



SDN Children's Services

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## SDN Batemans Bay Preschool celebrates 50 years of care, community and connection

Batemans Bay, NSW (June 2025)

SDN Batemans Bay Preschool marked its 50th anniversary on Friday 30 May, celebrating half a century of nurturing young minds and building strong community ties.

The milestone was honoured with a joyful birthday event attended by families past and present, local leaders, and friends of the preschool.

Founded in 1975 as the first community-based, not-for-profit preschool in Batemans Bay, the centre has long been a cherished place where children are given the best start in life. Since joining SDN Children's Services in 1999, the preschool has continued its mission of providing accessible and inclusive early childhood education.

The celebration was opened with a moving 'Welcome to Country' by Aunty Loretta Parsley, Walbunja Yuin Elder, who shared her handmade possum skin coat and stories from her life as a teacher and historian. The children of the preschool performed their original "Care for Country" song, which they sing each day to honour and respect the land.

Special guests included Federal Member for Gilmore, the Hon. Fiona Phillips, SDN CEO Kay Turner, Councillor Amber Schutz from Eurobodalla Shire Council, and representatives from Noah's Inclusion Services.

A highlight of the day was the return of Beth Eppelestun, one of the preschool's founding staff members, alongside Kery Bergan, who led the preschool through its transition into the SDN family in 2000.

Children presented handmade artworks to special guests and joined in a spirited group performance of the "Wombat Wobble," a song by Aunty Loretta performed with preschool dad Darren Leonard.



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“SDN Batemans Bay has been more than just a preschool,” said Councillor Schutz. “It’s been part of the heart and soul of this town. For 50 years, it has been a place where friendships are formed, values are nurtured, and children grow with care and purpose.”

The event concluded with food, laughter, and of course, a giant 50<sup>th</sup> birthday cake — a fitting tribute to a place that has helped shape generations of children and supported local families.

More information

For information about the Preschool, visit our [website here](#)