



Self-help and Independence Skills

We've all experienced the morning rush trying to get out the door to where we need to be, only to be faced with your preschooler refusing your help to put their shoes on as they want to do it themselves. As frustrating as this can be, this is a good indicator of your child's developing self-help skills.

What are self-help skills?

Self-help skills are the everyday tasks children learn, so they are ready to participate in life activities, such as dressing themselves, eating independently, brushing teeth etc.

Why are self-help skills important?

Encouraging children to try something for themselves rather than doing it for them straight away, supports them to build self-esteem, confidence and trust in themselves. Self-help skills also act as the foundations for many school related tasks as well as life skills.

Self-help skills fall into four main categories:

- Self-feeding
- Self-dressing and grooming
- Hygiene and toileting
- Helping with chores



How can we help children develop self-help skills?

To support your child with their developing self-help skills, give them opportunities to practice. When you arrive at preschool, ask your child to find their name tag, choose their locker and unpack their own bag. By doing this by themselves, they are learning important skills they will need when they start school. When children come out of the preschool sandpit, they are encouraged to try putting on their own socks and shoes, although educators are ready to help if needed. At preschool, the children are responsible for tidying up after play and putting toys away, tidying up the garden etc. You can encourage self-help at home from a young age. Ask your preschooler to make their bed in the morning and even if the duvet is crooked or not quite to the top, acknowledge and thank them. Let your child choose their own clothes for preschool and encourage them to try dressing themselves. Include your child in setting the table for dinner. All of these may take a bit of extra time but the skills your child will learn will last them a lifetime.

If you are concerned about your child's self-help skills, please come and have a chat with your educator who can give you tips and strategies to further encourage this.



June in Review 2024

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Our Preschool Programme in Review

Sweetpeas and Bluebells: Our Sweetpeas and Bluebells groups have been very busy this month enjoying a range of role playing spaces. We have seen them become teachers, shopkeepers, hairdressers, doctors, princesses, superheroes and educators in our very own baby daycare - just to name a few! These scenarios provide children with opportunities to practice many of their social skills, including sharing resources, negotiating roles and turn-taking. The children have been playing collaboratively in these play spaces which has resulted in the formation of some new friendships as well as the strengthening of existing ones. This kind of play strongly reflects the elements included in Learning Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity. It also allows children to use their creativity and imagination to extend the play space, incorporate their interests and practice relationships and experiences as outlined in Learning Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners. Most of all, children have lots of fun engaging in these play spaces as evident in the following photos!



Schoolies: Within our educational programme, there are designated 'goal weeks' ensuring that the educators and children work closely towards the child's explicit, challenging and achievable goal/goals that were established at the beginning of the year. When setting these personalised goals, together educators and families consider all areas of development of the child and decide on what is most important for the child to achieve while considering their individual learning needs. Throughout the semester, educators implement purposeful teaching strategies that build on the children's current interests/strengths and further develop the skills outlined in their goal. For example, if a child is working on a social goal of building and maintaining friendships and has a strong interest in animals, then collaborative play spaces can be set up that involve animals such as vet clinics, pet shops, animal sanctuaries etc. This play encourages the sharing of ideas, role play, turn taking etc and supports the child with their interactions with others and building of friendships. Educators also use educator-modelling and support during this play. As we lean closer to the end of the semester, educators are currently evaluating the children's overall progress towards their Semester 1 goal to inform their future planning. We look forward to sharing with you your child's goal statement and the progression they have made this semester.



Schoolies Excursion to the Post Office

Thursday 6th June

The Thursday Schoolies went on an excursion to our local Post Office this month. Prior to the excursion they all dictated and traced a letter to a special loved one. They used language and were able to express themselves and use words to convey meaning through this experience.

Once we were at the Post Office we purchased stamps, placed them on our envelopes with the help of our family volunteers and then excitedly mailed them in the post box. After this we were able to have a look inside the Post Office exploring different equipment that the postal service uses. It was a great opportunity to explore our local community and transfer our existing knowledge.



