

Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow

WELCOME BACK!



Welcome back to Preschool everyone! We hope you have had a wonderful and relaxing time with family and friends over the New Year break and stayed safe and healthy. I wish to extend a very warm welcome to our new families and know that you and your child will quickly settle into the Preschool routine. We start back Monday, January 24th and look forward to an exciting year ahead full of fun, friendships and learning. For parents new to Preschool, we send out a newsletter via email every month which contains feedback from each of the educators about the various activities their group has been doing along with interesting information on development and education for the 3 - 5 year age group. Importantly, it keeps families up to date with upcoming events during the year so it is great if you can take the time to read the newsletter each month. On our return to Preschool we spend the first two weeks getting to know each other and start to build those personal relationships which are so important to our environment. Please say hi to all the educators and we encourage you to take the time to introduce yourself to other families. As we head into the new year, please do not hesitate to talk to the educators about any questions or concerns you may have at any time and especially during the first few weeks, as everyone gets into the swing of things.

Warmest regards, Lara



January & February 2022

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Welcome to Preschool for 2022



The educators wish you a warm welcome. Please do not hesitate to ask any of us anything at anytime! We are looking forward to getting to know your child and know they will enjoy the wonderful year we have planned at Preschool.

Meet Our Teaching Team



Lara



Jo



Deon



Adele



Emily



Maddie



Tegan

Class Groups: Whilst we do have lots of free playtime all together, your child will be allocated a primary educator and the educator allocation list will be on display on your first day at Preschool. Your child's educator will be working with your child during the year and recording their development in their portfolio. They are your main point of contact in relation to your child, however, you will soon find that all the educators will have a strong relationship with your child as we work closely as a team.

Educational Program: During the first 2 weeks of Preschool we will be enjoying activities allowing us to get to know you and your child and for the children to get to know each other. Our Term 1 Educational Programme will be on display on your first day. If you have any questions please ask an educator. The children heading off to school in 2023 will be participating in our Phonemic Awareness Programme and the programme will start during February. If you have any questions please see Tegan or Emily. For new children to Preschool your child's educator will be meeting with you briefly to introduce themselves, answer any questions you may have and to discuss the setting of a developmental goal for your child.

Show and Tell: When it is your child's turn for Show and Tell they will be given the Show and Tell bag the week before, in readiness for them to participate in Show and Tell on that same day, of the following week. Your child can bring an item that fits in the bag to talk about or they can do "talking" news and tell us about a recent adventure. Show and Tell will commence during February.

Little Endeavors: Get ready for lots of fun and learning as Jo starts the Little Endeavors Programme from February. Exploring, experimenting, creating, sharing and working together - Little Endeavors and especially time spent with Jo is a highlight for the children.

Parent Pocket: Each child has a pocket in the foyer at Preschool where educators put important notes and news for families. However with the current COVID-19 procedures educators will be handing the notes from these pockets to you during pick up and drop off time until families can properly re enter the service.



COVID-19 Safe Behaviours

The Preschool has many procedures in place to minimise an outbreak of COVID, or for that matter any transmissible disease. Our day to day health and safety practices include, but are not limited to, thorough cleaning of resources, regular cleaning of touch services, educating the children around proper hand washing and spending time in our outdoor environment.

NSW Health and The Department of Education are constantly reviewing and changing the public health settings in relation to Early Childhood.

We will provide an update on this closer to the time of opening on the 24th January.

If your child presents with even the mildest symptoms we ask that they be kept home until the symptoms resolve and a Covid PCR or Rapid Test is taken.

New Families at Drop Off

We understand that there are new children beginning at the Preschool this year and we want to ensure they have a smooth transition in the morning. So we have put in place some guidelines to help your child settle in at morning drop off.

Should you choose to enter the Preschool premises in the morning to help your child settle we ask that this is limited to a **Maximum of 10 minutes and a mask is worn at all times (unless you have an exemption)**. An educator will be on hand to help you and your child with the drop off routine.

On arrival at Preschool all children and families are asked to observe the following:

- ◇ Only one adult to accompany each child
- ◇ Adults and children will be asked to use hand sanitiser on arrival and before touching the iPad
- ◇ Adults are asked to ensure they maintain a safe distance to others including educators and children.

Returning Families: We would appreciate if you continue to pass your child through the gate to an educator to limit the amount of people in the Preschool at drop off.

