

Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



We are heading into February.....

Thank you everyone for your patience as we commenced the new year with the new electronic sign in system. It seems to be running smoothly and should make signing in/out even easier.

We are now back into the swing of things and time is already flying by. The children have done a great job in getting to know each other and our new children are settling in very well. Parents we encourage you to follow the children's example. If you see another parent you don't know please introduce yourself and start to build some connections with other parents. You never know they may turn out to be a life-long friend!

As we move further into the year, if your child wishes to spend time with another child outside of the Preschool environment, please feel free to drop an introductory note into the family's parent pocket. In line with our privacy policy we are unable to pass family contact details between you all.

Child Safety

Parents just a reminder to please not let your child wander or run around in the car park unattended. **Please, please** hold your child's hand in the car park and know where they are at all times.



Please enter the Preschool driveway, driving slowly, and keeping a close eye out for our little pedestrians. And of course, please do not leave other children in the car during pick up and drop off times.

Immunisation—4 Year Old Booster

If your child is due for their 4 year old immunisation booster please make sure that it administered by the due date. Immunisation is linked to child care subsidy payments and entitlements will be cancelled if the immunisation is not administered in a timely fashion. It can be challenging having benefits re-instated. Please remember to provide the Preschool with an updated Immunisation Register Statement once immunisation is completed—thank you.

February 2019

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Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

Sweetpeas Welcome back it is lovely to see so many happy faces with children ready to start the day. This will be another fun exciting year together. The new children have done really well this week settling in to new routines and meeting so many new faces. We are learning how to make friends and navigate our way through the routines of the day which can be a challenge but with the help of educators and older children everyone is doing so well. There are so many activities set up during the day for the children to engage in. At the end of the day parents are encouraged to read the diary which gives an insight of what we have done and the things that we have talked about during group times. This is a great opportunity to start conversations about the things the children have enjoyed most in the day. Making friends through play, **'You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation' –Plat**

Bluebells: Welcome back to preschool! It is so lovely to see everyone after the summer break and if you are joining us for your first year at preschool, a very warm welcome to you too! It has been lovely to meet all of our new Bluebell group and I'm sure we are going to have a great year together. Over the past couple of weeks, we have been getting to know each other and please feel free to have a chat with us anytime about how your child is settling in. It has been a hot start to the year so we haven't been spending too much time outside yet. The children have been going out in small groups which gives everyone the opportunity to explore the garden and outdoor space in their own time. The children were excited to discover the carrots and celery growing at the bottom of the garden and we are just waiting for these to get a little bigger before digging them up. We also had a look at our worm farm and we talked about how this helps our garden grow. You can have a look at our Green Book to find out more about how we care for and enjoy our outdoor environment.

Schoolies: We would like to wish a warm welcome to our new families and children who have joined us this year in the Schoolie group, as well as the families and children who have returned. We look forward to a fun- filled year ahead where together we will develop some wonderful friendships and bonds with one another in a holistic and thriving learning environment. In the coming weeks the children will begin to participate in our Schoolie program which will be a fun, challenging time. Our daily routine will offer many opportunities for our Schoolies to develop and strengthen their resilience and independence to develop greater sense of self, build confidence and foster a love of learning through our educational programme in preparation for school next year. We will also commence our phonemic awareness programme where we explore the phonemic sounds of all the letters in the alphabet. This pre- literacy program will be carried out throughout the year as we introduce a new sound every two weeks based on the Letterland programme characters, followed by a variety of fun, planned and child led experiences encouraging the children to practice the focus sound, enhancing their auditory processing skills and phonemic awareness, a key skill in early literacy. More information on the phonemic awareness programme can be found later in the Newsletter.



