



Mitcham Pre School Centre Newsletter

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This week at kindy

I can't believe we are now in week 7 and over half way through term 1.

This week we will continue on with our focus

"Celebrating Australia"

Last week we explored some famous landmarks in Australia such as Uluru, Sydney Harbour Bridge, Great Barrier Reef and Kangaroo Island.

This week we will move our focus onto

"Who were the first people to live in Australia?"

With Trent Hill (Aboriginal Story teller) coming in to tell a dream time story next week, and share some of his artefacts, we will commence finding out more about the first land owners in Australia.

To support our learning we will have inside

- Aboriginal Artefacts table (understanding our world)
- Mark making table with Aboriginal symbols on rocks to copy (literacy / fine motor skills)
- Story table—"Tiddalick the Frog" - dream time

story (literacy / language)

- Challenge puzzle table—Aboriginal puzzle (persistence / problem solving)
- Numeracy table—rock symbol matching game (numeracy)
- Craft table—continue still life paintings of Australian landmarks (observation skills)
- Home corner with dolls (dramatic play)
- Playdough with collage materials (sensory)
- Rhyming game on pallet (literacy)
- Fine motor activities on wooden pallets (fine motor skills)
- Dome with pets & books (dramatic play)

Outside there will be

- Aboriginal flag to paint at the easels (observation skills)
- Sticks and woll wrapping (fine motor)
- Trough with sand—small trucks, wooden adjuncts (dramatic play / sensory)

- Black tray with water, sea creatures, number stones (sensory)
- Obstacle course (gross motor)
- Trampoline (gross motor)
- Potions table (sensory)
- Cutting activity—turtle cutting (fine motor)
- Tinker table (fine motor)
- Swings—trapeze & ladder (gross motor)
- Blocks and landmarks photos (numeracy / literacy)
- Construction set (problem solving)
- Hammering—(gross motor)
- Land marks hunt (challenge / persistence)
- Water & paint-brushes (sensory / mark making)

Look out for "Calling all Aussies" where children have to work out which jar has the most Australian animals, recording their name and answer on the sheet provided.

It is another busy week at kindy.

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Please note, with our focus of learning this term, we had planned to explore multiculturalism, as part of our inquiry into **Celebrating Australia**.

(That is, find out more about the culture of our kindy families)

However, with the term going by very quickly, it is likely that we may not have time to do so (especially with wheels day taking up a lot of week 9)

So we will include this aspect of the curriculum, in our term 2 focus,

"All about me and people in our world"

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Assessing & feedback

During weeks 5 and 6 Maddie, Suzi and myself have informally assessed all children in literacy / numeracy and fine motor skills.

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.

Maddie, Suzi or myself will see you to book in an interview date and time. This will occur until the end of term 1.

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.

Please note, I do have Fridays available as this is my admin day.

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).

We look forward to sharing your child's progress with you.

Fine motor skills

One aspect we noticed through the assessing process, was that many children had trouble in their fine motor development. That is the ability to hold and manipulate pencil, textas and scissors successfully. Fine motor 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.

Just a thought

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.

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 our incursion with Wilbur's Wildlife; Trent Hill, Aboriginal story teller on Monday March 16th.

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

Pupil free days

Each year, preschools are allowed to have 4 pupil free days for the purpose of professional development, which includes working towards achieving our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). Pupil free days must be approved by the Governing Council.

At last weeks Governing Council meeting, the following dates have been approved for the first 2 pupil free days

- Monday March 30th
- Friday June 5th

The other 2 dates are yet to be decided. But we always make sure that pupil free days are equally shared between both groups.

On Monday March 30th, the staff will be undertaking professional development at the pre-school, to ensure we are working toward achieving the goals of our QIP.

SO THERE WILL BE NO KINDY ON MONDAY MARCH 30th.

Sun hats

Whilst we have had some cloudy and cooler days recently, the UV rating is still very high. That means children still need to wear a sunhat. Our policy "**No hat no outside play**" is still in practice (and will be for all of term 1, and possibly until sometime during May)

Lots of children are not bringing sunhats which means they cannot play outside. This can be very distressing for some children when they realise they don't have a hat in their bag.

So please send a sunhat everyday.

No beanies as they don't protect children's faces from the sun.

