

Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



Viral Gastroenteritis Update

We have been recently contacted by NSW Health offering support and advice regarding the recent outbreak of Viral Gastroenteritis in our wider community. Most of you are probably aware Viral Gastroenteritis has been reported, affecting many institutions, including schools and day care centres in NSW in the past few weeks.

We have had about 10 of our children and 5 of our educators contract the virus and it seems to have now passed. In the meantime, NSW Health has advised there is a change in health regulations now stating exclusion of sick children for 48 hours after last symptoms and we have now changed our Preschool Policy accordingly.

Families whilst this virus is still about within our community we remind you of the following:

Hand hygiene: Hands play an important role in spreading germs. Hand hygiene is a very effective way to control the spread of infection. Hand hygiene means washing hands with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based hand rub.

- Please encourage your family to wash their hands when returning home after every outing.
- Please encourage all members of your family, including your Preschooler, to use our alcohol based hand rub on entry to Preschool.

Excluding Sick Children : If your child contracts viral gastroenteritis they are unable to return to Preschool **until 48 hours** has passed after the last symptoms.

Our educators ensure that our health and hygiene practices are rigorously applied during every day of operating to minimise infection risk.

Thank you for your support in helping keep Preschool healthy.



September 2018

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Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

Sweetpeas Show and Tell is the most important part of the day for most children, especially if they have something really precious to show everyone. When the time comes there is a buzz in the air as everyone waits in anticipation for the next treasure to be shown. The Sweetpeas have had some interesting possessions to show. Kara brought her trombone, which the children really enjoyed, they listened to her make some interesting sounds as she took a deep breath before blowing really hard. Sam was so excited to show us his crocodile that he got for his birthday. Ivy showed us her windmill and had so much to tell us about a family fair that she went to and Grace showed us her Possum Magic book with a special little soft possum to cuddle. We look forward to seeing new treasurers this term. Show and Tell has many benefits for young children. These early language experiences help to build effective communication and listening skills that are essential for a young child's learning. Bringing in something that is important to them helps develop self-esteem giving them a chance to build confidence in themselves and in what they treasure. They develop social skills as children connect with others who enjoy interests similar to theirs which can help them with making friendships that can last for years, if not for a lifetime.

Bluebells: We have had a busy month learning more about the Aboriginal culture that surrounds us. We were lucky enough to have a visit from Jess from Koori Connections and you will read some more on that exciting day later in the newsletter. We have been very interested in some of the Aboriginal Dreamtime stories and we have spent some time learning about these. There are some animated versions on You Tube Kids that I'm sure your child would love to share with you. One of the stories we were most interested in was The Rainbow Serpent. This tells the story of Goorilla who was looking for his tribe and created the mountains, billabongs, animals and trees. This story enabled some children to share stories from their church about God creating the animals and trees and we had some lovely discussions about how similar these stories of creation were. The children displayed a great amount of respect for each other as they listened to other opinions. The children were invited to help create our own Rainbow Serpent and through an art activity, we decorated pieces of paper with crayons and pencils and you can see this on one of the boards on the wall. You will also see our own interpretations of what the Rainbow Serpent looked like on other paintings. The Bluebells have shown a lot of interest in the Dreamtime stories and we will continue to share these stories and learn more about our Aboriginal culture.

Schoolies: Over the past month our Schoolies have really flourished into fantastic team players within the Early Childhood setting with many of them expressing a great sense of enjoyment in carrying out their own means of imaginative play as well as also actively engaging in teacher initiated experiences. During these experiences they are not only exploring and strengthening the relationship and bonds they have with one another but, also further developing their overall social skills whilst exploring a wide variety of different readily available resources. The wooden blocks and loose parts trolley in particular has been of interest with many of the preschoolers. When exploring these resources they worked collaboratively together to build and construct something, expressing their own thoughts and ideas through play whilst also respecting their fellow peers own thoughts, ideas and contributions. Conquering the wide variety of small/ large puzzles together has also been another resource that our Schoolies have thoroughly enjoyed, applying their investigative and problem solving skills as they connect the pieces together to create the big picture. Some challenges were had during these experiences however this didn't stop them! It has been very humbling to see them all working together and helping one another. Like the old saying goes, **'Many hand's make light work!'** Great work Schoolies! ☺ Being a strong team player is a good quality to have for BIG school. The children's educator's will strive to provide open- ended leaning experiences that invite further group engagement in preparation for school.