Educator Groups and Developmental Groups



Assigning children to educator groups and developmental groups is one of the hardest jobs we do. We start out by date of birth but we have other considerations such as trying to make sure each educator only has 10 children per group per day, amongst other factors and as there is no set pattern with the children's bookings this job is really tricky. You will have noticed on your first day, that your child has been allocated to an educator's group. This educator will be delivering the educational programme activities to your child, undertaking observations and recording your child's progress in their individual portfolio. They will be your first point of contact with any exchange of information or questions or concern regarding your child. Whilst saying this, our team of educators work together closely and any of our educators will be able to assist you should your educator be away for any reason.

We then also assign the children to developmental groups. In essence, any child who is starting school the following year is considered a Schoolie. Children starting school 2 years out are Bluebells and our 3 year old friends are Sweetpeas. Every year we have different combinations of ages and as such the developmental groups do not always fit neatly in with the educator groups.

Please be assured that regardless of what educator group your child is in they will be receiving the developmental activities in line with their developmental group. For example: if your child is a Bluebell and your teacher is Deon and your friend's child is also a Bluebell and their teacher is Stephanie they will still be doing the same "Bluebell" developmental work and will be individually supported and challenged as required.

We hope this is a clear explanation however, do not hesitate to talk to your child's educator or Lara if you have any further questions.



Participation in **Show and Tell** is important for your child as it promotes the development of self confidence and expressive and receptive language skills. It also provides the opportunity for new learning as all the children contribute towards the ensuing discussion either by asking questions or telling their experience. Every child will be invited to participate in Show and Tell two times per term.

When it is your child's turn for Show and Tell they will be given the special Show and Tell bag. ***This means that their Show and Tell day will be the same day in the following week.***

Your child can bring any item that fits in the bag to talk about or they can do "talking" news and tell us about a recent adventure. Please do not worry about what your child chooses to bring or how many times they choose to bring the same item. What is important is their participation! If you have any questions please see your child's educator.



Enrolments

Dear families, a quick reminder to submit your waiting list form for any younger children you wish to attend Preschool in 2020 or even 2021. You are no doubt aware that we always have a healthy number of enrolments that usually sees all placements booked so it is wise to be on the waiting list as early as possible. If you have any friends in the same situation you may like to let them know!

Open Day

We will be holding an Open Day at Preschool on **Thursday, March 21st from 10am to 12pm.**

The purpose of the Open Day is to invite new families to look around the Preschool and experience the educational environment we provide. It also provides the opportunity for new families to explore any questions they have about starting Preschool, gain understanding around our Philosophy and see how our educational programme is delivered as well as an opportunity to meet our lovely staff.

If you know anyone who is interested please invite them along.

Many thanks.



February Birthdays'

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

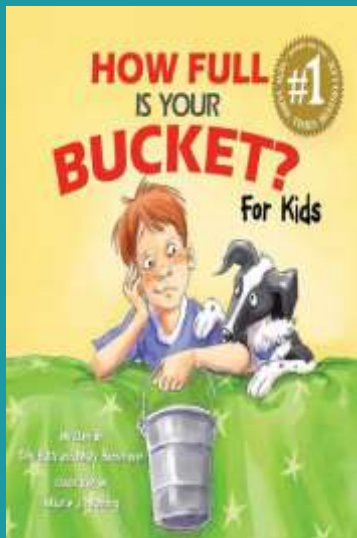
Jackson—3 yrs

Bridget—3 yrs

Ethan—5yrs



Scholastic Book Club At preschool, we run a book club from Scholastic. This comes out twice a term and is distributed by a magazine in your parent pocket. There are always great books in this magazine and any orders placed earns 20% in commission back to preschool which we use to buy new books and resources through the book club. Ordering is easy. You can return your order form with cash to preschool or you can order through the LOOP app which you'll find in your app store. Issue 1 will be in your pocket in the next week or two. If you have any questions, please see Deon.



How Full is Your Bucket?

During February we will be introducing a story 'How Full is your Bucket' to all our preschool children. Returning children will be familiar with this story. The Bucket is a metaphor that encourages the filling of another's bucket through kindness and helpfulness. Throughout the Preschool and spilling into other areas of the children's lives, we endeavour to create a welcoming and loving atmosphere for encompassing our children, family members and the community.

