



## Mitcham Pre School Centre Newsletter

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Term 2  
Newsletter 3

## Thankyou

At last I get a moment to write a newsletter! My apologies there has been limited newsletters & information over the past 3 weeks. It has been a busy few weeks for me with 3 trips to the Riverland in 8 days (to organise & attend my Dad's funeral, clean out his home, plus spend time with my family). Thankyou to everyone with their well wishers with the passing of my Dad. It was truly appreciated and shows the kindness and compassion of our community.

Can you believe we are now in week 7 of term 2? The term is certainly flying by. We have certainly hit the winter ills and cold weather.

### Kuitpo Forest excursion

What a wonderful 2 days we had in the forest last Wednesday and Thursday. The weather was perfect on the Wednesday but we were certainly lucky on Thursday that the rain stayed away. It was cold and windy on Thursday but there was virtually no rain. We were blessed!

It was a wonderful 2 days as we

- Had a long bus ride (1 hour) into the country where we

## Kuitpo Forest

saw cows, sheep and horses, open spaces and the forest. On Thursday some of us even spotted a kangaroo

- We cooked marshmallows on the campfire in our small groups. They were so delicious!
- Climbed and balanced on logs of various heights and lengths
- Found different coloured Fungi (we had to remember we aren't experts at Fungi so couldn't touch it)
- We discovered insects hiding in and under branches and rocks
- We picked up sticks
- We found tee pees in the forest and played games in them
- Some of us even built our own tee pee.
- Some of us went on long walks through the forest
- We had snack and lunch together and enjoyed having sometimes food!! (a major highlight!)
- We remembered safety rules for

travelling on the bus (sitting down / wearing our seat belt) and in the forest (wearing our safety vests / staying in the boundary, climbing trees only to the shoulder height of adults)

- We experienced having a bush weel!
- We remembered safety rules of cooking marshmallows on the campfire (stay next to the adult when cooking a marshmallow, sit on the log to wait for your turn)
- We ended the day with a story in the forest

It was a truly wonderful experience where children took risks, challenged themselves, built resilience, worked together collaboratively, trusted adults and peers to support them, made discoveries and had so much fun, in such a beautiful environment.

(continued over)

The next  
Governing  
Council  
Meeting will be  
**Monday June  
25th**  
7.15pm for a  
7.30pm start.  
Everyone is  
welcome to  
attend.

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## Kuitpo Forest (cont)

Thankyou to the parents & carers who supported the staff and children on the excursion. Your help and support was truly appreciated and ensured everyone kept safe.

Thankyou to Bec Swincer who provided us with some additional safety vest for the adults.

Thankyou to the children who were truly wonderful explorers, adventurers, helpers and friends on this special excursion. It was wonderful to share this experience with you.

During this coming week, the children will complete a drawing for their work folder, on their experiences at Kuitpo Forest.

Laura will also put together a

learning story for each child's folder, on their adventures at Kuitpo. So look out for their work at the end of this week, in your child's work folder.

Also this week, we will put up a slideshow of our Kuitpo adventures on our computer screen. It will be on at the beginning of the morning, Look out for that too.

### What children said about Kuitpo

Children say the most wonderful things. It is usually uncensored and genuine. Below are a few snippets I heard children say about their trip to Kuitpo Forest

"It was the best day of my life"

"It was so much fun"

"I'm going to ask my mum and dad to take me there again"

"I cant wait to go to Kuitpo forest on calendar number 3"

"I love Kuitpo Forest"

Kuitpo Forest is less than an hour from our preschool by car. It is a place where there is freedom to play, climb, discover, explore in such a beautiful natural environment. It is worth an outing with the family.

(take a picnic, wood for a campfire & a bag of marshmallows!)

## Art experience

This week (Thursday and Friday), Sam Wannan will be back at kindy. Sam is an artist and worked with the children in term 1. Sam is going to work with the children again with the focus on forest.

We look forward to having Sam at kindy, sharing in the art experiences with the children.

## Relationship posters

***This Thursday & Friday (June 14th & 15th) is the last day to return relationship posters.***

Although special person's day has now been delayed until week 10, we need to have this activity finished this week, to go on to our next focus area for the child protection curriculum (and the activity associated to it).

