

# Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



*a caring place to learn and grow*



## Transition to School

It has been lovely to see how our Schoolie' group has blossomed this year and how confident and independent they are becoming on their journey towards big school. At the beginning of fourth term we are implementing some little changes to the educational environment for the children who are heading off to school next year. These changes are designed to further strengthen their self help and independence skills.

### **Our curriculum will include but not be limited to:**

- Signing in will be conducted outside the gate and Schoolie parents will be asked to sign your child in, then pass your child through the gate. It is then up to them to unpack their morning tea, lunch, Show and Tell item in the baskets and choose their locker. (Of course the educators will be there to provide support!). It will be helpful to have Schoolie children to Preschool by 9am.
- At lunch time Schoolies will be encouraged to open their lunches themselves and to finish their lunch within a set time.
- A focus will be placed on encouraging our Schoolies to participate appropriately at group times by putting up their hand to speak and listening to the speaker.
- Schoolie children will be encouraged to complete tasks and activities they choose, to practice the discipline of persistence.
- Schoolie children will be encouraged to use their expressive communication skills when needing something from a teacher or when playing co-operatively with friends.
- We will be doing some concentrated work on rhyming words through games, nursery rhymes and singing along, and of course with our Phonemic Awareness Programme. It is so important for your children to play with sounds as this is a great foundation for learning to read and spell.
- Schoolie children will continue to be encouraged to hold their pencil correctly and to sit at the table correctly when drawing.
- Schoolie children will be encouraged to pack their own bags before going home.
- Visits by Big School Teacher and students - week commencing November 25th.

Most of all the Schoolies will be encouraged to have fun with their friends, fun with the programme and have fun learning!



## November 2019

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## Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

**Sweetpeas:** I can't believe that we are into the last semester of the year. The Sweetpeas have gained so much confidence since the start of the year. They have engaged in many fun activities and over the last month, especially during the holiday program, enjoying many sensory experiences which is crucial to brain development. The Sweetpeas have enjoyed making play dough, playing with shaving foam mixed in sand, ice melting, finger painting, exploring our sensory garden, creating with clay, sandpit play and baking. Learning through sensory exploration comes naturally to young children and these activities have helped stimulate all their senses by touching, tasting, smelling, seeing, moving and hearing. Sensory play experiences support language development, fine and gross motor skills, problem solving skills and social interaction as children exchange thoughts and ideas during this sensory play experiences. *'Play is the answer to how anything new comes about'* - Jean Piaget

**Bluebells:** Another busy month has passed and this one brought a fun filled holiday programme. The Bluebells enjoyed many activities such as having their nails painted, planting in the garden, lots of baking and learning all about Scotland! Over the past month, the educators have observed the children showing an interest in Auslan, the Australian sign language. At our Christmas concert last year, we performed a song in Auslan and the children have been keen to revisit that. From this, lots of questions have been asked about Auslan so we decided to spend some time learning more about Auslan and learning some signs. The children discovered the alphabet can be signed and we took the time together to learn the alphabet, especially the letter our own name started with. We also learned some signs such as hello, please, thank you, my name is, happy, sad and we learned to sign to the I Can Sing A Rainbow song. We talked about Auslan being a form of communication and in particular the people that would use Auslan as their main form of communication. The children demonstrated a good understanding of the importance of Auslan and were very keen to learn this. We enjoyed watching some stories on you tube that were also in Auslan and you may wish to share one of these with your child, in particular we liked "Too Many Elephants In This House" and "The Wrong Book".



It is a really busy time of year. Please remember to return your child's forms for Kindifarm, STEPS vision screening, Band Visit and our Expressive Arts Fundraiser for Hornsby Hospital. Thank You!



## Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

**Schoolies:** What a busy month the Schoolies have had, it has been great to see how far all the Schoolies have come this year and the excitement is starting to build as the transition to big school comes closer and closer. The Schoolies have taken a very strong interest in the topic 'Farmers'. Steph recently had a visit to a farm and brought back photos to show the children. They loved seeing the cows, poddy calves, sheep, horses and dogs, but their first comments were of concern noting, "The ground looks grey, how do the animals eat the grass?" Steph explained that the farmers are feeding the animals hay between once and twice a day due to the lack of crops. The children have shown great empathy and care for the farmers and are very saddened by the effect the drought is having on them. We have engaged in various experiences such as pin the tail on the pig, drawing classes, learning the song Old Mc Donald Had a Farm in sign language and reading various texts to further extend their interest and knowledge on farming. We have created a project board to display all the children's learning and the various experiences they have engaged in to further their knowledge.

We are grateful for amazing farmers, future farmers, and the contributions of agriculture to this world, which don't end at the dinner table.



