

## What is 'midline' and why is 'crossing the midline' important for your child's brain development?

Imagine a line that starts from the top of your head and draws straight down to the point between your two feet. This figurative line splits your body into left and right halves and is known as the midline. The term 'crossing the midline' depicts the movement of a body part over the midline from one side to the other side of the body to complete a task. Lack of midline crossing could result in poor communication between the left and right sides of the brain. Crossing the midline requires communication between both sides of the brain and midline activities therefore fully engage your brain which can cause mental fatigue. It is recommended that children regularly complete activities that cross the midline to strengthen the neural networks to coordinate movement and learning. Physiologically, crossing the midline can assist strengthening the dominant hand's ability to complete fine motor skills. The dominant hand needs to reach over the body to complete most fine motor tasks. If both hands are being used equally then the development of a dominant hand can be delayed consequently delaying fine motor skills. As your child gets better at reach over and understanding where their body is in space, their co-ordination and confidence improves. Crossing the midline also requires an adequate level of core support and strength to allow your child to reach over to their other side when completing a task. Crossing the midline activities also develop a child's gross motor skills such as co-ordination and balance. A child's poor gross motor skills can also negatively impact their attention and working memory. A child can be too preoccupied co-ordinating themselves that they are not retaining the information they need in their working memory. Attention and working memory are necessary for completing the more complex activities of daily living such as dressing or writing (knowing the sequences of dressing themselves or having enough attention to complete a writing task). Therefore, therapists incorporate crossing the midline activities to address numerous avenues of up-skilling and learning for children.

### Activities for home:

**Reaching to the opposite side:** Ask your child to reach to the opposite side to pass you materials ie, pen, spoon, food by setting these items up on their non preferred side.

**Reaching for balls:** Place a basket of balls on one side and an empty basket on the other. Ask your child to reach across with the opposite hand to pick up the balls and place in the empty basket.

**Maze:** Create a large maze on cardboard that runs across from left to right side in front of your child and ask them to trace the maze with their finger on their dominant hand



## July in Review 2023

### Inside this Newsletter

- ♥ Educator Reports
- ♥ Holiday Programme
- ♥ Feature Creatures
- ♥ Phonemic Awareness Report
- ♥ Little Endeavours Report
- ♥ Sustainability Report

# Our Preschool Programme in Review

**Sweetpeas:** The Sweetpeas have had fun-filled days joining in with many activities during the school holiday program. Pyjama days are always so popular that we got to do this twice. The children shared bedtime routines with each other and learned about the importance of sleep so that our bodies can grow. Cooking experiences, as we made pizza for lunch and yummy blueberry muffins for afternoon tea, presented opportunities to develop many skills. Such as, problem solving, basic maths concepts, listening to instructions and most importantly working as part of a team, developing turn taking and sharing skills. Although these social concepts can be difficult to understand at a young age, with continued encouragement the children are doing well showing kindness to one another. We explored winter and how this relates to other seasons of the year. We also discussed winter sports played in Australia and games played in other parts of the world as well as clothes we wear to keep warm. We also learned about animals that hibernate during long winter months as we read some of the 'Very Cranky Bear' book series which the children always enjoy. By being involved in these play-based learning activities children develop memory skills, build vocabulary, learn new skills and knowledge and learn how to get on with others.

*'What we learn with pleasure we never forget' - Alfred Mercer*

**Bluebells:** Here we are in Term 3 already and what a busy month July was! The children experienced a variety of activities during the recent school holidays, and a great time was had by all. From making our own pizzas for lunch to dressing up as our favourite superheroes, there was lots to do that allowed us to be adventurous, creative and a bit silly!

The Sweetpeas and Bluebells continue to develop their gross motor skills through the Mini Moves program. Over the last term, we worked on underarm throwing, leaping and kicking. Leaping proved a tricky one for some children and we continued to practice this for a bit longer. When practising underarm throwing, the children engaged in games of bowling, which helped develop the swing of the arm and the release. We played games such as Floor is Lava to encourage the children to leap to safe spots on the ground and while we will continue to practice this skill, the children are becoming more confident in this area. Kicking was a favourite and we used a variety of balls to practice including soccer balls, footy balls, all of different sizes. This term, we will be focusing on side-sliding, catching and stationery dribbling, all of which you can practice at home or at the park with your child.