## Changes to the term 2 calendar

As the outdoor area redevelopment, is still in progress, we have made some changes to our term 2 calendar

### Week 8 (next week)

- **Monday June 18th**— this will be our next Funtastics, held during normal session time for blue & gold group.

### Week 10

- **Tuesday July 3rd**—Our end of term celebration day for blue group will be "Special person's morning"
- **Wednesday July 4th**—Our end of term celebration day for gold group will be "Special person's morning"

Information regarding special person's morning will be out soon. The children will also make an invitation. The outdoor area, may still not be quite finished and signed off by Kidsafe SA but we will have all the verandah, sandpit and lawn area to use. Plus we will have activities set up in each room inside.

We will make it strictly **1 adult to each child**, due to the space available. I know sometimes children like to bring more than 1 adult. But with less space this year, we will have **1 adult to each child**.

***Over the next 4 weeks, we may continue our walks to bush kindy. We will let you know, via app / email if & when we go out.***

## This week at kindy

Our next topic of the child protection curriculum is Trust

So we will explore

**"What does trust mean?"**

This is a very important aspect of the child protection curriculum, understanding what trust means, and who you can trust to keep you safe, look after you, care for you and support you.

To support our focus of learning this week we will have inside

- Letter of the week is "E e" for excursion (literacy)
- Writing / drawing table—family members word cards to copy (literacy)
- Home corner with doctors kits with teddy's (dramatic play)
- Easels—forest paintings (creativity / observation skills)
- Light table with adjuncts (numeracy—shape & space)
- Challenge puzzle table (numeracy / problem solving)
- Construction table (problem solving)
- Subitising table (numeracy)
- Box making (problem solving)
- Dome with forest theme (dramatic play)

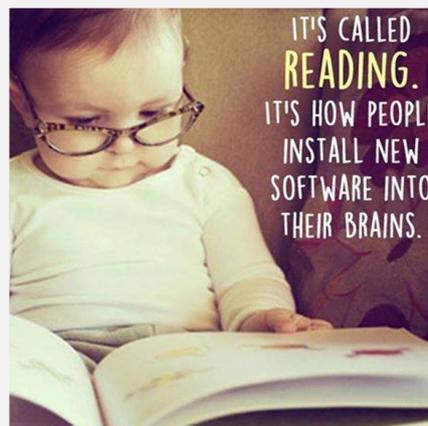
Outside there will be

- Rainbow wash painting (creativity)
- Lid sorting (numeracy)
- Measuring kits (numeracy)
- Tools table (problem solving / fine motor)
- Games table (numeracy)
- cutting activity (fine motor)

Plus we will

- Be drawing our experiences from Kuitpo forest
- Engaging in an art experience with Sam
- We will continue to watch Gus and James and the development of our outdoor area.

It's another busy week at kindy



## Funtastics

Our first funtastics went really well with the children adapting to the new program, with ease. We have lots of parent / carer support, which enabled the program to run smoothly

Thankyou to everyone who helped with the last funtastics. Your help was very much appreciated.

Our next funtastics is next **Monday June 18th, during normal session time**

- **9am—10.30am for blue group**
- **12.45pm—2.15pm for gold group**

**We are looking for helpers again next Monday, so if you can help out, please put your name on the board.** Please remember, you need to have attended RAN-EC training.

Due to the structure of funtastics, we cannot invite babies & toddlers.

## A thought!

### Creative Thinking

"The principle of good education is to create people who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done.

A second major goal is to form minds which can be critical, can verify, and not accept everything they are offered."

(Jean Piaget)

## Carpark update

I have been advised that work will commence on the northern side of the car park, most likely next week. This is the area, where the fencing is currently erected. Once work commences, the area will be totally blocked off as the asphalt will be taken up and some of the garden beds removed. Once prepared, work will commence on paving and restructuring the layout of the carpark.