**A big thank you to our wonderful volunteers—
Greg, Katie, Jacqui, Vani, Danielle and
Marcella. Without you this excursion would not
have been possible.**



FIRE SAFETY WEEK



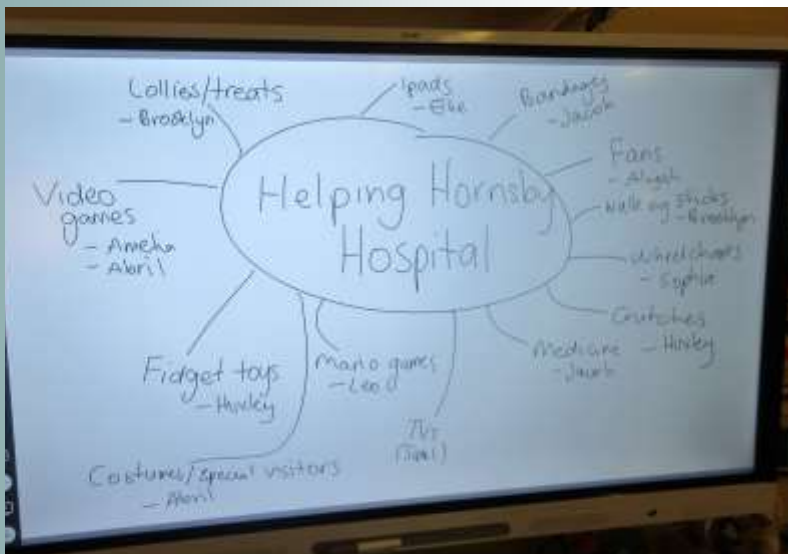
Fire safety week was filled with many hands-on activities and opportunities for children to engage with digital technology. Our program this week was guided by Fire and Rescue early years education program which was developed to support the outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework. The children learnt to recognise the difference between fires that were safe when controlled by adults (e.g. birthday candles or campfires) and dangerous fires (e.g. bushfires or house fires). They had many opportunities to practice their "Stop, drop, cover and roll" and "Get down low and go, go, go!" emergency responses and learnt the importance of yelling "Fire!" to alert others of danger. They had the opportunity to role-play emergency phone calls to gain an understanding of the questions they would be asked and practice speaking loud and clear into the phone. They also had lots of practice reciting their home addresses, although this is something we will continue to practice to ensure they are prepared if there was ever an emergency. The schoolies group loved playing the 'Triple Zero Kids Challenge' fire safety scenarios on the Smart Board which encouraged them to identify fire safety hazards, walk through the steps they should take in the event of a fire and recognise situations that are classified as 'emergencies'.



People Who Help Us/ Helping Others

W/C 17th June

This week as we raised money for our annual Walkathon fundraiser, we further explored People Who Help Us/Helping Others. This included brainstorming what our money could go towards to help Hornsby Hospital. The children had some brilliant ideas including buying wheelchairs and tvs, installing lots of windows so all patients can see outside and organising transport to take the sick children on outings. We shared our past experiences in hospital and how the Doctors and Nurses helped us. This learning allowed our Walkathon to become more meaningful and motivating for the children in order to help others.



WALKATHON FUNDRAISER



We were overwhelmed with the children's enthusiasm during our Walkathon fundraiser. They showed their sportsmanship, cheering their friends on and gave it 100% when participating in the Walkathon.

We are so proud to say that we raised

\$ 3122.50

A fundraising record!!

Thank you to all the families and friends who donated to this amazing cause.



OUR PETS/ PET SAFETY 23rd June

This week we had placed a focus on pet safety as the children were enjoying this topic through the phonics program while learning the letter 'P'. The children had the opportunity to share photos of their pets. We spent the week practising safe approaches, gentle handling, warning signs and ways of caring for our pets. The children then had the opportunity to put their safe approaches to the test when having some special visits from some the educators pets. We had a visit from Spice the Kelpie, Maddie's snake and Taylah's bunny Crunchie.

The children demonstrated such care and enthusiasm towards all our special visitors transferring their knowledge from one context to another.



Little Endeavours with Jo



It has been a busy month and most of our activities have seen the preschoolers working together and collaborating on our group projects. It is great to see how they discuss what needs to be done and how it will be done, having to compromise if they don't agree.

Red Robot – Our Red Robot is always a great learning experience for the preschoolers as we start from scratch, make it, paint it, and then decorate it. They were confident and involved learners and they showed dispositions such as cooperation, confidence, creativity, persistence, curiosity and commitment, as they worked together to create our robot. Comments are made about her every day and the children have shown pride in their involvement in the making of our finished robot.



Walkathon Numbers and Streamers – As we made the items for our Walkathon the children who had been involved last year interacted with our new preschoolers, explaining what we were doing and why we did the walkathon. They all felt connected to our community as they spoke of when they had been to hospital or visited someone there. You can see the photos of the numbers and streamers being used in our Walkathon blurb.



