



**MITTAGONG PRESCHOOL**  
*Kindergarten Incorporated*

**AGM 2018 Edition**

# Mittagong Preschool Newsletter

**AGM**

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## 2018 AGM President Report

Continued .....

This year we saw a huge change in the way preschools are funded; this meant discussion regarding fee reduction, and resulted in a significant drop. We began the year with a meet and greet evening, and a well-attended family night, always popular with the children.

The children participated (as usual) and were successful at the Moss Vale Show, with the creation and entry of many pieces, including a handmade scarecrow. Much deliberation has always gone into what scrap of fabric or button or ribbon should be donated to include on the scarecrow.

We celebrated our Mum's and Dad's with Mothers and Fathers nights, and on behalf of all parents, I would like to express our appreciation to the Preschool staff for the creation and organisation of these sentimental and memorable evenings.

The children also participated in the first preschool colour walk. It was a joy to see the children so excited about their team colour, and being allowed to leave the preschool grounds without the donuts! Special thanks to all for the organisation of this fun activity!

From a fundraising perspective we held two highly profitable Bunnings BBQS, and a Market Day. Towards the end of 2017 we celebrated with pride the children completing a successful year of preschool with an intimate but fun graduation, mini concert and morning tea, and finished with a carnival themed end of year fair.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank the staff of Mittagong Preschool for the support we have received from you.

I personally would like to thank the parent committee; your efforts and valuable contribution have made my role as president pleasant. Working alongside you has been fun and rewarding. I wish the incoming committee the best of luck for 2018.

It has been an honour to serve as president for the past 3 years. I have thoroughly enjoyed my role, and the relationships I have built, particularly with those who have cared with such devotion for my children during their time at preschool.

I wish all at Mittagong Preschool continued success, and a happy and productive 2018.

*Belinda*



As presented at the  
Mittagong Preschool  
Annual General Meeting,  
Monday 12 March 2018

### Our 2018 Committee

President

*Jaime Woolley*

Vice-President

*Cath Reeves*

Secretary

*Tami Woolley*

Treasurer

*Kristylee Robertson*

General Members

*Emma Isedale  
Alicia Jones  
Belinda Myles*

Publicity

*Helen Hull*

Maintenance

*Phil Brammer*



**Making an erupting volcano in the sandpit**

## Committee Thanks

Firstly I would like to thank the members of the outgoing committee for their hard work and dedication to the Preschool over the past year. Thanks to Belinda Myles for her work & support in the position of President. It has been wonderful working alongside Belinda, with her calm insightful approach to her role and her understanding of the early childhood sector. Thanks also to Heidi Searle-Aalto as Vice-President, Kristylee Robertson as Treasurer and to Jodie Eccleston as Secretary. Thanks to our three general members: Laura McEwan, Catherine Reeves & Jessica Miskelly and special thanks to Jaime Woolley, Lee Coyle, Kate Crawford & Cath Reeves for their role as our fundraising team. Jaime steered the ship so well, raising plenty of funds for the Preschool and creating many wonderful social events. From the money we raised, we purchased many new books, replaced some old books, bought some new and exciting group games, purchased bikes and trikes as a new initiative, bought new lockers for the Koala Room and upgraded our resources for the sensory room.



# Director's Report

*From Pauline's Desk*

## Committee Involvement

We all fully appreciate the fact that these positions are voluntary and that there can be stress involved at times. However, as I say each year, I believe that involvement in your child's education is a priceless gift and, please know that your child, the other children, families, staff and community benefit from your dedication. I have enjoyed working closely with you all and hope you have enjoyed the experience as well.

Each year I quote the saying 'it takes a village to raise a child'. Whilst this has become somewhat of a cliché, the idea behind it remains true — that children grow up as a part of a community. Remember, that as a community-based centre, we could not operate without you ... so thanks!

### Preschool News

We have had a very busy year with special events like the Mother's, Father's Night, Family Nights & Farewell lunches at year-end. We celebrated Harmony Week, Moss Vale Show Week with many successful entries, Science Week, disco days, pyjama days, a Colour Walk & many more program highlights. Program-wise, we have also had lots of exciting incursions like music incursions, a magic show, a Bollywood dancing session and the responsible pet program. We have also had excursions to the Library for Book Week. We have successfully incorporated the ELLA Italian language apps and we will continue with this Government funded program this year.



We have continued implementing the "Munch & Move" program with a 'fundamental movements' session each day in the outdoor environment. It has been wonderful to see how the children's skills have grown with this repeated practice. We have also continued to offer the PALS social skills program, running it again in Term 3 within small groups. This allows time in Term 4 to follow-up on skills, as we continue to see the positive impact this program has on confidence & pro-social behaviours.

