

Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow

Fine Motor Skills

Many of your child's daily activities—like getting dressed, eating, and writing—require control of small muscles in the hands. We call these skills fine motor skills. Fine motor skills are necessary to engage in smaller, more precise movements, normally using the hands and fingers. Researchers acknowledge that fine motor development is essential for children's emergent and later writing skills and that is why it is important for children to experience a range of activities to support and strengthen these developing skills.

Fine motor skills involves so much more than being able to hold a pencil or use a pair of scissors. Before children get to this stage, they need experiences that will help increase muscle strength and coordination. You can support your child's developing skills at home by providing opportunities to



- ♥ Play with dough. Roll, squeeze, stretch, pat, pound or use tools such as plastic knives, scissors or rolling pins for cutting and rolling.
- ♥ Finger paint. Use fingers to paint pictures, letters or numbers.
- ♥ Tweezers, clothes pins, kitchen tongs or chopsticks. Use tweezers, clothes pins or chopsticks to pick up and sort objects like beads, cereal, cotton balls, pompoms or other small objects (watch closely for choking hazards).
- ♥ Crayons, markers, pencil, chalk. Draw, scribble or write.
- ♥ Plastic containers. Allow children to open and close empty plastic containers with lids.
- ♥ Buttons and zippers. Practice buttoning and unbuttoning, Zipping and unzipping.
- ♥ Pouring. Place objects (corn, beads, cereal, etc.) in one small container, then have children pour the objects into an identical empty container.
- ♥ Legos and blocks. Connecting, stacking, building with Legos and blocks.
- ♥ Loose change. Sort loose change into different containers with fingers.



If you are concerned about how your child's fine motor skills are developing, please have a chat with your child's educator for support.



April in Review 2022

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Fire Truck Visit—Wednesday 6th April



Dear Mt Colah Preschool,

Today our friend Nich the minister from the church came to visit us. He brought along his friends Tony, Bruce, Chris and Neville as well as a real life FIRE TRUCK all from the local Mt Kuring-gai Rural Fire Brigade! Nich explained that he was a Chaplain in the Rural Fire Service and his job, along with other members of the Rural Fire Service, was to help protect the community from bush fires. He went on to explain to us the difference between 'good' fires such as campfires and indoor combustion fires as oppose to 'bad' fires like bushfires and house fires, however he shared with us the danger that comes along with both fires and that no child should ever get too close to fire and be sure to be in an adult's company if having a campfire.

Nich asked us if we knew what we had to do if we discovered a fire—**"Get down low and GO, GO, GO!"** we told him. We also talked about what number we call if there is a *fire*, **"ooo"** everyone called out confidently. Some of us got to dress up in Nich's special fire fighter uniforms and he shared with us that they are coated with a special sealant to protect him from the fire, he also noted that his uniforms are a special bright colour so that people in the community know which emergency service he is. Before heading over to the truck, Tony sounded the sirens and showed us the flashing lights, it was so loud but nonetheless very exciting to all. Then it was time to get a closer look at the truck. We saw hoses, pumps, extinguishers, helmets and lots of things that firefighters need to use to put out fires. We were then invited to climb up into the fire truck where there was so much more to see. We sat in the cabin and as we got down, we had the opportunity to go up again into the back part of the truck where we spotted more hoses and pumps.

Then, Chris and Neville got out one of the big hoses. They first turned on the pump, making sure it was safe before inviting all children to have a turn of the hose. The children pretended they were putting out fires, shooting water all over the driveway!

Chris then demonstrated the biggest hose on the fire truck and that water went so high into the sky and all over the trees.

To conclude our exciting visit the children had the opportunity to ask the Firefighters some questions, before being handed a special and very generous RFS show bag which included an activity pack, posters and a hat, much to everyone's delight.

A big thank you to Mt Kuring-gai RFS, Nich, Tony, Neville, Chris and Bruce for taking the time to visit us with your Fire Truck, we hope to see you again next year.

Our thoughts on our learning:

Today we discovered more about the role of the RFS in our community. We learned about what they do to protect us and we discovered that we can play a role in protecting ourselves and families too. We realised that our learning disposition of curiosity enabled us to fully engage with this incursion and ask questions to find out more about the job Nich and the RFS do.

Links to Early Years Learning Framework:

Learning Outcome 1.1 Children feel safe, secure and supported.

Reggio Emilia theory of the child as an active participant in learning.

EYLF Learning Outcome 4.1 Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity.



Next steps:

It was lovely to see how much curiosity and excitement was about during this fire truck visit. We will continue to develop our awareness of essential community workers and our knowledge of Fire Safety by making these visits possible. Educators will also promote this sense of community by extending the children's knowledge through play. This will involve setting up learning environments and play spaces with emergency service dress ups, telephones, fire engines and police cars.

