



Alstonville
Community
Preschool

Together we can

FAMILY NEWSLETTER

September 2020

Dear Families,

Our mural is complete. This has been a long term wish list item for our preschool, and last year we were successful in applying for a grant to have this done. We found an amazing mural artist in Sam from Breakaway Art, and have finally had it completed. This was a wonderful experience for the children (and educators) as we watched it evolve day by day, with many of the inclusions coming from the ideas of the children – a magpie, echidna, white faced heron, Lizard, Birdwing butterflies and a possum, amongst the rainforest trees. Our playground seems to have so much more depth and life now!



2021 Enrolments

Thank you all for your prompt replies. All current children have received their first preference for days in 2021, and we will now begin taking enrolments from our waiting list. Naomi will send a confirmation of your choice of days during next week.

School Enrolment

Thank you also for your responses about which school you are planning to enrol your child in for next year. We will be working closely with local schools to help with orientation of children into Kindergarten, as they, like us, are having to think differently about their Kindergarten and Orientation processes this year.

If you are enrolling or considering enrolling at school for next year, it is important to contact the school as soon as possible as they have begun their enrolment processes.

Some families recently took up the opportunity for a mid-year chat with educators about their child's progress.

Early next term, we will have Transition to School statements prepared and sent to the local school indicated by you as your school of choice. This will help the Kindergarten teachers as they plan their classes and programs for next year. Towards the end of the year you will receive your child's written developmental summary against the learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework and their Learning Book, as a beautiful collation of their time at preschool.

PRESCHOOL PHOTOS are being taken during the week after next (On Monday, Wednesday and Friday from September 14th). You will be given an envelope for orders during next week, which will need to be returned with payment by the following week to ensure your child is included in their photo session. It will be difficult this year to plan for follow up photos if children miss the day for their group.

HOW WE ASSESS CHILDREN'S LEARNING AND COMMUNICATE THAT LEARNING WITH FAMILIES

It has been increasingly difficult this year to ensure all families are aware of the learning, and planning for learning that is occurring in preschool each day. We are looking at ways to improve this, but for now here is a short summary of how we are currently communicating with families and planning for learning.....

1. Each child has a **Learning Book**, which includes work samples, educators' observations and documentation of your child at play and learning activities, and a Summative profile which is gradually completed during your child's enrolment here. This profile shows over time, a picture of development against the five required learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework. These Learning books are normally available in each room at all times for children and families to look through, however this year with changes to arrival and departure each day due to Covid 19, families don't have this opportunity. The children love to look in their learning books and share them with their friends. Each family will receive these books at the end of their child's time at preschool.
2. We use **focus groups** of children throughout each term to ensure specific attention is provided for each child. During these times you will have been asked to share some of your child's current interests and knowledge with us through the **Focus Child Family sheet**. Information from these sheets is added to information we have from observing your child at play.
3. **Floorbooks** are used across the preschool to show group learning and current interest areas. These are displayed each afternoon at the front gate for you to view, and a photo of each groups' floorbook is **posted to the ACP Family Community page** each week. From next week, we will be using the **ACP Family Community Page** to communicate additional information about what we have been learning with posts from each group each week. All families can join this FB group at any time. Please let us know if you haven't already and would now like to, ***as this will be the main way we communicate what is happening in preschool with you, between now and the end of the year.***
Please see the Room Leaders at the gate, if this presents a problem for your family.
4. A **photo slideshow of our day** is set up to the left of the front gate each afternoon, except on rainy days, and this provides a good talking point with your child each afternoon about what they have been doing during the day. This may or may not include photos of every child every day, but will give you some insight into the day's activities.

FOR OUR AMAZING EDUCATORS...

Dear Families,

Wednesday 2nd September was Early Childhood Educators Day.

<https://www.earlychildhoodeducatorsday.org.au/>

As the preschool's Wellbeing officer I would like to ask you to take some time with your child this week to have a look at this website to find out more about what this celebration is all about and think about the early childhood educators in your child's life and what they mean to your family.

I would like to surprise our educators next week (when they least expect it) with lots of thankyou's however they come, for all the great work they do. I can assure you hugs are some of their favourite things and a card made by your child or a simple, special thank you, would go a long way in making them feel special and appreciated.

I thank you in advance and ask that you try to keep it a surprise till next week and then go crazy 😊

Jo Sandral

Important information about preschool next term....

