

# Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



## Update: Industrial Action in Early Childhood Education Sector

In February, the Fair Work Commission released a decision on the joint application by United Voice and the Australian Education Union (AEU) for an Equal Remuneration Order. The Equal Remuneration Order application relates to employees working in **long day care centres or preschools other than teachers covered by the Children's Services Award 2010.**

The Commission decided to dismiss the unions application. The application sought to compare the work performed by mostly female child care employees to the work performed by predominately male employees in the manufacturing sector under the Manufacturing and Associated Industries Award 2010 and its predecessor awards in Victoria and the ACT in 2005.

The Full Bench dismissed the Application for a number of reasons including that a comparison of work in 2005 was not appropriate in 2018, without a thorough examination of the value of the work today. The Full Bench confirmed that despite the decision dismissing the application, it is still open for United Voice and the AEU to file a fresh application or to file a work value claim that seeks pay increases on the basis that they would argue there are greater responsibilities for childcare employees due to regulatory change and other factors.

On Tuesday, March 27th United Voice, the union representing Australia's early childhood educators, is urging its members and non members to strike in relation to its equal remuneration campaign. Unless workers are directly engaged in bargaining for an enterprise agreement and a protected action ballot order is in place, the planned walk off is deemed as unprotected industrial action and therefore unlawful.

United Voice and their members had called on the Federal Government to increase wages by February 1. The Union is arguing that the government should fund the proposed pay rise, rather than the families. They are therefore asking families to support the strike, by making alternative child care arrangements on the intended strike day.

Our Preschool educators are currently non-members of the union and even if they were members, would not participate in an illegal stoppage. We do however, support the application for pay increases in the sector which sees an Award that has not kept pace as the required qualifications have increased. United Voice are also correct in saying that any awarded increase in the Award for educators will be borne by families through their fees if the Government does not step up to the plate. ***Birth to 5 years are the most critical years in a child's development. When will early childhood education be viewed as important as other education sectors?***



## April 2018

**Inside this**

**Newsletter**

Industrial Update

Teacher Reports

Book Club

Why health checks  
are important!





## *Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review*

**Sweetpeas** The Sweetpeas have had a fantastic month and everyone is settling in very well. Despite the weather continuing to be very hot, we have managed a few afternoons outside and the children have enjoyed exploring the Preschool garden. We have also had fun practising our fundamental movement skills, with activities like jumping and hopping on one foot. This has been fairly challenging for the Sweetpeas but with a lot of practice and perseverance we have seen a significant improvement. It has been wonderful to see how this has boosted the confidence of the children bringing smiles to all their faces as they master these basic gross motor skills. Most importantly, with a firm grasp of fundamental movement skills, children will enjoy sports and physical activities helping them grow into happy healthy people.

**Bluebells:** The Bluebells have had a great month! We are enjoying spending time outside exploring the outdoor environment. Friendships are developing over a love of digging with the trucks, confidence is building by exploring the climbing equipment and the trees and imaginations are being used through lots of exciting made up adventures. Last week at Preschool, we celebrated Harmony Day. Our Preschool family is made up of many different cultures which you can see by the flags hanging from the ceiling. Some of our families and teachers weren't born in Australia and we spent some time finding out where they came from. The Bluebells loved the Mem Fox book "I'm Australian Too" and we used the globe to look up some of the places named in this book. We sang some songs in different languages such as Incy Wincy Spider and Twinkle Twinkle Little Star and we practised counting in French. We talked about what Harmony Day actually means and why we all belong. Penny told us we all belong because "Australia is all our homes". Happy Harmony Day everyone!

**Schoolies:** This year we have focused on the 'Fill your bucket' metaphor which has led us to explore friendships; kindness, respect, empathy and caring for one another. The Schoolies took this on board and began transferring their knowledge and understanding of filling ones bucket to their home environment, thus creating a connection between their home and Preschool (EYLF Lo.1). Educators also observed children using the metaphor during their play at Preschool which further consolidated their learning and understanding. We have extended the metaphor to educate the children to care for the environment and how we should "fill the environments bucket". We investigated ways to help our environment by picking rubbish up, and thanks to Elliot who told us all about the "Three For The Sea" concept to help look after our beaches. We implemented strategies to preserve our water. This empowered the Schoolies to know they can and are making a difference in our world. We also used different mediums to investigate how rubbish and pollution effects our environment and the Schoolies really took this to heart. Educators are receiving great feedback from families about their child's respect and love for the environment. Go our little environmental warriors! Families, if you have any ideas or suggestions for our environmental focus please let one of our educators know.