### Preschool Documentation

The staff continued with the journal-style programming format based on children's interests, incorporating the Australian curriculum framework document, "Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia" (EYLF). We have also continued with the individual portfolios as a means of maintaining children's individual records, in a digital format, sending out Dropbox links twice yearly. We continued writing six-monthly and annual Developmental Summaries as a means of ascertaining appropriate directions for facilitated growth and as a tool for informing our ongoing programs. We once again completed a modified version of the Transition to School Report & have received excellent feedback from the local schools, saying they found them very beneficial. Last year we introduced Going to School social stories for each of our graduates. Michelle created wonderful books for each of the children and once again received wonderful feedback from the families for this initiative. We continued displaying the program journals on a fortnightly basis. We have continued varying between flyers, newsletters, emails, text messages, sign-up sheets & the changeable sign as means of engaging the interest & participation of our families.

## *Enrolments & Funding*

The Preschool had full enrolments throughout 2017 with a waiting list. Throughout last year we implemented the Start Strong funding program. This government initiative of increasing funding for children in the last year before school entry saw our fees nearly halve. This funding has ensured the ongoing viability of affordable fees for the Preschool, allowing us to ensure equal access to Preschool for the 4 year olds in our community.

## THANKS TO STAFF

We are just about to embark on our annual Staff Review sessions between the staff and myself with the aim of setting professional goals and working towards growth throughout this year. This affirms the staff for all their wonderful qualities as well as indicating appropriate in-service training. Whilst on the topic of staffing, I would like to formally acknowledge the experience, passion, drive, commitment & expertise of our wonderful staff at the Preschool. Rita Pierson, an inspirational teacher, states: "Every child deserves a champion – an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be". Our Preschool is staffed by a crew of champions and it is thanks to all the staff that we do such a great job of early childhood education and that we have such a fantastic reputation in the area! Thanks again!



Preschool education is about forming and nurturing relationships with families/carers .... The Preschool staff are committed to consulting with, and involving the whole family within the Preschool program. We have an open-door policy, we invite program-input from families and we are always here for a discussion.

## Staffing Points:

We had some staffing changes to accommodate staff illnesses & leave. This saw us introducing many new casuals into the Preschool environment. One of them Janel, is now working in a temporary support role for 2018. The end of the year saw us farewelling Kamie from her role as teacher for three days in the Koala Room.

We had some wonderful farewell events and I know she felt very much appreciated for her time and dedication to the Preschool.

This caused us to review staffing arrangements. I am not teaching a group this year; however I am covering the outdoor role on a Wednesday when Sue is not working. Michelle is working as the Koala Room teacher this year on a temporary contract. We will monitor the efficacy of our new staffing direction, making a decision about future directions as the year progresses.

## Parent Involvement and Communication:

Parent involvement is very important to us and this was once again evident in 2017. Thanks to one and all for your involvement in so many ways, large and small! There were Working Bee jobs, book contacting volunteers, Bunnings BBQ helpers, helpers at the Market Day and our end-of-year clean-up days. Please remember that the help and input of our families is vital to the ongoing community-based nature of our Preschool. We are not asking for a huge commitment of time but rather, if everyone does just a little, then the whole task is much more manageable.

## Quality Improvement Plan:

With an overall rating of Exceeding National Standards (assessed in 2015), we have continued to strive for best quality, reviewing the Preschool policies. We upgrade them to reflect recent policy & practice, in an ongoing process and will continue throughout the year, with a major staff focus in the April non-term break. We were quite successful in addressing our improvement points from our 2018 QIP (Quality Improvement Plan).

We held a Colour Walk to raise funds for a defibrillator & we will continue to research funding avenues to fund this project. We purchased bikes, trikes and traffic signs as part of a new Road Safety Program focus. We have upgraded our Koala bathroom to include the pneumatic nappy change system purchased as part of the 2016 QIP.

## Structure Changes:

Following some intensive staff reflection and some Inservice training, we have decided to change the structure of our days, including more flexibility for the children to choose between indoors and outdoors learning.

We also changed our room learning environments. The Possum Room (top room) is now the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) learning environment and the Koala Room (bottom room) is now the Creative and Literacy learning environment and the Outdoors maintains the focus on physical play, gardening and environmental science. We are still working towards new Preschool signage, Newsletter content updates and family involvement in the policy review process. We will soon be revising our Improvement Plan for the year ahead, in line with the new National Quality Standards, including these goals and others.