

Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow

Nurturing your child's wellbeing—Why emotions matter

The way we interpret and respond to our feelings has a major impact on our behaviour, choices, and how well we cope with and enjoy life. Think about all the different feelings you have every day – from surprise to shame, elation to empathy – and how you react to each emotion. The way you deal with your feelings now is very different to how you would have at age 14, which is different again to your responses age four.



Emotional development is a complex process that begins in infancy and continues into adulthood. Emotional development starts with young children:

- **learning** what feelings and emotions are
- **understanding** how and why they happen
- **recognising** their own feelings and those of others
- **developing** effective ways of managing them.

As children grow and are exposed to different situations, their emotional lives also become more complex. Developing skills for managing a wide range of emotions is really important for their emotional wellbeing.

You will read in our Educator reports this month that we have been asking the children to consider how they engage and interact with their friends. Asking the children are they being kind, helpful, inclusive and caring to their friends?

*a warm smile
is the universal
language of
kindness*

The children are eager participants in these discussions as they start to explore their own feelings, how to manage them and begin to understand the emotion of empathy and consider how their friends maybe feeling in different circumstances. It would be great if you would like to continue these discussions at home.

March 2020

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Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

Sweetpeas What a great start we have had to the year with the children settling in really well. Our one-on-one developmental times have been met with enthusiasm. Through these planned developmental times, Educators are able to observe the development of each individual child and plan how we can support and challenge their learning. We all have so much to learn about each other and it is lovely to watch how the children are interacting and learning to make friends. By reading the book 'How Full is Your Bucket?' by Tom Rath and Mary Reckmeyer, the importance of empathy and kindness has been reinforced. The children are beginning to understand this concept and we have seen so many acts of kindness, giving each other hugs, making sure friends are included in play and helping someone in need. It is so important for everyone to feel they belong. Once children feel happy and comfortable in the environment and emotionally ready, learning can happen with ease. *'A little consideration, a little thought for others, makes all the difference.'* - Eeyore

Bluebells: We have had a fantastic month exploring our preschool environment. Over the past month we have been focusing on getting to know each other and part of this has been about being kind. We use a concept called Fill Your Bucket. This tells us that we have an invisible bucket and when we choose to be kind, we not only fill the buckets of those around us, but also fill our OWN bucket and when we choose to say or do mean things, we are dipping into buckets. All day long, we are either filling up or dipping into each other's buckets by what we say and what we do. The children have developed a great understanding of this concept and we have loved hearing this philosophy being used in play. The children have also used the Fill Your Bucket thoughts to explore how we look after our environment and the animal world. The Learning Station has a beautiful song on You Tube called Fill Your Bucket which explains this philosophy.

Schoolies: The Schoolies have been very busy with their hands this month. We have been focusing on further developing their fine motor skills. Fine motor skills are the coordination of small muscles, in movements usually involving the synchronisation of hands and fingers with the eyes. The Schoolies have been working on their control, manipulation and strengthening of their fingers and wrists. Learning experiences and resources have been readily available within the early childhood setting to allow the Schoolies to strengthen their fine motor skills through play. These activities include threading experiences, cutting, tracing, pegging activities and engaging with play dough. Continuing to do experiences at home will further develop your child's fine motor skills ready for big school next year. Bake cookies with your children, rolling the dough increases muscle strength and manipulation. Get outdoors to do some planting and weeding, this will get their little fingers moving and promote hand eye co-ordination.



Open Day

Wednesday, March 18th 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 wonderful educators.

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



Enrolments

We currently have 2 places left this year, if you know anyone who may be interested please let them know. Also a quick reminder to submit your waiting list form for any younger children you wish to attend Preschool in 2021 or even 2022. 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!



We are now on Facebook! Please 'like and follow'

our page where we will bring you Preschool community updates, helpful articles regarding early childhood development and some of the fun activities and learning experiences we enjoy during our busy days at Preschool.

Please take a look at a recent article posted on the importance of play in children's development



New Play Equipment

A safe environment is of high importance in the care of our Preschool children. We conduct internal and external safety checks everyday and this includes the safe use of our outside equipment. Our old fort with clatterbridge had decidedly seen better days and so we have recently installed a new climbing fort with clatterbridge. The children are really enjoying this improvement and the challenge it provides in the development of their gross motor skills.



Gratitude!

Whilst observing the rain outside the children noted that they would have to stay indoors. Phoebe was quick to comment "It's good for the farmers though"

March Birthdays'

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

Iris—4yrs

Laird—5 yrs

Lucas—5yrs

Ivy—5yrs

Grace—5yrs

Nika—5yrs

Educator Jo ????

HAPPY BIRTHDAY





Sunny, Helpful Nature

Deon was putting on sunscreen last week and Nika asked why she was doing that. Deon told her she was protecting her skin, just like she has to do. She nodded her head then said **"Do you need some help rubbing it on your face or do you think you can do it yourself?"** Deon told her she was sure she could do it herself and Nika replied **"Yes that's good, that's cos you're a big girl now"**.