Our Preschool Programme in Review

Sweetpeas:

The holiday period was a little quiet with many children away for the holidays, but this did not stop us from all enjoying the fun activities that were available each day. The Sweetpeas had the opportunity to develop fine motor skills with painting, cutting and drawing with all the craft activities available. When the weather allowed, gross motor skills were developed, particularly during our Healthy Hearts Day. The children participated in an exercise class as we learned about the importance of looking after our bodies by doing exercise, eating healthy food and resting, so that we can grow strong, healthy bodies. The Sweetpeas have been working towards individual goals, particularly their social skills. They continue to grow and develop as they participate together in social games and play experiences such as puzzles, building with construction toys and playing group games. This teaches us the importance of turn-taking and sharing, which is always a difficult concept to understand at such a young age. During Harmony Week some Sweetpeas brought in items to share part of their culture with each other. It was lovely to watch the confidence of the children as they proudly stood in front of the group showing everyone a special treasure from home. ***'Play gives children a chance to practice what they are learning' - Fred Rogers.***

Bluebells: April has been a busy month and the children participated in a very fun filled holiday programme, experiencing a wide variety of activities over the two weeks and you can find more photos from this further on in the newsletter. Autumn has definitely arrived and we have experienced some tumultuous weather over the past few weeks! Although the children have occasionally been restricted in their outdoor play, it is important that they still experience physical play. To combat this, the educators have set up obstacle courses indoors, focusing on balance and jumping. Cosmic Yoga is a favourite activity and the variety of stories keeps this fun and interesting while the children move. Just Dance encourages the children to dance and copy movement skills, which can be tricky but a good activity to promote coordination and balance. One of the children's favourite physical activities is dancing with the ribbons. Choosing their favourite songs and dancing freely not only promotes gross motor skills, but also encourages self expression and supports social skills as the children share this experience with each other.

Schoolies: This month educators have noticed lots of emerging friendships and many children expanding their friendship circles within the Schoolie group. Promoting and supporting social skills is something the educators are very passionate about here at Mt Colah Preschool especially in the lead up for big school. Throughout the term and more specifically during our goal focus weeks, educators mentor children in conversation as well as play, making sure we are able to best support each child in developing their social skills. The physical environment here at Preschool is another hugely important factor that educators consider and tailor in order to create learning environments that involve collaboration, teamwork and encourage social play. To foster these important friendships and support these incredibly important social skills we encourage you to reach out to your child's educator to assist in sharing your contact details through the parent pocket if you wish to organise play dates outside of Preschool. We are pleased to share with you that we are in the early stages of creating for you a Preschool Phone Book. For families who choose to feature in this book, we will include parent names and the best contact details. ***We do want to share that this however is not a compulsory phone book.***



Week One



HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

A day of comfort, as we learnt about the importance of sleep for our bodies and growth. We also got to make our own eye mask for bedtime.



A chance to use our thinking caps as we experimented with cause and effect, trial and error and used our reflective thinking to consider why things may happen.



Planes, Trains and Automobiles Day



We looked at motion through paper planes, and various modes of transport. Children loved using recycled materials to create.



A surprise visit from the Easter bunny that led us to an Easter egg hunt! We also looked at how different cultures celebrate Easter, made cookies and painted some plaster eggs donated by the Curtis family.



Week Two

Green Thumb Day

HOLIDAY PROGRAMME



**HAPPY
MARIO DAY**



Mario is a hot topic of conversation at preschool. We looked at the different characters and made some yummy cupcakes with the various characters.

We used our creativity today to explore different forms of art, including clay, paints, and a variety of sensory experiences.



Artist Day



We learnt all about keeping our bodies strong and healthy, engaging in an exercise class and making some yummy bliss balls for afternoon tea.

Healthy Hearts Day



Walkathon

Fundraiser for the Children's Ward at Hornsby Hospital

Our Annual Walkathon has allowed us all to experience the act of giving and the importance of helping our local community by contributing to help those who are less fortunate. Not only has this been a great lesson for us in empathy for others, there have also been opportunities to learn about team work, supporting friends, the importance of exercise and being fit and healthy. By making number signs we developed fine motor skills as we traced and decorated numbers, as well as challenging our math skills by number recognition and the counting of laps walked by friends.

We are proud of the people these children are becoming and we hope that these skills of kindness, helping others and teamwork are something they carry with them throughout their lives. We love that we are able to also promote a sense of community within the early childhood setting and build connections between us and our local community.

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL THE FAMILIES, EXTENDED FAMILIES AND FRIENDS WHO DONATED TO THIS IMPORTANT CAUSE. WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE RAISED AN AMAZING

\$1920!





