

# Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



*a caring place to learn and grow*



## *What is Phonemic Awareness?*

Phonemic awareness is literally 'sound' awareness. Phonemic awareness understands that words are made up of sounds and being able to hear, recognise and manipulate the individual sounds that make up a word. Phonemic awareness is primarily an auditory skill of distinguishing and recognising the sound structure of language. For example, phonemic awareness is realising the word 'puppy' is made up of the sounds /p/ /u/ /p/ /ee/.

***Why Phonological Awareness is important?*** According to an article called Reading Rockets, by Louisa Moats, phonemic awareness is important because it is critical to and a powerful predictor of the likelihood of reading and spelling success. Expressing the ability to identify and produce the appropriate letter sound is considered significantly important, particularly in preparing for formal literacy education.

At Mount Colah Preschool we provide a phonemic awareness programme which acts as an introduction to exploring letter sounds and gives the children an opportunity to practice processing and making these sounds. Based on the Letterland Programme we have fun with interactive learning experiences using music, rhyme, nursery rhymes, stories, dance and games, as well as the opportunity to engage in hands-on experiences.

***Some things that you could do at home to greater support your child's phonemic awareness include:***

- Read regularly with your child
- When out in public encourage your child to produce the appropriate letter sounds of words or images that you may see e.g. A sign in the fruit shop that has the word 'banana' on it, say 'B...b...b...b.. banana' together.
- Explore nursery rhymes, singing and silly word games. By reading nursery rhymes to children, singing songs and playing silly word games you are stimulating their phonemic awareness and building their vocabulary.
- Ensure 'letter craft' is readily available, e.g. magnetic letters, alphabetical puzzles

*We have invited the children to bring in items from home that reflect our focus letter sound. We would like to ask for you to continue to do so. As of next week a basket will be provided within our literacy area for your child to place your items in. These items will be visited during our phonemic awareness focused group times*



To reflect the letter sound of Noisy Nick, Jed brought in a number of items to share with his peers that started with the 'N' sound. The items included pretend money notes and his camping nightlight.

Article by  
Cat Fielding



## September 2019

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## Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

**Sweetpeas:** This month the sandpit has been very popular. The Sweetpeas have shown a keen interest spending most afternoons enjoying this shady but warm spot. Educators have been providing the children with a range of materials and objects including dinosaurs, recycled cylinders, buckets, spades and cooking utensils. The children have also enjoyed having wet sand added to the sand pit to allow the children to develop another sense of texture, although more recently we have had to explain to the children we must only have this occasionally, due to current water restrictions. While sandpit play may seem so simple to most children and adults, there are a range of very important developmental benefits that children are exposed to during their time in the sand pit. While in the sand pit the children are developing their fine motor skills through basic scooping, pouring and grasping of objects such as buckets and spades, these actions strengthen hand and finger muscles as they play. Sand play hugely promotes and expands children's imagination and challenges their creativity. The children's positive social skills have shone as they work collaboratively to come up with ideas such as tea parties, birthday parties, roads and treasure hunts, communicating their ideas and thoughts with each other at these times. We have also seen an increase in concentration and cognitive development as the children experiment with volume, weight and depth. *"Play is often talked about as it is a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning" – Fred Rogers*

**Bluebells:** August has passed us by and it was another busy month. The Bluebells had a great experience at the Feature Creatures show and met a huge variety of animals, even holding a snake! We have also had a fantastic few weeks learning about space and we hope the children have been sharing some of what they have been learning and maybe have some questions for you too! This month, the Bluebells have been practising their fine motor skills, focusing on cutting and using scissors safely. Research tells us that being able to hold and use scissors helps to promote the hand skills that children need for optimal fine motor development and for an efficient pencil grip. At preschool the children have a variety of scissors to use, such as easigrip which are self-opening and only need a small squeeze to cut. These scissors are ideal for children who are just learning to use scissors and/or need to build up strength in their hands. We have many pairs of regular scissors which the children are encouraged to use in every day practice and the Bluebell children have been using these effectively in their cutting experiences this past month. There are lots of ways you can encourage cutting at home. Give your child a magazine, a pair of scissors, a glue stick and a piece of paper and encourage them to cut out pictures of interest from the magazine. If you would like to talk to us about your child's cutting skills, please feel free to come and have a chat.

