



### GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

We recently shared with you about the importance of developing fine motor skills. This time, we would like to share the importance about developing gross motor skills.

Gross motor skills are foundational skills that involve bigger movements using large muscle groups – arms, legs, feet, and trunks – to move the body.

Developing gross motor skills happens over time, by using different muscle groups. Remember back when your baby rolled over for the first time, or the first time they put their fist in their mouth? That was their gross motor skills starting to develop, and with practice, children learn to develop and use gross motor skills so they can move in their world with balance, coordination, ease, and confidence!

Much of a child's cognitive development is based on their motor skills, so this is an important aspect of their overall holistic development. Gross motor skills are important to enable children to perform every day functions, such as walking and running, playground skills (e.g. climbing) and sporting skills (e.g. catching, throwing and hitting a ball with a bat). However, these are crucial for everyday self care skills like dressing (where you need to be able to stand on one leg to put your leg into a pant leg without falling over) and climbing into and out of a car or even getting into and out of bed.

Here are a few gross motor skills examples:

- Walking and running
- Climbing
- Jumping, hopping and skipping
- Throwing, catching and kicking a ball
- Riding a tricycle or bicycle
- Swimming
- Dancing

They also need to develop skills like balance, strength, coordination and stamina.

You can support your child's gross motor skills development in so many ways. A visit to the local park. A bush walk. Make an obstacle course in the garden. Play Floor Is Lava at home with cushions. If at any time you are concerned about your child's development, please come and speak to your child's educator.



## April in Review 2023

### Inside this Newsletter

- ♥ Educator Reports
- ♥ Walkathon
- ♥ Phonemic Awareness Report
- ♥ Little Endeavours Report
- ♥ Sustainability Report

# Our Preschool Programme in Review

**Sweetpeas:** The Sweetpeas have all enjoyed participating in crazy fun days over the school holidays. There were many sensory experiences, making sandwiches and biscuits for Teddy Bears' Picnic, muffins on Mario Day Cooking Day where we got to make yummy fried rice and bliss balls, Pamper Day and of course the very popular Messy Play Day. It was lovely watching those, who were a bit hesitant at first about messy play, inch forward and find the thrill of digging into cold spaghetti, plunging hands into warm goop, leaving little paint hand prints on paper and searching for worms (spaghetti) in dirt. By being involved with food experiences the children were given an opportunity to explore eating food they would not normally try. There is something satisfying about making and eating food together, which the children embraced. Seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling are all ways children learn to explore their environment developing a strong sense of identity. Using multiple senses at the same time stimulates learning and language development, especially by learning descriptive words. Children also discover new things about themselves and their world by being connected. *Sorry about the mess, but we are learning here.*' - Unknown

**Bluebells:** April has been a busy month at preschool! Easter, holiday programme and Anzac Day have all created lots of talking and learning points for the children and it is encouraging to see how much the children have embraced all the new discussions of the past month. The children's ability to share their ideas and thoughts in these discussions demonstrate how much their confidence and sense of belonging in a group is developing. Over the past few weeks, educators have also been supporting the development of the children's individual, and group goals. Many children this age are still developing all important social skills and are learning to move from playing alongside other children to playing collaboratively, creating games and sharing decisions. As a group, we use stories, role play and group conversations to support these skills. We play games such as Duck Duck Goose, Bug in the Rug and Doggy Doggy to promote knowledge and friendships within our group – and these games are also favourites of the children too!

**Schoolies:** As the Schoolies prepare for big school, we continuously provide them with opportunities to strengthen their social skills. A child's social skills enable them to form positive relationships, have conversations, develop body language, cooperate, share and play collaboratively with others. Our environment offers a variety of social play activities both indoor and outdoor. In particular, the babies and kitchen play, Lego, marble run, binoculars and walkie talkies have been the most popular lately. We use educator mentoring during these experiences to guide the children with how to play collaboratively including taking turns, sharing, negotiating and compromising. The Schoolies have also recently showcased their ability to play board games independently, without the help of an educator. The Ladybirds and Spotty Dogs board games involve simple rules, turn taking and encourage the children to win/lose gracefully. Our intentional teaching group times regularly support the children's social skills as we encourage positive interactions through stories and discussions. We have recently incorporated role play scenarios into our group times, including scenarios such as —“Child A has taken the shovel off Child B”. This aims to not only develop the children's social skills but also further develop their problem solving skills, allowing them to handle certain situations.



