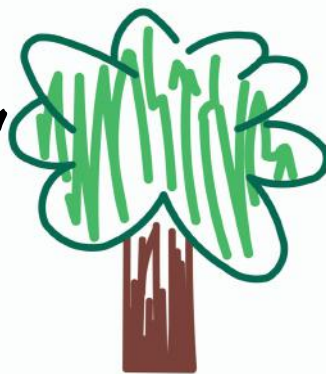


The Buzz: Term 1

ST JOHN'S PRESCHOOL



We've had such a great start to our preschool year - already halfway through term 1 and all the classes are settling into their routines, learning and exploring and getting more confident with every passing day.

It's been wonderful to meet so many new families as well, and we were glad to see lots of you at our Welcome Morning Teas. If you have suggestions of ways we can help you can make connections with other parents, please feel free to let us know!

So far this year we have had a busy time getting to know each other and discovering all the fun things to do at preschool!

The children really loved our Butterfly Garden, seeing the caterpillars develop, become chrysalis, and then emerge as butterflies.

It was so beautiful seeing the children's faces when the butterflies were released :)

We are all very excited about bringing our Teddy Bears to preschool this week, and at the same time raising money for the Children's Hospital at Westmead.

Coming up this term we have Harmony Day where we will celebrate our rich variety of cultures at preschool.

We also have a Chicken Hatching Program to see another life cycle in action, our Easter Church visits and the Return to Preschool Kindy visit where we will welcome our 2019 finishers back to play.

We will finish up our term with the Preschool Annual General Meeting at 6pm on Wednesday 8/04.

Please join us!

JACARANDA

3-day class

We have had a great start to the year! Everyone has settled in and already new friendships have formed, as children discover their common interests. We have been amazed at the children's creativity and their self-expression in using many different art mediums. The classroom walls are filling up with their master pieces.

Through their art making we have enjoyed experimenting with colour mixing. The children particularly enjoyed eye dropper painting and creating their own butterfly prints. The children were able to transfer this knowledge to join together with their educators in painting "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" story and making our own enormous butterfly.

The children's creativity has also been seen in their Lego constructions and dramatic play.

Our PALS puppet friends Jack, Anna and Kate visit each week and are helping develop the children's social skills in turn taking, sharing, listening and greeting one another. Together we are enjoying practising these skills and encouraging one another as we do so.

Small group games and board games have been a fun way to practice turn taking. Through this we have discovered a number of budding mathematicians and some fantastic memories. We are going to have a fun year enjoying lots of games together and developing these skills further in preparation for Big School.

We can't wait to see where the children's interests and creativity leads us this year.



JACARANDA

2-day class

We are excited to welcome new families into our room! It is still early days, but our new children have settled so well. It has been a pleasure to see calm transitions in the morning, as well as how happy and engaged they are in play and learning through the day.

We have been concentrating on building new friendships, getting familiar with the daily routines and class rules. The children have been learning very important social skills: turn taking, negotiation, working in co-operation and playing collaboratively.

We have been enjoying our Cooking Club every Tuesday. The children have an opportunity to make a variety of recipes that are easy and quick. The cooking experiences are amazing for learning mathematics, social skills, fine motor skills and of course trying new food!

We have seen a strong interest in animals throughout all different areas of the preschool.

Experiences have been provided to sustain and enrich children's interest, and we have been learning about animals that live on land and in the sea, and why animals are different colours.

We have been enjoying Music and Movement to start building the children's interest in this very important area of development. Music ignites all areas of child development and skills for school readiness, including intellectual, social-emotional, motor, language, and overall literacy. It helps the body and the mind work together. Dancing to music helps children build motor skills while allowing them to practice self-expression.

We have also started doing PALS program, which helps the children to learn social skills together with the puppets. We encourage parents to revisit together with the children what they have learnt during those sessions.



FRANGIPANI

3-day class

It has been wonderful to welcome our Frangipanis back to another year at Preschool!

We have spent the past few weeks exploring a few projects with the children. The first project that we studied was Space. On the first day of Preschool, Ellie, Yalguun and Sienna showed an interest in making moons, stars and planets out of playdough. From there, an interest was sparked and we explored many elements of space such as planets, astronauts, rockets, stars, meteors and shooting stars. We did this through group times, art works, Lego and other play experiences.