**Schoolies:** What a busy month the Schoolies have had as they continued to scaffold their learning on Space. The educators have been blown away with their existing knowledge and willingness to learn more as they have thrown some hard hitting questions our way. The Schoolies have been engaging in a variety of hands on experiences to further challenge their learning. The children participated in a group experience where they held a picture up of each planet and had to sort themselves in to the correct position away from the sun. A lot of positive communication took place as well as trial and error as they communicated with one another their ideas and thought on who was placed where and what way they spun. The children were also invited to take part in a drawing experience where they collaborated together to draw the Solar System. They used a Solar System poster as a reference to ensure they left no planets out and did their individual details such as rings, colours and size. They discussed with one another the moon's craters and how they are made, stars and even the Milky Way, again the educators were blown away by how much knowledge and curiosity the children expressed in space. To further your child's interest in Space there are various educational YouTube clips that have great information their favourite being 'The Solar System Song'.





# UPCOMING EVENTS



## Preschool Photos September 3rd and 5th

Preschool photos will be taken on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> of September. Nerida Child's Photography will be visiting the service to take the children's photos. If your child does not attend on one of these days you are able to book in an appointment at a time that suits you. Please talk to Lara or your child's educator if you have any questions.

September 30—October 11th

### Holiday Programme

Stay tuned for information regarding another action packed, fun filled holiday programme.

We would love to have family participation. If you would like to come along and help with an activity or would like to suggest an area of interest for the programme please talk to an educator

*We would love to see you!*

## Schoolie Excursion

October 17th

The Schoolies will head off to explore the Four Seasons Garden Centre and will bring back with them some fabulous new plants for our garden.

We will need parent volunteers so please keep this date in your diary!



## Scholastic Book Club



**Thank you** for all the orders for this issue, these should be delivered in the next week. This issue the children chose a Peppa Pig space book as part of our commission earned as this ties in with our continuing interest in Space. Issue 6 will be in your communication pocket soon.

**A quick reminder...** please take the time to check your Preschool account for any changes to your Child Care Subsidy entitlement and if so please adjust your automatic payments accordingly. **Thank you.**



*Grace was having trouble closing her lunchbox after several failed attempts by both Lara and Jo.*

*Grace commented "if Adele was here she could do it"*

*Clearly Lara and Jo need to work on their muscle strength*

## September Birthday's

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

Kosa—4yrs

William—5yrs

Phoebe—4yrs

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY



# Please Remember

**We would like to remind you....**

## **Show and Tell:**

we have run out of show and tell bags. If you have one at home, please ensure that you are bringing your show and tell on the assigned day. If you happen to find one at home that may have been misplaced please return it to preschool.



**Sun Safety:** Please remember to pack a hat for your child. We have a small number of spare hats and these go into the wash after each use so we run out often. If your child does not have a hat they may be required to play under the shaded area during outdoor play time.



**Developmental Portfolios:** Do you still have your child's Portfolio at home? We hope you have enjoyed reading through your child's experiences from the first half of the year. These are now overdue to be returned. Please return your child's Portfolio to your child's educator as soon as possible so they can continue to record your child's development.



**Thank you**

## **Muesli Balls**

All you need is three ingredients and 20 minutes to put together these easy and delicious muesli balls, which make a great snack for the whole family.

**Ingredients:** 1 cup pitted dates; 2 1/2 cups muesli; 1/4 cup rice malt syrup



**Method:** Place the pitted dates into a large bowl and cover with boiling water. Let the dates soak for 15 minutes. Drain the water from the dates and add 2 cups of the muesli and the rice malt syrup to the bowl. Use a stick mixer (or food processor) to combine the ingredients until they all come together. Place the remaining half cup of muesli into a separate small bowl. Use a teaspoon to scoop up the date mixture and roll into balls. Place the balls into the bowl of extra muesli and roll to coat. Put the muesli balls into an airtight container and place into the fridge for 1 hour to firm.





