

Mt Colah Preschool Kindergarten



a caring place to learn and grow



Dear Families,

The year has been crazy, difficult and challenging for many of our Preschool families and the support and caring nature of our Preschool community has been clearly on display. We can now look forward to Christmas and summer holidays, a very special time of year and one that will be very welcome this year. 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. The educational team know just 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. In knowing this we see it as a privilege to be working with your children to provide an interactive and vibrant learning environment.

Farewell to all our children heading off to school next year. It has been a pleasure to watch you blossom, build your independence and resilience in readiness for your next adventure and it has been wonderful to witness the kindness you demonstrate to each other. 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.

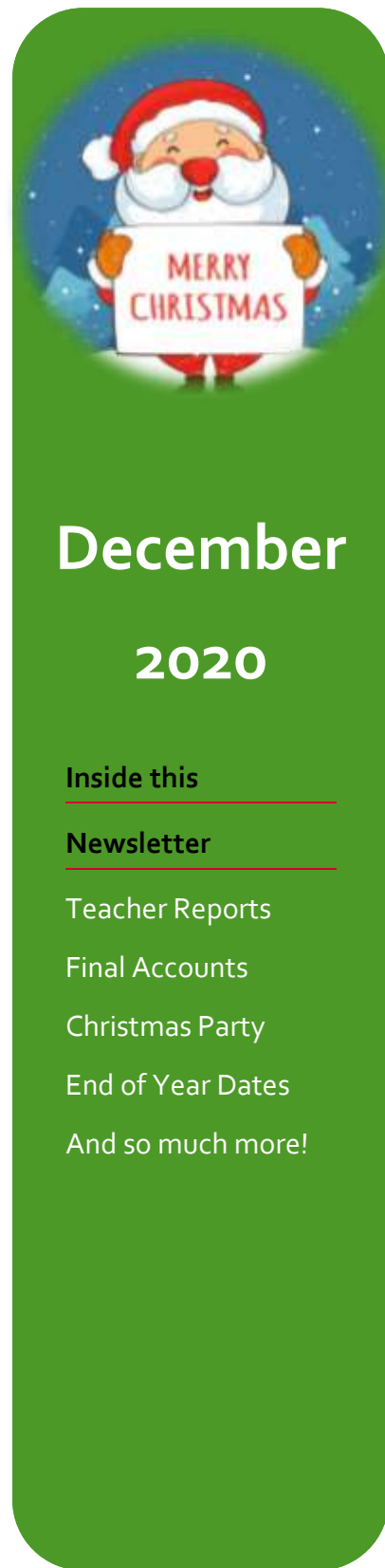
The passion, enthusiasm and dedication the teaching team has shown again this year is truly remarkable. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them so much for the caring and stimulating learning environment they provide every day on top of the huge amount of administration that occurs behind the scenes.

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

2020

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Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

Sweetpeas: With the end of the year fast approaching, I am pleased to say how well we have all weathered the storms 2020 has thrown at us. The Sweetpeas have come such a long way since starting preschool at the beginning of the year. The thing I enjoy most about being an educator is witnessing all the amazing changes in these little people. From shy beginnings they have grown and accomplished so much. Firstly and most importantly they have learned to be away from parents which may take time. I have watched new friendships grow as the children have learned to interact with kindness. It has been wonderful to see children, with big smiles on their faces conquer fundamental movement skills which they thought they could not. With practice, the Sweetpeas are learning to be independent, but not afraid to ask for help, as they manage bathroom routines, pack away belongings, wash hands and apply sunscreen. We have been so proud at how the Sweetpeas adapted so well to being dropped off at the gate. They have taken to unpacking their belongings and choosing a locker, in their stride. We still have so many fun exciting things to do together over the coming weeks. Thank you all for our special times together, I look forward to seeing our beautiful Sweetpeas become next year's Bluebell's who, in turn, will be able to help the new Sweetpeas settle into a new year at preschool. Wishing you all happy holidays and a safe return. **'The greatest gifts we can give our children, are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence' – Denis Waitley**

