Watching the joy of teenagers cooking damper around a fire, relaxed, chatting and laughing, being unguarded and playful with each other, is a sweet moment. Everyone is together around a fire! I could sense how they are more at ease in themselves, with each other, surrounded by the beauty of our mountain home. It felt good; it felt well.

Sarah Daniel
High School Teacher



Musical Overture on the Road!



Rhythm:

Shoalhaven Gorge lies to the south of Sydney. It is part of the river system that provides drinking water on the South Coast. The gorge itself is narrow with steep golden cliffs on either side, making it hard to reach by foot!

As we travelled, we learnt the value of rhythm. Once we stopped spinning in circles or careening across the river, we found rhythm. In ourselves, breath, paddle stroke, breath, paddle...rhythm with our canoe partner, rhythm with the wind and the water. When it all came together, moving became smooth. Gliding along.

This experience of rhythm is a familiar one on camp. It usually starts after the third night. Everyone is in bed earlier, at a time

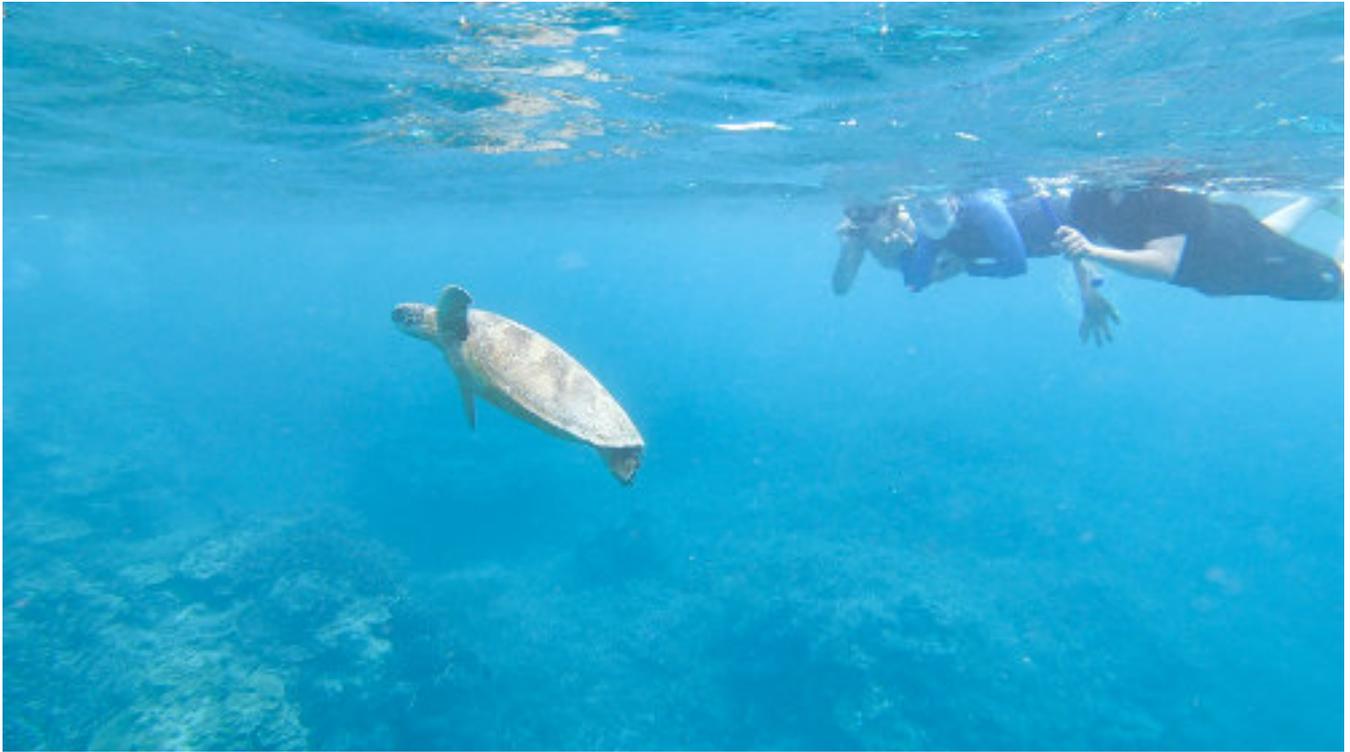
most parents dream of, and waking early with the call for breakfast. We fall into the rhythm of light and dark, rest and action, sleep and wakefulness.

There is also the rhythm of the camp. How to set up and pack down with speed and grace. Tents down, a chain formed, bus packed, kitchen folded, trailer filled; with the rhythm of participation it becomes like paddling – a lot easier!