Please note, we do not have spare hats due to head lice. Head lice is highly contagious so children only wear their own hats.

Family picnics

What wonderful turn outs we had to the 2 family picnics. Both were wonderful evenings where children played, adults socialized, dinner was eaten (by some children!!) and friendships forged. On both nights, it was such a lovely atmosphere and a wonderful sense of community emerging. I didn't get to speak with all families as so many families attended. But I hope you managed to chat with one of the staff as well as other parents.

Thankyou to the staff who gave up their evenings to be part of this special occasion.

We hope you had a wonderful evening.

No more boxes. We have an overload of boxes at the moment. We will let you know when we need more.

Thankyou.

Respect and being respectful

At preschool, we talk a lot about "respect" and being "respectful". This applies to respecting

- The things we play with and use at preschool
- Our friends
- The teachers
- The environment eg insects, birds, plants etc

We talk about being respectful such as

- Listening to our friends
- Playing, working, sharing with our friends
- Listening to the teachers such as at mat times or when they are guiding children in the choices they make etc.
- Caring for the environment
- Looking after our toys, books, games and other equipment
- Taking care of our work folders

We have found this year, so many of our resources have been broken and have had to keep working through the concepts of respecting (and looking after) the things we play with.

It has really surprised us, just how many things have been broken in the first 6 weeks of term.

I do think there are some reasons that create this problem

- Many children spend a lot of time on electronic devices so have limited experiences in using other resources
- Some children have limited skills in manipulating equipment eg poor grip strength
- Children haven't learnt yet, about respecting what we / they have

Being respectful is such an important life skill. It is a "behaviour" and "attitude" that children and adults need "to get on in life".

We will continue to keep working with the children about respecting the "things" we have at kindy such as

- taking care of toys etc
- ⇒ This includes playing carefully and putting things away when they are finished (rather than leaving them on the ground)
- ⇒ Even small tasks such as putting lids on textas is respecting & caring for our resources

These are terms you may like to use at home, to follow on with what we are working through at kindy.

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to come and speak with me.

Maddie has now completed a Wilbur's Wildlife learning story for each child (who were here on that day). It is now in your child's work folder. So come and have a look with your child. The learning stories are a great way for children to recall what happened on that day, using language to describe and discuss what they saw and did. They will love sharing the learning story with you.

Have you seen the turtle drawings on the wall near the home corner? The children used their observation skills to notice different aspects of the turtle. They used their fine motor skills to then draw the turtle and write their name.

The drawings are wonderful and demonstrate also just how quickly children's skills are developing eg writing their name

These drawings will go into their work folder at the end of the term.

I want to give you some advanced notice of some very special dates in term 4.

We will have a celebration day (a concert followed by lunch) in week 7 of term 4. (**blue group Tuesday November 24th / gold group Wednesday November 25th**).

It is a wonderful day where the children sing a number of songs, give you the present they have made and then we share in a lunch. It is a busy day and we finish by 1.30pm. (No kindy after 1.30pm)

On the children's last morning of kindy we have a graduation morning.

(**Blue group Thursday December 10th and Gold Group Friday December 11th**).

We have a morning tea for children & family members and then a graduation ceremony. The morning concludes at 12noon. There is no kindy in the afternoon. Staff are on site cleaning the centre, but there are no programs for children.

I know these dates seem such a long way off. However, feedback from some parents in previous years, was they wanted more notice when finishing times of sessions varied.

During the year, we have 3 after hour events where children have the opportunity to attend, therefore they still access the required number of hours.

For now put the dates in your diary and keep them free for these very special events.

Immunisation Information

With the commencement of the 2020 school year, the Department for Education have instructed preschools, that we must have a copy in your child's file, of their immunisation record.

At the time of enrolment last year, we only had to site immunisation records but now we must have a copy of their immunisation history statement. You can access

- Your Medicare online account logging into myGov
- The express Plus Medicare mobile app.

Can you please provide me with a copy of the immunisation document by **Friday March 20th**. You can bring in a hard copy or send me a copy via email (and I will run it off for your child's file). If you don't have a printer, we can print a copy at the preschool.

