



MITTAGONG PRESCHOOL
Kindergarten Incorporated

Mittagong Preschool Newsletter

02 24

Diary Dates

February

Lunar New Year
10th February

Association Meeting
Wine & Cheese Night
13th Feb. @ 6.30 pm

Family Night Picnic Dinner
22nd Feb. 5-6.30pm

Cupcake Fundraisers
27th Feb & 1st March

March

Working Bee
Sunday 3rd March

Preschool's 48th Birthday
6th March

Moss Vale Show:
8th – 10th March

Emergency Drill Week
11th – 15th March

Association Meeting & AGM
14th March at 6.30 pm

March is Vegie Month
Big Vegie Crunch
19th & 22nd March

Harmony Week:
18th – 22nd March

April

Last day of Term 1: 12/04

President Report February 2024

I'd like to warmly welcome all families - new and returning - to Mittagong Preschool for a fresh year which is sure to be full of enriching experiences for both you and your children. I'm so glad that you have the opportunity to be a part of this community which fosters a love of play and learning, curiosity and adventure, care and kindness.

Mittagong Preschool is a special place, and we are fortunate to enjoy the professional expertise of so many wonderful teachers and excellent support staff. I'm grateful for each of them sharing their skills, care, passion and time. I personally saw my daughter flourish during her time here, and it was quite sad for us when it came time to say goodbye. However, we have an abundance of memories to draw upon, and got to experience an almost seamless transition into kindergarten thanks to the skills and confidence she developed here.

Contributing to our community is an enriching experience that benefits everyone, and as a not-for-profit community-based centre, we rely on funds raised and time donated to make improvements to our facilities and processes. Please get involved in the way that suits you best – there are many ways to do so, and I can say with confidence that being involved will be a positive aspect of your life. Don't be afraid to try something new – you may surprise yourself, and after all, isn't that what we say to our kids?

Best regards,

Jess Winkler



Xplor App

Just a reminder to all parents and guardians about the Xplor sign-in and sign-out. It is vitally important that you as parents and guardians have an Xplor profile and have the App on your phone. These records must be an accurate recording of who has dropped off/picked up and we need to keep the records for 21 years.

Staff should only be asked to sign children in or out in extenuating circumstances. If other members of the family or friends are dropping or collecting, they need to be sent a Hub request by a parent/guardian.

Please note that Preschool cannot send a link to anyone other than parents/guardians. Hub guests cannot use an App on the phone; but must use their phone number/email and a code/password. If another member of the family is collecting routinely, they may sign up as a guardian and be given access to the App. This must be arranged through the Office. If anyone is having trouble, please contact the office or email us. We have cheat-sheets that help to resolve most issues.

Important Health and Safety Matters



Just a quick reminder regarding food at Preschool – due to severe allergies and, in some cases, anaphylaxis to nuts, we are nut-free, which means no whole nuts, nutella or peanut butter. We also ask that you do not send in muesli bars encrusted with nuts. Please note – foods that indicate traces of nuts are allowed at Preschool.

Also, please encourage your child to wash their hands and face on arrival, removing any traces of the peanut butter toast or any other unexpected allergens the children could have been exposed to inadvertently.

Please remember to pop your child's name on their food if it is to be placed in the fridge. I would also like to draw your attention to our Nutrition Policy where we encourage the provision of healthy 'everyday' foods in lunchboxes and water is our drink of choice!

**** Note Well ****

We have several children in attendance with medical conditions/treatment that cause low immunity. Please ensure that you notify us if your child is unwell with the kind of illness they have – Covid, RSV, tonsillitis, etc. so we can inform the families of those children at risk.

Service Report

From Pauline's Desk



Welcoming Words

As we start the year, I would like to welcome all our new children & families & welcome back our returning children & families. We are off to a flying start as we quickly get to know all the children's interests & their personalities. We look forward to the year ahead as an opportunity to observe each child in great detail, helping them to develop their skills & competencies. When you look at Portfolio entries, Journal/Project entries, developmental summaries and other documentation, you will see references to principles, practices and learning outcomes. These come from the national curriculum Early Childhood framework Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0 (EYLF)

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-01/EYLF-2022-V2.0.pdf>

Within our Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) we are also required to reflect upon & continually improve our policies, strategies and practices in reference to the National Quality Standards

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-07/RevisedNQSHandoutA4.pdf>

Our policies refer to the EYLF, Standards and legislative requirements: Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW) No 104a of 2010: <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2010-104a> and the Education and Care Services National Regulations (2011 Sl 653): <https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>

Preschool Networking

Developing a Sense of Belonging

We try to offer a range of events to engage our families in the Preschool. As a community-based Preschool we rely on the involvement of the families in the Preschool community. Without our voluntary committee, we are not able to run our Preschool. Involvement is part of the commitment to coming to our Preschool, so we hope families will consider ways they can be involved in their child's early education.