We will read stories that further the children's positive interactions and understanding of The Bucket, continuously talk about the concept during group time and have the children identify when someone has been kind or thoughtful filling another person's bucket—in the past everyone claps and applauds in support. In the past the children have responded really positively to this and constantly approach their educators' and share their bucket filling experiences.

Children will often approach an educator and say "Sarah filled my bucket" or "I filled her bucket because I said she could play". Alex hugs his educator then announces "I filled your bucket". We will continue with "The Bucket" concept for the rest of the year. If you have any questions please ask an educator or your child. And feel free to use The Bucket metaphor at home. Kindness and consideration of others is a wonderful gift to give our children.



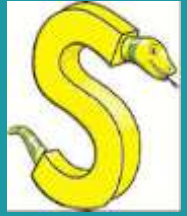
Phonemic Awareness Programme

Our Phonemic Awareness Programme is delivered to the Schoolie Group each day using a variety of activities that centre on the sound of the week. These activities can be anything from stories, songs, puzzles, poems to art and craft. The primary purpose of the Phonics Programme is for the children to have **fun with sound** and this may flow onto letter recognition.

We use the Letterland Characters as the foundation of our programme and focus on a different Character over a two week period. The Schoolies can't wait to get started on the Phonics Programme and are very excited to travel to Letterland and meet all of the characters.

Over February and into March we will be meeting Sammy Snake, Annie Apple and Clever Cat. You can support your child's learning at home by referring to the information provided to you in the Phonics Programme.

Please feel free to speak with Cat if you have any questions relating to the programme.



Settling your child into Preschool....

It is natural for there to be some apprehension for both parents and child when your child first attends Preschool. The child has new routines to learn, new people to meet and adjust to new Educators and a new environment. Parents are worried about how the child will cope. However, starting Preschool is an important step in providing the child with an introduction to school life and independence and it is important to get off to a positive start.

Children like regular and familiar routines. It can take some time for them to adjust to a new routine, rules or situation—such as starting Preschool. However, once settled the child's self esteem and confidence prosper.

Strategies to Settle In Your Child

- ♥ Keep to a regular routine in the mornings—arriving at around the same time each day, preferably prior to 9.30am.
- ♥ Spend some time with your child—sit with them at an activity. Over time reduce the time you spend in the mornings.
- ♥ Tell your child that you are leaving with a kiss and a hug and assure them that you will be back to pick them up and then leave no matter what :)
- ♥ Parting is often as difficult for the parent as it is for the child. If your child cries try to be excited for them and leave them with an Educator. Children often settle very quickly once the parent has left.

- ♥ You are free to ring the Preschool as often as you like during the day to see how your child is going.
- ♥ Let Educators know if your child is not themselves that day, so that if they become upset during the day Educators will be able to comfort your child appropriately.
- ♥ If someone different is picking up your child that day please let your child and Educators know.
- ♥ On starting your child it is suggested giving them short days and then lengthening the days over time.
- ♥ Please talk to the Educators if you have any concerns or if you need to pass on information concerning your child.

The Educator's Role

On arrival your family will be greeted by one of our Educators. The Educator will enquire as to how the child is feeling and if the parents have any particular concerns or issues they need to discuss.

The Educator will assist the family to settle the child into the first activity of the day and place the child next to another child and take the time to introduce them to each other.

Should the child become distressed as the parent is leaving the Educator will put into action a strategy of acknowledging the child's feelings, assuring them that their parent will be back to collect them and then encouraging the child to do something special that the child enjoys.

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Settling your Child into Preschool .. From previous page

So, some children skip off without a problem other children find it really difficult to say goodbye to mum or dad. Our advice is to be consistent with your morning routine. Generally speaking the hard part is —saying goodbye. By keeping a consistent morning routine on each visit your child will grow to understand this is what is going to happen each time and we find over coming weeks, will settle in much faster.

