



Mitcham Pre School Centre Newsletter

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**Term 2
Newsletter 2**

This week at kindy

This week at kindy we will continue our focus on

"All about me and people in my world"

Underpinned by the Child Protection Curriculum"

This week we will explore the concepts of

- Safe / unsafe
- Early warning signs (the feelings we get when something isn't right)
- Continue on with a focus on feelings

To support our learning we will have inside

- Letter of the week (Literacy)
- Feelings word cards at the drawing table (fine motor / literacy)
- Crown making (fine motor)
- Uno cards with pegs (numeracy)
- Play dough with lizards, rocks & logs (sensory / dramatic play)
- Challenge puzzle (intellectual stretch)
- Box construction (problem solving) shelves with mini dramatic play baskets (dramatic play)

- Home corner— Royal Palace with tea party (dramatic play)
- Preserved reptiles from the Nature Education Centre (understanding our world)
- Live blue tongue lizard (understanding our world)
- Easels with trucks to copy (creativity / fine motor)
- Dolls in the dome in literacy room (dramatic play)

Outside there will be

- Sandpit - construction site, hard hats, safety signs etc (sensory)
- Making mandala patterns with stones (numeracy—patterning)
- Games table (numeracy)
- Dark den with fibre optics (sensory)
- Blocks for castle building with Kids on the Blocks (problem solving)
- Tap tap (fine motor)
- Cross fit (gross motor)

- Mobilo construction (problem solving)
- Turtle cutting and colouring (fine motor)

In our small groups we will focus on the topics of the child protection curriculum (see first column) as well as continue our work on number recognition.

Of course we will continue to watch with anticipation as our outdoor area evolves.

We will also venture to the grassed area in front of the preschool (in small groups) to run, play chasey, hide and seek to help manage being in a confined space!

It is another busy week at preschool.

The next Governing Council meeting is next

Monday May 21st

at 7.15pm for a 7.30pm start.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

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Walks to our bush kindy

Last week we went out walking to our local bush area along the local creek, to practice & prepare for our excursion to Kuitpo Forest.

Our next walk to bush kindy will be next week, Tuesday May 22nd (blue group) and Wednesday May 23rd (Gold group)

We will use our walks to explore the environment and to learn a number of safety rules. These include

- boundary training—not going past the rope so that we don't get lost
- wearing safety vests so that we are highly visible in the forest
- wearing the appropriate shoes / boots to keep us safe from stick injuries & to keep our feet dry
- wearing raincoats to protect us from the cold
- stick / log safety- roll logs to keep us safe from the creatures that may be hiding under the logs
- emergency signal (3 blows on the whistle) if we hear 3 short blows of the whistle it is a signal that there is an emergency and we have to quickly go to the teacher
- gathering signal (1 blow on the whistle) if we hear 1 long blow of the whistle it is a

signal that we need to go to the teacher

- climbing trees (climb no higher than adults shoulders / branches must be thick)
- look out for ants when sitting

It will be very unlikely that we see a snake with the weather now being cool & wet. However we are visiting a woody area where snakes are seen during summer. To prepare, we will teach children that we stomp our feet to scare off any snakes that may be sleeping in the area we are visiting. Just in case we do see a snake, we will learn to stand very still.

The excursion to Kuitpo Forest will be a wonderful experience, but there is much to learn and practice before we go.

We are learning so many safety rules about keeping safe in the forest. It has been a wonderful learning opportunity.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO SEND A COAT FOR OUR WALK NEXT WEEK. Please ensure your child is wearing CLOSED IN SHOES.

Kuitpo Footwear

Kuitpo Forest is a wooded area with lots of leaf and stick litter. Therefore it is important that children and adults have appropriate footwear.

CHILDREN WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO GO ON THE EXCURSION TO KUIPTO FOREST IF THEY ARE WEARING BALLET FLATS, SANDALS OR ANY TYPE OF OPEN SHOE.

Gum boots will be ideal especially if it has been raining. However, if your child doesn't have gum boots, sneakers or other closed-in shoes will be fine. Please note, shoes that are made from "soft" material are likely to get wet & cold, whereas gum boots, sneakers or leather shoes will protect your child's feet.

Closed-in shoes will protect your child's feet from stick injuries and are more stable for climbing logs, trees and walking through leaf & stick litter.

Adults joining us on the excursion, must also wear appropriate footwear for safety & comfort reasons. If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to speak with one of the staff.

Information regarding the excursion

Permission forms and information about our trip to Kuitpo forest will be in the note pockets this Thursday / Friday.

Parents have asked if they can attend the excursion. You will be able to attend the excursion if you have attended the RAN-EC training. Information will be out this week and you will be able to indicate on the form, your attendance. Please note, this excursion is only for preschoolers. We can not invite babies & toddlers for supervision reasons.

Pupil Free Day

Just a reminder, kindly will be closed for a pupil free day **Friday June 8th** Staff will be attending training and development.

Term 2 Fees

Term 2 Fees are due for payment this **Friday May 18th.**

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to speak with me. All conversation will be in strictest confidence.

Boxes, boxes, boxes

We are ready for more boxes for our designers, architects, problem solvers, who love to glue, stick, design with boxes. Boxes of all shapes and sizes are wanted but no bigger than a nappy box. We don't take can's, plastic bottles, milk cartons, washing powder boxes, hygiene boxes etc. Please start collecting!

Hi Vis Vests

On our walks to our local bush kindy and on our excursion to Kuitpo Forest, the children will wear hi visibility jackets so can be seen clearly in densely wooded areas. Adults attending will also need to wear the high visibility jackets so that children can clearly see us.

Whilst we have enough jackets for all children and staff we will not have enough for all parent / carer volunteers.

