



Mitcham



Preschool Centre

Mitcham Pre School Centre Newsletter

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Term 1
Newsletter 5

This week at kindy

Can you believe we are already in week 6? It is hard to believe that we are half way through the first term.....It is nearly footy season!!! Yeh.

We have planned for 2 weeks as next Monday (our normal planning day) is a long weekend. So over the next 2 weeks we will continue to explore our focus of learning

"How do we care for Earth?"

Through our inquiry questions

What is recycling?

Why do we need to recycle?

To support our learning over the next 2 weeks we will have

- Writing table with Earth word cards (literacy / fine motor)
- Still life paintings of fruit (creativity)
- Easels with collage (creativity)
- Challenge puzzle table (persistence,

risk taking, problem solving)

- Making puppets and Shadow puppet play (dramatic play / creativity)
- Dramatic play table with bugs and information books (understanding our world, dramatic play)
- Tessellation tiles (numeracy)
- Number stones (numeracy)
- Box construction (problem solving)
- literacy corner - activities are literacy based (literacy)
- Recycling game (problem solving)
- Cutting activity with 2 entry levels (fine motor)

Outside there will be

- Little easels and craypas in the garden (fine motor / creativity)
- Water tray & boats (sensory)

- Rhyming hunt (literacy)
- Sandpit with small trucks, pipes, cones (sensory)
- Obstacle course on lawn (gross motor)
- Cars & car mat under the shed verandah (dramatic play / social skills)
- Hopscotch (gross motor)
- Home corner (dramatic play)
- Floor puzzles (problem solving / numeracy)
- Pegging activity (fine motor)
- Wet sand & shells in trays (sensory)
- Swings—ladder & trapeze)

This week is also our family picnics week.

So it is a busy and fun week at preschool.

Thankyou to Rachel Hodgson for her help in putting the parent packs together for me.

Your help and support is much appreciated.

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Fine motor skills

During week 5 (and in week 6) we are informally assessing all children in literacy / numeracy and fine motor skills. Once all the assessing is completed, staff will make time with you to have a conversation about your child's progress. One aspect that we noticed that many children had trouble with, is in their fine motor development. That is the ability to hold and manipulate pencil, textas and scissors successfully. Fine motor

Just a thought Supporting pencil grip

We have noticed over the past few years, as iPads & touch phones have become part of children's world, there has been an increase in the number of children commencing preschool with limited fine motor skills. For many children, they prefer to spend time on touch devices playing games, rather than using good old fashioned paper & textas. An Ipad or touch phone provides children with instant satisfaction. However, if they have limited grip strength & control in using writing tools, it is hard work and they will avoid drawing & writing. iPads are great for learning about the world. However, they don't teach our children how to hold & use pencils & scissors—necessary for school & life. Allow your child the time to use iPads & touch phones. But also provide them with the opportunity to use pencils, textas & scissors in preparation for tasks at kindy & then at school.

skills are so important not only for preschool, but school and in life.

I have included some information with this newsletter on fine motor development and some activity ideas to assist you at home. However, we will provide you with verbal feedback via our conversations over the next few weeks.

What textas etc help pencil grip?

To help support an appropriate grip, it is important to make sure that children use pencils & textas etc that will enhance their development.

Faber-castel have 3 sided pencils (triangle) that automatically put a child's fingers in the correct position. They are not expensive and can be purchased from "Big W". Fat textas are also more beneficial to developing children's pencil grip instead of thin textas. Faber castel have some textas that click together. There are thin and fat textas. The fat textas are the better ones to purchase. A thin texta will not be as easy to use as a fatter texta. Again these textas can be purchased from Big W.

If you have any questions about the appropriate writing tools, please see one of the staff.

Incursion / excursion levy

An excursion / incursion levy is included in each terms fees giving us a total of \$80.00 per year per child to spend on excursions (eg bus fares / entry into events), incursions (guests such as Trent Hill, Ruth Tuck Art school), special events (eg pizza lunch after wheels day) Each year our events change depending on our focus's of learning. However, the levy over the year, covers all curriculum events and there is no extra to pay.

In term 1, the levy covers our wheels day pizza lunch and 2 incursions—"Bugs & slugs" (week 8) and artist Sam Wannan (week 10)

Please see me if you need any further information or have any queries on the excursion / incursion levy.

Pupil free days

At Monday nights meeting the Governing Council approved the following pupil free days

Term 2—Monday April 30th
(Note this is the first day of term 2)

Term 2—Friday June 8th

Term 3—Tuesday August 14th

Term 4—Monday November 5th.

On each of these dates, there **will not** be any preschool sessions. The staff will be participating in professional development.

Children's work folders

Have you looked at your children's work folder located in the literacy room? Over the term, (and year) we will continue to add examples of children's work, learning stories and children's voice photos to the folders. Currently everyone has a learning story about "Transitioning into preschool". Over the next few weeks learning stories in relation to wheels day and bugs & slugs experiences, will be added to the folders.

The children have completed a drawing of themselves for their folder. Some children have added other work they have completed such writing or drawings. The work

children completed which is displayed in the room will also go into the folders, later in the term. Please come and look through the folder with your child. They will be excited to share it with you.