- ❖ Preschool fees will **remain free** for all of Term 4 now, due to a recent decision by the Department of Education to continue the Free Preschool program in NSW.
- ❖ Assisted drop off and pick up at the front gate will continue.
- ❖ A Health Declaration each morning will continue to be required.
- ❖ Families are requested to keep sick children at home i.e. runny nose, green nose and congestion, sore throat, cough, as per our Infectious Diseases and Sick children policies.
- ❖ Current high levels of hygiene and daily cleaning practices will continue in preschool.
- ❖ **IMPORTANT** - *if you don't work or need to drop off early for work purposes between 8.30 and 9.00am at the moment, please plan to arrive a little bit later i.e after 9.00am so that those families who have tight time frames have the opportunity to drop off first.*
- ❖ *Again, in the afternoons it is best to collect by 3.30pm if you are not working just to save congestion at the front gate closer to 4pm.* Preschool does close for the day promptly at 4.00pm. This is important to educators who use their time after work to clean, plan and set up for the following day. Thankyou

School holidays begin on Friday 25th September for two weeks. Preschool will resume on Monday 12th October



Partners in Play (PiPs)

Given the current guidelines from the NSW Departments of Education and Health, Playgroup in the Park has unfortunately had to stop running for at least the rest of this term.

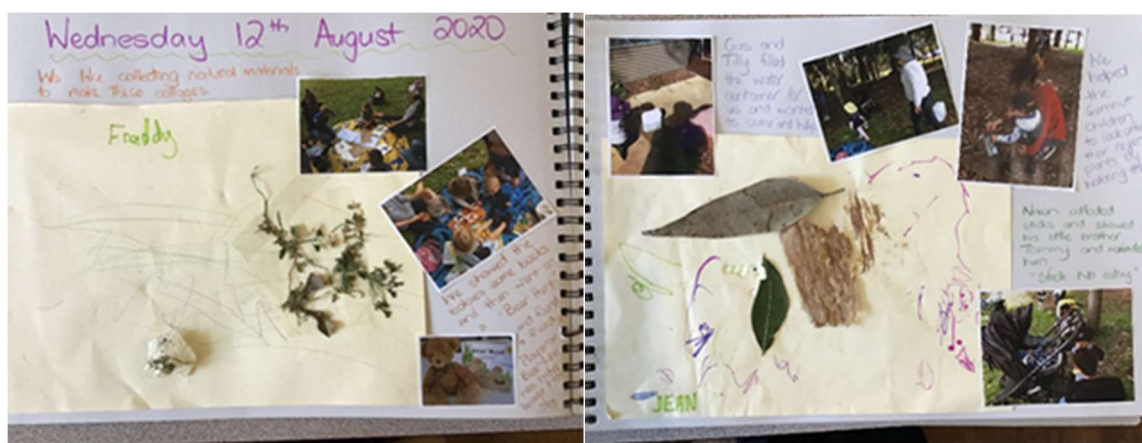
For a few weeks we had lots of fun out in the park watching the Gumnuts Group from afar and one week we got to explore and enjoy their "bushworld" too.

We had some new families attend and have started seeing friendships of both the children and parents develop.

We made the most of the natural environment, constructing with sticks, drawing with dirt and collecting leaves. Our favourite things to do were chase bubbles and play ball games together.

We also danced and sang and have had quiet times reading books all together.

As things are constantly changing regarding guidelines relating to COVID-19, we are hoping to be able to offer Playgroup in the Park again in Term 4.



Additional days for children who will begin school in 2021

To assist with preparation for school, we usually offer the opportunity of a third day where we have vacancies for currently enrolled children, who are beginning school.

Due to Covid 19, the opportunity for additional days has been delayed this year. The Management Committee discussed this issue at the Committee meeting this week, and have decided that, if Covid conditions remain the same as at present, this will be able to happen next term, from 26th October onwards.

Thank you to those families who have expressed interest in this, I will contact you as soon as we can offer this opportunity with days available.

TESTIMONIALS

Could you provide a testimonial of your experience at Alstonville Community Preschool, as we would love to add your comments to the updated preschool website? If you are happy to contribute please email your testimonial to director@alstonvillepreschool.com.au. Thanks in advance.

POLICY REVIEW

As a part of the continuous improvement required by the National Quality Standard, this week we are:

1. reviewing some of the things we need to consider to ensure each child is safe and adequately supervised at preschool. Safety is always our number one priority, especially during this year with Covid 19 considerations. If you have ideas for how we may improve our safety and supervision practices, we would be happy to discuss them further.
2. Reviewing our Administration of Medication Policy.
There are copies of this policy at the sign in/out desk. Please take a moment to read them if you are interested. See Summary below

Medication Administration Policy summary

- Medication must be handed to educators and not left in a child's bag
- Medication will only be administered if it is authorised except:
 - in an anaphylaxis or asthma emergency, medication may be administered without authorisation. Parents and emergency services will be contacted as soon as possible
 - in other emergencies we may obtain verbal authorisation from parents, or emergency services if parents can't be contacted. Parents will be advised as soon as possible
- A Medication Record will always be completed when medication is administered containing the authorisation, the time and date the medication is/was administered, the dosage, the name and signature of the person administering the medication and of the person who checked this
- Medication will only be administered if it's in the original container with an original legible label which if prescribed by a doctor has the child's name, hasn't expired, and is administered in line with any instructions on the label or from the doctor.

We value any feedback. Thank you.