

Getting Ready for School!

As we go into the last few weeks of the year at preschool, the children are having more and more conversations and asking questions about what to expect at school. Children who experience a positive transition into their new environment are more likely to be happy at school and continue to improve their social and academic skills. So how can you support a positive transition to school for your child? Here are some tips:

- ♥ Orientation visits have started, or will be starting very soon. These visits are a great introduction into the school day, and will give your child the opportunity to meet teachers, their buddy, new friends and familiarise themselves with the school environment. Encourage lots of conversations with your child about their school and the things you saw during orientation. Provide the opportunity for them to ask lots of questions and solve the answers together! Find out if your child has any fears about starting school and encourage them to share this with you.
- ♥ Find out if your school grounds are open during school holidays/weekends, and visit regularly to let your child familiarise themselves with the buildings and playground. Check the School Infrastructure website to see if your local school is included <https://www.schoolinfrastructure.nsw.gov.au/what-we-do/we-support-communities/share-our-space/everydayschools.html>
- ♥ Support the development of your child's independence and self-help skills so they have confidence in their own ability to make decisions and look after themselves and their belongings. Provide opportunity for them to practise this, don't do everything for them :) Does your child take a squeezable yoghurt pouch for lunch? When you pack their lunch, open this enough that the seal cracks, then close it again. This lets your child open it themselves at mealtimes, without having to rely on a teacher to help. This is a good one to start practising now.
- ♥ Remind them about all the things they are able to do at Preschool that will translate into the new school environment e.g. make friends, play nicely, ask teacher if they need anything, sit and listen during group time, write their name, pack and unpack their bag—there are so many things!
- ♥ Keep up social activities during the Christmas break so your children continue their development and confidence in their social skills. Play board games with them, let them visit with their grandparents or their cousins without you. Make use of the contact list from preschool to meet up with friends who will go to the same school.
- ♥ There are lots of stories you can share about starting school. Here are a few that we will also use at preschool;
 - Starting School by Jane Godwin and Anna Walker
 - My First Day at School by Meredith Costain
 - Wombat Goes to School by Jackie French and Bruce Whatley

The New South Wales Department of Education also has an animated story called Daisy's First Day and this link takes you to the story, along with a few resources to support your child and you with this transition <https://education.nsw.gov.au/parents-and-carers/going-to-school/preparing/starting-primary-school/daisy-s-first-day#Activity3>

Please also speak to the educators if you would like to discuss your child's transition to school further.



Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



October in Review 2023

Inside this Newsletter

- ♥ Educator Reports
- ♥ Holiday Programme
- ♥ Discovery Topics for the month
- ♥ Schoolies Excursion to Plant Bug
- ♥ Phonemic Awareness Report
- ♥ Sustainability Report

Our Preschool Programme in Review

Sweetpeas: It is hard to believe we are already into the last term of the year. Over the past month we have had opportunities to visit the church community garden during the day. Using the same procedures we use for fire drills, the children respond well to the routines of taking roll call, making sure to hold hands in groups and listening to instruction to ensure we are all kept safe during these mini excursions. With encouragement and support the children are developing a good understanding of why all these procedures are important. During roll call the children listen carefully for their names, giving a loud call out 'Here', while raising their hands to make sure everyone is accounted for. The Sweetpeas have enjoyed being able to use this garden space for playing ball games, joining in with treasure hunts, as well as challenging their gross motor skills while playing on the equipment in small groups. All these new experiences support the development of resilience and confidence as the Sweetpeas learn to cope with new challenges and experiences.

Bluebells: October has been and gone and we have been spending lots of time outside as the weather warms up. In the afternoon, the children have the choice of indoor or outdoor play, and most children go back and forth, taking the opportunity to enjoy quieter play indoors while also having the time to play outside. The Bluebells have been demonstrating their ability to care for our outdoor environment this month, in particular in caring for our plants and gardens. Following the Schoolies plant bug excursion, there was lots of work to be done in digging garden beds, weeding, planting new plants and watering these. Under the watchful eye of our gardening friends Janet and Jo, the Bluebells have been developing gardening skills, discovering what plants are weeds, how to pull these out, how far to dig for new plants and what plants grow well together. As these plants grow, the children have been involved in the daily watering, engaging in conversations with the educators about sustainable use of water and helping pick the produce that we can enjoy for afternoon tea. Learning these skills now will support the child's environmental knowledge as they grow and help them in learning to care for the land.