Parking bikes

A number of children ride their bikes or scooters to kindy each day. It's great to see children engaging in physical activity, developing coordination skills and enjoying the outdoor environment.

We do have a problem with parking bikes at kindy. In 2016 we applied for a grant to erect bike racks by the peach tree near the entrance gate. But we weren't successful.

For safety reasons, please **do not** park the bikes or scooters between the 2 gates. It makes entering and exiting the centre con-

gested and creates an injury risk for children and adults (tripping and falling on the bikes). Parking bikes etc inside the preschool is an issue as children are very tempted to ride the bikes.

We are asking parents to park their child's bikes outside the gates. You will need to have a padlock and chain to attach them to the fence.

Thank you for your support.

RAN-EC training for volunteers

RAN-EC training for volunteers will be held on **Monday March 19th** 7pm—9pm.

If you wish to volunteer on excursions, funtastics motor coordination program, walks, cooking at preschool, you will need to have attended this course.

A note will be out this week about the training.

If you have already attending RAN

-EC at another site (eg your child's school) you just need to provide me with a copy of your certificate.

Please remember, it is DECD policy for all volunteers to attend the training if you wish to volunteer. Without attending the training, you cannot volunteer. The training is valid for 3 years and can be used across DECD schools & preschools

Resources for kindy

We are in need of some resources for kindy. These include

- Boxes such as cereal, biscuit, toothpaste, tea bag boxes etc. Please do not send boxes any bigger than a large cereal box. Large nappy boxes etc can be overwhelming for parents especially if their child is an avid constructor of boxes. Smaller boxes are more manageable!!
- Toilet rolls (without any paper)
- Lids and bottle tops from juice / milk cartons / coke bottles etc
- Corks from wine bottles.

When collecting toilet rolls, corks, bottle tops, would you mind bringing them in to preschool in separate bags or containers eg a bag for lids, a bag for corks, a bag for toilet rolls. It just makes it difficult and time consuming if everything is thrown in together.

We really appreciate your help and support. It provides our children with recycled resources to assist in their work developing important skills such as problem solving, numeracy skills, critical thinking skills and creativity skills.

Please note, Attendance at Wheels Days, Special Persons Day, End of year celebration days etc do not require the RAN-EC training as you are not working directly with the children.

This year we have noticed that some children are saying they are "bored and they don't know what to do". Some were making this comment as early as week 2.

We offer a curriculum that is

- very engaging, with a mixture of opportunities for structured group times and free play
- We have a focus of learning which is inquiry based, allowing opportunities for research and investigation
- We have multiple activities that focus on different skills
- We have multiple types of activities that support children's different interests and learning styles
- Our activities may flow on over a couple of weeks if children are still using them (eg number hunts) but many new activities and experiences are introduced each week. Our planning cycle is from a Tuesday to the following Monday.

I know there are a large number of children who go to child care and preschool in the same week, which results in increased tiredness. But having listened to a child psychologist recently, and information shared by Laura and Amber from a recent Literacy summit, it is technology that is creating this sense of boredom for children, when they don't have a screen to play on.

Screens (IPhone, iPad etc), provide children with instant gratification, constant stimulation and they don't need to think for themselves.

Whilst children's concentration has improved over the last 5 weeks, even listening to a story has been a challenge for some. They are fidgety, and have difficulties in focussing to the front of the group. A book for some children, no longer provides the stimulation and gratification that a screen does.

Over the next few newsletters, I will share information on literacy, numeracy and the affect technology has on children's skill development. At preschool, we do not have the iPads out to play games on. Our screen time (interactive screen and iPads) are for research, watching information video clips that relate to our learning, learning songs and occasionally playing a game that involves literacy and numeracy skill development. Watch out for further information in upcoming newsletters. I hope you find the information useful.

As you may be aware, there is a homeless woman, living in a car with her granddaughter and their dog, in the car park. I know a number of parents have shared their concerns about her, being located nearby to the preschool. There have been a number of strategies undertaken by myself, such as talking with the police and the Mitcham Council. A care agency has also offered their assistance. However, there are limited powers in what the police / council can do, unless there is a specific instance. Currently there are no instances to warrant her removal from the car park. The staff are mindful of her being there and we are always vigilant in our supervision of children. Please be reassured that your child are being cared for at all times. They are safe.

Life is full of challenges for some people. Hopefully we can have compassion for those who need it most.

Laura, Amber and myself are in the second week of our assessing. The assessing is an informal process whereby we just play games with each child, on a one on one basis, to see where their skills in literacy, numeracy and fine motor skills are currently at. We then provide you with feedback on this information as well as how they are settling into preschool.

Laura, Amber or myself will see you over the next week or 2 to book in an interview date and time.

Please be aware, that we are limited with our times when we are available to meet with you. It will either be at the beginning of the day eg 8.45am or at the end of the day eg 2.30pm / 2.45pm / 3pm. We fit our interviews around the morning and end of day times, when we are not the lead teacher, taking group times.

As we do have so many interviews to get through, we would appreciate it, if you can keep your interview date and time, unless of course, you are unwell (or your child).

Finally

Thank you as always for your continued support.

It is always appreciated.

Chris, Laura, Amber, Carol,
Robyn, Lyn, Sophie