



Newsletter Issue 1 March 2017



PRESIDENTS REPORT

Welcome to new and old families at Apollo Parkways preschool. I hope by now all the children have settled into their exciting year at preschool.

I would like to thank the volunteers on the committee and I look forward to working with you. If anyone would like to join us please drop me a line.

I encourage families to participate in the preschool activities as you may develop long friendships, along with your child.

Please assist in the working bees, fruit duty, fundraising events etc. to ensure a secure future for the centre.

I look forward to reporting on all the fun activities through the year.

Daniel Neave
President 2017

DATES TO REMEMBER

Thursday 23 March: Responsible Pet Program – Red & Blue Groups

Friday 31 March: Term 1 Ends

Tuesday 18 April: Term 2 Begins

Thursday 27 April: Red & Blue Group – Excursion to Diamond Valley Library

SUNSMART POLICY

Apollo Parkways proudly follows the Cancer Council Sunsmart Policy. Please ensure SPF 30+ sunscreen is applied to your child prior to the commencement of their kinder session during terms 1 and 4.

FUNDRAISING ANNOUNCEMENT

We are currently selling the popular Entertainment Book. The 2017/2018 memberships are packed with loads of your favourite offers, along with stacks of new businesses that we know you are going to love. Please see below for further information in newsletter.





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BLUE & RED GROUP

A big welcome to all the families beginning kinder this year.

It's been a very positive start to the year for the four year olds beginning kinder. We began the year with interviews which were conducted in small groups. Parents were then encouraged to discuss anything individually after the groups interview. The interviews were great for gaining any important background information about the child prior to them beginning kinder.

While the interviews were taking place, the children were involved in a variety of activities. This was a great opportunity for Sharyn and Janine to get to know individual children, picking up on interests and developing a better understanding of children's personalities and how they may cope on their first week at kinder. It was a great opportunity for the children to become more familiar with staff and other children who will attend kinder with them.

The children were familiarised with their lockers, hand towels and the location of the bathroom. We were also pleased to get some lovely photographs of the children with their attending parent. These are displayed on the notice board.

The children settled in nicely on their first day and the shorter sessions gave them the opportunity to settle in to an environment with smaller number. The first lunch day came upon us very quickly and it was quite a long session. Although the children managed the day very well they appeared very tired towards the end of the session. They also had a lot to organise with lunch and fruit routine all in one day so well done children.

It has been fantastic to have our additional educator Jo working with blue group due to the KISS funding we received. Her support is has enabled us to continue supporting all the children's needs at kinder and many of the children coming from our Three-Year-Old program in 2016 have had a wonderful start with the continuity of educators.

Currently we are focusing on ensuring they have plenty of time to transition between routines giving them time to organise themselves and their belongings. We began the year with a program that allows the children to learn to move through the kinder environment with confidence and a feeling of success. The program is simple so the children can become familiar with the environment, where items are kept, how to access their belongings, the toilets and to feel comfortable and successful being able to take part in all activities with confidence. Visual charts and pictures have been introduced to assist the children in managing the routine at the beginning and end of the day. Already the children are referring to the chart when they are unsure which is great to see. We have also introduced our friendship tree the children have begun 'signing in and out' each day by adding their photo to the tree. Social stories have been read to the group which teach them in clear visual pictures and language many of the important social skills that make kinder a positive environment. Including sharing with friends, being part of the group, what hands are for and talking to friends.

As the weeks move on our program has developed according to the children's ideas interests and abilities taking the whole group and individuals into consideration. The children are already showing us in many ways how we can cater for these needs with many different ideas and interests being recorded and observed throughout the first couple of weeks at kinder. Through art and craft activities the children have already become familiar with identifying their names to paste on their work and can access smocks and are learning where to place their artwork





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on completion. Our observations of the groups have identified an overall interest in art and craft, insects, water play, numbers and counting, puzzles and Lego construction.

A focus area has been to develop the children's self-awareness and identity. The children have been looking at themselves in the mirror and describing what they see. This is not only an oral language experience but it also develops the children's positive sense of self and wellbeing and belonging to our group. The children's photos have been placed in a family and friends folder on our book shelf for them to view at kinder.

The children have also been talking about their families and identifying the people in their families whilst completing a family collage. This will form part of their kinder portfolios this term.

We have begun sending home our treasure box/bag which each child will have the opportunity to take with them. They are encouraged to place a special item from home in the box to share with the group. This again is a wonderful opportunity for the children to share aspects of their home life and culture and assists teachers to understand their interests. The children are learning how to listen to others while they share the items they have brought.

The weather has been very warm to start the year and the children have had many opportunities outdoors to explore with water. The children are also enjoying removing their shoes in the sandpit and are developing their skills in placing them back on their feet independently. This is a skill we will work on with many of them throughout the year.

Music will be a part of our program each week, group times will vary in length according to the abilities of the children and the time of the day such as morning or afternoon. At present the children are enjoying coming together to dance and also participating in finger play songs. The children have stories read to them throughout each session in our lovely reading space as well as group stories at the end of each day.

The staff are pleased with the progress the children are already making with our fruit routine. At this point in the year the children are needing some prompting to follow our hygiene procedures including the washing of hands before fruit and also the washing of their dishes. They have been eating fruit from a shared platter often outdoors. They have begun washing their own bowls after they eat and placing them on the drying rack. This allows for children to return for more fruit if they are still hungry. They are having a lovely time doing this and they seem to enjoy the sensory experience as well as the independence it gives them. The children have been eating a lot of fruit at the moment and we have been fortunate to have parents assisting us with kinder duty and the serving of fruit. Thank you all for your assistance.