Parking Alerts

We would like to raise awareness to the following issues regarding parking:

- ⊕ Parking too close to the corners, reducing visibility for children & families crossing the road
- ⊕ Parking in or across the longer staff driveway as staff start/finish at various times & need access to their cars
- ⊕ Parking in or across the smaller driveway as it is designated for equal access (disabled) parking
- ⊕ Parking opposite the Office in Waverley Parade as it is a No Stopping Zone at certain times of the day, due to the Bus Stop
- ⊕ Parking in or across neighbouring driveways as our neighbours need access to their properties

Family Involvement in our Community-based Preschool

Annual General Meeting/ Parent Committee Meeting Wednesday 13th March at 6.30 pm – election of new Committee: with this month's Newsletter we will include an outline of Committee positions. If you are interested in becoming involved in some way or want to know more about any of the positions, please don't hesitate to talk to myself or Jess (our current President).



'Nuts & Bolts'

On the topic of general housekeeping, I would like to remind parents & families about applying sunscreen in the morning even if it is overcast as the UV is often still high. Please tick against your child's name once the sunscreen has been applied. We reapply sunscreen at lunchtime each day to cover the afternoon outside playtime.

Also, if your child is sick or unable to attend Preschool on a certain day, please ring the Preschool or text the mobile number 0435019131, as early as possible so staff are notified of absences. This number can be used for messages or communication, as well as our landline 0248711109. You may also wish to use the Xplor App to notify us of absences or late arrivals. Please note, children not present at the time of the first head count around 9.30 am, will be marked as absent. If you arrive after that time, please go to the Office to be marked back in for the day. Thanks for your continued support.

Lunar New Year!

<p>Lunar New Year</p>	<p>Red Envelopes</p> <p>Red envelopes or 'hongbao' in Mandarin and 'lai see' in Cantonese are small red and gold packets containing money given to children, family members, friends and employees as a symbol of good luck.</p> <p>In Chinese culture, the colour red is associated with energy, happiness and good luck. The red envelope itself is considered lucky! Traditionally, the money inside symbolizes good wishes and luck for the year ahead.</p> <p>To celebrate Lunar New Year, we are gifting each child a red and gold envelope with one shiny, chocolate coin!</p> <p><small>*Cultural responsiveness is evident in everyday practice when educators demonstrate ongoing commitment to developing their own cultural knowledge to those who practice with children, families and communities' (EYF, Practice, p. 21)</small></p>
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Goals ...

Our wonderful Goal Tree has been growing with goals for our children over the past two weeks. If you haven't had a chance to write a goal tag yet, the tree will remain on display until 23/02.



ELLA is an exciting digital language learning program for preschoolers. It opens up a world of cultural possibilities for children early in life. This year the children are learning Hindi using play-based apps called The Polyglots. (A polyglot is multilingual.) They use tablet devices at preschool. The apps were designed with help from language, early childhood, and technology experts. An information sheet about this program is in each child's file.

Staff News

We would like to welcome a new face to the Mittagong Preschool team – Nikolet Colling (Support Educator in the Possum Room Mon/Tuesday group). After a stint as a fairly regular casual last year, she is now on staff. We also welcome Michelle Hinton back to active teaching duty after her extended leave, to a role in leadership and room cover. Karen Stevens is also back after Parental Leave as Support Educator in the Possum Room Mon/Tuesday group. Sue Hill-Thomson has taken on a new role as second-in-charge and Friedel Gorman is splitting her time between Outdoor Educator (Monday/Tuesday) and Room Teacher (Thursday/Friday).

We realise it is difficult with our large staff team to know the staff of your child's room & the other staff your child contacts throughout their time at Preschool. We have put together a page of faces for each group to help you put a face to the names your child is mentioning. They are on display at each sign in desk & were emailed home last week.