# Walkathon Week 27.3.23

**“As you grow older you will realise that you have two hands. One for helping yourself and the other for helping others”**

We held our annual Walkathon in which we raise money for the Children’s Ward at Hornsby Hospital. It was an important lesson as the children learnt more about giving back and helping those in our local community. The Sweetpeas walked five laps of the preschool playground and the Bluebells and Schoolies walked 10. As well as walking the children showed their sportsmanship as they cheered on their friends who were walking. It was such a humbling and wonderful experience for us as educators to witness and we couldn’t of been more proud of the children’s enthusiasm and the empathy they showed throughout the week.

**We were able to raise an amazing \$1465 for Hornsby Hospital.**

We are also proud to say that The North Foundation has chosen to do a feature story on us for the Preschool’s ongoing support of their charity.



# Walkathon Week 27.3.23



# Easter Week



Easter is a time of fun and joy. This week the children got to participate in Easter egg hunts, Easter crafts, many fun stories, eat lots of chocolate and share Easter gifts with friends. Throughout the week the children got to share their families Easter traditions and stories as well as learn how Easter is celebrated round the world.

The children were lucky to get a special visit from the Easter Bunny, who left them hundreds of chocolate eggs to collect around our preschool.



# April Holiday Programme

We had such a fun Holiday Programme! It offered us a lot of opportunity for fun, laughter and a lot of learning to take place. Here are some of the highlights...

**Mario Day** saw us race cars around our Mario track and make delicious Toad cupcakes.



**Cooking Day**—We made yummy fried rice and bliss balls.



**Games Day**—We played a variety of games that encouraged teamwork and sportsmanship



**Teddy Bears Picnic**



**Action Dance Academy** came to teach us some new songs and dance moves on I Like to Move it Day!



# April Holiday Programme



**MESSY PLAY DAY**



**Pamper Day**—We were well and truly spoiled as we entered Mt Colah Preschool's Day Spa for manicures, pedicures, foot baths, facials and hairstyles.

**PJ DAY**



**Carmel from Jim Jam Studios** did a fun music class with us based on various occupations for **When I Grow Up Day**.

*A big thank you to our wonderful family volunteers—Kirsten, Xanthe, Cheryl, Kaye, Jenny, Mel, Rawi and Dylan for their help during the Holiday Programme. We appreciate your time and effort.*

# Little Endeavours with Jo

So much happened in April in LE as during the Holiday Programme we do two different activities each week. All were individual activities and as they worked and created the preschoolers showed how their social and communication skills are developing as they chatted with me and their friends, about what we were doing and anything else that happened to be on their mind.



Easter Bunny – Using recycled tea light candle holders the preschoolers created an Easter Bunny, showing confidence as they added features of their own choosing, and asking for help if it was needed. It was even better that there was a chocolate egg in it when it was taken home.



Dinosaur Fossils – Clay is great for developing strength in hands and fingers and the children manipulated and rolled their piece of clay, before pressing it flat. They then estimated if their chosen dinosaur would fit on the clay before checking and then pressing it in.





# Little Endeavours with Jo

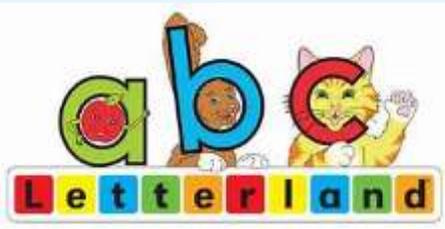
**Holiday Programme - Bliss Balls** – After an issue with the food processor and a replacement being found we made bliss balls for afternoon tea on Cooking Day. Lots of measuring of ingredients and counting skills used as we read the recipe, the children understanding we needed to follow the recipe to make them.

