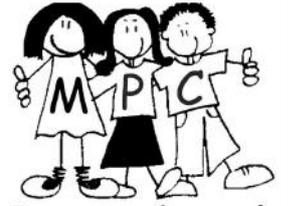




Mitcham



Preschool
Centre

Mitcham Pre School Centre Newsletter

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Term 2
Newsletter 1

Welcome back to the start of term 2

Welcome back to the start of term 2. It seems so long ago, that we broke for the April school holidays, yet it has gone really quickly. I hope you have had a relaxing holiday break, and lots of fun over Easter. It has been wonderful to see some photos from families, how they have kept busy over the past few weeks.

We cant wait to see everyone who is coming back this term. For those who are continuing to stay home for the short or long term, we will look forward to seeing you "in a while".

COVID -19

Our state and country have certainly been lucky so far, with our statistics regarding the number of people affected by COVID-19. Obviously the danger of COVID-19 is not over, but the authorities in health and education, state that children and students are low risk and hence , we are commencing term 2.

Ensuring the health, safety and welfare of children, families and staff is paramount so to this end, we are continuing to implement the following strategies everyday

- The gates are opened each day by a staff member

and kept open until everyone has arrived (this avoids you having to touch the gate)

- The gates are opened at the end of the day and left open, until everyone has left
- Parents / carers drop the children quickly and leave (please do not spend time chatting to other parents at kindy)
- Any child who arrives at kindy with a cold / cough / unwell will be sent home
- If a child becomes unwell during the day, a parent / carer will be called and asked to collect their child.
- Children wash their hands before eating snack and lunch. The children count to 20 / sing happy birthday whilst washing their hands
- Staff monitor the bathroom at snack and lunch and other times during the day
- Children have been taught to cough into their elbow
- When a child

coughs into their hands, they are reminded to wash their hands

- Staff sign children in and out everyday
- Wowie and Rosie no longer are sent home (the take home teddy bears)
- The children are asked to leave their toys and books at home
- At lunch times the staff hand the children their lunch box from the lunch containers, rather than the children touch other lunch boxes
- When eating, we still sit and eat in groups but we ensure the children are spread out
- We are still having our group times and are mindful of where the children are sitting. We do not play games that involve hand holding.
- Surfaces are wiped down frequently during the day including door knobs & light switches
- Toys etc are wiped down at the end of each day

(continued over)

We would normally start our brainstorming for our focus of learning in week 1.

However, with so many children being away in the last few weeks, and other children having a 3 week holiday, we will let the children settle back in this week, and start our focus of learning from week 2.

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COVID-19 (Cont)

- We have signs up to remind adults about social distancing eg at drop offs and when waiting to collect their child
- Drink trolleys and lunch crates are located in different areas of the verandah to spread the load of people as they arrive

The Department for Education, in the last few weeks of term increased cleaning times. For example

- The end of day clean has been increased from 2 hours to 3 hours each night to ensure door handles and light switches etc are cleaned
- Each day there is an additional clean, usually around 12.30pm for one hour, where the cleaner wipes down all surfaces eg tables, cupboards, door handles, light switches etc

We have ample cleaning materials, soap, tissues, hand towels and toilet paper. We had just received some hand sanitizer on the last day of term, which was a relief as we had just run out that week.

During the final few weeks of term 1, I had frequent contact with Mark Anders (Governing Council Treasurer) and sought advice on our procedures. This was to ensure that I had covered all areas of health and safety.

As we commence term 2, I will be guided by the information from the Department of Education / Health Officials as well as continuously review our practices and procedures. As further information and / or instructions are issued by the Department, these will be implemented.

We will all look forward to the day, when COVID -19 doesn't take up all our thoughts and we can return to life as we knew it.

Term 2 Curriculum

Term 2 will be a busy one as we explore our focus
" All about me and people in my world"
Underpinned by the "Child Protection Curriculum"

The Child Protection Curriculum is a mandated curriculum . There are many aspects of this curriculum that supports children's wellbeing, which is crucial at a time when life has been stressful and uncertain. So we will use the Child Protection Curriculum as a tool to support wellbeing.

A term overview, a term calendar and a note explaining the Child Protection Curriculum, will be out early this week.

Term 2, would usually involve an excursion to Kuitpo forest and Special Person's day. Currently we are not allowed to go on excursions / have incursions or have large gatherings. Therefore these experiences "are on hold"

But we will have

- Walks to the creek / play at the park
- Funtastics—motor coordination program—run by staff
- Camp fire in the sandpit
- A special celebration to end our focus of learning.
- Introducing a number of new experiences such as nature play, loose parts play (introducing stick play / campfire / mud kitchen / digging patch); cool glue gun activities

Look out for regular updates of what is happening at kindy through newsletters, articles and the outside white board.

It promises to be a wonderful term.

Baby Photo

As part of our focus of learning we are having a special activity, "Guess the baby". So we are asking that each child brings a photo of themselves as a baby. Please put it in an envelope with your child's name on the back of the photo. These photos will be placed on card using blu-tak (and returned to you later in the term), with clues about your child, as described by them.

We need all photos by Monday May 11th

Look out for our baby board and try and guess the baby.