As a result of this work, trucks will be accessing the car park (after 9am and before 3pm— hopefully!!). The only car parking available to us, will be immediately in front of our building and the toilet block in the park. Therefore, I would recommend parking in the streets surrounding our block (eg Angas Rd) and walking in. Once finished, the car park will be opened up for us, but that may be a few months.

The remainder of the car park (the area that is available to us now) will not be completed until much later in the year. They want to complete the Brownhill Creek work first, before that section of car parking is finished. As part of the Brownhill Creek work, trucks will be accessing the car park taking away soil etc. So as not to damage new work with the trucks, it will be completed later.

Thankyou to everyone for their patience with the limited car parking spaces. Whilst it can be frustrating having to walk in with babies, toddlers and kindy age children (especially when it is raining or very hot), the outcome for the Mitcham community will be amazing. You will have a wonderful new library, Brownhill Creek will be better managed in times of flood and will be developed as a nature play area for families. Plus there will be increased parking for the preschool and library users. It is a year long project, so difficult for the families of 2018 to manage. However, beyond 2018, the outcome will be well worth waiting for.

## Up date on our outdoor area redevelopment

Our outdoor area redevelopment is progressing well. We have had a delay in waiting for some timber as well as the new swing frame. (It is hard to believe that building a swing frame can take 6 -8 weeks!!!). Once the playground is finished, we need to have it inspected by Kidsafe SA. They will come in and check that all areas are safe in regards to heights, finger and head entrapments etc. Our landscaper has been working with Kidsafe throughout the project, so any adjustments should only be minor, once the inspection has taken place. Once this has occurred, and we have been given the safety approval, the playground will be opened up.

We are expecting the remainder of the work will be completed over the next four weeks of term 2. There have been major areas of development such as the paving, sandpit, wall for the vegie garden, which naturally takes a significant amount of time. There is so much work that goes into these areas in preparation etc. However, the remaining work (once the deck is finished), will not take long to complete. So with the commencement of term 3, the outdoor area should be ready for us!! (As long as we don't have significant rain events!!)

Hopefully this week, the lawn area will be opened up as this does not require inspection from Kidsafe. So we will have more space available to us such as all the sandpit, verandah and lawn. The rest will be fenced off.

It is a major project, and time allocated was approximately 8—10 weeks. So we are well within the project time span. Whilst the children have felt restricted at times in outdoor play and there has been a sense of "cabin fever", overall I feel that most children have managed well. The noise from our work and the work at the library has been difficult to manage at times as well. Our trips to bush kindy, games in the garden / park immediately adjacent to our front door, and of course our excursion to Kuitpo have assisted in stretching our legs outdoors and getting away from the noise of machines.

It wont be long now, until we have a wonderful redeveloped outdoor play space for us to explore, discover, play in and enjoy. It's only a few more weeks of "practicing our patience" to play outside in all the space. A comment I heard from a child about our outdoor play space....."I think I will be an adult when it is finished". It must seem like that to 4 year olds!!!

# Being respectful

One of the many things we teach and promote at our preschool is "being respectful". That is being respectful when

- Listening to and playing with our friends (getting along together)
- Listening to adults (at mat time and throughout the day)
- Following instructions from adults
- Greeting and farewelling (saying hello and goodbye)
- Taking care and looking after the toys and resources we have at kindy (and at home)

Being respectful is an important life skill which we need as children and through into adulthood.

We know "children will be children" and they are still learning the skills of life. They have only been on this Earth for 4 (or 5) years and still need lots of practice to develop skills such as being respectful.

However, we have noticed recently that many children are struggling in developing this skill. For example,

- They are "trashing" & breaking our toys (including the many things we borrow from the Nature Education Centre). Even simple things such as putting lids on textas, isn't happening
- The kindy often looks like a disaster zone as the children have left things lying everywhere
- They have been finding sitting and listening at mat times a challenge and will talk to children sitting with them. (we allow talking time with peers at mat time but also listening time. They are struggling to know when to stop and listen)
- Some are struggling with following instructions. For example, they may be asked to come and have snack / do an activity / come to mat time, but will say "No" or refuse to do what is asked (Of course, we don't let them get away with it!)
- Many children are struggling in getting along with their peers— listening to each other, including peers in their games etc

We have been working on "being respectful" through

- discussions, (1:1 and in group times)
- taking photos of areas of the kindy that have been trashed and then discussing what is wrong and how we can change.
- We have a set of white shelves in the main room with nothing in them at the moment. The children had broken many items, ripped books as well as spread the items to other areas of the kindy, creating a huge mess. So we have been learning about consequences

- We have been working on children's social skills supporting them in getting along
- and talking about listening to the teacher (and other adults). There are times when you are asked to do something by an adult and you don't have a choice.

