



Mitcham



Preschool  
Centre

## Mitcham Pre School Centre Newsletter

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Term 3  
Newsletter 1

### This week at kindy

This week we will continue on our focus of learning

#### "Celebrating Australia"

Our inquiry will be exploring

#### What are native Australian animals?

We will differentiate between animals that are born in Australia (native) and those animals that are born in other countries but come and live in our Zoo's.

It is a hard concept to understand but worth exploring.

To support our learning, this week we will have Wilbur's wildlife visit this Tuesday (blue group) and Wednesday gold group).

We will get to look at, pat or hold a number of different native Australian animals.

Inside this week we will have to support our learning

- Still life painting (pineapple) (observation skills / fine motor)
- Wombat Stew story table (dramatic play / language)
- Playdough with cutters & garlic press (fine motor / sensory)

- Dolls & books in the dome (dramatic play)
- Number activities on numeracy table / boards to copy & write numbers (numeracy / fine motor)
- Sorting adjuncts by colour (numeracy)
- Matching game with Australian animals (numeracy / literacy)
- Australian animal cards to copy on drawing table (Literacy / fine motor)
- Home corner with Asian adjuncts (dramatic play)
- Tree ladder (challenge & persistence)
- Duck bobbing / number hunt in water trough (numeracy)
- Slime (sensory)
- Construction set (problem solving)
- Lego (problem solving)

We will also continue to practice writing our name, using our name cards to copy and finding out what letters are in our name.

It's a busy week at kindy.

Outside there will be

- Hammock (sensory)
- Australian animal hunts (challenge & persistence)
- Sand tray with Australian animals (sensory)
- Dramatic play scene with reptiles
- Cutting activities (fine motor)
- Dinosaurs in digging patch with natural adjuncts (sensory)

The friendship lists will be distributed via the children's note pockets later this week. If you didn't return the friendship list form in time (which was attached to the first newsletter of the year) and would like to be included on the friendship list, please see me for a form.

The friendship list will be updated early term 2.

#### Inside this issue:

Rosie & Wowies Family picnics	2
Kindy calendar	2
Developing independence	3
Assessment and reporting	4
Calling all Australian's	4
Advanced notice about wheels day	5
Work folders	6

# Rosie & Wowie, our take home teddy bears

We have 2 teddy bears for both gold group & blue group. Their names are Rosie and Wowie. These teddy bears go home each weekend to children's homes, where they have wonderful adventures with the families. As part of the experience, we ask that you record your child's / families adventures in the book provided, by writing a story. You can add photos and your child can include drawings. The teddy bears are then returned the following Monday where your child shares their story with the group. We have lots of children but only 2 teddies per group. Everyone will have a turn, but your child may just have to wait. It isn't easy to wait for a turn, but everyone is guaranteed to get a turn.

We will send Rosie & Wowie home this weekend.

We look forward to hearing about the many wonderful adventures of Rosie and Wowie.

## Family Picnics

In week 6 we are having family picnics for gold & blue group families. The purpose of the picnic is for families to get to meet & socialise. The picnics will be held at Mitcham Reserve, Old Belair Rd, 5.30pm—7pm.

**Blue group picnic will be held on Tuesday March 3rd**

**Gold group picnic will be held on Wednesday March 4th**

Last year, the picnics were a great success, with a large number of families attending. It provided a wonderful opportunity for children

to play, parents to meet & mingle. From this occasion, many strong friendships were formed both for children & parents, which remained throughout the year.

A note will be placed in your child's note pocket this week. We hope you can make it to our family picnic.

## Absent from kindy

If your child is absent from preschool, please ring and let one of the staff know.

Staff are in attendance from 8.15am.

Alternatively, you can send me an email

Thank you

Children are so busy at kindy everyday in so many different ways. We have so many children who love painting and / or box construction. However by the end of the day, when they are so tired, they may have forgotten to look for their painting or box construction.