**Mario Pop-up** – Our chomping piranhas on Mario Day had either Mario, Luigi or Princess Peach being eaten. After choosing their character the preschoolers then coloured them in, some choosing to use the traditional colours, and others showing their creative side by using colours they preferred. Everyone seemed to have lots to tell me about Mario and his friends, confidently sharing the information with me.

**Pillowcases** – Everyone decorated a pillowcase on Pyjama Day, showing their creativity and fine motor skills using both paintbrushes and spray paint to personalize their pillowcase.

**Goop/Slime** – I think this activity won the award for the messiest activity on Messy Day. Using old and new technology (electric and hand beaters) we made a frothy mess which changed texture during the day. The children commented that the goop was thicker and slimier after lunch, using great observational and sensory skills.

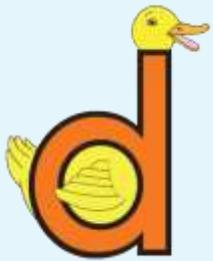




# Phonemic Awareness Programme



During the month of April, the Schoolies have been learning about the focus sound /d/ with Dippy duck. The children have been engaged in a variety of songs, stories, activities and craft experiences. They have also revisited the sounds we learnt in Term 1—S, A, C and B.



As we learnt about the /d/ sound with Dippy Duck, we also focused on the topic—dinosaurs. This included learning many different facts about dinosaurs through stories and short clips. We were then able to transfer our knowledge when creating dinosaur fossils with Jo using clay and mini dinosaur figurines. We set up a dinosaur land in our outdoor environment for the children to continue to explore dinosaurs. Each day, we continued to brainstorm multiple words starting with /d/ including dog, donkey and dragonfly.

**Revision:** During the revision weeks, it is a good chance to revise the sounds from the previous term and check-in with what we have been previously taught. This includes how to produce the sounds, write the letters in the air, discuss words that start with the sounds and sing our catchy Letterland songs.





This has been another great month with many hands-on sustainable activities. Our fabulous green thumb Janet and the kids have been on a mission to grow some potatoes starting from scratch. This month the potatoes had gone wild and started to sprout out the top of the potato pots. The children had the job of gently covering the sprouts with some nutritious soil and giving them plenty of water throughout the week in hope to start seeing some plump potatoes growing .



### Friendly Reminder



Here at preschool, we keep our Return and Earn bin outside our front door to collect any old plastics, cans, and glass bottles, which are then counted up by the children, taken to the post office and the money made is then donated towards the Sydney Children's hospital.

We also appreciate any donations of your pre-loved book to put towards our MCPK book library.



# healthy eating

## Sparking your child's interest in trying new foods.

- ♥ Set a good example by eating and enjoying a range of healthy foods yourself.
- ♥ Offer everyone in the family the same foods and try to avoid preparing separate meals.
- ♥ Eat together as a family wherever possible. Try to keep meal times relaxed and calm.
- ♥ Offer your child a new food regularly. Children may need to try a new food many times before liking or accepting it. Don't give up or say "they don't like it" after just a few tries.
- ♥ Encourage your child to explore new foods. Looking, touching and smelling a new food helps children learn about it be more prepared to taste it. Talk about the food with your child.
- ♥ Involve your child in choosing new foods when you are shopping.
- ♥ Children love to help with food preparation tasks such as pouring, stirring, spreading, dipping and shaking. Children who are actively involved in preparing food are more likely to try that food.
- ♥ Growing vegetables and fruit is a fun way to help

children learn where food comes from. Try growing cherry tomatoes, herbs, beans or strawberry plants in pots or in the garden.