Accident and Illness Policy



Over the past month we have reviewed the following policies and have made no changes to these: Show and Tell, Excursion, Child Safe Environment, Workplace Surveillance, Social Media and Dental Health Policy.

We have also reviewed our Interactions with Children Policy and thought it a great time to remind families of their role in the application of this policy which enables Educators to provide the best care and support for all children. Please remember to inform educators of any family events or incidents that may impact your child and their behaviour at Preschool eg. moving house, new sibling or family illness etc. Please keep educators informed of any concerns regarding your child's behaviour and well being and if they are struggling with any aspect of Preschool life.

Spring has sprung! Sun Safety reminder



As the beautiful season of Spring is upon us please remember to pack a hat for your child each day they come to preschool. Children are also required to wear tops that cover their shoulders. **Singlets and spaghetti straps** are not to be worn during outdoor play as they provide inadequate protection from the sun.

September Birthdays'

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

Levi—5 yrs

Charlotte—5 yrs

Imogen—5yrs



Surprising Reasons Why Outdoor Play is Healthy

Yes, we are in the colder months of our seasonal calendar but that won't stop us taking advantage of our outdoor environment. Please remember to pack a jacket and maybe a beanie or warm hat so your child can take full advantage of our outdoor play experiences.

In Scandinavian preschools, you will find children playing outside at every opportunity. Even in the depths of Winter, children will be wrapped up in warm overalls and will spend the day exploring forests, climbing moss-clad boulders or wading in creeks up to their rain boots. With these forest schools promoting exclusive outdoor play and its benefits, why is it then that we are not following suit? In Scandinavian countries, children are found to be fitter and more attentive with better motor skills as well as being generally healthier. To help you understand why here are surprising reasons for why outdoor play is healthy in Winter.

Children Can Escape Indoor Germs

Probably the most surprising health benefit of outdoor play is that it is better for our health! With viruses and bacteria being more prevalent in the Winter it is important to get outside where there is fresh air as the germs that we bring in the house are being recycled over and over again through our air vents. For children, in particular, getting outside is also essential for them to develop a strong immune system as they come into contact with bacteria in a natural setting and the more time they spend outdoors, the less likely they are to develop autoimmune disorders and allergies in the future.

Fresh Air is Healthy – Even in Winter!

Another contradiction to our common beliefs, exposure to the cold doesn't necessarily cause a cold. In fact, if dressed appropriately, fresh air is healthy for everyone even in the Winter. When people spend a lot of time indoors, especially when they are overheated and poorly ventilated, germs are recirculated and easily passed from one person to another. That's why outdoor play is crucial! Not only does it allow children to breathe fresh air and reduce the spread of infection, but it also refreshes the mind, allows them to burn energy and establishes a positive understanding for year-round



exercise throughout the rest of their lives.

Outdoor Play Provides Opportunities for Better Exercise

We all know that we as adults should be getting at least 30 minutes of exercise a day. For children, it is advised that they should get 60 minutes a day and this is even more important throughout the Winter. When children don't exercise enough, this excess energy can affect their sleep cycle and appetite which in turn affects their development and ability to maintain a healthy body weight. While exercise, in general, regulates this and ensures a healthy lifestyle, Winter exercise, in particular, is essential for muscle growth, strength and gross-motor development. Why? Because everything about this environment challenges us! Whether just walking through snow, or engaging in slightly more strenuous activity such as shovelling snow, sledging or building a snowman, this season provides us with unique opportunities for exercise that develop us in various ways.