- Box constructions are kept on the wooden shelves on the verandah for the week.
- Paintings are on the peg racks for the day then placed in the blue basket (for blue group) and white basket (for gold group). They are kept in the baskets for about 2 weeks (or until the baskets are full)

So please check with your child if they have completed a painting or box construction and check the cupboard / painting rack / baskets. Otherwise they do get placed in the recycle bins, if they can't be recycled within our program.

## Calendar to support literacy & numeracy skills

Have you seen our calendar? It is on the white notice board where the teacher sits at the front for group time. The calendar shows days of the week, months, numbers and events for term 1. We will use the calendar to

- Recognize the pattern of the days of the week
- Number recognition
- Counting down, counting on

- Developing an understanding of months of the year
- celebrate birthdays
- Plus it will help us know & remember important kindy events

Calendars provide wonderful literacy & numeracy learning opportunities. Also children really work well when they are informed, know routines etc. !

For some children, changes in routines suddenly "sprung on" them, can be stressful.

Please come and check out our calendar!

## Developing independence

One important learning outcome for children in their year at preschool is developing independence. Not just independence in leaving their family each day and remaining & coping in the care of staff at preschool, but developing independence skills. That is, developing skills to manage everyday tasks with out the support of adults. For example, putting on their own socks and shoes, washing their hands before eating, wiping their own bottom, finding their own snack in their bag, hanging up their painting, putting on a smock , getting their own jumper on or off etc, etc. We know they are only 4 years old (and some are still 3years old). However, at school there is high expectations by teachers that they are independent and manage these "life skills" without support of adults. So the kindy year, is the perfect time to encourage your child's independence.

We have found many children have limited skills in managing tasks independently. Lots of children are expecting adults "to do everything" for them. So we have started the process of encouraging independence. That is, with prompts & gentle persuasion we have expected them to "have a go" and try some everyday tasks such as putting on their socks & shoes. We talk them through the process, remind them they are "big kindy kids" and generally, they complete the tasks (even if some help is still required).

Being independent is empowering for your child. Believing in themselves, that they "can do it" and succeed in everyday tasks (and in other situations). Believing that adults feel they are worthwhile and capable, helps develop a positive self esteem. That is, a positive belief in themselves.

If your child relies on you to complete tasks, try and encourage independence starting with putting their pyjamas on by themselves. This time of the day is usually more relaxed rather than hustle of getting out of the house each morning. The weekend is also a good time to practice these tasks, where you generally have more time. Remember to give them plenty of time, lots of encouragement and praise and hints to step them through the process.

Independence skills are life skills. Skills your child will not only need at preschool, but at school, at work and in life. 4 years of age is the perfect time to help your child develop these skills. If you need any help & support, don't hesitate to speak with any on the staff. We are here to help.

## Challenge tasks

We have introduced the concept of "challenges". Challenges are tasks, or experiences, that can be a little difficult or "tricky" to do / participate in. Challenges can some times make us feel frustrated, worried or anxious. However, if we take a risk, have a go and persist at the task, we can have success.

It might take time, but not to give up. Keep trying.

Achievements are very satisfying. They make us feel happy, proud, fulfilled and successful. Overcoming a challenge helps build self esteem and a belief in ourselves as successful learners.

We have introduced challenge puzzles. These puzzles will be indicated by a yellow star. Having a go at a "tricky" puzzle, persisting and not giving up, developing strategies to complete the puzzle rather than just walking away eg asking a friend or teacher for help, are skills that can be applied to any task or experience.

We have had the number hunt...finding numbers hidden outside. Once the children find the numbers, they tick them off their sheet of paper. The numbers can be hidden in tricky places and not easy to find. The children are encouraged to persist, not to give up, work with a friend to find the numbers.

"Challenge, persistence, hard work" are part of our part of our daily conversations.

As the term / year continues, we will add in further challenge tasks, encouraging children to take a risk, have ago, and persist—important skills for life and learning. (Yellow stars indicate the challenge tasks)

***These challenge tasks are all part of the work that we do at our preschool to support children to develop "Growth Mindsets". I will send out information on growth mindsets over the next few weeks.***

# Assessment and reporting / conversations with staff

During your child's year at kindy it is a requirement for staff to monitor and assess their progress. This happens through a number of processes.

