



MITTAGONG PRESCHOOL  
Kindergarten Incorporated

September/ October 2023  
Edition

# Mittagong Preschool Newsletter

## President Report

Welcome back to Term 4!

*I'd like to extend a big thank you to those who attended our trivia night in August. We had a mix of staff and families, and their friends, who battled it out and shared a great night. Although predominately a social event, we were able to raise a further \$780 towards the construction resource upgrade target. A special thanks to our generous supporters of this event – Eden Brewery and Meadowcroft Wines – we couldn't have done it without you!*

*I'd also like to sincerely thank preschool staff involved in hosting the fantastic Father's Night in August. Attendees were treated to making a succulent pot, superb singing by the children and a sausage sizzle. In addition, the raffle raised \$630 towards the target. A special thanks also to our Fundraising Officer, Kristy Moerkerken, who arranged the market stalls and prizes for this event, as well as the Mother's Night back in May.*

*Our Bunnings BBQ will be held on Saturday 21 October. We still require four more volunteers throughout the day to help crew the stall. Please consider if you can contribute two hours. Thank you to all those who have already signed up to help on the day or donate supplies – your support is greatly appreciated! A special thanks, in advance, also to Woolworths Bowral for supporting this event*

Jess Winkler

[president.mittagongpreschool@gmail.com](mailto:president.mittagongpreschool@gmail.com)

## Allergen Alert

Lately we have noticed a few snacks coming into Preschool that contain nuts. It is not obvious, so please check the ingredients list.

We are a nut-free Preschool as we have several children across the Preschool with severe allergies & anaphylaxis to nuts.

Please note that nut traces are unavoidable but if an item lists nuts as an ingredient, then it must be excluded.



10 23

## Diary Dates

### OCTOBER

Key Word Sign Awareness

8th October

Parent Association Zoom Meeting: Wed 11/10 @7pm

Aussie Bird Count

16th - 20th October

Pyjama Party  
17th and 20th October

Preschool Photos:  
Tues 24th & Thurs 26th October  
Bush Preschool Program:  
late October/ Early  
November

### NOVEMBER

Parent Association Zoom Meeting: Tues 7/11 @ 7pm

Orientation Night

Thursday 16th @ 7pm

Children's Orientation:  
20th - 30th November

Diwali Celebration  
Tuesday 14th & Friday 17th

### DECEMBER

Family Presentation Night  
& Last Day Party Days –  
dates in Newsletter page 3

## Colour Run Report & Thanks



We had a wonderful few days at our Colour Runs! The children were excited to be in their colour teams & go from station to station, getting their action stickers on their lanyards .... from the warm-up to the cool-down yoga, we had a great time. Special thanks to our community of helpers, as listed: Natalie Bahls, Bek Rigoli, Kristy Moerkerken, James Todd, Alana Van Dieman, Alice Hinde, Michelle Hinton, Therese Rigoli, Aysha Fozzard, Lucy Parker, Tijana Nichol, Mandy Bodley, Jess Winkler, Catherine Oaks, Emily Connell, Xylee Raz, Froilian Robles, Katie McGuigan, Gabrielle Butterfield, Zac Butterfield, Claire Howe, Rebecca Costelloe, Barry Butterfield, Rachel Butterfield, Amanda Scheibel, Maryanne Tasker, Lee Tasker, Deb Klarsen, Maureen Edmonds & Leah Hayes.

On a programming note, we are busy now working on the children's individual programs, following up programming directions. Greg will be continuing with his Indigenous gardening project this term and we have a few surprises in store before the end of the year ... stay tuned!

This week we have been marking Key Word Sign Awareness with a focus on Read & Sign, incorporating sign language into our literacy experiences.

Next week we will be participating in the Aussie Bird Count and on Tuesday 17th & Friday 20th October, we will be having our Preschool Pyjama Parties!

We have another rotation of the Bush Preschool Program - from late October to early November.