- ♥ Serve only a small amount of the new food on their plate so it doesn't overwhelm your child. Serve alongside food they already like eating and are familiar with.
- ♥ Make meals and snacks look appealing by using different coloured foods, interesting shapes and textures.
- ♥ Try varying the way new foods are prepared. Some children prefer cold, crunchy foods while others enjoy cooked. This can change over time.
- ♥ Give your child a choice of healthy food— offer a small range of healthy foods e.g. in the middle of the table, and allow your child to choose what they want.
- ♥ Congratulate your child when they try something new even if it is just a small mouthful. Their efforts to learn about food by touching, smelling or tasting it are also important to acknowledge.

## Lunch Box Struggles?

Daily Bread Co is a local company that takes the hassle out of your daily lunchbox routine. Choose from their ready made options for your child's lunchbox and make your mornings a whole lot easier.

<https://dailybreadco.net/>

## May Birthdays

**A big Happy Birthday to all of our children and educators having birthday this month!**

**Amelia—4 years**

**Isla—5 years**

**Brooks—4 years**

**Tegan**



Please find attached information regarding changes to the Child Care Subsidy coming in July. We are hopeful that this will benefit most families. There are hard copies of this information on the Family Information table. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask Lara.



Services  
Australia



## Changes to Child Care Subsidy

From 10 July 2023, there are changes to the way we work out your Child Care Subsidy (CCS) entitlement. Child care will be cheaper for most families.

### What you need to know

- The maximum amount of CCS is increasing from 85% to 90% for families earning up to \$80,000.
- The income limit for CCS is increasing to \$530,000.
- If you earn over \$80,000, your CCS percentage will go down by 1% for each \$5,000 of income your family earns. You'll either get more subsidy or have no change to your entitlement. The CCS percentage you're entitled to depends on your family's income.

For more information about CCS, go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/changes-if-you-get-family-payments](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/changes-if-you-get-family-payments)

### Families with more than one child aged 5 or under

From 10 July 2023, if you have more than one child aged 5 or under you can still get a higher rate for one or more of your children.

### If you get Additional Child Care Subsidy

If you get Additional Child Care Subsidy (ACCS) your rates will stay the same.

From 10 July 2023, the low income limit for ACCS Transition to Work (TTW) will increase to \$80,000. Your family will still need to meet other ACCS TTW eligibility requirements:

### What you need to do from January to June 2023

In most cases, you don't need to do anything to get the increased rate. If you get CCS, we'll apply changes to your CCS automatically from 10 July 2023.

### Updating your family income estimate

The amount of CCS you get is calculated using your family income estimate. It's important to make sure that you check your income estimate regularly and update it if your circumstances change.

If you get CCS or if you're already assessed for CCS but get 0%, you may be eligible for an increased rate. Check your family income estimate is up to date so you get the right amount from 10 July 2023.

You can check or update your income estimate at any time using:

- your **Centrelink online account** through [my.gov.au](https://my.gov.au)
- the **Express Plus Centrelink mobile app**
- the **myGov app**.

For more information about how to update your family income estimate, go to [servicesaustralia.gov.au/familyincomeestimate](https://servicesaustralia.gov.au/familyincomeestimate)

# Community Connections

**MOUNTAIN  
FEST  
2023**

**SUNDAY  
7TH MAY**

**10AM TO 4PM  
MOUNT KURING-GAI  
PUBLIC SCHOOL**



**9D Cinema  
Jumping Castles  
Awesome Rides  
Silent Disco**



**Delicious Food & Drinks  
Community Stalls  
Prizes & Raffles**



**+ MUCH MORE!**

For more information and to view **ticket prices**  
please visit our Facebook Page →



**Open  
Morning**

**Thursday 25 May 2023**

**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

Enquiries: 9477 3627

Email: [mtcolah-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:mtcolah-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)  
Website: [www.mtcolah-p.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://www.mtcolah-p.schools.nsw.edu.au)

*If your child is starting Kindergarten in 2024, enrolments are now open. Please come to our Kindergarten Information Evening on Tuesday 8 August, 7pm - 8pm, in the school library.*