1. In their first term, staff will informally assess your child in some key literacy / numeracy & fine motor areas to give us a "picture" of where they are in their development. This occurs on a one on one basis, generally in weeks 5 & 6, once the children have settled into routines.
2. Following the informal assessment Maddie, Suzi or myself will give you some feedback via an informal conversation. We make a time to see you either at the beginning or end of the day, requiring 10–15 minutes of your time.
3. Throughout the year, staff will continue to monitor your child's progress through observations, conversations with children & parents, at funtastics, taking photos, collecting examples of their work and using learning stories
4. Through out the year, we provide feedback on children's progress to families, as required. Staff and / or parents may initiate conversations to discuss your child's progress.
5. During your child's 3rd or 4th term at preschool, we again informally assess each child. At this point, our assessment is more comprehensive as we are covering a wider range of literacy & language skills / numeracy skills / motor skills / social skills
6. Again following this informal assessment, Laura, Amber or myself will make time to meet with you, to provide feedback on your child's progress & development

6. In their final term, this information is formatted in a "Statement of Learning" that is forwarded on to your child's school.

Assessing and reporting on your child's progress is an important part of the work we do. Keeping you informed on their progress and working together to achieve positive learning outcomes, is imperative for your child.

We look forward to providing you with some feedback following our informal assessing after weeks 5 & 6

If you have any concerns or feel you need to share some information about your child, don't hesitate to speak with one of the staff.

I realize that parents are keen to talk with me about their child, sharing information from home or finding out how they are going at kindy. Often I have a line up of parents waiting to speak with me. The other staff members of our team (Maddie, Suzi, Lyn, Robyn, Karen ) are highly skilled teachers / ECW's, who are more than willing to assist you.

So to avoid waiting in line to see me, please also use these staff members as your points of contact. They will always share the information with me, and if necessary, I will follow up with you at a later time (eg next day).

We have a wonderful staff team, who work closely together, to ensure that your child is supported in the best way possible. We ensure that information is shared so that parents don't feel they have the need to inform every staff member. By telling one staff member, you can be assured that your concerns or ideas will be shared as a team.

## Calling all Australian's!

Outside the main kindy door there will be a table with an activity "**Calling all Australians**"

Each time the activity is available, there will a question related to our focus of learning.

For example, this week the children have to work out which animal is native to Australia (giraffe or kangaroo)

They write their name and put a tick next to their answer

The table is out from Tuesday to Friday and then the following Monday, we find out the answer to our question by checking & counting.

It is an opportunity to develop skills such as

- Problem solving
- Predicting
- Estimating
- persistence
- Numeracy—numbers,

- Counting, measuring, numbers, sorting etc (dependent on the activity)
- Literacy skills (writing their name etc)
- Fine motor control (holding & manipulating textas)

Please allow your child the opportunity to come up with their answer to the question. Often as adults, we want to work it out for them, usually so they are correct.

But one of the many purposes of the activity is for them to problem solve independently. You can support your child to work out their answer, but allow them to "do the work".

Also allow your child to write their name. You can always write underneath, so we can decipher it. The more practice they have in writing their name, the more competent and confident they will become.

Happy exploring!



# Advanced Notice about Wheels Day

Wheels day will be held in week 9. (5 weeks times) and it is our only fundraiser for the year. I am giving you advanced notice as you will need to arrange to take your child & their bike or scooter to Mitcham Primary School. We will start our day at the school (not at kindy) and return to the preschool later in the morning.

At the end of the morning, your child's bike / scooter will need to be collected. For those families who can not get their children back to kindy after wheels day, we will walk them back, but we cannot take bikes & scooters with us.

In past years, parents with four wheel drives have assisted in getting bikes back to kindy. But we will organize that closer to the time.

Some details are below, but further information, permission forms & sponsorship forms will be out in 2 weeks.