Pick up Time: Your child will be brought to you, outside the front door (Please ring the doorbell). An educator will discuss their day with you at this time and provide feedback :)



PRESCHOOL

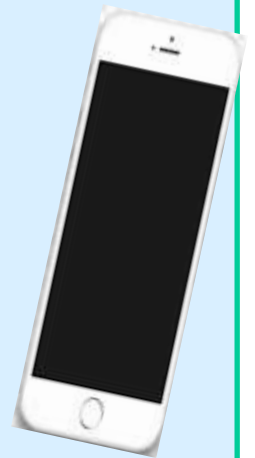
Accounts for 2022

Your first invoice for the year will be emailed to you prior to the 24th January and on your arrival at Preschool a printed copy will be in your parent pocket. This invoice will include fees for the first 4 weeks of Preschool and is due for payment **by Friday, February 4th**. Week commencing February 7th, you will receive your first fortnightly invoice (via email) and we are then in our fortnightly in advance payment cycle. Once we are into the fortnightly fee system, many parents elect to set up automatic funds transfer from their bank account to ours (banking details are found on your statement). If you do this please set up the payment for the **Thursday prior to the Friday due date** to ensure payment is recorded on our bank statement prior to the following Monday morning, when the next invoice is raised. This will avoid any unnecessary confusion of entries on your statement. We only accept payment via direct deposit, we do not accept cash payments for fees.

Please also ensure we have the correct email address on file to ensure you receive your fortnightly accounts.

First Time Checking In or Out

Parents please note you will need to have your mobile with you the first time you either check your child in or out of Preschool as your access code to our iCheck –in system will send the pin code to your phone. After this is set up you only need to remember your pin code for easy drop off and collection of your child.



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.
- ♥ Settle your child into an activity (limit to 10 minutes, due to COVID)
- ♥ 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. 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 leaving is the hard part—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 create a visual routine board to assist settling the new and returning children. It identifies each transitional period and educators 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.



Scholastic Book Club Mt Colah Preschool offer the Scholastic Book Club to families which is an opportunity for you to purchase books at discounted prices. The brochures come out twice a term and orders can be placed by returning the order form with cash to the preschool or through the LOOP app which you can download. Every order placed with Scholastic earns the preschool 20% in commission which enables us to buy books and resources for preschool and keep our own library up to date. The first leaflet will be in your communication pocket in the next week or 2 with all the information you need to place an order. Please see Deon if you have any questions.



IMPORTANT



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. Please also do not send food items containing whole egg. In particular, whole boiled eggs and egg sandwiches. Thank you for helping to keep our children safe.

January and February Birthdays

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

January

Amelia—5 years
Maddie B—4 years
Mischa—5 years
Lara—?????

February

Sophia—5 years
Jiamon—4 years
Oscar—3 years
Zac—5 years
Hunter—3 years
Bodhi—4 years
Max L—5 years
Max C—3 years



Educator Groups and Developmental Groups



You will notice 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. Please be assured that regardless of what educator group your child is in they will be receiving the developmental activities in line with their individual goals and capabilities and will be extended accordingly.



Little Endeavours Program



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 displayed to indicate what activities Jo has lined up for the week.

Our Phonemic Awareness Program



Our Phonemic Awareness Programme is delivered to the Schoolie Group each day using a variety of activities that centre on the focus 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 letter sound over a two week period. The Schoolies always can't wait to get started on the Phonics Programme and are always 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. Also, a phonemic awareness play space will be introduced within the learning environment. This play space will provide opportunity for all children, particularly our Schoolie friends to begin to explore their phonemic awareness through play. This space along with other planned experiences within the indoor and outdoor environment will provide opportunities for the children to engage with our focus letter sound.



Our Book Exchange

As part of our sustainability plan, the preschool has a book exchange program. The aim of this is to teach the children about how books we may no longer want may be enjoyed by someone else and also encourages an early interest in books and stories. The books are in a black basket near the main gate and has a selection of age appropriate books for your child to borrow. Once you have finished with your borrowed book, you can bring it back. As this is an exchange, you are also welcome to bring in any unwanted books from home for other families to borrow and enjoy. Please only allow your child to take one book at a time so that everyone has an opportunity. If you would like to donate some books, please hand these into an educator and we will put them in the basket when we can.



GENERAL INFORMATION



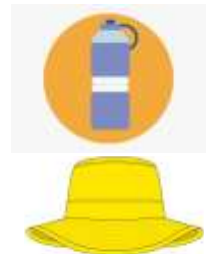
Forms will be sent home asking parents to complete and return to Preschool. You will find these forms in your parent pockets in the first two weeks of preschool. One form is "All About Me" Another form is a questionnaire about starting school. Please return these as soon as possible. Many thanks for your assistance.

Opening and Closing Times

Due to licensing 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 late collection of children after 4.30pm

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.

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



Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):

As part of the Department of Education's accreditation process each childcare service is required to implement an ongoing Quality Improvement Plan. Our Quality Improvement Plan has set goals against the National Standards as we strive to continually improve the services we provide. Please refer to the Quality Improvement Plan display at our entry for regular updates as we focus on our goals. A copy of the current QIP is located at the sign in table and parents are invited to read this document at any time.

Emergency Contact Number:

In the event the Preschool has an emergency evacuation we have an emergency mobile contact number:

0431 810 445

It would be wise for family and carers to add this number to the contact lists in their phones.

We are on Facebook and Instagram. Feel free to follow us!

Facebook: Mount Colah Preschool Kindergarten

Instagram: follow us at **mt_colah_preschool** for all our fun learning experiences



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