Phonemic Awareness Programme



During the month of March, the children have been learning about the focus sound /d/ as well as revising the previous sounds s, a, c and b. The Schoolies have been engaged in a variety of songs, stories, activities and craft experiences to further their knowledge and sound production.

Dippy Duck

While learning about the letter/sound D, the children explored the topic of dinosaurs. They have enjoyed learning about different dinosaurs including if they are a carnivore or herbivore. The dinosaur play space in the sandpit was very popular as the children made homes for the dinosaurs using natural materials. The children also took part in observational paintings using a dinosaur of their choice. During the second week, the children read The Ugly Duckling story, sung 5 Little Ducks and performed their own 5 Little Ducks song using sticker finger puppets.

Revision

During the school holidays, the children revised the sounds that they have previously learnt. We explored a range of songs, practised tracing/writing the letters, played games such as the colour game where the children need to choose a letter/sound and lastly, matched the words/pictures with the sound that they start with.



Little Endeavours with Jo

We have had lots of fun this month, while we learnt and practiced skills, as the school holiday programme meant two different LE activities each



Preschool Firemen Wall Display - The preschoolers made some very colourful fireman outfits and while colouring related back to me, using great descriptive language, all the things they had seen and learnt when the RFS firetruck visited preschool.

Recycled Vehicle Construction – So much enthusiasm and ideas for this activity. With recycled items brought in and items we had saved at preschool the preschoolers created fabulous vehicles with lots of added features showing great creativity.

Easter Biscuits – After fruit for afternoon tea we had a special 'sometimes' treat for Easter. The children showed their fine motor skills, some learning how to spread with a knife, as we put icing on an egg-shaped biscuit and then added sprinkles. Many children explained to me that this was a treat and shouldn't be eaten all the time – showing how they know how to care for their growing bodies.



Little Endeavours with Jo

Mt Colah Worm Wee – Our worms have been working hard and produced enough worm wee to enable the children to take a bottle home on Green Thumb Day. The children shared information about our worms including they have no teeth and don't like cake. After a big discussion about worm wee being smelly, that theory was proved wrong, as we smelt some worm wee and found there was no smell at all!



Mario Pop-up Piranha Plant – There is a lot of interest in Mario and after making their pop-up Mario or Luigi the preschoolers enjoyed playing with them together, with fun chats happening between the characters in the cups with the children speaking for their characters, showing how they have the skills to talk and listen in a conversation.



SUSTAINABILITY

Return and Earn:

Dear Families, thank you for your contributions this month, we have been overwhelmed with the amount of bottle donations lately, making many trips to the local deposit side at Berowra Post Office. We are making such great progress in reaching our Preschool goal of \$100 ahead of time, currently we have raised \$82. Sorting, counting and bagging up the bottles is one of the childrens favourite things to do here at preschool and there is never any shortage of helpers.



Holiday Program Fun:

Lots of sustainable experiences were had during our holiday program this month. From bottling worm wee, to making nature boards, planting new vegetables as well as our making own automobiles using all recycled materials.



More yummy produce was picked from our veggie patch by Nick, Max.L and Kai this month. Later in the month the children helped Jo plant new established veggie plants on Gardening day.





Wednesday May 4th —Mothers Day Dinner

May 25th - National Simultaneous Storytime

June 7th—Tuesday Schoolies excursion to Post Office

Scholastic Book Club

Issue 3 is now available and all orders are due in on or before Friday 13th May. Book orders can be placed via the LOOP app or by returning the order form and money to preschool. All orders received earns 20% commission for preschool which supports our books and resources supplies.



May Birthdays

A big Happy Birthday to all of our children and educators having a birthday this month.

Charlie 5 years

Natalie 5 years

Tegan

Emily



Community Announcements

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MECHANICAL
MOVEMENTS
CONSTRUCTED &
DEMONSTRATED
WITH MECCANO

40th MECCANO Exhibition

7th May 2022 10:00am to 4:00pm

If Federal Election falls on this date our exhibition will be on 14th

Mount Colah Uniting Church
cnr Pacific Hwy and Amaroo Ave, Mt Colah

Admission Family \$12 Max, Adults \$6 Students \$2

Meccano Modellers Association Sydney Inc
<http://www.sydneymeccanomodellers.org.au>

Everyone Welcome



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Open
Morning

Thursday 26 May 2022

9:15 - 10:45am

- Listen to a band performance
- Principal's Welcome
- Watch Kindergarten involved in the "Magic Movement" program
- Visit Kindergarten and Year 1 classrooms, the Library and Technology Centre
- Morning Tea provided



SCAN ME



Enter via Telopea Street or Pierre Close gate

Mount Colah Public School
Respect • Responsibility • Personal Best

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If your child is starting Kindergarten in 2023, enrolments are now open. Please come to our Kindergarten Information Evening on Tuesday 9 August, 7pm – 8pm, in the school library.

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