Illness Policy

To minimise the risk of infection our Illness Policy states should a child have an episode of vomiting or diarrhoea at Preschool they are to be collected within 15—20 minutes if possible and no longer than 1 hour of the episode and are not able to return to Preschool until 24-48 hours has passed since the last episode. If parents are not contactable at the time then emergency contacts will be required to collect your child. The same requirement is stated should a child demonstrate a high temperature (38 deg +)

Late Collection of Child Policy

Our service reserves the right to implement a late collection charge when families have not collected their child/ren from the service before closing time. If a child is collected from Preschool after 4.30pm a late collection fee will apply. The fee is \$15 for collection up to and including the first 10 minutes then \$5 per minute thereafter.



Slip, Slop, Slap

Please remember to apply sunscreen to your child on arrival and if you don't have time please let our educators know and they will happily apply for you. Please remember. As per our sun safe policy remember your child's hat every day and clothing that covers their shoulders. Let's stay sun safe!



Safety Reminder

Dear parents and carers a quick reminder that you are responsible for the supervision of older and younger siblings who accompany you at pick up and drop off times. Siblings should remain in your company at all times. Please ensure siblings are not running around or playing on the equipment and that they follow any rules we would ask of the Preschoolers'. This ensures that we continue to provide a safe environment for our Preschool children.





Who knows best?

Lara was sitting outside when she did a big yawn, commenting that she was tired. Lucas without hesitation replied

"Maybe you should go to bed earlier"

Scholastic Book Club



Thank you for all your orders for Issue 1. These have now arrived and you can collect these from the office. Issue 2 will be in your communication pocket in the next couple of weeks and you can place your order in the same way, either by returning your order form with the money to preschool or by ordering through the LOOP app which you can download. If you have any questions about Scholastic, please see Deon.

The Power of Pretend Play in Childhood Development

During the preschool years, or sometimes earlier for children with older siblings, children begin to take on roles or play parts in *sociodramatic play*. As children take on roles, such as pretending to be a firefighter, or engage in elaborate fantasies with others, such as playing "pirates and princesses," they become more aware of how others think and feel.

Sometimes sociodramatic play can lead to conflict. When it does, it's a great opportunity for parents and caregivers to suggest that children negotiate or swap roles (e.g., "ok, now you be the mommy and I'll be the baby"), take other's perspectives, and communicate their own wishes.

Tips and Activity Ideas

- **Stock a dress-up box.** Collect clothes, hats, masks and accessories in a large box or chest. You can even make items together, such as a telescope from a toilet paper roll, a cape from a small sheet or baby blanket, and a mask from a paper plate. Encourage kids to dress up, put on shows, take on roles, and engage in sociodramatic play with siblings and friends.
- **Use symbols.** Ask children to explore the house, finding everything that they can pretend is a car (or other item of your choice). What objects do they find? What do they all have in common? What happens when you suggest something that looks totally different from a car?
- **Start a narrative.** Next time you schedule a play date, arrange for it to have a theme, such as pirates, explorers, superheroes, princesses or athletes. Encourage children to dress up and create props that will enhance the theme. You can use simple story prompts to get children started on some dramatic, such as: "Once upon a time, there was a very ticklish alligator and a cowardly fisherman..." and let them fill in the blanks.



Phonemic Awareness Programme

Our Phonemic Awareness Programme is based on the Letterland Programme. Each fortnight we meet a new resident of Letterland who introduces us to a new letter sound. We then have a lot of fun engaging with and practicing making that sound through stories, singing and hands on activities. In recent weeks the children have had the chance to meet.....

'Ssss' Sammy Snake is having a lovely time by the Letter land swimming pool. Sammy loves sun-bathing, but he is always careful to put on sunscreen when he is in the sun. Sammy loves swimming too and he likes to splash in the sea and slide into the swimming pool.

The children used their fine motor skills when creating their own Sammy Snakes where they practiced their cutting skills, cutting along the drawn squiggle. They were also encouraged to decorate their Sammy snake with all things that start with the 'S' sound, 'Spots', 'Stripes', 'Squiggles' and 'Stars' using coloured textas and stickers.



Annie Apple lives in an apple orchard in Letterland. She has lots of animal friends; anteater, alligator and antelope. She also has amazing visitors, an acrobat who swings by and an astronaut who drops in. The only visitors Annie Apple doesn't like are the ants when they tickle her.



Inspired by Annie Apple's letter sound we had fun with a hands on experience that consisted of a hessian tree, small cut out apples and wooden pegs. This experience offered opportunity for the children to explore their fine motor skills as they pegged the apples on the hessian tree branches. Whilst the children engaged in this experience, a fun song was introduced to the children called **'Way up high in the apple tree'**. This song was a huge hit with many of the children as together they explored their numeracy knowledge, adding five apples to the tree to begin with, followed by practicing to count backwards and removing an apple at a time from the tree throughout the song. You can find this song on YouTube kids.





Over the last few weeks I have been getting to know our new Preschool friends and building on the relationships I have with our Preschoolers from last year who proudly tell me they are NOT Sweetpeas anymore. As the children work they show great communication skills as they discuss what they are doing and share information with me about their families and life.