PRESIDENT

- Face of the committee and acts as spokesperson for the preschool.
- Ensures the constitution rules are followed.
- Chairs monthly meetings.
- Organises monthly meetings in advance and ensures they are held.
- Ensures decisions are followed through.
- Where a vote is tied, chair usually has a second or casting vote to break the deadlock.
- Link between the Committee and Director.
- May act with other executive members on behalf of full committee in an emergency.
- Significant role in developing a good rapport between committee, director and staff.
- Liaises with Director in making decisions that cannot wait until the monthly meeting.
- Preschool signatory.
- Rallies support & delegates tasks to members as required.

VICE PRESIDENT

- Assists President and shares some tasks.
- Acts as President in their absence (at meetings and around the preschool).
- Preschool signatory.



Management Committee Roles



SECRETARY

- Keeping records up to date.
- Taking minutes at meetings and distributes to members; electronically
- Compiles monthly meeting agendas in consultation with President and Director.
- Presents a list of correspondence/emails at each meeting, bringing attention to urgent or important items.
- Presents applications for new members to Committee for approval.
- Prepares thank you notes, certificates for donations and assistance.
- Preschool signatory.

TREASURER

- Oversees financial management.
- Assists in preparation of annual budget.
- Monitors income and expenditure.
- Preschool signatory.
- Presents financial reports at committee meetings, annual financial report and audit to the AGM.
- Oversees annual audit and other financial returns to relevant funding bodies and government departments.



GENERAL MEMBERS (3 POSITIONS minimum)

- Attend meetings and assist in making decisions.
- Together with the President, Vice-President, Secretary & Treasurer, the general members make up the Parent Committee.

General Maintenance

- Reports on general maintenance.
- Observes and lists items requiring maintenance in consultation with the Director.
- Organises Working Bees with Director & Staff
- Contacts volunteers to ensure items of maintenance are conducted.

Publicity/Newsletter

- Advertises events via social media & local media/radio
- Compiles newsletters each month.

Fundraising Coordinator

- Investigates possible fund-raising events & compiles Fundraising Calendar with President & delegates.
- Reports on progress at monthly meetings.

Fundraising Sub-Committee

- Assists Fundraising Coordinator with all fundraising events – preparing, conducting, reporting on & evaluation.

Library Co-ordinator

- Categorises & catalogues new books.
- Organises books for covering.
- Sorts & puts books away onto shelves.

Upcoming Program Highlights/Events



PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR FIRST

FAMILY PICNIC NIGHT

DATE: Thursday 22nd February 2024
 TIME: 5pm to 6.30pm
 BRING: BYO Picnic Basket Dinner

RSVP USING THE LINK BELOW:
<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050E4EA9AE2EA5F9-4-47848893-family>

The night is sure to be **MAGICAL!**




Cupcake Fundraiser

Tuesday 27th February & Friday 1st March

In anticipation of our Preschool's 48th Birthday on Wednesday 6th March, we will be hosting a Cupcake Fundraiser in Week 5.

How can you assist?

Bake! Please respond to the information email and volunteer to bake uniced vanilla or chocolate (nut free) cupcakes, delivered on the morning of Tuesday 27/2 and/or Friday 1/3. Please provide a list of ingredients.

Volunteer! We need a few volunteers on Tuesday and Friday afternoon to sell our cupcakes on the Koala Room verandah.

Buy! Cupcakes will be on sale from 2:45pm for a gold coin donation each. Buy one to eat, a few to take home or some to share with siblings. You may even like to donate \$4.80 in honour of our 48th birthday!

The Preschoolers will ice and decorate the cupcakes during the day. Each cupcake will showcase a little topper - a party-themed drawing done by our children. Thank you for being part of our celebration!




Dress up day

Tuesday 5th & Friday 8th March

We are turning 48!

To celebrate our birthday on Wednesday 6th March, we are hosting a **dress up day!**

When:
 Tuesday 5th March & Friday 8th March

Dress up:
 Come wearing party attire. Whether it is a dress up costumes, fancy dress or colourful clothes!

Please no swords, guns or lightsabers




Working Bee

Sunday 3rd March

Sign-up sheet coming out soon!

Community Noticeboard



Wollondilly Southern Highlands

Let's DANCE

2 FREE TRIAL LESSONS

JAZZ - PILATES
 CONTEMPORARY
 HIP HOP


STRENGTH - FLEXIBILITY
 POSTURE - RHYTHM
 CO-ORDINATION



Physie is social and fun, we offer classes for preschoolers through to ladies.

To learn more about Physie visit www.wshphysie.com or email your enquiry to i.wshphysie@gmail.com

Gymnastics @ PCYC Southern Highlands!

FREE Trial (Includes PCYC Membership). Contact the Club today 02 4868 5200 to enrol or scan the QR code!



