

Term 1, 2020 Newsletter



Director's Report: Sally Whitrod

Welcome to a new year at Syndal Pre-School. It has been a busy and exciting term full of friends and learning. Across all preschool groups, the children have settled into kindergarten well and are enjoying new experiences as they get to know their teachers and peers, while building a cohesive kindergarten community which celebrates the unique talents of each child.

As parents, you are your child's most important teacher. As such, we look forward to working closely with you to ensure your child's kindergarten experience is unique to them, supports their individual learning and your family's values and interests.

Information regarding kindergarten programmes for each kindergarten group is shared with families each week via the Flexibuzz App. We hope you take some time to read through what each group has been working on and our plans for the coming week. We love to hear your thoughts and suggestions, so please send us an email, add your suggestions to the programme displayed in the foyer, add comments to the Family Suggestions page next to the Sign In book or have a chat with your child's teachers. Keep an eye on the TV screen located in the foyer for photo displays of what the children have been doing at kindergarten.



Our kindergarten curriculum is based upon the Victorian Early Years Learning Framework. The Framework is a guide developed by the Victorian Department of Education and Training with the specific purpose of "assisting families and early childhood professionals to guide children's learning and development in the first eight years of life." Should you wish to view this document or have any questions, please speak with your child's educators.

In addition to whole group programme, each child has their own personal portfolio. These portfolios chart each child's individual kindergarten journey and include samples of work, learning stories relevant to each child and information about special

events. Please come and look at your child's portfolio at any time. The children love looking through these books and especially sharing them with others. You are most welcome to add things yourself, as this assists us to tailor the programme to your child's individual interests.

At Syndal Pre-School, we encourage parents to be involved in their child's kindergarten experience. We love having you attend kindergarten as part of the Family Participation Programme. It is an excellent opportunity for you to see firsthand what we are doing and to join in with your child. It is also a wonderful way for educators and parents to get to know each other better, as often it is difficult to chat at busy pick up and drop off times.

Finally, a big thank-you to the entire kindergarten community, for a great first term. We all look forward to sharing an exciting and educational year.



COVID-19 – Information Update: School Holidays Brought Forward

The school holidays in Victoria will now commence on Tuesday 24 March.

As such, Syndal preschool will be closed from Tuesday 24th March, until the beginning of term 2. Currently term two is due to begin on **Tuesday 14th April**. We will keep you up to date as we receive more information from the Department of Education and Training.

Blue, Red and Green teaching teams will be in touch via Flexibuzz with ideas and suggestions for engaging children at home.

Please ensure you have downloaded the Flexibuzz app, select your child's group and use the password - Syndal20

Thank-you for your understanding, take care and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

Further Information can be found at:

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-public-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

Sally Whitrod

Director

Presidents Report: Winnie Wong

I would like to welcome every family to Syndal Preschool and hopefully have the chance to get to know each of you throughout the course of the year. My thoughts are with you all as the coronavirus has profound effects on our families, our kinder and our wider communities. As the pandemic continues to intensify, with no certainty of when it will abate, our kinder and the Syndal Preschool Committee will keep you abreast of the latest development from the Department of Education and associated arrangements. We are here to support you and your family, so if you have any concerns in relation to our kinder, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the staff or the Committee. I wish you a safe and happy year at kinder.



Welcome to Blue Group! With first term holidays nearly upon us, it is lovely to look back upon a busy and productive term for the Blue Group.

Our focus for much of the first term has been developing the children's understanding of the kindergarten routines and getting to know each other. We use the daily routine board to assist the children with this – this is a visual schedule of activities and routines for the session. We find that this assists the children's understanding of the kindergarten day and reassures those with English as an additional language as well as those who might just be finding it a long time to be away from home.



Our most important focus throughout the year is to be kind to each other at all times. This is something which we will be constantly reinforcing over the year. Initially, this involves children learning and using each other's names, participating in a range of experiences to support their growing respect for each other. Building upon these skills supports the development of a cohesive, kind and supportive kindergarten community where children feel confident to experiment and try new things.





Whole group experiences further support developing a cohesive, kindergarten community and after reading the 'big book' of Ten in the Bed during group time, we decided to make our own 'bed', filled with five children. As the group sang the song, the "Five in the bed" acted out the story. This encouraged group participation, counting, and patience as each child waited for their turn.

Looking at colour and experimenting with colour has been a focus over the past weeks, with the children encouraged to join in a variety of colour matching and mixing experiences including use of creating 'butterfly' paintings, golf ball painting and roller painting.



As a group, we learned the song "It's a Rainbow". The children used individual coloured ribbons to demonstrate their knowledge of colour names – learning violet and indigo as new colours. Listening skills were important as each child waved their ribbon according to the song's directions before joining in together to make the 'rainbow' of ribbons. Maintaining balance whilst sitting and waving a ribbon can be quite challenging, as it requires core strength, focus and hand eye coordination. Activities such as roller painting / shaving cream painting / action songs which cross the midline of the body and climbing activities all work to develop these skills. Large body movement, coordination and strength are all prerequisites for strong hand muscles and manipulation skills required for tasks such as scissors use and drawing or writing.



Using our interest in colour and rainbows, the children threaded their own rainbow, using pony beads. Threading develops muscle strength in children's hands and fingers, hand-eye coordination, information processing skills as children coordinate both hands in conjunction, passing the thread and beads from one hand to another. Concentration is required to keep from dropping the thread and creativity and maths skills developed as children make patterns and count the numbers of beads.



