



Mitcham Pre School Centre Newsletter

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Term 5
Newsletter 1

Coronavirus

What a difficult time the world is experiencing in 2020, with the Coronavirus. People throughout the whole world, contracting a virus that is having a significant impact on life. People in isolation, borders closed to some countries, travel restrictions, sport, cultural & community events cancelled, the economy affected, people losing their jobs. It is a very challenging and difficult time in our lives.

Making the situation even more difficult, is the over saturation of the media including social media. It is making people very fearful and as a result, we see outbursts of emotion in shopping centres as people panic buy.

This anxiety in adults, can be transferred to children. The children are exposed to parents worriedly talking about the virus etc. They hear it on the news, radio and TV. It is a constant now in children's lives.

Please be assured, the Department for Education is in constant contact with all preschools and schools. We are provided with information based on the best medical advice, on how we are to operate under such circumstances.

At staff meeting Monday, we have planned how we will teach the children

"to keep themselves (and their friends & family) safe and healthy".

We will ask the children

- "have you heard about the Coronavirus that people are talking about?"

No doubt they will have their own theories & information!!

We will talk about is as

- A virus that can make us sick

To make sure that we don't catch the virus

- we will wash our hands with soap & water—washing the back & front of our hands. We will dry our hands with paper towels.
- When we sneeze or cough, we need to sneeze / cough into our elbow
- If we sneeze or cough into our hands, we wash our hands with soap and water.

We are going to do an experiment to show how germs can move away by washing your hands with soap. (we are using a black pepper, water trick on youtube to explain the

concept).

The staff as normal practice, will ensure all children wash their hands before snack and lunch, monitoring that they use soap and water. This will also include washing hands after going to the toilet. This is all normal practice, but we will be even more vigilant!

If a child becomes unwell at preschool, you will receive a phone call to collect your child.

If your child is not well, we ask that you keep them home. They may not have coronavirus, but they do need to stay home until well / checked by a doctor. This is the directive of the Department of Education and you received a letter last Friday, via email / APP, to explain this.

Are we cancelling kindy?

The answer is NO. It will only be cancelled if

- There is a case of coronavirus diagnosed within the children or staff
- If we are directed by the Department for Education.

It is business as usual.

Continued over

Pupil Free Day

Just a reminder that our pupil free day is **Monday March 30th.** ***There will be no kindy on that day***

Staff will be undertaking professional development.

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Coronavirus (Cont) Wheels Day

On Monday, I cancelled the RAN-EC training for volunteers. It was cancelled at short notice. Between 4-5pm on Monday night, half of the families cancelled their attendance sending me an email.

At the time I was on a Webinar from the Department, listening to the Minister for Education, CEO and a Health Professional talking to preschool directors about the action we need to take.

These have included

- If staff are sick, we don't go to work
- Social distancing—reduce unnecessary gatherings.
- Gatherings can happen but we need to look at numbers attending, size of the venue
- Hygienic practices are paramount

We are confident in how we are handling (and will continue to handle) this tricky situation.

If you are concerned don't hesitate to speak with one of the staff or send me an email.

I am devastated by the Coronavirus.....I was so looking forward to going to watch my beloved Crows!!! What will I do without footy!!!

With your children, try to limit the discussions you have around them, on the Coronavirus. Turn off the TV and radio when news is on / or turn to a child friendly station such as ABC Kids.

This is so overwhelming for adults so will be very difficult for children to cope with and understand. With the saturation of all kinds of media, it only increases the anxiety for children and adults.

At this stage Wheels Day will go ahead next week. However, things can change swiftly and I will continue to keep you updated.

I spoke with Scott Green-shields, principal from Mitcham Primary School over the weekend and he said he is happy for the event to go ahead.

However, we do have a contingency plan for wheels day, just in case.

So for now, we will plan for wheels day to go ahead.

Wont it be disappointing if we have to cancel. The children have been talking about it for a couple of weeks.

Excellent Youtube Clip on Coronavirus

Below is a link to an information and interesting clip on Coronavirus. Jacinta Adhern, Prime Minister of New Zealand talks with 2 health professionals.

It is really worth listening to. It is 18 minutes long but you will feel informed following it. She is an amazing leader.

