

For immediate release  
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## Learning as You Grow: Kooloora Preschool's Bush Tucker Garden

Kooloora Preschool is situated in the grounds of Toukley Public School. It is one of eleven Department of Education designated Aboriginal preschools in New South Wales; however, it is the only designated Aboriginal preschool on the Central Coast.

Thanks to a grant from the Wallarrah 2 Community Foundation, Kooloora Preschool can now commence work on an extension to their existing Bush Tucker Garden which was originally established in 2013.

Preschool Teacher, Brianna Thomas explains that there is still a large section of land within the Toukley Public School boundary which remains vacant.

"This grant will enable Kooloora Preschool to extend the size of existing bush tucker garden to create an Aboriginal landscape. The landscape will be infused with a greater diversity of bush tucker plants that are predominantly native to the local area that would have the capacity to teach children, families and wider community about how food was sourced and plants used and valued in traditional Aboriginal life. As well it will support the local ecosystem and encourage biodiversity. It will also increase home food production for our families and reduce the community's reliance on processed, highly-packaged foods and unnecessary waste. It is hoped that it will incorporate a fire pit as a centrepiece for communal gatherings, yarns and corroborees for children, their families and the wider community".

This bush tucker garden will provide a 'living' classroom – a classroom that can help produce food, be incorporated into various curricula program areas and offer experiential learning to students who may otherwise not readily engage in the classroom environment. Enhancing this existing bush tucker garden will increase parent and community involvement and will build life skills which can help to transition Aboriginal people into the professional workforce/employment.

"It is anticipated that this project will be complete in approximately 6 months from the commencement date", added Ms Thomas.



L-R: Peter Smith Environment & Community Manager of Wyong Coal, David Pross Guringai TLAC, Brianna Thomas Preschool Teacher, Tom Kelly Principal & Tracie Howie Guringai TLAC