

Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



Dear Families,

This is our final Newsletter for the year with Christmas and summer holidays right around the corner.

You will soon receive your child's developmental portfolio for you to keep. When you look at the record of progress in skill level, development and

growth for your child over the past 12 months you will be amazed at how far they have come. It is also time to reflect upon the amount of development that occurs in children during ages 3 to 5 and how important it is that children are given every opportunity to extend their knowledge, challenge their own thinking, develop social skills and confidence in themselves in a safe and caring environment.

We are so pleased for the children heading off to school next year. They all, individually and as a group, demonstrate independence, kindness to each other and a love of learning and we wish them all the very best for their start to school. To our returning children, we look forward to seeing you again in the new year, as our leaders and helpers as we welcome new children and families to Preschool.

I cannot let this opportunity slip by without thanking the teaching team for all their efforts during the year. The team has worked tirelessly in planning, observing, recording, supporting and extending your children and they do this with a great deal of passion and enthusiasm.

I know the teaching team have also greatly appreciated the many ways in which our families have provided support this year and we all feel very blessed to be a part of the very special Mt Colah Preschool community.

On behalf of the teaching team, I would like to thank you so much for your support this year and wish you all a very happy Christmas and a safe and relaxing summer break.

Warmest regards,

Annette



December 2017

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Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

Sweetpeas: It has been so good to watch how the Sweetpeas have grown and developed since starting pre-school at the beginning of the year. There have been many challenges along the way but with practice and determination so many new skills, such as packing away belongings, washing hands, applying sunscreen, co-operating and contributing to group times have emerged. Many new friendships have developed as the children interact and put into practice the very important concepts we have all learnt, filling each others buckets with kindness. We have noticed such an improvement in the ability and confidence of the children as they participate in skipping, galloping, kicking and catching activities during our fundamental movement sessions. Some of the Sweetpeas who were a little wary at first are now enjoying participating and conquering these skills. The end of the year is fast approaching and I look forward to all the fun exciting things we will be doing over the coming weeks. *'Teach your children that strength doesn't come from what you CAN do. It comes from overcoming the things you once thought you COULDN'T'* - Author unknown

Bluebells: It is hard to believe this is the last newsletter of 2017 and very soon, our beautiful Bluebell friends will move on to being Schoolies. We have had a busy few weeks. Everyone loved the Kindifarm visit and we were very careful and respectful of the animals we met. This month we looked at Maths and this was a subject that everyone embraced. We practiced our counting – groups of children stood up and we counted how many people were there. We talked about the times tables and many children told us about their older siblings having times tables homework and how they sometimes practice too. We recognised that maths and numbers are all around us such as telling the time, going to the shops and spending money. We used measuring tapes to measure tables, construction we made and each other! Thomas told us that we need to learn Maths so we can do good learning when we go to school. There are lots of great Maths apps out there such as Monkey Lunchbox and Maths Rockx. We would like to wish all of our Bluebell families a wonderful Christmas and we look forward to seeing you all again next year!

Schoolies: The Schoolies took a very strong interest in Reduce, Reuse and Recycle week. We discussed the various rubbish bins we have at home and where they are taken. We looked at landfills, pollution in the air, water and land and ways in which we can reduce water usage and electricity. Nena said, "We use our left over bath water to water the plants". Rocky then said, "That's a great idea, we should all do that". Although they were interested in all topics around the three R's, The Great Barrier Reef really captured their attention. They were all so curious and inquisitive as they asked a variety of questions surrounding The Great Barrier Reef. They showed so much concern and empathy towards the animals that were being harmed by all the rubbish and demonstrated an increasing responsibility to respect their environment as they brainstormed ways they can keep rubbish out of the ocean. Liam's Mum came in the week after saying how Liam informed her about all the rubbish in the Great Barrier Reef over the weekend. The children even asked to continue to learn more about it the following week. What a wonderful year the Schoolies have had. From making new friends to becoming more confident within themselves and really engaging in all preschool has to offer and their own learning. We wish them all the best of luck as they take the next step in transitioning to Big School. It has been great to see such growth from all of our Schoolies.



Changes to Child Care Assistance 2018



Australian Government
Department of Education and Training

From July 2018, the Government is bringing in changes to the Child Care Benefit/Tax Rebate. The package will now be called the Child Care Subsidy, and this replaces the current child care benefit and child care tax rebate. It will be paid directly to services and will make child care more affordable for most families.