Winter Play Helps Children to Develop

Much like exercise, outdoor play also provides opportunities for learning and development, some of which are exclusive to those Winter months. With outdoor play equipment being frozen and covered in snow, children are challenged with finding alternatives which stimulate their imaginations and offers different ways to learn. Physical and cognitive challenges such as "how will I pack this snow tightly to build shapes?" and having an awareness that they need to adapt their behaviour in this new slippery and less safe environment, all ensure that they learn important life lessons and develop vital skills.

Playing Outdoors Supplies Children with Essential Vitamin D

You may not think that there is enough sun in the Winter months to provide us with our daily requirement for Vitamin D, but you'll be surprised yet again. While adults can take vitamin D supplements to compensate for the lack of sun and amount they get from their diet, children can't. Vitamin D is even more essential for children as well as it promotes calcium absorption, ensuring strong bone growth and preventing bone deformities such as rickets, so it is important we get them as much sun exposure as possible. With sunlight and vitamin D having a large impact on daily mood, outdoor play in the Winter will help keep those little ones smiling!

Scholastic Book Club

Term 3 orders will be delivered in the next week. Thank you to all the families who placed orders this time. Please keep a look out for Issue 6 which will be in your communication pocket in the next week or two.



Wipe out Waste

This year the children at Preschool have really enjoyed learning about how to look after our environment. They have become passionate warriors for the protection of the environment taking up many great ideas such as using recycled craft items, using our food scraps for our gardening programme, only playing with natural items found on the ground not pulling them off the plants and trees and conserving water as we wash our hands—to name a few.

To continue the children's interest in caring for our environment we would like to introduce Nude Foods to our Preschool, encouraging children to bring morning tea and lunch items free of wrapping and packaging.

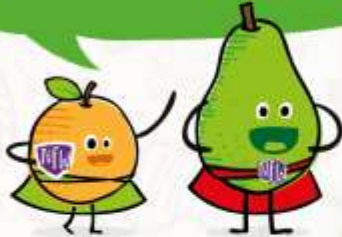
This is a great way to teach children the difference that their actions can make for their own health and the environment. This initiative will encourage discussions about the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, environmental sustainability and the difference their actions can make.

Together we can make a difference no matter how small.



HOW TO PACK A NUDE FOOD LUNCH

The Nude Food Warriors have created a step-by-step guide to make packing a Nude Food Lunch easy as 1, 2, 3!



STEP 1

Choose the main lunch item, it may be something from the list below or a Nude Food creation of your own

- Sandwich/ Roll
- Wrap/Pita
- Frittata/Quiche
- Pasta/Pasta Salad
- Salad
- Sushi/Rice Paper Rolls
- Noodles
- Stir Fry
- Egg Muffins

STEP 2

Select your fruit

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| Apple | Berries |
| Orange | Fruit Salad |
| Banana | Pear |
| Grapes | Mandarin |
| Watermelon | Kiwi Fruit |

STEP 3

Pick a nutritious Nude Food snack

- Yoghurt
- Vegetable Sticks and dip
- Cheese and crackers
- Popcorn (natural)
- Rice Crackers
- Vege chips (homemade)
- Pretzels

STEP 4

Dont Forget Hydration!

Fill your favourite reusable drink bottle with filtered of tap water! Remember to refill throughout the day to make sure you stay hydrated!



Reptile Show



On Monday 20th August, we had a visit from the Bob Turner Reptile Show! Bob came in carrying some big boxes and we couldn't wait to discover what was inside!