We use the word "respectful" and 'being respectful' constantly in our conversations.

This week we are going to reread the book "The way to A" - this is the book that explains the A and B Choices. We will also brainstorm with the children and

- Describe what does respectful mean
- come up with a set of values and rules that we all need to work towards, to help us develop our skills of being respectful.
- What might happen if we don't follow these rules (consequences)

You will see these rules (that the children help us decide) displayed somewhere in the preschool.

If you are having difficulties at home, with your child / children being respectful, you may like to do the same as we are at kindy, such as talking about being respectful (what does it mean at home), work out as a family a set of values and rules (for every member of the family) to work towards, and the consequences when the rules / values are not adhered to. These rules & values can be placed on the fridge to prompt everyone.

Don't hesitate to speak with me, if you want further information how to work through being respectful in a family setting.

We feel that it is very important that at kindy, we support children in developing the skill of being respectful. It is an important skill for life.

# Learning to read and write

Children will commence kindergarten between 3.8 years and 4.8 years of age and bring to the centre a range of skills, interests, experiences, abilities and knowledge. We value each child as an individual and are at different stages of their learning. Each child has the ability to learn but all children learn in equally meaningful but different ways and at different paces.

This is so evident when we look at children's ability to read and write at kindy. Some children can recognise their name and may even be at the point of writing some or all of the letters of their name. Some children may be able to identify some letters of the alphabet and familiar words & symbols eg "exit, stop, McDonald's, KFC" etc. However, many children at 4 years of age are not interested in learning to recognise the alphabet or write their name. They have other priorities such as developing their social skills, working on creative tasks or finding more about their world. There is no set time frame for developing such skills or the order they are achieved. These skills will come all "in good time" – that is, when your child is ready.

If your child is showing an interest in reading and writing, there are some very simple things you can do to support them

- Most important is to praise their efforts even if their name is spelt backwards or some letters are missing. Positive comments such as "You are doing a great job at writing your name" makes them feel so special and encourages them to keep on trying
- **Always teach your child to write in "lower case" eg a,b,c,d,e,f...** This is how they are taught at school. If we teach them to write in capitals eg A,B,C,D,E children then have to relearn how to write
- When writing their name encourage them to write from the left to the right side of the page
- Write out shopping lists allowing children to help you with the writing
- Write easy words for children to copy eg when going to a party let your child write on the card (you can write the message & they can copy)
- Let them write their friends names on their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday party invitations
- Let them make some books. They can draw some pictures and you can write a story about the drawings
- Children love making signs at kindy. At home you can write the word and they can copy it. Hang the signs up to show you are proud of their achievements.
- Rather than reciting the alphabet, help your child to identify letters on signs, in magazines, in newspapers
- See if they can recognise letters of their name on signs & magazines
- Cut out words and pictures from junk mail
- When reading story books let them read joining words eg "and, the, I, but" (books with large print and a few words are good for this)
- Let them predict in stories what's going to happen next

Look at the cover of a book before starting and work out what the story is going to be about

These are just a few of a huge range of activities to support children in learning the skills of reading and writing. At kindergarten we don't make the children learn how to write but if they are showing some interest, we will certainly encourage them and provide a number of opportunities for them to practice.

Remember children will only have success at writing if they are ready and if we encourage, support and acknowledge all their achievements no matter how small. Finally when children do start to write they will not be "perfect". It actually takes a lot of skill to hold a pencil correctly, and then move their hand & arm in a writing motion. It will take a lot of practice.

If you would like any further information on reading or writing, or want some other ideas, we are always willing to help. Just ask one of the staff.

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

Kind regards

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