Wheels Day Notes

Wheels days is fast approaching
Blue group—Tuesday March 24th
Gold group—March 25th

A note and sponsorship form was placed in your child's note pocket last week. A final note and permission form will be in your note pocket later this week.

Wheels day is a very special day and much loved by the children. It is our only fundraiser for the year. This year we are raising money to purchase

- **Wet weather play resources including boots, coats, umbrellas, boot stand**
- **Magnetic water wall; Canal & water tower system; funnel table & slide kit**

Look out for the final note and permission form in your child's note pocket Thursday / Friday

We are looking forward to wonderful Wheels Day.

Up coming events

Week 8

Monday March 16th—

Incursion with Trent Hill—
Aboriginal Story teller at preschool
for blue and gold groups

**RAN-EC training for volunteers
to be held at the preschool
6.45pm for 7pm start—9pm.**

If you would like to volunteer on
excursions, with Funtastics etc, you
need to attend the RAN-EC train-
ing.

If you have attended this training
in the last 3 years at a school, I
just need a copy of the certificate.

**RSVP for the RAN-EC training is
due by this Friday March 13th**

Week 9

Tuesday March 24th

Blue group wheels day at Mitcham
Primary

Wednesday March 26th

Gold group wheels day at Mitcham
Primary

Information and sponsorship form
was in children's note pockets last
week.

Further information and permis-
sion form will be sent home this
week

Week 10

Monday March 30th -

Pupil free day—no kindy on this
day

Week 11

Tuesday April 7th -

Blue group celebration day

Wednesday April 8th-

Gold group celebration day & last
day of term for gold group

Thursday April 9th—

Last day of term 1 for blue group

Friday April 10th

Good Friday

Governing Council

What a wonderful turn out we had at the AGM, after my
"SOS" for help. It was so good to see so many people at kindy
that night in support of the preschool.

The 2020 Governing Council was elected and are

Chair person—Eleanor Blight

Vice Chair—Gareth Arentz

Secretary—Jayde Clark

Treasurer—Mark Anders

Social Members

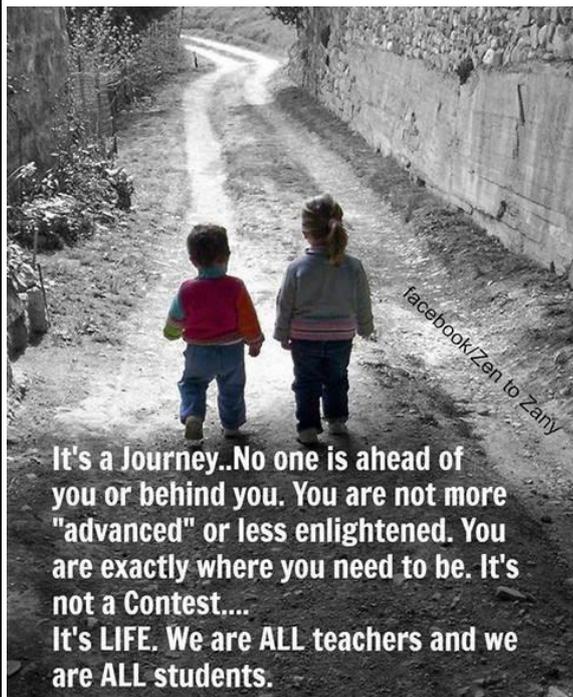
Farah Mugal, Tom & Naomi Dalton, Catherine Dichiera, Megan
Noble, Zara McDonald, Thilina Gunasekara, Vikas Rauthan, Sa-
rah Falkenberg, Casey Parker-Todd, Lynette Day, Abby How-
ard, Mon Vickery, Candice Connolly, Courtney Skuse, Anna Hi-
gnett

As we will have the RAN-EC training on March 16th, our next
meetings will be in term 2

Week 2—May 4th

Week 6—June 1st.

Thankyou to everyone who has volunteered their time to join
the Governing Council. Anyone is welcome to attend meetings
and join during the year.



**It's a Journey..No one is ahead of
you or behind you. You are not more
"advanced" or less enlightened. You
are exactly where you need to be. It's
not a Contest....
It's LIFE. We are ALL teachers and we
are ALL students.**

Thank you as always for your
continued support.

It is always appreciated.

Chris, Maddie, Suzi,
Lyn, Robyn, Karen