Little Endeavours with Jo

Affirmation Hearts – Please stop and read the hearts that are part of our affirmation display. Great fine motor skills were shown as each child cut out the heart they had painted. We have all put up something that we love about ourselves and as the hearts were finished they were read out to the preschoolers and they showed confidence and a positive sense of worth as they acknowledged their own heart.



Pet Rocks – For Pet Week we have made our own pet rocks and some very creative pets we have, with very original names. The preschoolers confidently made lots of decisions - which rock, what creature they would make and which items to add to make the perfect pet.





Phonemic Awareness Programme

During the month of June, the Schoolies have been learning about the focus sounds /r/ and /f/ with Red Robot and Fire Firefighter Fred. The children have been engaged in a variety of songs, stories, activities and craft experiences.

What a rrrrradical fortnight, learning about the /r/ sound with Red Robot. This included engaging with our basics programme which supports our sound production as well as exploring words that start with that sound, how to write the letter and listening to stories with Red Robot. The children also had the opportunity to explore with written text, tracing and copy the letter r. With generous donations from our families, we were also able to construct our own Red Robot with Jo, using recycled materials and red items brought in from home.



While learning about the /f/ sound, the children focused on the topic Fire Safety with Firefighter Fred. By bringing in their home address form, they were able to begin practising memorising their address in the case of an emergency. This also included listening and responding to a fire alarm through get down low and go go go as well as transferring their knowledge into play spaces such as the fire trucks and fire equipment. We have since organised a visit from a real life fire truck on Monday 1st July.



Mini Moves



This month the children have been developing some new skills. We have been working on hopping, leaping and kicking. Some highlights of the mini move program this month have been:

- ♥ Hopping is a tricky skill to learn but the determination the children have shown in developing this has been fantastic to see. Hopscotch played a big part in this skill development, and the added bonus of this game is that it also supports counting skills and number recognition. Hopping is a skill that we will continue to revisit throughout the year as it is one of the more challenging ones to master.
- ♥ Leaping is also a skill that took a bit of practice for the children. We played games such as On the Way to the Zoo, where we had to LEAP over animal obstacles to get to safety. We also leapt from lily pad to lily pad trying to avoid falling into shark infested waters!
- ♥ Kicking has been a lot of fun to work on, and the children have enjoyed showing us their awesome soccer skills. Using a goal as a target, the children have been encouraged to run up and kick the ball, with educators encouraging the kick with the shoelace area of the shoe or the inside area of the shoe. **GOAL!**

These skills have been our focus and by incorporating these into play with everyday games and activities, the skill will continue developing throughout the year.



SUSTAINABILITY

Garden TLC

The children have loved getting their hands dirty and assisting us with our garden maintenance. Watering, weeding, harvesting, fertilizing and repeating the process.



~ Reminders ~

- ♥ Our preschool collects **Nespresso coffee pods** to collect and recycle them correctly. We send the Nespresso pods back as they use the coffee grounds to be processed into compost and used in soil mix for landscaping and the pod is recycled and given a second life.
- ♥ We still collect your old **bread bags** and use them to send home your child's wet/soiled clothes.
- ♥ Old **ink cartridges** can be handed to one of the educators to recycle them correctly as millions of cartridges end up in landfills where they take up to 1000 years to decompose fully.



STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The teaching team ensures that they are up to date with all required training especially when it comes to the safety of everyone involved in the preschool. This month educators have completed their First Aid Training and Refresher CPR courses.



July Birthdays

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



Ellie—5 years
Sophia—5 years
Max M—5 years



Quality Improvement Plan

Cultural Responsiveness



This month we have been exploring the Italian culture through language, music and food.

The children have been taught new everyday words which we have been incorporating into our daily routine. We have learnt some new songs in Italian with 'Brilla Brilla' (Twinkle Twinkle Little Star) being a favourite.

The children also enjoyed making pizza for afternoon tea to further support their knowledge of the Italian culture.



Community Connections



You're invited to

Open Classrooms

Join us for a tour of our new Kindergarten Classrooms,
Stage 3 Classrooms and our Library.

Wednesday 31 July, 9-10am

We invite you to our **Open Classroom session** to experience our newly renovated learning spaces including the Kindergarten classrooms, Year 5 and Year 6 classrooms and our new Library.

Join a student led tour and chat with our principal, **Todd Vane-Tempest**. Feel free to ask questions in a relaxed setting and find out more about the St Patrick's K-6 learning journey, school readiness, transition to kindergarten and enrolment.

Come and see for yourself our classroom facilities, witness teaching in action and gain a real sense of the St Patrick's School community.



◀ Scan to register or visit:
bit.ly/StPatsClassrooms

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