# Sustainability Programme

## Book Exchange:

It is wonderful to see how much the children are participating and enjoying the book exchange. Thank you for all the donations of books that come in regularly to this. This is a fantastic way to recycle pre-loved books and is also developing a wonderful love of reading.



## Schoolies Park Excursion:

The Schoolies recently visited the park in Asquith and had a fantastic time exploring the area and equipment there. Our environmentally conscious children brought back a bag of rubbish they collected in the park to be disposed of responsibly in the bin at preschool. The children also brought back a variety of natural materials that have been used in craft projects in preschool.



**Return and Earn Project:** Our Return and Earn project continues to grow, thank you so much to everyone for contributing to this with your plastic and glass bottles and cans. We are getting closer to our target. We are using some of the money raised for this for our garden and we recently purchased some strawberries, tomatoes, lettuce and succulents which have been planted around the garden. The children had a fantastic time planting these with Jo and are taking their watering responsibilities very seriously.

## Reducing Waste:

During morning tea and lunch times, the children are encouraged to think about how to dispose of any packaging responsibly. We have a yellow bin for recycled packaging, grey bin (or scrunch bin as the children call it) for plastic wrappings that are then taken to Coles to be recycled and food waste such as banana skins, apple core, strawberry ends etc are fed to our worms that then produce lots of wee for our garden. We appreciate your help by packing minimal wrappers in your child's lunch box when possible.



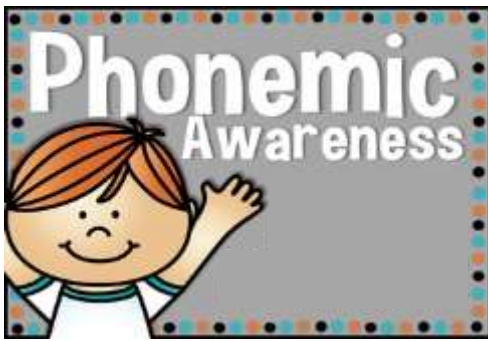
**Recycled Craft:** Earlier in August we spent a week using our imaginations and creating masterpieces using lots of recycled materials. We have a bin outside full of boxes, yoghurt pots, kitchen roll tubes – lots of stuff that we throw away every day! The children were invited to pull bits and pieces from this to make something and we were



amazed with what was created! We had robots, space ships, bees, gardens and people made from this box of wonderful things!

**Cartridge Recycling:** Did you know we are a recycling drop off point for ink cartridges and toner cartridges? We have a big box next to the touch screen computer and you are welcome to dispose of any cartridges from home.





Over the past few weeks our Schoolies have been introduced to another two Letterland characters  
***'Kicking King'*** and ***'Noisy Nick'***



***Kicking King is the King of Letter land. He is a keen footballer. He loves kicking the ball really hard. That's why everyone calls him Kicking King. All the letter landers love to play football with Kicking King.***

To reflect Kicking King's love and interest in practicing his kicking skills and playing football the children played with balls during outdoor play time. The balls were a huge hit with our Preschoolers. They even requested for goals to be set up so that they could carry out their own football game. They found themselves dividing into teams and others deciding to be the goalie and even a coach. During this experience it was great to see the children extend their knowledge of Kicking King's sound whilst exploring their physical wellbeing and the joys and pleasures of their social world.



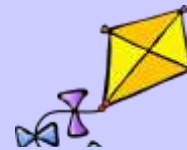
*The children enjoyed sorting themselves into teams.*



*... and the player of the match goes to*



To further reflect on Kicking King's sound the children were given the opportunity to make their own **KITE** using a wide variety of materials.



***Noisy Nick is celebrating his ninth birthday and he is very happy. His parents have given him a drum kit so now he thinks he can make as much noise as he likes.***

To reflect Noisy Nick's ninth birthday the children have enjoyed further exploring their numeracy knowledge, particularly numbers 1- 9 whilst engaging in a 'Dr Knickerbocker' dance experience where they performed various actions and movements and explored rhythm and beat.



Some fun musical instruments were made available within the learning environment to offer opportunity for the children to explore—**NOISE**—investigating the instruments use and the sound they make.







We have had lots of fun this month in Little Endeavours mostly working together in group activities. The children enjoy helping me, and each other, with lots of chatting as we work.