Later in the term, we are planning a local community excursion.

On Tuesday 14th November & Friday 17th November, we will be marking Diwali at Preschool with some rich cultural experiences – food, music and art.

Along the way, we will also be supporting the transition to school process – discussing and supporting Orientation sessions, completing transition to school reports, distributing school social stories for those going to school and facilitating extended orientation sessions where required.

## From Pauline's Desk

### September Newsletter

Big apologies regarding the September Newsletter – the end of term & the term break were hectic with enrolments & I kept running out of time to get the information to Natalie. Luckily our website, digital sign and event flyer's kept everyone in the loop. We will have a bumper September/October edition of the Newsletter out in the next week.



### Staff News

Amanda Scott had a fall at Preschool in early September and has been attending related medical appointments and receiving treatment over the past few weeks. We are eagerly awaiting her return – fit and healthy! However, in the meantime, Rene and Nikki are working together to cover her Mondays and Tuesdays and Georgie & Helen are covering her Thursdays and Fridays. We thank the staff for taking on Amanda's work responsibilities in her absence and wish Amanda a speedy recovery!

Jennifer Gilroy shared sad news of her Mum's passing late last week. We wish both her and her family our best wishes and support at this difficult time. During the holidays, we finally had the opportunity to farewell Kristie Faavae, a long standing Mittagong Preschool staff member. She left a while ago, however COVID impacted our opportunity to host her farewell. Over an informal coffee catch-up we surprised her with a Tiffany bracelet & a framed photo montage. We take this opportunity to thank her formally on behalf of the families over the years for her contribution to Mittagong Preschool.

### Transition to School Reports

Regarding the Transition to School Reports, these have changed to a compulsory online format for those going to State Schools. Printed versions will be given to families and those attending other religious or independent schools will have a printed or emailed version sent to the chosen school. We have been completing our own version of these forms for many years; however, they are now required as part of the Start Strong Fee Relief payment for each eligible child. We also need to upload a signed consent form for each child. Therefore, over the next few weeks we will be getting parents of our school-leavers to complete the form (by 27/10).



### Summer Program

From the beginning of this term, we are starting our days in the outdoor learning space, coming inside for morning tea at 9 am. As always, please ensure you support your child to apply sunscreen each morning and that he/she is wearing sunsmart clothing (no strappy dresses/tops or muscle shirts please). If you are arriving after 9.30 am, please go to the Office to sign your child in for the day.

### Gates

We request all adults going in and out the gates to please pull/push the gate closed after you have walked through it. Please look back to check it has closed. We are constantly having our gates checked, altered and maintained; however, we have had some incidences where the gate has momentarily remained propped open, causing concern for the children's safety.

**Preschool Pyjama Party**

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> October & Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October we are having a Preschool Pyjama Party!

Come along dressed in your PJs and bring a favourite bedtime plush toy! After lunch, we will turn the lights down low, grab our 'cuddlies', pop some popcorn and enjoy a short 25-minute animated story (an ABC View Julia Donaldson Classic) – just like a movie night, but in the daytime!

We thank Charlotte from the Possum Room for suggesting we have a PJ Day at Preschool... it is sure to be great fun!

This experience links to Outcome 2 where children participate in a Preschool community event, being connected with their world.

**Key Word Sign**

**What is Key Word Sign?**  
Key Word Sign (KWS) is a type of Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC).

**Features of Key Word Sign include:**

- Use of sign and speech at the same time
- Signing the key words but saying the whole sentence
- Using other visual strategies, such as: body language, gestures, facial expression, some finger spelling, directionality & placement

**Key Word Sign Awareness Day** is on 8<sup>th</sup> October... we are celebrating this day at Preschool throughout the week with a focus on **Read and Sign**

Using KWS with book making supports attention to its understanding of the story, also building the foundation for future literacy development... and it's a great way to learn signs!

## End-of-Year Events

We are planning some special end-of-year group-based events (including party days), please pencil the dates onto your calendar. Invitations to follow.