(This experience helps children learn more about themselves, develop descriptive language skills, develop observation skills, plus is lots of fun)

For those families self-isolating, we would love you to still be involved in this activity. If you send me a photo via email I will run it off, then we can do a phone chat with you and your child (using Messenger - if you have it) to gain some clues for our "Guess the baby".

Next Wednesday, Maddie and Suzi, will be continuing to work on our webpage where we will be uploading activities, experiences and information for those families continuing to self-isolate. Of course all families can access this webpage. The curriculum we run at preschool, will be mirrored on our webpage. Look out for information out soon.

Even though the weather is now cloudy & cool, the UV rating is still 5 and remaining at 5 from 10am to 2.30pm.

The Cancer Council still recommends that children continue to wear sunhats for protection. (Until the UV drops to 3)

So please send a sun hat every day, even if it looks cool and cloudy.

Beanies and woolen hats are not classed as sunhats.

The UV rating is gradually changing. I will keep you posted about when we can take off our sunhats!

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.

Groups for lunch and drink bottles

Each term the children are placed in different lunch groups. This supports the children in broadening their friendship groups, cope and manage with change and experience the different teaching styles of the educators. If we always keep everything the same, children never get to learn how to manage and cope in different situations.

So make sure your child checks the lunch box and drink bottle lists, to see if they are in another group (different shape)

If your child hasn't changed this term (the shape their lunch box & drink bottle goes into) they will definitely next term.

Story Groups

Each term, the children are placed with a different teacher and with different peers for small group time, which occurs in the morning. I have done that again for term 2. However, with so few girls in both gold and blue groups this year, they have found it difficult, in forming friendships. It isn't easy to connect with other girls, when they are limited in number (we found the same last year, when there were limited numbers of boys). Of course, with many children being away in term 1, due to COVID-19, the number of girls was even less.

So just for term 2, I have grouped the girls together for small group time, in the morning. It will mean, the girls will get to know each other better, and this will assist them in forming friendships. I did the same with the boys last year, and it worked really well. In term 3, we will resume mixed groups for small group times and lunch groups, as we all need to learn to get on (boys & girls), work together and make friends with both genders.

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

We are ready for more boxes for all our amazing constructors, architects, builders and planners. Nappy boxes are too big. So please make sure boxes are smaller than a nappy box, such as biscuit, cereal, tea bag, toothpaste boxes. Please NO milk cartons, plastic bottles or washing powder boxes. Thankyou for collecting boxes for us.

Vocabulary

Did you know.....

The size of vocabulary, that is number and variety of words that children know in preschool and initial years of schooling, is a significant predictor of reading comprehension in the middle and secondary years of schooling.

"The more words you know, the more clearly and powerfully you will think... and the more ideas you will invite into your mind" (Wilfred Funk, 1986)

How can we extend children's vocabulary?

- Talk with them
- Incorporate new words and explain their meaning. For example if talking about lions you could say "**Lion's are carnivores, that means they eat meat**". You have used an interesting word to describe something about lions and explained its meaning
- Don't be afraid to use interesting words as children love to hear them. They will usually "catch on" and use the word too.
- Try not to "dumb down" conversations with children. There is no need to use "baby or toddler talk". They are amazing learners, they love to learn and love to hear words that adults use
- Read lots to your child / children—read story books, information texts, read appropriate articles from the newspaper and magazines, read signs, messages in cards etc. The greater number of words, the variety and complexity of words they hear, will mean better outcomes in reading at school.
- Go on a word hunt looking for long words, or words that look interesting (eg shape of a word). Explain what the word is and what it means. For example at a plant nursery you may find the word "Deciduous". You could say, "this is an interesting sounding word.....deciduous and it means that this type of tree loose their leaves. They are getting ready to rest in winter". You can then also let your child know that there are other trees that are "evergreens" - they keep their leaves all year round. You could go on a walk looking for deciduous trees and evergreen trees.

Helping your child to extend their vocabulary, (the number and variety of words) will assist them in the complex skill of reading in the early years and primary years at school. If you want any further ideas, please don't hesitate to speak with one of the staff.

The most beautiful things in life are not things. They're people and places, memories and pictures. They're feelings and moments and smiles and laughter.



Thankyou

The last few weeks of term 1, was very stressful for everyone. Families, children and staff felt anxious and nervous, with the ongoing issues and uncertainty with COVID-19. However, I just want to say how supported we felt from the Mitcham Preschool Community. It was wonderful to have so many parents support us, and provide such positive feedback on how we were managing the situation, whilst caring for and educating their children. So thankyou for your ongoing support, care and kindness to our teaching team. We are truly grateful and we feel blessed that we work in such an amazing community.

Of course, COVID-19 is not over. And we will continue to be vigilant at all times, to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the children and families in our community.

Finally

Thankyou for your continued support. Jan Samm will join us again this term, providing support to children in our gold group on Wednesday & Friday mornings.

We are looking forward to a wonderful term 2.

Kind regards

Chris, Maddie, Suzi, Lyn, Robbie, Karen, Jan

Governing Council

Our Governing council meeting is suppose to be next Monday.

However, groups are still unable to gather. So I will seek advice from my Education Director, how we manage ongoing meetings.

I will send out an email once I know.