**Schoolies:** We can't believe we are into Term 3 already! We hope you have enjoyed looking through your child's portfolio and seeing all the amazing work they have done this year so far. Over the past month the schoolies have been very inquisitive towards their learning and have displayed this during group times and throughout the indoor/outdoor learning environment. Educators have been giving the children a variety of opportunities to be curious and explore their environment as it is an important part of their development and well-being. The children have loved exploring different ways of discovering and researching through digital technologies like the iPad and interactive screen to search about specific topics of interest or to follow up on questions that may have been asked during group times. By allowing the children to have supervised access to a form of technology, it allows them to take more action for their own learning and helps improve their independence skills. Our discovery topics over the past months have all stemmed from the children's questions and interests. They have loved displaying their curiosity through our floor book and investigating the Interest Table as a way of enhancing their knowledge about each topic. Well Done Schoolies!





# Holiday Programme!

We had a busy, creative, hands on, and most importantly FUN two weeks during our recent school holiday programme. The children engaged in cooking experiences, including using ingredients from our own garden. We explored the science world as we made snow on a warm, sunny day. We had some awesome superheroes visit preschool and everyone always loves a pyjama and oodie day! The educators definitely enjoyed demonstrating their creativity as they thought of some crazy hairstyles and face painting ideas! **Thank you to every family helper that came along to help, your contribution was very much appreciated.**





# Holiday Programme!





# Feature Creatures Week 17th July



This week was Feature Creature week at preschool. The children were very lucky to receive a special visit from the Feature Creatures show, where they got to engage in hands on learning and had the opportunity to ask questions and meet a variety of different reptiles and amphibians. The show stemmed an interest in learning the difference between a reptile and amphibian. The children looked into the different characteristic, habitat and diet of each animal and engaged in many crafts that were based off their favourite creatures. The children spent the week sharing and applying their newly gained knowledge through play and group time discussions.





# Feature Creatures Week 17th July





# Little Endeavours with Jo

Another month has gone by and with the School Holiday Programme happening we have had lots of fun and learning. Many children are enjoying the activities so much that they want to have a second turn if they are coming on both days I am there, and if there is time I am happy for them to join me again. It is wonderful seeing them wanting to be so involved in the LE activities.



Create A Fish Tank – Lots of decisions confidently made by the children when designing their fish tank during Pet Week. What shape, which fish and seaweed did they want to make, how many fish and pieces of seaweed. All the children showed how independent they are and expressed themselves well as we worked together.



Sock Puppets – We were very lucky to have lots of helpers when we made our sock puppets on Crazy Socks Day so the children took their time to create their puppet and decide on their features. They communicated well with our helpers and enjoyed discussing the options. We had twenty-five very different puppets at the end of the activity.

# Little Endeavours with Jo

Snow – All it took is shaving foam and bi-carb soda to make our snow for Winter Wonderland Day, which even felt cold. The preschoolers all had a chance to be part of the process in the measuring of bi-carb and adding the shaving foam, using mathematical concepts and loving the mess we made when mixing them together. So many great descriptive words used by the children about how they thought the snow looked, felt and smelt.



Reptile Eggs – After the Feature Creature visit to Preschool some great scissor skills were shown as we cut around the reptile egg shape and then the zig-zag line across it. Any preschoolers that needed help confidently asked for it and then persisted even when they found it hard. Discussion about the split pin we used showed how the children are interested in how things work.







# Phonemic Awareness Programme



As we explored the /p/ sound with Peter Puppy, the children focused on the topic Pet Safety. This allowed the children to share photos of their own pets as well as discuss how to approach pets safely. The Sweetpeas and Bluebells also became very interested in this topic, joining in with the experiences and leading to a Discovery topic the following week. We practised the four steps when approaching a dog – walk up slowly and

stop, ask the owner if you can please pat the dog, let the dog sniff your hand and pat the dog on the back. We were also lucky enough to have some special visitors throughout the fortnight to put our knowledge into practice! This included Matthew's dog Toffee, a previous Preschool family's dogs Rosie and Ella, Oreo the bunny rabbit and Maddie's dogs Indi and Nova. The children also enjoyed transferring their knowledge into their play as they engaged with the vet play space.







# Phonemic Awareness Programme



## Revision

What a fun week full of songs, games and stories to revise the sounds learnt in Term 2.