It has also been wonderful to spend time with the children exploring colours. We have done this through color sorting activities and investigating the mixing of colours at the art table. The pinnacle of it all was the magic milk experiment that the children conducted with Els, exploring how when two or three colours combine, new colours can be made. In Bible time, the children have been learning more about the Bible, how it is God's book that tells us about His Son Jesus and the power that Jesus has over sickness and death.



FRANGIPANI

2-day class

It has been wonderful getting to know our new Frangipanis throughout the beginning of this term. We are starting to see their individual personalities and look forward to getting to know each one of them better. The children have shown a strong interest in animals – exploring our Australian animal figurines, as well as sharing their knowledge about different animals. We have had group discussions about the different features of animals around the world, comparing the similarities and differences between them and talking about our favourite animals. It was wonderful to extend on this interest in creatures through the visiting of our Butterfly Garden in Weeks 4-5.

We have some budding artists in our Frangipani room. The children have really enjoyed exploring different ways to express their creative ideas over the past few weeks through water colour painting, drawing with sharpies and adding a wash of edicol dye, along with exploring the many possibilities of what can be made at the box construction table.

In Bible time, we have been looking at Jesus' power over sickness, as well as how we can learn more about God through the Bible.



LILLI PILLI

3-day class

We have seen strong friendships develop this term as well as new ones quickly blossoming! Understanding friendship dynamics can be challenging for the children, so our focus this term is to learn and practice how to negotiate play with peers, share friends with one another, and regulate emotions.

The Lilli Pillis have been enjoying learning these skills with puppets Anna and Jack while also sharing great ideas to solve issues that commonly occur when playing with others.



Lilli Pillis continue to inspire each other to learn new skills and concepts. Insects have been an interest since last year and it became even stronger after exploring the Butterfly Garden and the lovely bee experience with Suzie (Hannah's mum). The children have also learned about insects and their life cycle through investigating them during outdoor play, engaging in a craft project to make chrysalis and butterflies, and in group times.

Learning to make paper planes was also a strong interest! Children taught each other how to fold paper planes showing an amazing ability to explain the step by step process of folding a paper plane. They became so proficient in folding paper planes that they took on a challenge to learn how to make more sophisticated models.



LILLI PILLI

2-day class

The new Lilli Pilli children have settled really well into the routine and easily navigated their days while showing lots of excitement to be here! All of the children have shown good concentration and interest in group experiences which impressed their teachers! To help the children become familiar with the routine, we used picture boards that represent each part of the day. Every day the children are eager to do our daily routine chart which is a great way for them to learn their peers' names, develop pencil grip and use cognition when matching pictures or identifying numbers.

Other ways to help the children feel a sense of belonging with the group is our Lilli Pilli tree. They love to look for their own photos as well as to show them to peers and teachers. As the children responded with strong interest in group experiences, we have been having extra short group times throughout the day in between free play. The children engage in role play songs that involve choosing a friend to jump together in the middle of the circle or to play 'bug in the rug'. Through group experiences, the children have been learning social skills such as turn taking, sharing,

and becoming familiar with peers and teachers, as well as learning new concepts. It didn't take very long for friendships to start to emerge as the children gathered in big groups to play hide-and-seek, duck-duck-goose, and other games such as tip and dancing. Outdoor play is a popular time of the day, and looking after our pet animals is a strong interest among the children - we seem to have real animal lovers here! The children enjoy feeding, patting and just looking for them in their coop or hutch. The bunnies are the most popular for sure!





Inclusion at Preschool

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to education.

We value the ability to welcome children with additional needs or any other individual differences into our preschool. We believe there are opportunities for all of us to grow and develop by learning from each other! We work hard to ensure our staff are well trained and that ratios of educators to children remains high to assist in the inclusion of children with additional needs.

Our enrolments are carefully managed to ensure a balanced opportunity for all children to have their needs met, to grow, learn and flourish together. Children who have additional needs benefit greatly from being in a classroom with children who have a mix of abilities - it leads to increased access to friendship and social skill acquisition.

They learn new skills more quickly and have a chance to feel they belong. For children with more typical abilities, there are benefits as well. They learn to be a part of a society that is fair and inclusive. They also develop their social skills as they learn how to respond and adapt to different ways of interacting. Having a classroom that is inclusive and allows individual children to develop at their pace allows all children to have their educational needs met more fully than in an environment where only one way of learning is promoted.

As a parent, it is great to be a role model for your child and get to know all the children in your child's class as individuals. Talk with your child about how to interact with children who might respond differently than others and encourage them to seek out others they can help and learn things from.