GARDENING – Over the Christmas break our sensory garden, veggie patches and worms missed us and the care we give them. We have now planted our purple carrots seedlings, trimmed the plants in the sensory garden (with the children noting the different scents of all the herbs), put herbs out to share with our families and watered all the plants with the rainwater we had collected which we added our worm wee to. All the children love participating outdoors and working together.

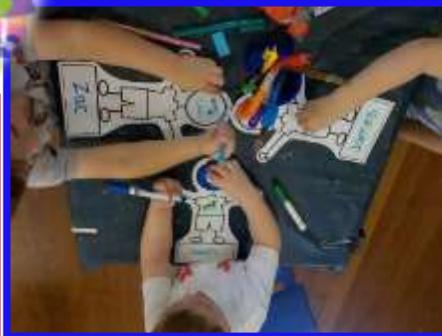


RECYCLED LID AND PEG ART

– All the pegs, lids and cardboard we used for this was donated by families, friends and the community so it was a great effort in sustainability and recycling. The children chose a lid and a coloured sheet of cardboard and then created a drawing around the lid, lids or peg. They were all fantastic creative works of art which hang on the back of our preschool paperchains. The children proudly point out their work and love seeing it on display.

PRESCHOOLER'S PAPER CHAIN

– All the children coloured and decorated a person to which their name was added. These pictures are now holding hands and hanging high across preschool and the preschoolers love looking at them and noting who each person is and which children are holding hands.



Return and Earn Project

Our Return and Earn project has kicked off with a bang. With all the wildlife that has been injured in the recent fires and floods that have caused so much harm, we have decided to donate our Return and Earn fundraising money to animal rescue. We have made two Return and Earn drops to the Berowra Post Office and have earned \$20 towards our goal of \$100. The children have helped to sort and count bottles and are enthusiastic about bringing bottles to preschool. Not only will we be help injured animals, we are helping to reduce landfill which has such a devastating effect on our planet. Thank you to everyone for your contributions. Please keep those bottles coming it is so much appreciated.

We would appreciate your help in collecting drink containers with the 10c deposit label on the bottle/cans to add to our collection and together we will help make a difference in reducing waste. You will find a big blue container undercover outside in which to deposit your bottles. Once a fortnight this will be taken to a collection point and redeemed for cash.



Eligible drink containers

Under Return and Earn, most empty 150-millilitre to 3-litre drink containers are eligible for a 10-cent refund when presented to an approved NSW collection point.

Container materials that are eligible for a refund include PET, HDPE, glass, aluminium, steel, liquid paperboard.

Containers should be empty, uncrushed, unbroken and have the original label attached.

Wine, spirits, cordial and plain milk containers are not eligible.

Throughout the year we discuss the importance of recycling, you may soon find your children sharing this information with you at home!



Sustainability Report

Recycling

The children are starting to use our recycling bins every day at preschool and are learning which product goes in each bin. We have the yellow bin for recyclables, the grey bin for soft plastics which are then taken to Coles to be recycled and we have the normal bin for everything else. At meal times, the children also dispose of fruit and vegetables in a special bin which is then fed to our worm farm. We have another bin which is for recycling ink cartridges and photocopier toner. This is next to our big computer and you are welcome to bring in ink cartridges from home to recycle.



Book Exchange

Near the front gate there is a black basket full of books. This is our book exchange and you are welcome to take a book home from here. The book exchange was introduced as a way of recycling books that may otherwise be thrown away. You are welcome to bring in any unwanted children's books from home to donate to the basket. Please give these to a member of staff.



Nude Lunchboxes

The children are developing a wonderful sense of responsibility when it comes to looking after our environment. At Mt Colah Preschool we are keen to promote nude lunchboxes which basically means no packaging so less plastic going into the bin at the end of the day.

Gardening

The children recently planted some carrots in the garden and you can read about this in the Little Endeavour report with Jo. The children have also been taking on the responsibility of looking after the garden, watering it and cutting herbs. We have collected lots of rain water over the past couple of weeks and this has been put to good use watering our garden, helping the plants to grow.



Quality Improvement Plan (QIP): One focus of our QIP this year is to increase our family's knowledge of the emergency practices we undertake and the role of families in these practices. We always endeavour to provide a safe and secure environment for our educators, children, families and visitors to the Preschool. In the event of a threat, dangerous situation or natural disaster within the community the Preschool aims to minimise the risk of harm or exposure to danger, for anyone on the premises through the implementation of lockdown procedures.

Over recent weeks the children have been practicing our lockdown procedures where they are required to follow educator instructions to gather in a designated area. If you happen to be at Preschool during one of these practices it would be greatly appreciated if you could follow educator instructions.



Dates to Remember!

March 18th	Preschool Open Day (New Families to Preschool)
March 20th	Speech Screening—remember to return forms
March 30th	Walkathon—information to come
April 10th	Good Friday—Preschool closed
April 13th	Easter Monday—Preschool closed

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