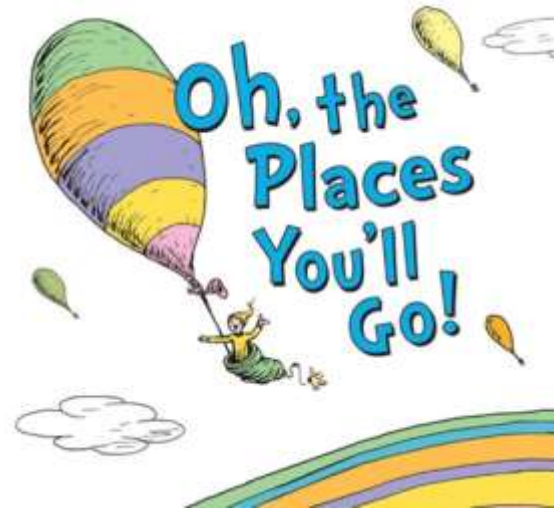
Bluebells: Well, we have come to the end of another year – and what a year it has been! COVID certainly brought us some challenges as we spent some of our preschool year in lockdown but we continued learning and having fun together. Bluebells, it has been wonderful getting to know you all this year and we are so proud of how you have embraced the challenges that this year brought. We have enjoyed exciting events such as our Walkathon, the chicks coming to preschool and our Kindifarm visit and we have made some fantastic friends along the way. Some of you are moving away this year and we wish you all the very best in your new preschools. For our friends that are returning to preschool next year, we know you are going to love being Schoolies and we can't wait to share this exciting next step with you. Merry Christmas Bluebells!





Our Preschool Programme Past Month in Review

Schoolies: What an amazing and fun filled year the Schoolies have had. We would like to take this opportunity to say how proud we are of all the children and commend them on how well they managed the ups and downs that COVID brought and how their resilience grew, and their independence flourished despite this difficult time. The Schoolies have learnt so much about one another and themselves as they have been preparing for their next chapter at 'Big School'. We wish all Schoolies the very best at school and look forward to you popping back in for a visit and cuddles every now and then. Families, it has been a pleasure getting to know you and sharing this very exciting time in your child's life working collaboratively with you in preparing your child for big school.



Helping others this Christmas Christmas Giving Tree

We are collaborating with the Church this Christmas to contribute to Lifeline's efforts to help feed and care for many struggling families after what has been a very difficult year. As you are aware we look to these opportunities to teach our preschoolers' about helping others in the community. If you would like to contribute we are looking for donations of non perishable food and Christmas gifts.

Please place in the designated area at Preschool prior to December 6th.

Thank you for your support.





Preschool Christmas Party

Friday, December 11th

Thank you for your support this year in
complying with COVID restrictions

Children to be dropped to Preschool **before 9am** and
the Church will open for the nominated Schoolie parent
from 9.10am. The children are looking forward to
seeing Santa **ho ho ho!**

Scholastic Book Club



A huge thank you for all of the book orders received over the year. Every order received earns the preschool 20% commission which has been used to update our own books and resources. The children have helped choose the books for us, often depending on interests at the time or favourite books they have at home or even just ones that sound good! Orders for issue 8 close on Friday 27th November to ensure delivery before the Christmas break. The book club will return in Term 1 next year.

December Birthday's

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

Easton—5 yrs

Zane—5yrs

Madison –6yrs

Alessandro-5yrs





Preschool Accounts

Your final account for 2020 has been distributed and all final payments are due by Friday December 4th

Therefore, could we please remind everyone to ensure your account is finalised prior to December 4th

Could everyone, especially for those leaving Preschool, *please stop any automatic fee payments* you may have set up to avoid your account going into credit. Overpayment of fees by returning children will be retained as a credit in your account. Please note that our daily fee for 2021 will be \$99 per day.



Big School Week Commencing November 23

We had a lot of excited Schoolies come into Preschool this week with their school uniforms on. We were lucky to have visits from Mrs Grimshaw from Mt Colah Public and Mr Vane-Tempest from St Patricks. They brought with them some of our preschool students from last year.

We looked at our Big School Book, that was produced in collaboration between local schools and local prior to school services which offers the preschoolers' a great pictorial guide to all the different places in our local schools. The children learnt more about various aspects of school including uniforms, the library, playground, canteen, different subjects they will learn and much more. The past students read to the children some of their 'readers'. We were very impressed with how much they had learnt in such a short time at school.

Needless to say, the children were very inquisitive and excited for their next chapter and this experience has allowed them to approach their transition to school with more confidence. We value our relationships with our local schools, and this was a great opportunity to further these connections.



SUSTAINABILITY

Our Preschool Garden—We are finally able to sample the fruits of our gardening. It has been so exciting to watch tomatoes grow starting off as tiny little green berries and then turning red. Fortunately we have beaten the possums and have been able to harvest tomatoes to enjoy for afternoon tea. Unfortunately, our carrots have not done as well but we are not losing hope and continue to water them with watering cans, hose and rainwater when we can. Hopefully, we will be able to pick some carrots and beans which were recently planted, to enjoy for afternoon tea soon.