Schoolies: As the Schoolies enter their final term of Preschool, we have strongly been encouraging self-help skills to further develop their independence. This has included separating from their loved ones at the gate when arriving to Preschool, to encourage the children to unpack their bags independently. We have also been supporting the children with packing their bags throughout the day as they regularly pack away lunch boxes, clothing, show and tell etc. The Best Packed Bag award further supports this independence as well as our positive feedback and praise to all children demonstrating this skill, leaving them with a sense of pride. During meal times, the Schoolies have been showcasing their ability to open and close lunch boxes, open packaged foods and fill up their water bottles, needing some assistance at times with opening and closing lids. The self-help skills continue in our outdoor environment, including putting shoes on and putting on/taking off jumpers. All skills which will be beneficial at 'big school'. We have also been supporting the children's self-regulation as we educate them on how to solve problems that may arise in the environment. This has included exploring scenarios that may leave a child to feel upset or angry and discussing strategies to deal with this problem. The children explained "**Saying stop I don't like it**" (using their words), "**Telling a teacher**" and "**Finding somewhere else to play**". We will continue to support the children's emotional development as they prepare to transition to a larger environment.



Holiday Programme Fun!

Our last holiday programme of the year was a busy, fantastic two weeks. We got off to a musical start with a visit from Tuza and the African Drumming workshop which everyone enjoyed. We dressed up several times such as Cinema day, Mixed up day and Bluey day. Spring day saw us plant some beans to grow at home, as well as learn how bees make honey thanks to a visit from Sam's family. Mixed up day saw us drawing upside down, eating afternoon tea at morning tea and the children being the educators! We enjoyed a visit to the community gardens where the children had the opportunity to hide rocks they had painted for our community to find. Party day was a lot of fun as we played Pass the Parcel, Musical Chairs and enjoyed fairy bread for afternoon tea! Our teddies came to preschool for the day and we had lots of wet fun on water day. Our holiday programmes are a fantastic opportunity for the children to engage in different experiences and try new things.



Holiday Programme continued..

A big thank you to our family volunteers—Jacqui, Oscar, Gavin, Xanthe, Rawi, Dylan and Nanna Jan.



Exploring the Garden Week

9th October

Throughout the month of October, the children have displayed their passion for the natural environment and their interest towards exploring our gardens. We spent a week participating in a variety of activities, applying our knowledge and discovering more about the plants, insects and natural materials that live among our gardens. The week consisted of many community garden scavenger hunts, stories, researching, hands on learning and large group discussions about our findings. The children's enthusiasm surrounding their garden findings are displayed on a daily basis at preschool.



Schoolies Excursion to the Plant Bug

Thursday 12th October

The Schoolies went on an excursion to our local nursery The Plant Bug! Whilst there we went on a scavenger hunt for various plants, herbs and vegetables for our sensory and veggie gardens, which we planted when we got back to Preschool with Jo and Janet.

A BIG THANK YOU to our parent volunteers and the lovely staff at Plant Bug who set up a beautiful morning tea for us and donated some of our produce. We are grateful that we get to promote a sense of community within our Preschool and further build these connections with our local community.



Rocks, Minerals and Crystals Week

16th October

This week we explored rocks and minerals after the children showed an interest towards digging for rocks and treasures. The children shared their crystals, quartz and rocks from home, allowing everyone to discover their physical features. We learnt what rocks are used for such as fuel, mirrors and houses. We conducted a science experiment where we grew crystals as well as put rocks in the rock tumbler to observe the changes over time. We made our own crystals and dug for rocks just like miners. Jo even shared a lava rock that she recently got in Iceland. What a fun week learning about our Earth.



Mt Colah Public School Band Visit

Monday 23rd October

We were lucky to have Mt Colah Public School's band visit us for a special performance. The students along with conductor Matt in the Hat played a variety of our favourite songs including Bluey, Twinkle Twinkle, Heads Shoulders, If You're Happy and You Know It and Ghostbusters! The children were able to respond through movement to the music and move to the tempo and rhythm of the music and some even got a chance to conduct the band!

The students showed us all of their instruments including the flute, trumpet, saxophone, trombone, drums, keyboards and the children got to have a closer look at the instruments, touching them and noticing the sounds they made.