EVENTS

A family picnic was held for both red and blue groups. We had great weather and a great turn out with many of our families bringing a picnic dinner and sharing in this special night with their children and other kinder families.

A library story time visit for both groups was held on Thursday 2nd March which was wonderful for meeting the librarian Marlies prior to our excursion to the library in term two. Marlies read some simple but fun and interactive stories with the group as well as telling them about the library and the wonderful programs and opportunity it offers to them and their families. The children all seemed very excited about the upcoming library visit which we have spoken about at kinder.





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Notes went out to families in blue group recently advising them not to have nut or nut products or eggs in their children's lunches due to a child at risk of anaphylaxis. The children will also need to wash hands after consuming dairy products at kinder.

If families have any questions in regards to this, please don't hesitate to speak with your child's teacher.

Sunhats are currently being left at kinder in the children's own hat pockets. The children will be required to wear their hats during outdoor play until then end of April. You can choose to swap a summer hat for a beanie over the winter months if you like as outdoor play will continue.

We arranged a visit from Little Chompers the Nillumbik Community health dentist on Thursday 16th March, where the children had their teeth examined.

Later in the term we have a visit from the Responsible Pet Program, Thursday 24th March. This program is for children and parents with four sessions planned throughout the day. It is a very valuable program that teaches children how to keep themselves safe near dogs. We hope that many parents will attend the parenting session while their children are in session.

Early next term on Thursday 27th April we will take the children on an excursion to Diamond Valley Library. The children will walk along the walking track and across the bridge over the freeway. When permission forms go home to families we will request help to supervise children during the excursion. Marlies will take this session for us.

Thank you

Tamara, Helen, Janine, Sharyn, Joe & Marilyn.





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YELLOW GROUP

Welcome to our new and returning families to Yellow Group. We hope you and your child have an enjoyable time with us at Kinder this year.

Our Three Year Old Kinder program is run on Monday mornings and Friday afternoons. We are called Yellow Group. We have twenty children in our group with Jo (team leader) and Pauline (co-educator). We are pleased with how well all the children have settled in. First day nerves have now passed and the children seem keen to come to Kinder each session. Lots of cuddles and reassurance has helped each child and family to feel welcome and safe within our environment.

Our group has a variety of needs so it is certainly a busy time. Parent helpers with fruit has allowed Staff to focus on the children. Thank you to all our parents who have volunteered their time to cut and serve fruit. The children are coping well with the transitional fruit time, choosing when they feel hungry and are ready for fruit. Yellow Group are encouraged to wash their own bowls once they have finished eating fruit. The children are all managing this independent skill well.

The children are slowly getting used to their routine, its taking time to transition from inside to out and then outside to in, collecting bags and drink bottles etc. We are all learning patience and practise while each individual child is reminded what to do next.

Group times have started with only a small amount of time expected for the children to sit in a group and focus. They all seem keen to dance and sing as they learn new songs and dances. We often play relaxation music and blow our magic bubbles on Friday afternoons when often the children are feeling tired.

The program is quite simplistic to begin with. Simple insert puzzles, magnetic blocks, a few pasting materials are offered at the craft table and only one colour of paint is available at the easel for painting. Dinosaurs are very popular amongst the group, so we set up an imaginary play experience with fur, logs and a variety of dinosaurs inside on a table. Outside water play and the sandpit are extremely popular. We often open up both the sandpits to allow the children more space to play with different equipment set up in each sandpit. Some Friday sessions are spent outside in the fresh air (weather permitting). Water play allows the children to cool down on warmer days. A trough of water with scoops and water wheels as well as an area set up for washing dishes, has been thoroughly enjoyed by the children. Activities change according to the needs and interests of the group and a program is written to reflect these changes.

The children have been introduced to Boris our Travelling Bear, a special bear that belongs to Kinder. In Term Two each child will have the opportunity to take Boris home and write or draw in his diary to share with the group on the next kinder session. Boris is available during the sessions for the children to snuggle and play with. During our story time each child has a turn to hold onto Boris while we have our story.

Sharing is a skill that many of the group are having difficulty with, so staff are talking to the children individually and in groups about this. This is age appropriate and something that the children in Yellow Group hope to achieve this year. We are also focussing on our hands are used for playing and are to be kept to ourselves, while encouraging the children to use their





words when being hit, pushed or poked and telling their peers to STOP when they don't like something.

Friendships are beginning to form as the children learn each other's names and start to play together. Lots of imaginative and role play experiences encourages socialisation amongst the group.

Portfolios have begun. Each child has their own kinder portfolio which will include an overview of their time in Yellow Group. These stay at Kinder for the year and will go home on our last day. Special days, birthdays and art will be placed in the children's portfolios and are available for the children to look at during our sessions. We look forward to continuing to help the children establish routines and friendships while learning while at Kinder.

Yellow Team

Jo & Pauline





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ENTERTAINMENT BOOK

Apollo Parkways Pre School are fundraising, and we need your help! This year we are fundraising with the Entertainment Book! Order the NEW 2017/2018 Entertainment Book or Entertainment Digital Membership now. You'll receive hundreds of valuable offers for everything you love to do, and help our fundraising at the same time!

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