Three things will determine a family's level of Child Care Subsidy:

- **Combined Family Income**
- **Activity Level of Parents** (eg. Paid work, study and training, looking for work, volunteering etc)
- **Type of Child Care Service**—please note our Preschool is considered Centre-based care.

For further information as to the upcoming changes we have provided information brochures at the Information Table and families can also visit: education.gov.au/childcare



Teacher Zoe was helping Tilly open her lunchbox when she accidentally broke a bit of it. The next preschool day at lunch Tilly said to Zoe "Zoe today I can close my own lunchbox" Zoe was clearly not to be trusted around Tilly's lunchbox again.

Earlier in the month Farmer Brendan visited Preschool with some of his friendly animal friends. The children were able to feed and interact with a cow, goats, sheep, bunnies and chicks. Farmer Brendan taught them all about taking care of animals, some facts about the animals and even showed us some sheep shearing. This led to a discussion on what the wool was used for and each child was lucky enough to get some wool to take home. Although Sophie T was a little concerned when Brendan stood above the sheep getting ready to shear asking "**Why are you sitting on the sheep, you're squashing it!**"





Preschool Christmas Party

You would have received a note by now advertising our Preschool Christmas Party to be held on the morning of **Friday, 8th 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 approximately 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.

Please make sure you return your RSVP as soon as possible!



Liam F came back last week from his long holiday overseas. Deon told him she had missed him and gave him a big hug. He returned the hug saying

"Oh I missed you too!" He then stepped back and said ...

"What's your name again?"

Scholastic Book Club



The last book club magazine of the year is due back on 29th November. Any orders will be delivered in time for Christmas. The preschool team would like to thank everyone for their support of the book club. Over the past year, we have purchased some fantastic books and equipment for preschool with the commission from these orders and the children always love new toys! The book club will return early Term 1 in 2018. *Thank you for the support of the book club!*

December Birthday's

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

Mackenzie 6yrs

Hazel 4 yrs

Olivia 6 yrs

Indie 4 yrs

Willow 6yrs

Xavier 5 yrs





Preschool Accounts

Your final account for 2017 will be distributed mid November with all payments due by Friday December 1st. This account will include all fees up until our closing day of December 22nd. It also now includes 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 now is the time to 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.

Please note that our daily fee for 2018 will be \$89 per day.

Casual Days Book

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

AMAZING!

Creative Fundraiser

The children raised an awesome **\$856** for the Children's Ward at Hornsby Hospital. The paintings were fabulous!

"Would you please send my kindest regards and thank you to all the children for raising this money for the ward. We are always purchasing new equipment to replace old worn out equipment and cherish the communities support greatly. Once again, thank you very much, the children have done extremely well in their fundraising efforts." L. Robinson, Nursing Unit Manager, Children's Ward Hornsby Hospital.

Thank you to our amazing families for all your support of this opportunity for the children to give back to our community





Our Healthy Habits initiative is to support our Quality Improvement Plan item - *focussing on family and child health*.
10 Christmas Safety Tips for Toddlers and Children *Source [The Child Accident Prevention Trust \(CAPT\)](#) and the [British Toy and Hobby Association](#).*

Fairy lights, festive candles and new toys make for the perfect Christmas but they can also be a risk to your child. Here's how to keep him safe...

1. Shop wisely and buy toys that meet safety requirements

When shopping for Christmas presents, always head to reputable retailers, who take care about the products they stock year-round. Markets or temporary shops often sell illegally imported toys that are unlikely to conform to strict toy safety requirements.

2. Ensure toys are age appropriate

Make sure that the toys you give are appropriate for the child's age, as babies and toddlers can choke on small parts or swallow harmful components. Toys that are not intended for very young children are clearly marked.

3. Keep small things out of your child's reach

Look out for small things that young children can choke on. Put small decorations high out of reach, tidy away small plastic toys from crackers and put small batteries (particularly the round, silver ones) out of reach of little fingers.

4. Sleep safety and child-proofing away from home

If you're staying with relatives or friends over Christmas, remember that the top bunk of bunk beds can be dangerous for children under 6 years. And bear in mind that safety items you might have at home, such as stairgates and cupboard locks, might not be available where you're staying.



5. Keep the stairs clear

On the big day itself, make sure stairs are free from clutter. Children will be rushing around to find visitors, open presents and play with their new toys, so remove things that could cause a bad fall down stairs.