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Return and Earn 2020—Another tub of bottles was recently counted which brings our total to \$95. We are so pleased to say that our target for the year of \$100 will definitely be reached. This money will be donated to wildlife injured by the Australian bushfires early this year. The children have embraced this project and have shown concern for the wildlife that sadly lost their homes and food. We have discovered that no matter how small every little bit helps. A very big thank to all who have supported this project it is very much appreciated.



Recycled craft bin—We spent time sorting through the recycled craft bin and the children have enjoyed creating towers, cars, aeroplane and many more interesting inventions, using recycled boxes, lids and miscellaneous items. The children all loved engaging in this experience.

Book Exchange—Our book basket is overflowing with new books. Please remember to look through for new books to enjoy at home. We are very happy to give preloved books a home, feel free to drop them in to be used and enjoyed by someone else.



Phonemic Awareness Programme



The children loved meeting Walter Walrus and learning about his 'w' sound. Ask your child to show you Walter Walrus' special action. The children loved Where's Wally as we focussed on the 'w' sound. Their powers of observation and their ability to apply focus and attention were really tested. The children also discovered a lot of new information about whales and this was extended by engaging in whale craft, stories and colouring.



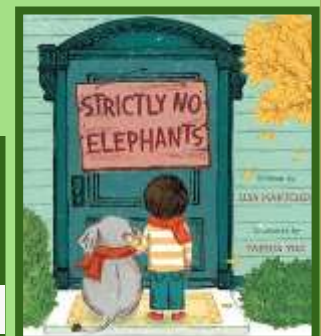
Golden Girl with her long golden hair looks after a beautiful garden in Letterland. The children followed Golden Girl's lead with enthusiasm, we created an indoor garden with air plants, made grass heads with the lovely Jo and did a great job tending to our Preschool garden. The

children also used their imagination to create their own gardens with different painting experiences.



The children are currently learning about the special sound that Eddy Elephant makes. The children are enjoying Eddy the Elephant's song providing great practice engaging with the "e" sound. We are exploring new knowledge about elephants, the different

species of elephants, what they eat and how they live. The children will also engage in some elephant craft and a challenging colour by number elephant. Outside the children will play some great gross motor games using held containers like trunks to catch balls and to throw bean bags to nominated areas of an elephant drawn on the ground. The children will also read a beautiful story "Strictly No Elephants" which is about how important it is to include all our friends.





Last report for the year and what a year 2020 has been. I have had a fantastic time with the children as they developed and practiced skills in all our activities, some group and some individual. So many great discussions on so many subjects. Our bean and seed growing has had the best results I have seen in all my years doing LE. Sadly not much cooking due to COVID but lots of other wonderful group projects which hang in the Preschool.



I have loved working with your children. I will miss the Schoolies helping me out and organising me, as they move on to big school, but I look forward to seeing the returning children as they become our new Schoolies and my helpers.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



'W' Wall Display Board - We all had so much fun making our wall display featuring the sound 'W'. There was lots of great **W** words that we noticed as **w**e worked and talked. The finished display board had **w**ater, **w**hales, **W**alter **w**alruses and **s**ea**w**eed on it.



Grass Heads and Gardening - This activity ran for two weeks so that most at Preschool would make a grass head. If you didn't get to make one let the educators know and I can put a kit together for you. So many different faces were made and the grass grew much quicker than expected. The children loved reporting to me how their grass head was growing and were looking forward to giving them a haircut.



CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Our Mt Colah community is culturally diverse and the children love to learn about how people celebrate their culture and especially enjoy learning about Australia's first peoples.



NAIDOC WEEK: The children created our own yarning circle which is the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians practice of speaking and listening from the heart. Yarning is a process of sharing stories and developing knowledge from the group. The use of a 'talking stick' helps to make it clear who is talking and who is listening. We all sat together in a circle sharing ideas and thoughts, being respectful to one another's questions and answers, as we discussed this year's NAIDOC Week and what it stands for ALWAYS WAS, ALWAYS WILL BE



Celebrating Diwali 'THE FESTIVAL OF THE LIGHTS' The children have been using watercolour as an art form to create various 'Rangoli' patterns which are traditional patterns created throughout many Hindu festivals. They are bright, colourful and very eye catching. The children created many different art works and these are displayed at the entrance of our preschool as we recognise, celebrate and respect the diverse cultures within our Mt Colah



Quality Improvement Update: We have recently reviewed our Dental Health Policy and wish to advise that we now have a relationship with Happy Smiles Dentist, in Hornsby. In the event of a dental emergency Happy Smiles Dentist will be our point of call to ask for advice as required.



Dates to Remember!

December 11th

Christmas Party

December 22nd

Last Day of Preschool

January 25th

First Day for 2021



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