**Blue group**—Tuesday March 24th

**Gold group**—Wednesday March 25th

Wheels day is held at

- Mitcham Primary School Ashbourne Ave, Kingswood.
- 9am—11.30am
- Session back at kindy at 12noon. (the session is an official preschool session for kindy children only)
- Pizza for lunch at 12.30pm for kindy children only
- Session finishes as normal at 3pm

It is a great event, much loved each year by the children and remembered long into the year. Children ride their bikes / scooters around the bike track at Mitcham Primary School, followed by snack and a special ceremony. We hope your child will be able to join us.

## Practicing for wheels day

Our very special and much loved Wheels Days will be held in week 9 at Mitcham Primary School bike track. Did you know that you can use the bike track on weekends or after school? The school is a public place. It is the perfect place to teach your child how to ride a bike / or move from a bike with trainer wheels to a 2 wheeler.

Over the next few weeks, you may wish to take your child to the school with their bike, to practice for wheels day, especially if they are not a confident rider. Each lap of the bike track is 0.5 of a kilometer. So for some children, it is a challenge to complete multiple laps.

Practicing beforehand, will help them to know the track and feel more confident on the day.

## Diary Dates

### Week 6

**Monday March 2nd**—Governing Council meeting

**Tuesday March 3rd**—Blue group family picnic

**Wednesday March 4th**—Gold group family picnic

Wednesday March 4th & Thursday March 5th—library visits during the afternoon.

### Week 7

**Monday March 9th**—public holiday

### Week 8

**Monday March 16th**—Incursion-with Trent Hill Aboriginal story teller during normal session times.

**Monday March 16th**—

RAN-EC training for volunteers 7pm—9pm

### Week 9

**Tuesday March 24th**—wheels day for blue group

**Wednesday March 25th**—wheels day for goldgroup

### Week 11—last week of term 1

**Tuesday April 7th**—blue group celebration day

**Wednesday April 8th**—gold group celebration day

**Friday April 10th**—Good Friday

# Administration of medication

Children who require medication must have a health care plan signed off by their doctor. Staff can not administer medication without a health care plan. For example, if your child has an allergy to foods / bee stings etc and requires treatment via epi pen or medication, we must have a health care plan. If your child has asthma (even mild doses) we must have a health care plan.

Also medication **MUST** be provided every day your child is at kindy, just in case we need to administer it. Some parents with children who have asthma or food allergies, have medication left at our site for the year. Other families prefer to bring their medication in on a daily basis. Whatever system is best for you, is fine, but just remembering we need to have the medication available every day your child is at kindy.

Where your child has an infection and requires antibiotics for short periods of time, we do not need a health care plan. However, we must have a letter signed by the doctor indicating the need for antibiotics, dosage and time of administering eg before lunch.

We **CANNOT** administer antibiotics without this information from the doctor. The label on the bottle is **NOT** sufficient information for staff to give your child their medication. With winter illnesses approaching (although hard to believe!!) please be aware of the requirements for staff in administering medication.

## Staffing

As a director it is my responsibility to attend meetings throughout the year. At times through the year, staff may need to take leave due to illness or personal reasons.

Whenever possible, I will always ensure that we have continuity of relief staff....staff who work here on a casual basis.

This ensures that we can continue with our curriculum, the relief staff know the children, centre staff and daily routines well.

I have a partnership meeting on this

Thursday February 20th—Sara will be the relief teacher

I have a leaders day on Thursday February 27th Sara will be the relief teacher.

When I am at meetings in Maddie / Suzi takes on a leaders role.

## Work folders

Maddie has been putting together learning stories for each child, on their transition into preschool. All blue group children now have a learning story and gold groups will be finished this week.

Come and share the story with your child. The folders are in our quiet corner, in the main room. Over the next few weeks, a number of learning stories will be added to each child's folder as we participate in special activities such as Trent Hill, Wilbur's Wildlife and Wheels Day. The folder evolves over each term / year, as children's work also is added to their folder.

Enjoy sharing the folder with your child.

## Fees

Just a reminder, term 1 fees are due this

**Friday February 21st**

If you have any queries about paying fees, please come and speak with me. All conversations are in strictest confidence.

## Finally

Thank you as always for your continued support.

It is always appreciated.

Chris, Maddie, Suzi,  
Lyn, Robyn, Karen