## Sustainability

**Mt Colah Preschool** has a strong sustainability focus, please feel free to chat to our teachers about our sustainable practices. We encourage the children to recycle craft and paper items no longer useful and when planning activities the teachers look at ways to re-use items we have collected. During the year you may receive a call to action, asking families to save up things like yoghurt cups as we plan special craft projects.

We also love to teach the children about our garden where we grow fruits and vegetables. We have a worm farm which feeds the plants rich nutrients and the children learn which food scraps can go into the worm farm to feed the worms.

*Next to the sign in desk we have a recycling bin for all your old printer and toner cartridges. Please feel free to recycle your old cartridges using this bin.*



*We are now also a collection point for Coles redcycle Programme. You can bring in any soft plastic items that can be crunched into a ball. For more information see the posters at Preschool.*

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

## April Birthdays'

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

Gabriel 4 yrs

Lianna 4 yrs

Harrison 4 yrs

Adelaide 5 yrs



## Scholastic Book Club



Thank you for all the orders received for this issue. These should be delivered next week. Issue 3 will be in your communication pocket early Term 2. Thanks so much for your ongoing support.

### JUST BECAUSE

Ethan brought a toy for Show and Tell the other week. We were all admiring it and Deon asked Ethan "Why did you choose to bring this one today?" (hoping he would tell the story behind his choice). Ethan turned to Deon and replied **"Because it's my Show and Tell Day"**.



### REMEMBER HATS PLEASE!

Increasingly, children are arriving at Preschool without their hats. Please remember your child needs to bring a hat with them each day to Preschool as part of our **"no hat, no play" sun safety policy**. As per the anecdote below, even the kids know the rules.

## THE RULES

Lara quickly walked out of the office to show Steph something and Eadie ran up to Lara and very sternly said **"You need to put your hat on"**



Patrick walked past me and he had completely missed rubbing in a big area of sunscreen on his face. I called him over and helped him rub it in. He replied **"Thanks for that Deon. Anytime you want to help me with that, just let me know and I'll be happy to let you"** and he walked away giving me a thumbs up!





# Phonics Programme

*The Schoolies are really enjoying their time visiting Letterland and the characters they meet there.*



Clever Cat is a very clever cat that lives in Letterland. Through the Letterland programme we helped Clever Cat count four clouds and find the missing cow. We also played an activity where we had to locate words that makes Clever Cat's special sound. Zoe and Steph then read 'The Cat in The Hat' which also linked into the week's developmental focus - rhyming. Understanding the concept of rhyming is an important foundation skill of pre-literacy. By reading the Dr Seuss book it was a fun and engaging way for the children to also further practice rhyming. It would be wonderful if you could extend your children's learning by doing some rhyming activities at home, to further their development.

*"You're off to Great Places!  
Today is your day!  
Your mountain is waiting,  
So.. get on your way!"  
— Dr, Seuss*



The Schoolies have just met our new friend Bouncy Ben. They have been engaging with the software program, singing his catchy song and learning fun facts about him through his 'B' sounds. Zoe and Steph will engage the children in bean bag and basketball activities over the coming week to further their gross motor skills and practice Bouncy Ben's special sound.

## **Regular health checks for children are Important—Especially before starting school!**

The following are recommended health checks for children:

- annual dental checks from when their teeth first come in
- regular weight and height checks
- regular eyesight and hearing checks



All children should have a health check before they start school to check on their general health and wellbeing. This health check is generally carried out from the age of three and will include:

- height
- weight
- hearing
- sight

These checks are not just important for a child's wellbeing, they may also indicate issues that may effect your child's learning when they start school. **Best outcomes are seen through early intervention.**





We are all enjoying the LE sessions and this month we worked as a group each week, getting to know each other better and helping each other out when needed.



Our main focus has been turning rubbish into art. There have been four projects which you will see around preschool and the children are very proud of their work and how clever they are, creating art by working with their peers and recycling items we often throw out

CD fish

Coffee pod hanging display

Recycled people

Hessian wall hanging



We have also worked outside cleaning up the veggie patch. The plants have all been trimmed and the soil turned ready for the school holiday programme when we are going to enlarge our sensory garden with some plants that are great to look at, smell and touch.



For Harmony Day we painted our hands and all the preschoolers handprints are part of our rainbow. During this activity the children noted and discussed the fact that our hands are all the same but different.





**Quality Improvement Plan (QIP):** As discussed in earlier newsletters, we are currently undertaking a complete



audit of our Preschool service against the National Quality Framework. We are looking for 3 family volunteers to give half an hour of their time to contribute towards this review. Family feedback and participation are important to us, so if you are keen to help out please let Lara know.

## Dates to Remember!

Friday March 30th

Monday April 2nd

April 16th—27th

April 25th

Easter Friday—Preschool Closed

Easter Monday—Preschool Closed

Holiday Programme

Anzac Day—Preschool Closed



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