6. Keep children out of the kitchen

The kitchen can be a hectic place on Christmas day. So keep young children out of the kitchen while you're preparing Christmas dinner to avoid burns and scalds. One in 10 children's accidents happen in the kitchen.

7. Remove alcohol

Clear away any bottles of alcohol and the last dregs of drinks left in glasses as even small amounts of alcohol can poison young children.

8. Lock away medicines

Make sure visitors to the house, such as grandparents, don't leave medicines in places where children can find them, for example in handbags or counted out on bedside cabinets. Medicines are the most common cause of accidental poisoning in children, with everyday painkillers a frequent culprit.

9. Be cautious with candles

Keep candles away from Christmas trees and decorations. And don't hang decorations from lights and heaters, as they can catch alight and burn easily.

10. Turn off Christmas fairy lights and check smoke alarms

Remember to turn off fairy lights and blow out candles before heading to bed. And check that your smoke alarms are working.



Drink Bottle Hygiene—just a reminder to check your child's drink bottle—making sure they are well cleaned. It is great to regularly clean them in sterilising solution as they can become mouldy especially if they have small straw like parts in them.



Fun with Phonics

It was fun meeting new friends Walter Walrus and Golden Girl!

This week we met **Walter Walrus** and what a pleasure that was! The Schoolies were very excited as they learnt Walter Walrus's song and heard his story. Walter Walrus is an interesting Letterland character who lives in the Water with other Walruses and Whales. Together we all made Walter Walrus's special sound, which the Schoolies did really well with. We played charades and all our characters had to start with a W sound, this was a lot of fun and the children were very creative! We read a book about Whales and discussed the Whales habitat, made funny Whale sounds and



collaboratively drew a HUGE Whale. This week's interest was 'Maths' so we incorporated this into our Letterland programme and explored weight; the Schoolies did a great job distinguishing heavy from light. We looked at weather, in particular Tornadoes, as Cade loves learning about these, as did everyone else. We read the Wombat Diary and danced to the Wombat Wobble!



Finally we met the greatly anticipated **Golden Girl!!!!** Ella and Amber were extremely excited about this. We all practised saying her sound then went to the experiences. We read Green Eggs and Ham and encouraged the children to rhyme with us; everyone was really good at this. We integrated our weekly interest into this and explored the Great Barrier Reef and discussed how we can STOP the pollution. We played Duck, Duck, Goose and investigated Garbage trucks on the Edu Touch.



Little Endeavours



My last report for the year and with our final Little Endeavours experiences the preschoolers have shown me that they have become confident and knowledgeable children during their time at preschool this year and I have loved being a part of it. I say goodbye to the Schoolies (I will miss all your help and our great discussions but know you will have a great time at school) and I look forward to welcoming back the Bluebells and Sweetpeas returning next year.



Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas and thank you for letting me have the opportunity to get to know and work with your fantastic children.



We made cupcakes with a recipe brought in by Emily K. She taught us all a lot about substitutes that can be used in cooking for people with allergies. We also talked about foods the children can and can't eat, and discussed how this is different to not eating food because we don't like it. The cakes were yummy and everyone could eat them.



Our clucking chooks were a great success with the children but there were some complaints from parents about the noise the children were able to make with them!! It took great finger co-ordination to create the sound and although some children found it tricky they persevered and were proud of their achievement when their chook started to cluck.



Using recycled lids collected by many people we created two fantastic artworks that now hang in the outside area. This was a great group project to finish the year and we all worked together, listening and helping each other. As this was enjoyed by everyone (and we had plenty of lids left over) we carried this on for another week and the children made their own individual artworks.



Quality Improvement Plan (QIP): As we wind down to the end of another year we take the time to reflect on the improvements that we have made to our service and start to look forward to 2018 and our commitment to our ongoing improvement journey.



Undergoing a complete review of all areas of our service is a huge task and to support this we have recently purchased a new software programme that allows us to undertake a wide ranging review in a time effective manner. We will have this system up and running in the new year. Parents, if you feel there are areas that we need to further support within our educational environment and the services we provide, please pass your suggestions on to either your child's teacher in person, a note in our mailbox or please send an email . We appreciate your feedback.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Dates to Remember!

December 8th

Christmas Party

December 22nd

Last Day

January 22nd

First Day for 2018



Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten

Cnr Amaroo Avenue and Pacific Highway

Mt Colah NSW 2079

Preschool: Ph: 9476 4101

Email: info@mtcolahpreschool.com.au

Annette: Ph: 9943 0731

Email: annette@freelancer.net.au