We are working towards the children developing certain perceptions of self and dispositions to assist them throughout life. We want each child to be; curious, have initiative, be confident, be creative and imaginative, and most importantly be caring and compassionate. We want each child to have self confidence and a strong sense of self-esteem. To this end, we focus on each child's social skills and emotional development; encouraging and supporting each child to negotiate, rather than use more aggressive means, when things don't go as they planned. The children are learning to be a

valued and important part of a large group as well as an individual with their own thoughts and needs. We encourage each child to be as independent as possible, as this assists the development of their sense of self and gives great self esteem when they achieve a task that previously they needed assistance with.



Thank-you all for a lovely first term. We hope you enjoy a relaxing holiday ready for another exciting term.

Sally, Jennie, Donna, Karin and Suzie

(The Blue Group Team)



Term 1 is flying by and the children are settling in. The programme revolves around the children's interests and needs and our areas of interest have included the Dharra our turtle, the Lunar New Year, colours and colour mixing, and families.

Throughout first term our emphasis is on the children:



- Feeling comfortable and safe at Kinder
- Building relationships with other Kinder children
- Becoming comfortable interacting with the staff
- Learning and responding to the new Kinder routines
- Trying a variety of new and familiar learning experiences inside and outside
- Participating in singing, music and movement activities
- Listening and responding to stories
- Learning to be good listeners

To help the children get to know other children better and to extend their friendships we have started using our **name cards** at eating times. We ask the children to sit where their name card is placed.

The other way we use the name cards is that the children are learning to recognise and write their own names using “school writing”. They are also learning the first letter and sound, and are starting to recognise other children’s names.

Developing early literacy and numeracy skills is an on-going part of the programme. Some children are very interested in number, and we have offered some experiences involving counting groups of objects and matching them to numerals, as well as sorting and patterning experiences.



Another interest we have been following is our countries of origin. The children have been making flags from our different countries, as well as the Australian flag and the Aboriginal flag. We are also learning to say Hello in different languages.

Sharing experiences about our various cultures and backgrounds helps the children develop tolerance and an understanding of diversity and what makes us all unique. We will continue to learn about celebrations and cultures around the world throughout the year. Please let us know if you are happy to teach us about your own celebrations and culture. This could be by talking to the children at group time, showing some photos or pictures or by doing an activity with the children.



For the last week of the term the children will be talking about and participating in some art and craft experiences around **Easter**, which is part of the Christian calendar.

Family Participation Programme

Children love having you at Kinder to help. They feel proud, valued and special when they can show you their Kinder environment.

Having a few extra pairs of hands to hang up paintings or write names on work, also gives the staff more quality time with the children individually, and in small groups. You may be asked to sit at a table with a small group of children to assist with an activity, play a game or help with a

more challenging puzzle. Obviously, the more adults we have in a room, the better quality of Kinder programme we can provide.

As family, while you are helping out, you will have the opportunity to see what we do at Kinder, and in particular see how your child is progressing and how they interact with the other children.

If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please come and speak to us.

Kirsty, Jennie and Karin



By Liangli (Lily) and Donna

Welcome to Syndal Preschool Green Group 2020. We have now come to the end of term 1 and the children have settled well in term 1. All our children have coped well with the separation anxiety under families and teachers' support. The children have enjoyed the kinder environment and learning programs. The children were not familiar with teachers and peers at the beginning of the term, but they are starting to build up relationships with each other and having more interactive play now.



First term of the year is mainly allowing all children to settle down in the preschool environment. The preschool and teachers are new to all the children. We supported our children to get familiar with the indoor and outdoor environment by letting our children to explore and play freely. We also guided our children to build up their senses of belonging by scaffolding the children to understand that this is our kinder and we are going to

look after ourselves and all our materials at kinder. Packing up time is a great opportunity for children to build up their senses of belonging. At the beginning, the children might be a bit lost and did not know what to do for packing up time. However, the children take more

responsibilities to help pack up and would remind their peers to pack up after indoor and outdoor play time by the end of this term.



For the indoor activities, we have set up activities based on children's interests. This term the activities were mostly about animals including Australian animals, farm and zoo animals, colors, shapes and fruits. Some children would mix up colors when they did rainbow painting or free painting. Therefore, we read a book called "mix it up" for children to know about what colors can the three original colors make out. In addition, we set up table activities for children to try to create new colors by mixing up the three original colors. The children have had a lot of fun with the book and the activities.



Outside play time is one of the children's favourite at kinder. Children enjoyed playing with the "horses" outside. We put out horses' models for children to play outside. The children would choose their favorite horses and rode on the horse in our playground. This was also where the interactive play started to happen. The children would form a line of "horses" and there would be a leader to guide the line where to go. The children were not confident to climb the challenging courses in the playground when they first got in touch with them. However, the children have more courage to climb the challenging courses as time goes by. The children gained courage from both their teachers and peers. The teachers would guide the children where to climb and how to coordinate their arms and legs. The children would also observe

other peers who climbed the challenging courses and learned from other peers. The children have gradually built up their confidence when they play outside throughout the whole term.



Group time is an important routine of children's kinder life. The children got to learn different songs and read various stories during group time. The stories play the role of guiding children to learn different concepts. For example, we read "The very hungry caterpillar" for children to understand about the concepts of "everyday food" and "sometimes food". Music can support the children to participate actively for the group time. We learned songs that include simple actions, in this case, the children would have more interactions with teachers and peers during group time. We also used group time to show the children how to maintain personal hygiene, especially for the Coronavirus that has great impact for all of us recently.



Thank you for the participation of all the children and families in term 1. We understand that it has been an unstable term for all of us due to the outbreak of the Coronavirus. We appreciate all the families' support and understanding. The group has settled well in the kinder environment for this term. We wish we will have a better and more interesting term next term and we believe that we can get through this hard time together.

Wishing you all a great term break!