Family Night & End-of-Year Presentations at 5.00 pm:

Monday/Tuesday  
Possum Group &

Monday - Wednesday  
Koala Group:

Tuesday 5th December



Wednesday - Friday  
Possum Group &  
Thursday/ Friday Koala  
Group:

Thursday 7th December



### Last day Party Days:

Monday/Tuesday  
Possum Group –  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> December



Monday-Wednesday  
Koala Group –  
Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December



Wednesday-Thursday  
Possum Group &  
Thursday/Friday  
Koala Group  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December



## Enrolments/Orientations

The Enrolment Process is nearing completion with the Preschool almost full for 2024. An Orientation Night is planned on Thursday 16th November at 7 pm with our Orientation sessions from 20th to 30th November. During these weeks we will be holding the Orientation sessions for the new families/children (10 – 11.30am).

## QIP News

We continue to meet monthly as a Working Party to systematically work through our self-assessment tool. We met this Monday to discuss Quality Area 5 – Relationships with Children. This is an area of strong practice for Mittagong Preschool. We decided our improvement initiative was to do with staff training about the PALS program to ensure all staff were aware of the key messages, so they can be embedded across our preschool program. We are looking into a quote for window coverings – an action point from Quality Area 3 and we had a great response to our prioritizing of goals in the mid-year summary – an action point from Quality Area 1. Ongoing thanks to Jess, Chris & Michaela for their work on this project.

## Photos around Preschool



## Preschool photos

Photos are scheduled with Danielle for Tuesday 24th October & Thursday 26th October. The email went out this week. All ordering and payments are managed through Danielle online and there will be digital options, or the prints will be sent to your homes.



# Quality Ratings Certificate .... Unpacking the Standards.

## October Newsletter: Quality Standard 5 – Relationships with children

The National Quality Standard is made up of seven quality areas

### 5 Relationships with children



**Significant Improvement Required**      **Working Towards National Quality Standard**      **Meeting National Quality Standard**      **Exceeding National Quality Standard**

The NSW Department of Education  
**Education and Care Quality Ratings**

**Mittagong Pre-school Kindergarten**

goes beyond the requirements of the National Quality Standard in at least four of the seven quality areas.

**Significant Improvement Required**      **Working Towards National Quality Standard**      **Meeting National Quality Standard**      **Exceeding National Quality Standard**

The National Quality Standard is made up of seven quality areas

1 Educational program and practice				
2 Children's health and safety				
3 Physical environment				
4 Staffing arrangements				
5 Relationships with children				
6 Collaborative partnerships with families and communities				
7 Governance and Leadership				

Significant Improvement Required      Working Towards National Quality Standard      Meeting National Quality Standard      Exceeding National Quality Standard

This service was last assessed in October 2010 against the National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care and these ratings have been awarded in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

Date of issue: 24 May 2021      ASR-0027489      SE-0008429

**Standard 5.1 Relationships between educators and children**  
Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.

**Standard 5.2 Relationships between children**  
Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.

As an Exceeding service, what strategies does Mittagong Preschool use in Relationships with children?

5.1.1 Positive educator to child interactions

5.1.2 Dignity and rights of the child

5.2.1 Children are supported to collaborate, learn from & help each other

5.2.2 Each child is supported to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts

Rostering of Teachers & Educators to ensure time for meaningful interaction

Behaviour Guidance Policy & Procedures

Rostering for higher educator: child ratio



Use of visuals on lanyards and social stories as behavioural prompts

Staff & Planning Meetings discussing planning for individual children

Code of Conduct for Staff Members Policy

**Ethical Conduct Procedure**

All staff and volunteers at Mittagong Preschool agree to the following principles:

1. Abide by the Early Childhood Code of Ethics (2015), actively supporting its areas of commitments and therefore reflecting these in their practice.
2. Understand and implement all Mittagong Preschool policies, Mission & Vision Statements, Philosophy and principles, contributing to their realisation as needed.
3. Represent the Preschool in a positive way at all times, reflecting best practice.
4. Treat children, families, other staff, Committee members or visitors to the Preschool with courtesy, respect and consideration at all times.
5. Only discuss confidential information or Preschool related issues with appropriate people within the Preschool environment but not with any person outside the organisation, unless asked to do so by law.
6. Wear clean, neat clothes, professionally appropriate to the type of work to be undertaken and not offensive to others at the Preschool.
7. Resolve any conflicts with other staff members, Committee members, families or visitors calmly, using the Preschool policies and procedures.
8. Act positively on complaints, reflecting on the relationship between the complainant and the complainee under the Code of Ethics, promptly resolving the issue.
9. No smoking, use of illegal drugs or consumption of alcohol immediately prior to or after on duty on the premises.
10. Use appropriate language at all times within interactions with the children, families, staff, visitors and Committee members.
11. It is not acceptable for any staff member to neglect the needs of a child or children, harass the child/ren or use any form of physical, verbal or emotional punishment.
12. The level of restraint is a difficult one that is generally expected that no staff member will restrain a child unless it is particularly required for the safety of the child or based on the child's needs as outlined in an individual behaviour plan.

**Building Ethical Practice – the Practicalities:**

1. Staff meetings – include ethics as an agenda item and discuss a section of the Code or debate an ethical issue relevant to the Preschool.
2. Availability – include the Code of Ethics in a Handbook for new and existing staff.
3. External communications – refer to the Code on the website.
4. Advocacy action – use the principles in the code to support advocacy of children, families and the early childhood profession.
5. Reflective resource – use the Code as a reflective resource to help articulate a position or justify decisions in professional situations.
6. Promotion – display the Code poster in a prominent place at the Preschool and have copies of the brochure available to parents.
7. Induction – refer to the Code when the Preschool Handbook on enrolment. Include the Code's principles within position descriptions and Preschool procedures.
8. Documentation – The Code should be a reference point within policy documents (where practical), use this to promote within program plans and other documentation.
9. Newsletters – include a regular ethics item in the Preschool Newsletter, highlighting the implementation of an ethical principle within Preschool practice.
10. Website – include links to the Code of Ethics and the UN Rights of the Child on the website so that families can use this as a reference.

**MITTAGONG PRESCHOOL**  
Kindergarten Incorporated

**STAFF HANDBOOK**

Professional Standards are outlined in a range of documents, handbooks & signed agreements

Strong commitment to inclusion of children with additional needs, supporting learning & emotional regulation

Encouraging social interaction and collaboration between peers through focused planning and groupings

Based on ECA Code of Ethics

Service Philosophy

Interaction with Children Policy

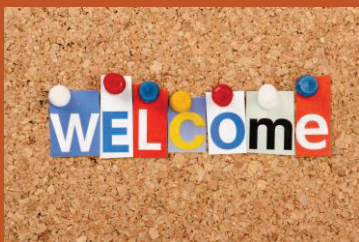
Advocacy for Children's Rights & child engagement/involvement in decision-making

# Preschool Enrolments for 2024

I am right in the 'thick of things' at the moment, as families have accepted offers & are returning paperwork as we speak. There have been some changed circumstances which we are sorting out now & we have updated the handbook too.



An Orientation Night is planned for early November (via Zoom and in person) with our Orientation Weeks for two weeks after that. Over the past few years, we have found it less overwhelming for our visitors to have only 5 or 6 new children per day for an hour or so each day, with the visit time being mostly spent in the outdoor environment. We are currently putting together an Orientation Pack to welcome each newcomer!



We are currently consulting with a past & future parent to put together a fantastic Orientation Pack to welcome each newcomer!