March is Veggie Month



Veggie Month Challenge #1

Get your kids involved! Ask them to help wash, sort or chop vegetables for dinner every day this week

VEGIE MONTH 2024

Veggie Month Challenge #2

Ask your child to choose at least one vegetable for their lunchbox (or at a snack time) everyday

VEGIE MONTH 2024

Veggie Month Challenge #3

Pack vegetables this week for our BIG VEGIE CRUNCH!

VEGIE MONTH 2024

Veggie Month Challenge #4

Encourage your family to eat the RAINBOW. Aim to eat as many different coloured vegetables as you can this week

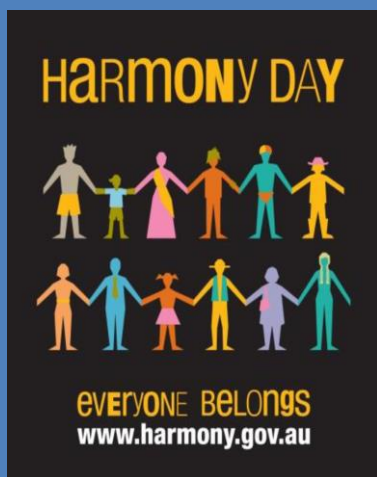
VEGIE MONTH 2024

Program Highlights/Events

Moss Vale Show 8th – 10th March. The children will be involved in creating entries in the weeks leading up to the Show. We will let you know what they have entered closer to the date.



Harmony Week 18th – 22nd March. We will be weaving extra culturally diverse input throughout the program over this week. Stay tuned for details of some special Harmony Day events.



We're on the Web!
Visit us at:
www.mittagongpreschool.org.au



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

Thoughts on Separation From Michelle



If you have any concerns about your child settling at Preschool, please talk to the staff as we will come up with a range of individualised strategies to assist him/her through his/her separation issues.

Adapted from previous Newsletters.

Another year starts at Mittagong Preschool & the familiar faces return, much discussion surrounding how much they have grown during the school holidays & then they quickly race off to reunite with friends from the past year. Soon, the new faces start to arrive. Some children bound through the gate, eager to meet their teachers, find their locker & explore the environment, almost ushering their family out the gate so they can start their day. Others apprehensively step out of the car & walk in, seemingly wanting to go unnoticed, smiling politely as the teacher greets them but mostly just seeming unsure about the whole 'preschool thing'. In some cases, starting preschool can mean tears, cuddles & reassurance from all obliging parties. All of the above scenarios are perfectly fine & developmentally appropriate. What teachers & educators are acutely aware of during this transition process is separation anxiety & how we can overcome these feelings of doubt in partnership with the child & family.

One thing we know for sure is that; all relationships are built upon trust. During the first few weeks at preschool, we aim to build this sense of trust & belonging. By including family drawings within the new setting, we aim to form an immediate link between home & preschool, thereby creating a sense of comfort in a somewhat unknown space. We also program based upon information provided within the enrolment forms & 'Getting to Know You' pages - providing known resources & including interests forges a dialogue & encourages the children to talk about their home life, engendering an initial point of contact with staff. Teachers intentionally include children's photographs, name cards, paintings & child constructions within the space, a visual reminder that we now see the child as part of the preschool community. We also intentionally create a routine, so children know what is happening, making their day familiar.

So, what can we do if children continually connect preschool with a sense of anxiety upon separation? It is important we create a farewell ritual with the child, as this creates a sense of predictability. Sometimes a brief goodbye is the best goodbye & whilst ever we have the gate-farewells, this is all we can do! An item from home can also provide that needed connection with the familiar - never underestimate the power of a teddy bear! Talking positively about preschool is also a step in the right direction. Furthermore, literacy is a powerful tool to convey complex messages. Reading a story about what children are going through, allows them to identify their feelings & know it is okay to feel this way about separation.

Some fantastic titles to use as a discussion point are:

The Invisible String by Patrice Karst

I'll always come back! by Steve Metzger

The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn

Maisy goes to Preschool by Lucy Cousins (discusses a preschool routine & some experiences)

In my heart: A book about feelings by Jo Witek

Know that transitions to new environments can cause worry, but positivity & speaking positively, really makes a big difference in the child's overall sense of comfort.

For more information I have listed a few web links:

http://raisingchildren.net.au/articles/separation_anxiety.html

<http://www.earlychildhoodaustralia.org.au/parent-resources/separation-anxiety/>