Last year we were lucky enough to borrow the high vis jackets from a parent who worked in an industry

that used them. Does anyone work in an organization that would have spare high vis jackets. We will need to borrow 15-20 jackets. They will be returned in good condition.

If you can help out please let me know.

Outdoor area up date

As you can see the outdoor area redevelopment is making good progress. We are waiting for the slippery dip and swing frame to put into the soft fall area (western side of the kindy). The lovely big logs will become stepping logs near the slippery dip and in other parts of the yard. We will also have climbing structures in the soft fall area, but will wait to see the space available once the slippery dip and swing goes in. Soon Gus and James will commence the eastern side of the yard, with the nature play area, including digging patch, creek

(with rocks / stones), natural paths, logs and little bush retreats! There is still much to be done with a bench around the sandpit, vegie garden to be finished, deck to be built and fencing around the verandah. The lawn will be going in soon. There is a delay in getting the timber we need, so our project wont probably finish until the end of this term.

It is exciting to see it come together. And imagine the joy..... when the children can actually play in the new outdoor area.

Recently, I have heard some rumours that I am retiring at the end of this year. I have heard it via a few sources in our community.

I just want to reassure everyone, that I am not retiring at the end of this year. This is my 13th year as director of Mitcham Preschool but it isn't the end of my tenure.

I will be here for a bit longer yet, enjoying amongst many things, the wonderful new outdoor area, which has been years in the pipelines!

Kits

Blue group commenced borrowing the kits last week. Many thanks to Bec Richards who is lending and checking the kits each week. Kits will be available again this Thursday.

Jennifer Wilckens has offered to lend out the kits for gold group on Fridays but we are looking for someone who can check them on Wednesdays. Once someone is able to help we can start lending them out.

Checking the kits off can occur at the beginning or end of the session and just means making sure all the contents are in each kit, before they are leant again on the Friday. Checking will only take 30 minutes.

Please let me know if you can help or want more information.

Guess the Baby

Have you seen the Guess the Baby photos / stories. They are just adorable. Come and take a look. The stories the children have told for staff to write are priceless.

Nature Play



What is Nature Play?

In the past, playing outside in nature was a part of everyday, normal childhood experience. Many of us have fond memories of time spent outdoors riding our bikes around the neighbourhood, swinging from the clothesline, climbing trees, playing backyard games of cricket or soccer that spilled out onto the street, picking fruit straight from home grown trees, camping, bushwalking and picnics in our beautiful national parks.

Children today are increasingly unable to relate to these experiences. In fact, South Australian children are spending less time outside in nature than at any other time in our history. In the space of just one generation, there has been a dramatic shift in childhood activity from outdoors to indoors driven by a number of factors including the advent of new screen-based technologies and the emergence of a risk-averse culture.

This has far-reaching consequences for our community. In parallel with the shift indoors we are seeing increasing rates of childhood obesity, depression and behavioural disorders.

Research across the world supports the view that unstructured outdoor play is fundamental to childhood. Opportunities for outdoor play and immersion in nature are essential to the health and wellbeing of children, helping them to develop to their full potential.

Participation in nature play has the ability to enhance children's cognitive flexibility and creativity, boost self-esteem and improve resilience. 'Nature play' includes any unstructured play outdoors such as riding a bike, climbing a tree, gardening, bushwalking and swimming at the beach.

Nature play is, of itself, an intrinsic good and from it flow benefits in health, cognitive, social and emotional development and in the building of resilience and creativity. Experience in nature as a child also leads to 'natural activism', sometimes known as environmental stewardship, later in life.

For more information go to <http://www.natureplaysa.org.au/>

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Have you been to the new Morialta Conservation Park Nature play ground? It is amazing. A wonderful place to climb, risk take, explore, develop gross motor skills, problem solve etc in a beautiful natural environment. Following a major redevelopment Marshmallow Park, Glen Osmond RD Adelaide has now reopened and is a nature play ground. I haven't been to see it as yet, but the photos look amazing. Both playgrounds would be fabulous places to spend time on the weekends.

FREE PLAY

We are often asked what do children "learn" when they are playing at kindy.

Here are just some of the skills they will develop and practice in "free play", where they make choices about participating in a creative activity, outside with their friends, in the home corner, completing a puzzle, using a construction set or reading a book etc.

- I can choose a variety of activities
- I can easily decide what to do
- I can talk easily/freely about what I am doing
- I can work on my own
- I can interact and cooperate with different children
- I can take responsibility for setting up
- I can pack up
- I can share with others
- I can initiate and lead a group
- I can relate to adults around me
- I can be a problem solver
- I can learn to handle different materials
- I can complete tasks
- I can have fun and enjoy
- I can communicate with others
- I can share my skills and expertise
- I can seek help
- I can explore the world around me
- I can explore my own interests
- I can think of a variety of ways to problem solve
- I can think of lots of things to do

Every day is a busy day at kindy where children **through play**, explore, discover, develop, practice, learn, enjoy and have fun!

Funtastics

Thank you to our families for the positive response to funtastics. We had a great response and so will be able to go ahead with the program. As we are going out walking next week to bush kindy, we will have our first funtastics **on Monday May 28th**. I will put up a sign, for you to indicate your availability .

Please remember you need to have attended the RAN-EC for volunteers (or completed it on line) to help out.

Thankyou again for your wonderful support. It is very much appreciated and ensures our fabulous programs can continue.

Finally

We welcome Debbie Wannan to our staff team. Debbie will be working at our centre on Thursdays, providing support for staff and children.

Finally, thankyou as always for your continued support. It is very much appreciated.

Kind regards

Chris, Laura, Amber,
Carol, Lyn, Robbie and Debbie