In the upcoming week we will have our Kindifarm visit and further explore our role in helping drought affected farmers and the importance of conserving water. These are great conversations to have at home with your children. You can help currently by purchasing Famers Own milk to support our farmers. The children loved seeing the educators use this milk at preschool.

## PHILOSOPHY

### Preschool Philosophy



Our Preschool Philosophy is important as it provides a clearly defined statement of our policies, aims, values and beliefs in relation to early childhood education and care. It also reflects commitment to the relationships needed for a successful learning

environment such as collaboration with family and the support and development of our educators. In essence, the Philosophy becomes the cornerstone on which all decisions for daily interaction and operation are founded. We are currently undergoing our annual review of our Preschool Philosophy. We will be inviting families to help with this review process. If you would like to participate in this process have a chat with Lara—we would appreciate your feedback.





# HERE'S THE NEWS

## Preschool Christmas Party

**Yes, it is that time of year!** Please pop this date in your diary.  
Our Preschool Christmas Party will be held on the morning of  
**Friday, 6th December.**



The event is held in the Church. Children are to be dropped off to Preschool before 9am and parents enter the Church from the front of the building.

Please note the parents entry to the Church will not be opened until **9.10am**. Also, we are asked every year by parents, "Where will my child be standing" unfortunately, as we have 70 children to organise into lines on the morning prior to walking into the Church, we have no way of advising where each child will stand. A note will be coming home to you shortly with all the information about times and how to RSVP!

## Preschool Accounts

Your final account for 2019 will be distributed mid November with all payments due by Friday December 6th. This account will include all fees up until our closing day of December 20th. It will also include the refund of the \$100 holding deposit to those families whose children are heading off to school next year.



Therefore, could we please remind everyone to keep a close eye on their accounts over coming weeks to ensure that all payments are up to date and for those leaving Preschool, please consider stopping any automatic fee payments you may have set up to avoid your account going into credit, especially considering the refund of your holding deposit.

## Casual Days Book

As the Preschool accounts are being finalised in November please be aware that the Casual Days Book finishes operating at the end of November.





## Schoolie Parents

A contact list has been placed on our entrance table. Feel free to add your name and phone number to this list. It is a great way to keep in contact with other families attending the same school. A list will be put together with all the contacts for each family and given only to families who have chosen to be on the list.



Summer is upon us, please ensure that your child is coming to school with an appropriate sun safe hat and clothing covering shoulders. We ask parents to please provide your child with sunscreen upon arrival at preschool, alternatively sunscreen is readily available at our entrance table—just ask an educator for assistance

## Scholastic Book Club

Scholastic leaflets are out just now and orders are due back on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> November. This edition has a bumper Christmas section.



If you would like to place an order, please do so either through the LOOP app, through the Scholastic website or you can return the form with the money to preschool.

*Thank you*

## November Birthday's

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

Sam—5yrs



## Big School Week! Week Commencing November 25th



Children heading off to school next year are very welcome to wear their school uniform during this week. During Big School Week we will be having visits from local schools. A teacher and several kindergarten students visit and talk to all the children about school, show off their school uniforms and read our preschooler's stories.

The teacher also introduces our children to a book called "Big School". This book was produced in collaboration between local schools and local prior to school services and offers the preschooler's a great pictorial guide to all the different places in our local schools. This book is then left out for our Preschool children to look at for the remainder of the year. We have been conducting Big School Week in collaboration with local schools for a number of years as it provides another Important transitional link for the children heading off to school



### Transition to School Tips—*what can you do at home*

**Read A Story.** Make a special time every day to read to your child, ask questions about the story and have a conversation asking your child what they enjoyed about the story.

**Sing Songs and Play with Rhyme.** Increase your child's phonemic awareness and build their vocabulary by reading Nursery Rhymes and Dr Seuss and singing songs together.

**Orientation.** Make good use of orientation programmes at your school of choice and use every opportunity to network with children and their families attending your school .

**Play Dates.** Organise regular play dates with other children during the holiday break to continue to practice relationship building and those important social skills

**Increase Independence.** Give your child small jobs to do around the house; support them to look after their own belongings on outings; pack and unpack their bag for Preschool; encourage them to make their own decisions; support them to persist with challenging tasks.

**Talk about Starting School.** Answer frankly any questions your child may have, explain how things they are already able to do in our Preschool environment will be the same things they need to do for school. Discuss all the things you discovered during school orientation.

This Department of Education link provides some helpful tips for preparing you and your child for school next year. <https://education.nsw.gov.au/public-schools/going-to-a-public-school/media/documents/getting-ready-for-school.pdf>





# HOLIDAY PROGRAMME



The children had a much fun during our last holiday programme of the year. What confident, creative and involved learners we are witnessing within our preschool environment. We were lucky to have some fantastic family volunteers to help us bring our Holiday Programme to life over the fortnight.