<https://youtu.be/qKNys5i8yIk>

Rhyme

Rhyme" is one of the keys to reading. If a child does not understand the concept of rhyme, they are likely to have difficulty learning to read.

At preschool we focus on "phonological awareness" - in particular children's ability to understand rhyme and initial sounds. (that is the sound of letters at the beginning of words eg "t" for teddy)

From our assessing we noticed that many children were inconsistent in their understanding of rhyme. To support your child in understanding rhyme you can

- teach them that rhyme means when 2 words sound the same eg cat / hat, tree / bee
- read stories that include rhyme eg Dr Seuss stories / Pamela Allen stories. Find the words that rhyme in the story
- play rhyming games in the car. For example choose a word then find words that rhyme such as car, bar, star, par, far

Helping your child develop their understanding of rhyme now will assist with the concept of reading at school and beyond.

If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to speak with one of the staff

With this newsletter I have attached an article on rhyme. I hope you find it useful.

I have attached a story pamphlet that we used today to talk about Coronavirus. We adapted this to our age group. You may like to use this when talking with your child about Coronavirus. Many thanks to Mon Vickery for the information.

This week at kindy

This week, we will continue on with our focus of learning,

"Celebrating Australia"

We will continue to Investigate Aboriginal Culture, following on from last week.

To support our learning we will have inside this week

- Aboriginal dot painting with sticks on small brown paper / bark (observational skills)
- Numeracy table with unifix cubes, number trays, number tracks (numeracy)
- Rock symbol matching game (numeracy)
- Pine cones with rubber band wrapping (fine motor)
- Story table—Tiddalick (dream time story)
- Shape / adjuncts (fine motor activity)
- Playdough with collage materials & Australian animals (sensory)
- Home corner—adding coffee machine & food processor (dramatic play)
- Display of Aboriginal artefacts (understanding our world)
- Challenge puzzle (problem solving)

Outside we will have

- Rocks & black pens with Aboriginal symbols (literacy)
- Stick weaving (fine motor)
- Magna doodle (fine motor)
- Aboriginal flag collage (problem solving / numeracy)
- Torres Strait Islander Flag painting with palette paints (fine motor / observational skills)
- Black tray with selection of pouring / scooping utensils (numeracy)
- Water trough with water wheels (problem solving)
- Basketball (gross motor)
- Kids on the block with foam blocks (identity)
- Large wooden building blocks (team work / numeracy)
- Construction on mat—magnetic shapes (numeracy / problem solving)
- Aboriginal symbol hunt (persistence)

Its another busy week at kindy.

Tired Children

Parents have been commenting on how tired their children are and the negative behaviours they are seeing at home.

We are now into our 8th week of preschool. Term 1 is a long term, with 11 weeks. There has been so much the children have had to adapt to, learn and cope with in 8 short weeks of preschool.

The second newsletter of the term described the things children have had to adapt to. That newsletter is still on the APP and website if you want to revisit it.

Please remember they are only 4 or 5 years of age (and some are still 3 years old). They have only been on this earth for a very short period of time and are still building their resilience to cope, manage change and to develop persistence.

In 4 weeks time, the children will be on school holidays. It will provide an opportunity to rest, relax and revitalize. Until then, if your child is showing signs of tiredness, keep life simple. Allow them time to rest on the weekends and after preschool. Reduce the number of outings and extra curricular things they do. Ensure they go to bed early (eg 7—7.30pm) rather than later in the evening.

They will "bounce back" after a rest over the holidays.

Trent Hill

We had a wonderful morning / afternoon on Monday, with Trent Hill, Aboriginal story teller, who came and told us a Dream time story. It had underlying themes of listening to elders particularly grandparents; not to tell lies; share—not to be greedy; always tell the truth and be honest. The children were so engaged and were able to recall the messages that Trent shared through the story.

Trent also shared some Aboriginal artefacts and showed us how to make animal tracks in the sandpit / how to make a fire using a fire stick to ignite a fire.

Over the next week, Maddie will complete a learning story about Trent's visit, for those children who attended on Monday. It will be in your child's folder soon. Come and share it with your child.

Finally

Thank you as always for your continued support. It is always appreciated.
Chris, Maddie, Suzi,
Lyn, Robyn, Karen