### Spider Web Weaving



Great fine motor skills were shown as the children wove a spider's web in the centre of a paper plate. The children confidently asked for help if they needed it. The best part of the activity was adding the spiders to it!



### Mt Colah Astronauts

Everyone enjoyed colouring their space suit and then adding their own face to it. As they added their astronauts to our space scene many looked for their friends astronauts so they could float near them. After we had finished the children kept returning to the display looking at all our astronauts and trying to name them all. Lots of space talk as we worked with the children remembering many facts from group time discussions.



### Gardening

Outdoors is always a favourite LE activity and the children love helping to trim and plant in our gardens. This time we planted in one of our raised veggie gardens and trimmed the sensory garden – leaving the trimmings for families to take home and use. Our mint had grown so well we were able to pull some pieces up with roots on them so families could add them to their own gardens.



### Our Orange Octopus

As the phonics programme is focusing on the sound O we are making our own Orange Octopus to accompany our Red Robot. So far we have used paper mache to make his head and we will make eight arms out of recycled items. Look for him hanging from the roof in the coming weeks. As we worked we tried to name as many O words as we could.







**August 19th**



We have had a great time celebrating Book Week. It has been a fantastic opportunity for the children to share with their friends their favourite book and a chance to dress as some of our favourite literary characters.

During Book Week we discussed the importance of books:

- *They help us learn the meaning of new words*
- *They transport us to a magical place and stimulate our imagination and creativity*
- *They allow us to understand sequencing—beginning, middle and end*
- *They teach us how words are read from left to right and although you may not be able to read yet we learn that words have meaning*
- *We have also been talking about the Title, Author and Illustrator. Do you mention these when you read books to your child?*



The children absolutely love books here at preschool and we love reading a variety of books from non fiction to fairytales and Dreamtime stories as we further explore Aboriginal culture at preschool. Families we encourage you to continue to nurture your child's love of



# SUPER, AWESOME & AMAZING



## On August 12th our Schoolies went on an excursion to Asquith Park...

The park provided many learning opportunities for the children. The children further explored their strong sense of identity as they ventured into their community and broadened their understanding of the world around them. They also showed care and empathy towards the environment as they safely picked up rubbish, with some children even saying *"We are filling the environments bucket"*. There was also a wonderful opportunity at the park to test the children's gross motor skills as they navigated their way around various pieces of play equipment.

After all our hard work we then sat down to have morning tea which consisted of juicy oranges and delicious muffins by Bite Me Bakehouse—*thank you!*

The children LOVED the time spent on their excursion which could not have been possible without our wonderful family volunteers, Erin, Becky, Noni, Julie, Fred, Kate, Winnie, and Jodie.





# Feature Creature

We were lucky enough to have a wonderful educational experience with Jacki and Kev from Feature Creature.

The children were able to interact with a variety of wonderful creatures including frogs, turtles, a stick insect, blue tongue lizard, hermit crabs, a small crocodile and a python snake. The educators were all so impressed by the bravery of the children as they volunteered to hold, touch and pat the various creatures.

The children were able to explore relationships with other living things and further their knowledge and respect for the world around them. We learnt wonderful facts about each of our new friends and shared laughter and fun throughout this experience.

***What a wonderful journey we were taken on with these amazing creatures!***



## Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):

The educational team constantly work to improve emergency safety practices at Preschool. Recently we **have been practicing with the children different 'lock down' scenarios and you may have heard your child**

talking about these at home. We also regularly practice emergency fire evacuation drills as it is important for the team to understand their individual responsibilities and for the children to also know what is expected of them in these situations. During October the team will be undergoing training with experts to keep current our knowledge in the use of the fire fighting equipment and the opportunity to have our emergency policy and procedures reviewed.



## Dates to Remember!

As soon as possible  
September 3rd & 5th  
Sep 30th—11th Oct  
October 7th  
October 17th  
October 21st

Portfolios Returned to Educator  
Preschool Photos  
Holiday Programme  
Public Holiday Preschool Closed  
Schoolie Excursion to Four Seasons Garden Centre  
Creative Painting Fundaiser



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