The children also really enjoyed singing the catchy 'A is for Apple' song which goes through all the letters in the alphabet. One of our revision activities included setting up the hoops to play the coloured hoops game with the Letterland cards. The children took turns calling out a sound using the microphone followed by the rest of the group finding that letter. Hide and seek using the Letterland cards was also a big hit, followed by the children explaining words that start with those sounds. Lastly, the magnetic letters and letter display was available for the children to practise writing the letters. During revision weeks, we reassess if the children can produce the sounds. It is always so lovely to discover that a child can now produce the sound. If your child is having trouble producing age-appropriate sounds and is not currently receiving speech therapy, this will be communicated to you.





## Self Assessment/Quality Improvement Plan

# Reconciliation Action Plan



As part of our self assessment we are working on our Reconciliation Action Plan which aims to provide a culturally safe learning environment for all children, families and educators through respectfully embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures into our play spaces and learning opportunities. This has included cooking experiences, the use of bush tucker from our own garden, arts and role play. Recently we have celebrated both **Reconciliation and NAIDOC Week**. We aim to include educators, children, families and our local community to help contribute to our RAP so we value any input from you as we continue to work on our RAP.





# SUSTAINABILITY

## ~ Garden Growing Success~

This month the children have been regularly watering and checking up on the gardens with our green thumb volunteer Janet. The children were absolutely elated when they had the chance to get their hands dirty in the soil and discovered lots of produce that was ready for harvesting. The children dug up sweet potato, carrots, potatoes and picked our first two giant passionfruits all of which they enjoyed for afternoon tea.





## Winter Health

We have all seen the warnings in the media of a bad flu season hitting Australia. During the day the Educators and children follow many hygiene practices to inhibit the spread of colds and flu as well as any other illnesses that may be going around. This includes regular handwashing, cleaning of surfaces, toys etc and monitoring children for any symptoms of illness.

We ask you to please get your child to wash their hands on arrival or use the sanitiser when entering the Preschool each day.

We also ask you to closely observe your children and if they are suffering from a temperature, lethargy, runny green nose, constant cough or headaches to please keep them at home and seek medical advice if required. If your child has been required a dose of Paracetamol or Dimetap etc. prior to coming to Preschool they should be kept at home. As per our policy if you give your child a dose of any medication prior to their day at Preschool you are required to notify Educators on arrival.

The spread of germs in this age group is inevitable as they are all learning how to care for themselves, and their immune systems are still developing, however if we can all work together to minimise the risks hopefully we will manage to get through the Winter season in good shape.

*Diet plays an important part in staying healthy.*

*Boosting the immune system with lots of healthy fruit and vegetables during winter is another way to ward off the season's nasty cold's and flu's!*



## August Birthdays

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



Chris—5 years  
Brooklyn—4 years  
Aaliyah—5 years  
Peter—5 years  
Declan—5 years  
Belinda





# Community Connections

## MOUNT KURING-GAI PUBLIC SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN 2024



### KINDY KICK START DATES:

Wednesday 1st November      Monday 6th November  
Tuesday 14th November      Thursday 23rd November  
Time: 9:45 - 11:15

### SCHOOL TOUR DATES:

Tuesday 25th July 2:45	Friday 28th July 9:45	Tuesday 8th August 2:45
Friday 11th August 9:45	Tuesday 15th August 2:45	Friday 18th August 9:45

If you would like to enrol your child for Kindergarten 2024 or book a tour at Mount Kuring-gai Public School please contact the school office for more information.  
Phone: (02) 9457 9088  
E-mail: mtkuringga-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

## Kindergarten 2024 Parent Expo

Tuesday 8 August  
6:00pm – 7:00pm  
In the School Library

- ❖ Combined School Choir Performance
- ❖ Representatives will discuss:
  - Key Learning Areas
  - Learning Support - MiniLit/MacLit
  - Parent & Citizen (P&C) Programs
  - Before and After School Care (BASC)

Enter and exit via Telopea St



Enrol now for  
Kindergarten  
2024!



SCAN ME

Telopea St, Mount Colah  
9477 3627  
www.mtcolah-p.schools.nsw.gov.au



Try Baseball  
@ Rofo Park



Free hot dogs for  
participants  
and their families

Children of all ages welcome  
www.rangersbaseball.com.au



Sat 5th Aug 2-4pm  
Monday 14th Aug 5pm  
Or come to Rangers pre-season trainings  
every Saturday in August 3-5pm