We met Charlie the Blue tongue lizard who was happy to give some children cheeky kisses on the cheek with his big blue tongue! Bob told us that blue tongue lizards don't lay eggs, they have live babies and we met Benji the baby blue tongue! Then we met Mr Whiskers the bearded dragon. Some of our friends were invited to the front of the group to have Mr Whiskers on their jumper! Julie the spring leaf insect was beautiful as was Herman the frog who sat on some peoples heads. The most surprising of all the reptiles was Mr Cranky Pants the GIANT snake! Bob spoke to everyone about how to stay safe around snakes and what we need to do if we see one. The children were very engaged during Bob's show and the shrieks of laughter told us they were having a great time.



Nurturing your child's well being is so important, especially as they head off to Big School!

How to nurture a child's mental health



Actively listen before offering your advice



Be patient



Share your feelings and validate theirs



Tell the truth



Model healthy behavior



Surround them with healthy adults



Be consistent and follow through with what you promise



Believe them and in them



Teach them how to be safe



Use open ended questions



Have scheduled family time



Limit electronic time for everyone



Reach out and hug them



Practice relaxation exercises together



Model forgiveness



Respond calmly when their emotions are elevated



View their behavior as a window to their needs and feelings



Make play and exercise a requirement



Recognize positive choices



Be present



Set and respect boundaries



Phonics Programme



This week we introduced **Kicking King** who makes the **special 'K'** sound. Letterland's **King** is a **keen** football player, who loves **Kicking** balls really hard. He also has many pets such as a **Kangaroo**, **Koala** and some playful **Kittens**. The children have been asking to partake in various relay races so the educators decided to make a **Kangaroo** relay using the jumping sacks. They would all yell, "Ready, set, go" and off they went. As the children raced the rest of their friends provided encouraging words and cheered them on, what great sportsmanship. The Schoolies demonstrated good gross motor skills as they jumped their way through this relay race keeping their feet together and landing both feet simultaneously. At the end of the race the children were asked to say a word that starts with **Kicking King's** special **'K'** sound.



The children were very excited to meet **Noisy Nick** on his **Ninth** birthday. His parents gave him a drum set so he thinks he can make as much **Noise** as he likes. The Schoolies made their own **Noise** as they engage with our **New** Music wall made by the children and Jo. We will be discussing tempo and pitch. They definitely made more **Noise** than **Noisy Nick** did on his birthday.





Oh my goodness – what a busy month it has been in Little Endeavours with our hands, minds and imaginations all working hard to create some wonderful work!! The children are so enthusiastic and have learnt how to wait patiently for their turn each session as everyone wants to go first!



We have been so busy we need two pages this month to tell you all about our endeavours!

DAMPER – Together we mixed and baked 2 types of damper (cheese & choc chip). No need to guess which one was favourite!



DREAMTIME ANIMALS – our rainbow serpents and echidnas were all so different. The children loved making these and it was great fine motor work for their hands and fingers as they folded the paper for their serpents and moulded the clay and sticks for their echidnas.





Little Endeavours continued...



AUSTRALIA MAP DISPLAY – It was certainly tricky tracing the outline of Australia and ruling the state lines. We then had to think and place the state and capital names in the right places.



DINOSAUR EGGS – Lots of dinosaurs hatched during the session. Everyone had a try cutting out their own egg with many children persevering and completing the task on their own. Also great discussion on how split pins



MUSIC WALL – Using recycled lattice and household implements we worked together to create our outside music wall after collaborating together and drawing a plan what we would do. It's great it is outside as the noise (music!!) is very loud.





Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):



We have a continuing focus on improving all we do and this includes improvements to safety. We have recently replaced all the shelving in our outdoor equipment storage shed with made to measure shelving (thanks Claude!). The old shelving was inadequate and dated and did not provide enough room for the safe storage of all the equipment. It was also important to ensure that Educators could safely access the items they needed to set up our outdoor programme. It is a great time to remind you all to let us know if you ever see something within our environment that appears unsafe.

Dates to Remember!

September 4th & 6th	Preschool Photos
October 2nd—12th	Holiday Programme
October 1st	Public Holiday



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