Harmony:

Spend more than three days with anyone on the road and you will notice relationship is key! Harmony is making sound and listening: voicing your needs, listening to others, checking in with one who might be a bit extra quiet. We have to moderate to find the sweet harmony: manage ourselves, tiredness, weird food, strange places, too much travel, excitement and joy, the inevitable homesickness. We learn to make a chorus of family with different strengths and challenges, making sure that everyone has a place.

When it works, there is harmony. Someone in the kitchen cooking and washing up, someone to sit next to on the bus, a surprisingly vulnerable conversation that makes you feel at home, a new joke that belongs to everyone. We feel ourselves held in the tension of relationship; there is a place for each and each one is valued.



Symphony:

Each camp is a journey. Like a symphony it has its various movements and moments of mood and tension. The journey is personal, each of us feeling discomfort, excitement and awe in our own ways. It is collective, moving through Country, discovering places and people. But it is also a journey into the greater complexity of life on Earth.

On our way to the Great Barrier Reef, we passed through White Box and koala forest threatened by mining, through kilometres of industrial agriculture, across the ocean to a tiny island surrounded by pristine underwater forests of coral, rainbows of fish, sharks, rays, turtles. In each place we asked, what do you see here? Feel here? What does this place tell you about climate change and the environment? What does this place seed in your soul?

Even tricky moments, like being treated as second class citizens, being abandoned on a remote island and rescued by pirates, taught us something. We learnt about fairness, inequality, resilience and a bit of pirate wisdom, like this from sailor Pete: "Many drops make an ocean. Be the change." It is the symphony of life!

Sarah Daniel

Senior School:

Buran Nalgarra – Restore, Re-story our world

What is it we need to think and do, to restore, re-story our world? This was the thematic focus for our transdisciplinary studies in Term 1, incorporating English, Geography, and Society and Culture.

We have been in conversation with complex concepts that are nutrient to restoring and re-storying our world. These exciting ways of thinking are drawn from biology, literature and the humanities. From Culturally Responsive Standpoint Theory to the emergent Science of Entanglement, to extending our learning from documented texts to the living world of Nature; of fungi, of forest, and to the water cycle as a significant way to address a changing climate.

Bio-scientist Predrag Slijepcevic says we are trapped in a contemporary version of the Copernicus Complex. He says human beings place themselves at the centre of everything, with consequent entitlement to exploit nature as it suits us. He further argues that a worldview shift is needed to one of ecological entanglement and reciprocity, where we understand ourselves in a 4 billion year old co-evolution with bacteria, fungi, plants and animals, as eco-civilisations or communities nested one within another.



To learn more about **Buran Nalgarra**, visit our Senior School blog: <https://blog.kindlehill.nsw.edu.au/>

We have lifted the teaspoon of soil from the bush (more organisms in this than there are people on the planet) and observed its perfectly adapted capacity to support and regulate diversity of life. We have learned how trees and vegetation store both carbon and water and are instrumental in mitigating the impacts of climate change. We have made kin with trees and shrubs in our local environment, entering into respectful and playful conversations with them, leaving us with the feeling of care and connection to them and their kind.

We have diversified our thinking, exploring complexities and perspectives about the war in Gaza, about the treatment of refugees in Australia, to how mangroves provide shelter and nourishment as a community.

We are learning from the fungi to let rot old mindsets and habits, personal and collective, to become soil and nutrient for new emergent ways of thinking that are



characterised less as hyper-individualistic and more community minded.

These morning learnings are complemented every day by learning in community settings. These include a 'design and make' project with a sustainability focus, and learning-enacting the art of the interview in conversation with local community Elders about issues of importance and how to bring impactful change. The students have walked into the creeks that connect to the Grose River which flows into Dyarubbin in a project called Grandmother Walking. It is fieldwork for our Geography studies and for our connecting to and learning to love Country. Ancestral presences are sensed even in the complexity of urban settings.

It has been a rich and exciting first term as we experience Buran Nalgarra, strength and learning through togetherness. These pioneer students have themselves been fertile soil for growth and it's interesting how much of the learning is a kind of common sense in them that is waking into consciousness.

Lynn Daniel
Senior School Coordinator



Jack the kelpy belongs to our Business Manager, Andrew, and he visits the school Office each Friday and accompanies dog-whisperer Libby on Wednesdays during her High School Literacy Support sessions. An incredibly obedient and loyal kelpie, Jack obeys Andrew's every command, and whilst he may look a bit big and scary – Jack, not Andrew – he is the king of cuddles and shares his puppy love unconditionally. Students who have met Jack have quickly come to appreciate how special he really is, and as these photos show, he has become Kindlehill's unintentional 'pet therapy dog'!



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