## A BIG THANK YOU....

**Steph**, for helping the children make their own song puppets as they explored their creativity and communication skills.

**Grant**, for your paper plane making expertise. The children were able to use their engineering skills to make their own planes, which were raced and flown throughout the day.

**Deb**, for creating a whole themed hour of Circus fun in which the children were able to explore their gross motor skills. We engaged in a range of experiences which promoted balance, coordination, risk taking and spacial awareness.

**Jane, Georgie and Madison** for helping pamper the children by painting their nails and providing them with intricate, funky hair styles.



# Sustainability Programme

**Return and Earn** Thank you to all the families who have supported this project this year. \$120 of the money raised from this venture was recently used by the Schoolies during their excursion to The Four Seasons, buying flowers, vegetables, herbs and pots for the garden. You can read more about this in the The Four Seasons learning story.



**Cartridge and Toner Recycling** We are a drop off point for Planet Ark recycling for ink cartridges and toner. The box is next to our big computer, just drop it in and we'll sort out the rest.

**Book Exchange** The children continue to enjoy the book exchange and there continues to be a variety of books available to the children. Please remember to have a look through at the end of the day and you may find a new story for bedtime!



**Water Saving** We were lucky enough to have a few days of rain recently and we collected the water in a big container for using in our garden. The children are becoming much more aware of how important it is to be water wise and are putting what they have learned into practice such as turning off the taps and using the short flush in the toilet. Any unused water at the end of the day is also used in the garden.





# Sustainability Programme

**Recycle** The children are encouraged to think about what we can recycle at preschool and we have a soft plastics bin for such items. This is taken regularly to Coles to be recycled and the children have become very skilled in recognising what can and can't be recycled.

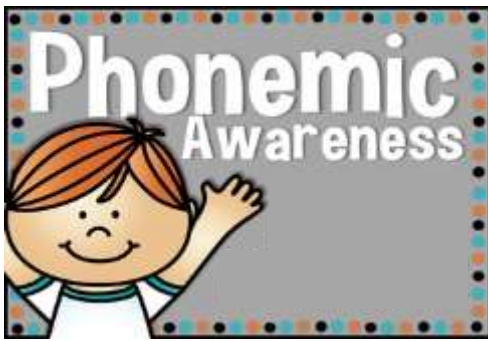


**Rosemary and Basil** You may have noticed that we have a thriving rosemary and thai basil bush. Please feel free to cut some off if you need some to add to dinner!



**Recycled Craft** During the holiday programme, the children engaged their creative skills with the recycled materials box. Using yoghurt pots, kitchen roll tubes, sticky tape rolls they used their imagination to create some wonderful inventions such as robots, fairies, cars etc. The children discussed what these were originally used for and shared their thoughts on recycling for craft. On Spring Day we also used donated yoghurt pots to plant our sunflower seeds. If your sunflowers are growing, we would love to see some photos!





## Jumping Jim

We have had so much fun meeting Jumping Jim and learning about his special sound.

Who is this jumping high in the air above Letterland? Jumping Jim lives in a jigsaw house, which he put together himself. Can you guess why he lives in a jigsaw house? Because jigsaw begins with his letter sound! Ask Jumping Jim what he enjoys most and he will tell you, 'Jumping' and 'Juggling'.

To practice Jumping Jim's letter sound, the children have been given the opportunity to engage in some experiences where they have explored the joys and pleasures of literacy as well as also exploring their physical wellbeing. A new audio book called, 'Animal Boogie' was introduced to the children. This story has been a huge hit with many of the children where it took them on a Journey as they walked through the Jungle. During this experience, the children viewed, listened and sung along to the words in the story. An array of jungle animals were discovered throughout the story whilst a rather catchy instrumental tune is played. This story and song also offered opportunity for the children to explore rhythm whilst having fun as they explore and play with words.

With juggling being one of Jumping Jim's most favourite things, the children were given the opportunity to explore their hand- eye coordination, balance and strength whilst practising their own juggling skills. To extend on from the children's obvious enjoyment in the juggling experience, Jo carried out an experience where the children made their own juggling balls using rice and balloons. A hands on experience was also carried out where the children assisted in making 'J...J...J..J, Jelly' for our underwater sensory play tray linked to a recent group time topic of interest, water safety.

An array of items were brought in from home from by some of the children that that started with Jumping Jim's letter sound. Items that were brought in included, jewellery, toy jeeps and a pretend jug.







This has been a very busy month with Little Endeavours and the Holiday Programme and the children have enjoyed every moment!