# Service Report September

*From Pauline's Desk*



## Fees for 2024

Considering Preschool attendance for 2024, it is important to let all our returning families know about the continuation of the Affordable Preschool Program. We have very little information about this program. The guidelines are being rolled out next month and we will inform everyone as soon as we have had time to budget & set fees.

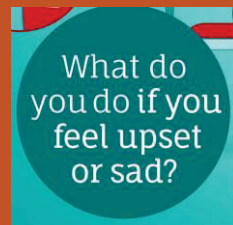
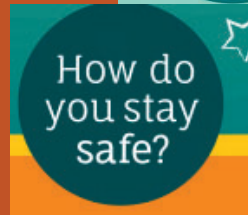
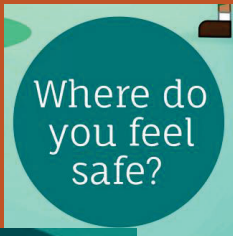


With the warmer weather and with UV in mind, please remember to apply sunscreen each morning. We will move back to our regular Spring/Summer Program from the start of next term, with an outside start.

## SAFE Series

We are half-way through the SAFE Series now. The children have met two of the four characters, having heard the key personal safety messages. We will be finishing the program with the children on 15th September. For your information, I will outline the characters and their messages:

-  **Sam the safe explorer**
-  **Andy learns the undies rule**
-  **Fiona finds five heroes**
-  **Eve listens to her feelings**



## PALS

We have completed the PALS program for the year, having covered the emotional literacy topics this term. We will continue to refer to the content of the program until the end of the year, as it is extremely helpful with supporting each child's ability to understand themselves and the perspective of others, especially in solving social dilemmas and in constructing pro-social conversations. I hope you have found the information sheets helpful. If you would like to discuss any of the topics or your child's response to them, please don't hesitate to approach a teacher, educator or myself.

# Father's Night!

We had a wonderful time welcoming our Preschool Dads and Father-figures into the Preschool environment.

Our visitors were treated to a sausage sizzle, a pot-painting experience, a succulent-planting experience, market stall perusing and a few songs ... plus a lucky door prize draw & a raffle ticket draw!

There was a fantastic vibe on the night, and we farewelled our Dads and Preschoolers with three cheers all around! We hope the Dads of our Preschool community had a lovely Father's Day.

**Raffle Prize Winners:**  
 Old Mates BBQ voucher – Dan Pacey; Ironing voucher – Bill Peacock; Pet Resort voucher 0 Glenn Tasker; Bunnings Voucher – Adam Kormendy; Bunnings voucher – Jim Dade; Cute as a Button voucher – Barry Griffiths; Grasshopper sculpture – Luke Ingenhoff; Samurai Blue Hamper – Binod Dangol; Bootjack – Luke Ingenhoff; Little Bugg voucher – Ali Parker.

A big vote of thanks to the following businesses for their donations:

Bunnings, Cute as a Button, Rusty Rose, Pet Resorts, Samurai Blue, Lonedog Workshop Timber Products & Little Bugg. Special thanks to Kristy Moerkerken (Little Bugg), our Fundraising Co-ordinator, for arranging the markets on the night & getting all the prizes together for us!



**Mittagong Preschool**  
 Just now · 🌍

Spring and sunshine! 🌞  
 We observed engaged and joyful play in our outdoor environment, with most children choosing to spend their day in the sunshine.

Our plants were thankful for a drink and lots of children stopped for extra water breaks.

It is time to swap our Winter woolies for short sleeves 🧢, lighter layers, shorts 🩳 and dresses with capped sleeves 👗. Good time to check packed spares too. It is estimated to be 29° in Mittagong on Monday and Tuesday 🤗

Such a happy vibe at preschool today. The sunshine surely is a boost of positivity 🌞



## Book Week

We had four lovely excursions to the library across the week and the children were exposed to a higher dose than normal of quality literature. It was also nice to see the children borrowing books in our home corner library at Preschool. We hope to extend on this community excursion as the year draws to a close ... stay tuned for details.