It was a great opportunity for us to further our connection with our local school and the children to understand more about big school and what it has to offer in the way of extra curricular activities. Thank you Mt Colah Public School.





Phonemic Awareness Programme



During the fortnight of Talking Tess, we were set on a challenge to reach 50 T words! The children were up for this challenge, excitedly sharing a number of different words. They searched for new words in their environment, read stories and sang songs. We were very proud to reach 70 T words by the end of the fortnight, even learning new meanings to some words. The children enjoyed making the letter T with their bodies as well as making telescopes with recycled cardboard rolls.



Impy Ink learnt about Italy with us this fortnight, exploring some of our children's and educator's culture. Giovanna (Lara's Mum) came in to teach the children some basic Italian words, explore a map of Italy and share photographs of some iconic landmarks that she visited during her recent trip. We also cooked pasta with Lara and enjoyed this with our lunch as well as made pasta bracelets/necklaces using uncooked coloured pasta. Lastly, Jo made instruments with the children for the /i/ sound and to experiment with different noises.



Little Endeavours with Jo

It is hard to believe it is Term 4 already. After being away for a month it is great to back and working with the preschoolers again with lots of activities to finish off the year.

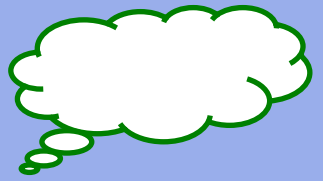
Gardening with Janet - For two weeks we worked with Janet's guidance in the garden, learning a lot about sustainability, growing our own vegetables. We prepared the garden beds for the plants the Schoolies chose on the Plant Bug excursion, gently planted them and then watered them before putting lucerne mulch on the soil around them to stop weed growth and help water retention. With all the hot weather at the moment we have to remember to keep watering them. Our gardens provide the children with opportunities to care for and learn from the land.



Cup Musical Instruments – Linking to our visit from Mt Colah Public's Band and the Schoolies learning about the // sound in Letterland we made our own Instruments. The preschoolers were amazed we could make such different sounds with a cup using balloons, beans and elastic bands. It was hard decision to decide which to make. We had to work together, coordinating our hands and fingers, to make them which was tricky but encouraged our fine motor skills. On my second day many wanted to make a different instrument to the one they had already made. A lot of noise after they were made with lots of happy faces as we experiment with rhythm and tempo using these instruments.



Children's voices and ideas



Within the preschool and in every day life it is important that the children have a sense of autonomy. At Preschool we aim to achieve this through everyday decisions including play spaces, learning opportunities and discovery times.

Recently we have also received the children's voices around our Physical Environment, highlighted in National Quality Standards. When our new cubby arrived the children were asked for their ideas of what they wanted to add to this blank canvas and educators worked to make these happen - this included a doorbell, mailbox, kitchen and flowers. Some ideas were a little harder to bring to fruition including a bathroom :)

We also changed the room layout for our Mixed Up Day in the holiday programme, but had a lot of comments from the children about how they liked this. So we took it to a vote for children and families to keep the set up as it was or change to the new set up. The majority of votes have been to keep the new layout of the room so this will now be our new layout.

Thank you for your votes!





We have a very busy term ahead of us so please put the following dates in your calendar. We have copies of the Term 4 Programme on the entry table for you which contains these also.

Big School Week (Local School Visits) - W/C 27th November

Christmas Concert 9am - Friday 8th December

Schoolies Graduation 5pm - Thursday 14th December
(Community Garden)

Last day of 2023—Friday 22nd December

November Birthdays

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



Sophie—5 years

Max Cu—5 years

Tommy—5 years



Community Connections

ART FESTIVAL & EXHIBITION 2023

Pacific Berowra Christian School

29th + 30th November

Featuring...
The Berowra 'Arties'
inter-school children's
Portrait Competition

Wednesday 29th, 9am - 9pm

Exhibition viewing from 9am

School performances from 10am

Festivities and food begin at 5:30pm

Official Opening and Prize Giving at 7pm.

Thursday 30th, 9am - 4pm

Preschool activities

Exhibition open for viewing

FREE ENTRY



Find further information here
including 'Berowra Arties'
information and Entry Form, or
PBCS office: (02) 9456 2444 or
artsfestival@pacificberowra.nsw.edu.au

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