The first thing I noticed after I selected photos for this month's newsletter was how hands on we were this month with everyone touching and manipulating a great variety of materials. The children have loved all these sensory activities using all their senses, and fine motor skills, as they explored and created. They also used great expressive language to describe how things felt and smelt.

**Baking** – We mixed and baked zucchini and carrot cake with great co-operation between the preschoolers as they helped each other in the process.



**Spring Day** – We all love gardening activities and the children noticed we were using recycled yogurt pots to plant our sunflower seeds.

**Juggling Balls** - Everyone loved making their juggling balls, all working together and helping each other, and we were all impressed with Jack's demonstration of how he could juggle.







## Little Endeavours Report Continued ....



**Dough Letters** – Many children were surprised to find out it was bread dough we were using to make our letters, and even more surprised when they saw them after they were baked and could eat them.



**Coloured Rice** – As we made coloured rice to use as a resource at preschool the children commented on the smell of the vinegar and were amazed how little food colouring was needed to colour the rice. We also discovered the colours we could mix to create other colours.



**Planting** – The Schoolies bought us a wonderful selection of plants on their excursion to the nursery and we planted most of them the next day. The Schoolies were very excited when they saw the plants they had chosen being put in the sensory and veggie gardens.



# LEARNING STORY

## Our visit to The Four Seasons Nursery

Dear Schoolies,

Today you were all so excited as you prepared to embark on your excursion to the local Four Seasons Nursery .

Prior to departure you all sat as a group and discussed road safety with Steph and Cat. We talked about the importance of holding an adult's hand at all times and being aware of the busy roads. We also talked about being considerate of other customers that will be shopping in the nursery.

Steph asked you, "How do you think we are paying for the plants", you all were excited to hear that the money raised from our Return and Earn Program was going to pay for all our plants.

The plants that we buy will be used for cooking experiences, and we will need everyone to care for them and help our new plants grow at Preschool.



Our wonderful family volunteers arrived and each of you were partnered with one of our helpers. Each group was assigned a small picture of a plant to find at The Four Seasons Nursery. On our list we had had coriander, basil, lettuce, snap peas, marigold and pansies.

Then we were on our way! What a fabulous understanding of road safety you demonstrated as we travelled to our destination holding hands and waiting for adults. When you had arrived at The Four Season Nursery you were all keen to explore your surroundings as you went about looking for your assigned plants. Before we knew it you all successfully found your assigned plants with assistance from your parent helper. We then continued to explore the nursery a little longer. One of our parents suggested that we get a mint chocolate plant. You all were very keen to try the taste of it's leaves. You all loved it so much leaving there were not many leaves left on the plant.





# LEARNING STORY

## Visit to the nursery cont....



It was now time to leave The Four Seasons Nursery so you farewelled the helpful staff and thanked them for the discount on our purchase, and we greatly appreciate this kind and supportive gesture from our community friends. We then made our way back to Preschool where we took a group photo and gave a huge thank you and round of applause to our parent helpers who kindly helped us out.

*Thank you to Kel, Jodie, Rach, April, Kate, Indi, and Sophia.*

Schoolies you were so excited to show your Sweetpea and Bluebell friends what we purchased. We left our plants on the table for everyone to investigate and explore. Tomorrow Jo will be coming in to help you all plant our new plants in our Preschool garden. You will all continue to help take care of them by giving them water each day during outdoor play time.

### What did you discover?

Today you discovered that when our preschool community works together we can achieve great things. You found by your collective efforts through our return and earn programme, you were able to support our own sustainability programme. L.O 2.4).

You discovered by employing your social skills you were able to build upon an ongoing relationship with the staff of the Four Seasons Nursery creating a wonderful feeling of community (L.o.2) You also found that your curiosity allowed you to extend your knowledge about the world of plants – their uses, the different varieties, how they grow and how to care for them within our environment (L.o.4)

Early Years Framework: Learning Outcome 2—  
Children are connected and contribute to their world.

Early Years Framework: Learning Outcome 4—  
Children are confident and involved learners

Reggio Emilia—Children are active participants in their learning





## Quality Improvement Plan (QIP): *Emergency Procedures*

Educators are currently reviewing our Emergency and Evacuation Policy and Bush Fire Policy after our recent training. Lockdowns – Children and educators have been undertaking our last round of lockdown practice for the year— practicing what to do in a variety of emergency events. The service aims to minimise the risk of harm or the exposure to danger, for anyone on the premises through the implementation of this procedure. Children are showing a good understanding around the importance of this procedure as they actively follow educators instructions. New emergency evacuation signage is currently being organised to ensure we comply with fire safety regulations.



### Dates to Remember!

November 28	Kindifarm
November 4 & 7	StEPS Vision Screening
November 5	MCPS Band Visit
November 18—21	Orientation Visit for 2020
November 25	Big School Week



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