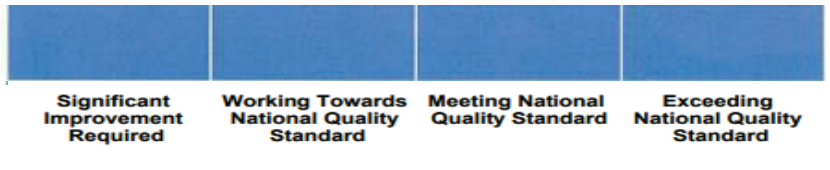
## Fundamental Movements

FMS sessions have come to an end now, with certificates handed out this week. We are in our Colour Walk Week now. Today we hosted our first excursion with the children having a great time filling their lanyard sheets with stickers from each station! Big thanks to our parent & Preschool community of helpers. I will list the helpers in our next Newsletter



The National Quality Standard is made up of seven quality areas

4 Staffing arrangements



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The National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care is issued in accordance with the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

SE-0008429

**Standard 4.1 Staffing Arrangements**  
Staffing arrangements enhance children's learning & development.

**Standard 4.2 Professionalism**  
Management, educators & staff are collaborative, respectful & ethical.

As an Exceeding service, what strategies does Mittagong Preschool use in Staffing Arrangements?

4.1.1 Organisation of educators  
4.1.2 Continuity of staff  
4.2.1 Professional collaboration  
4.2.2 Professional standards

Rostering of Teachers & Educators on a weekly basis to ensure facilitation of quality learning

Monthly Association/ Committee Meetings with staff representation

Fortnightly Planning Meetings across the team

Code of Conduct for Staff Members Policy

Based on ECA Code of Ethics

Service Philosophy

Collaborative service community

Advocacy for Children's Rights & Early Childhood Services

Staff grouping reflects the children's attendance within Preschool groups, so the children have access to their core Home Room Teachers/Educators each day

Rostering for higher educator: child ratio

Monthly Staff Meetings to organise & collaborate re. decisions

STAFF HANDBOOK

Professional Standards are outlined in a range of documents, handbooks & signed agreements

Strong commitment to mentoring, educator support and Professional Development opportunities (in-house & external), including 360-degree reviews

Higher qualifications across the staff than regulatory requirements

Ethical Conduct Procedure

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Mittagong Preschool

Published by Michelle Koala Room · 25 September at 19:30 ·

Our amazing 🥰 entries for the #tsbakeoff2023

Three cheers for the preschool creators and bakers! 🥳🥳🥳



Threatened Species Commissioner

25 September at 17:20 ·

Gouldian Finch (*Erythrura gouldiae*) and Platypus (*Ornithorhynchus anatinus*) - Schools Category - Mittagong Preschool (3-5 yrs)

Janel decorated a Platypus and Fenella decorated a Gulian Finch for the Threatened Species Bake-Off. We will include photos in the Newsletter to see our amazing entries.

Next week we will run Bush Preschool excursions with Greg's Indigenous bush project input, including a treat of some Davidson Plum cordial & a highlight for each group of planting a locally native plant!

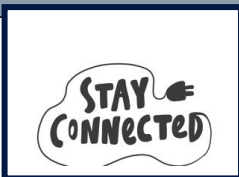
QIP: We continue to meet monthly as a Working Party to systematically work through our self-assessment tool. We met this Monday to discuss Quality Area 4 – Staffing arrangements. This is an area of strong focus for us. Our processes will be strengthened by continuing with the 360-degree review process. Ongoing thanks to Jess, Chris & Michaela for their work on this project.

We have our Preschool Photos in Term 4, on 24th & 26th November. All photos will be taken in the outdoor environment, weather permitting.

We're on the Web!  
Visit us at:  
[www.mittagongpreschool.org.au](http://www.mittagongpreschool.org.au)



Like us on Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/MittagongPreschool/>



Thank you for reading our  
Preschool Newsletter!