At Preschool we provide strong daily routines which provide comfort as children settle in. We have created a visual routine board to assist settling the new and returning children. It identifies each transitional period and Teachers spend time showing the children the pictures and discussing the routines and the board is located to easily allow the children to view it throughout the day.



Our lovely Jo will be coming in two times a week to deliver special activities this year. Jo will be organising activities for the children that will link with our developmental focus and weekly interest.



Jo's activities will get little hands and minds working as they further explore art, craft and cooking. Also, Jo will be extending our environmental programme and will involve the children in our Preschool vegetable patch and our worm farm! A notice will be at the sign-in desk each week to indicate what activities Jo has lined up for the week.

Forms have recently been sent home asking parents to complete and return to Preschool. One was a form called "All About Me" which went home to all families. Another form went home to returning families asking them to update information in relation to their child's development and goals for your child. Please return these **as soon as possible**. Many thanks for your assistance.

Don't Forget!

Clothing Policy: Please remember to ensure your child's shoulders are covered to protect them from the sun by dressing them in a t-shirt. Please do not dress your child in singlets or strappy tops/dresses. Please remember that thongs or crocs are not allowed at Preschool. Please dress your child in well fitted shoes or sandals. Our outdoor area is challenging and requires secure footwear to help avoid accidents.

THANK YOU



GENERAL INFORMATION



Opening and Closing Times

Due to licencing regulations, we are unable to accept your child before **8.30am**.

We close our doors at **4.30pm** and the staff vacate the premises at this time. If you wish to have a chat to staff when collecting your child - **which we highly recommend** - please allow plenty of time to do so by arriving at Preschool by at least 4.15pm. Of course if commitments mean you are arriving just prior to 4.30pm staff will be very happy to chat with you about your child in the morning at drop off times. We do have a policy for charging families for collection of children after 4.30pm and this

Remember....

Please remember a **water bottle and hat** on every occasion your child attends Preschool. Thank you.



We are peanut free

Please do not send food items that contain peanuts, walnuts, almonds, cashews, pistachios and pecans—or products that have these items appearing within the ingredient line. In particular, peanut butter and Nutella (or other nut based spreads) are not to be sent to Preschool.

Don't Lose it—Label Everything!

Please remember to label your child's belongings so they always make it home. This includes hats, water bottles, jumpers and jackets and lunch boxes. We have a lost property box so if you do misplace an item have a look in the lost property box kept near the sign in table.

Quick Contact

Please find below a quick contact list to minimise your time when you have an enquiry or need to pass on information.

Illness or Absence from Preschool:

Ph: 9476 4101 **prior to gam on the day** of absence to advise teaching staff.

Checking on a Child who may have been unsettled or to pass information to teachers for a child attending that day:

Ph: 9476 4101 - at any time, talk to any of our teachers

Account enquiries, CCS enquiries, Enrolment enquiries or any concerns in general:

Annette: 9943 0731 at any time or via email at annette@freelancer.net.au

Concerns or questions regarding the Programme or your child specifically:

Ph: 9476 4101 to speak with Lara or any of the teachers





Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):

As part of the accreditation process each childcare service is required to implement an ongoing Quality Improvement Plan. We will be reviewing our Quality Improvement Plan over the first few months of this year to set our goals against the National Standards for 2018. Please stay tuned for further information and updates. A copy of the current QIP is located at the sign in table and parents are invited to read this document at any time.



Dates to Remember!

February 9th Please return all forms to Preschool

Thursday March 21st Preschool Open Day (New Families to Preschool)

April 15-26 Holiday Programme



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Cnr Amaroo Avenue and Pacific Highway

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Preschool: Ph: 9476 4101

Email: info@mtcolahpreschool.com.au

Annette: Ph: 9943 0731

Email: annette@freelancer.net.au