DIRECTOR NEWS

CHILDREN | FAMILIES | EDUCATORS

Celebrating learning, community and connection

Term 3 has been a wonderful term of curiosity, connection and discovery. Across the preschool, children have been encouraged to share their ideas, develop confidence and resilience, build friendships, explore their interests and strengthen their independence.

Learning Through Children's Interests

Our educators continued to build the program around the children's questions, ideas and interests. This term, children explored animals and the zoo, nature and Australian wildlife, space and construction, water play, books, drawing and creative arts, dramatic play, maps and countries, and many opportunities for inquiry and problem-solving.



- Building confidence, persistence and a growth mindset through 'having a go', trying different strategies and reflecting on what worked.
- Developing communication, storytelling, drawing, mark-making and early literacy skills, especially through their Story Drawing journals.
- Strengthening early mathematical thinking through play, construction and everyday investigations.
- Developing fine-motor skills through creative experiences such as beading, painting, construction, sticker fun, small-world play and cutting activities.
- Supporting independence, collaboration, negotiation and genuine choices about participation.

A Term Full of Special Experiences

Some of the highlights from Term 3 included:

- **Sydney Zoo excursion** – children explored Australian wildlife, wild animals and the aquarium, supported by educators and family helpers. Even the rainy weather became part of the adventure! Children were exploring their favourite animals in classroom projects and even created a cardboard zoo across both groups. Their knowledge of the diversity of animal life is increasing, along with the different habitats and needs of the animals. We hope that a genuine interest and respect is emerging. Without doubt, the Aquarium and reptile section was a favourite!
- **Book Week and Dress-Up Day** – children celebrated authors, illustrators, stories and favourite book characters, with many enjoying dress-ups from home and the varied collection at preschool. Even staff had a great time getting into the fun of dressing up. Our connection with our seniors in the Intergenerational Gardening program saw some children engaging with Authors of 'Nature Knows' in The 5 Senses Garden and created recycled-paper bug collages.

Children too, are listening to their own story book journals being read back to them- experiencing themselves as authors and illustrators. These journals are a huge part of our early literacy program.















- **Stories Under the Stars** – families joined us for 3 stories told under the stars at preschool. One was a read story, another, a movement story using a parachute and the final story, a told story. All had an Indigenous perspective to them, culminating in a special visit from Garrigan the blue-tongue lizard! Snacks and campfire yarns and marshmallow cooking made for a memorable evening of community connection.







- **Wuruniri Cultural Program** – Uncle Boori Monty Pryor shared stories, songs, movement and Indigenous perspectives with the children. He too, is an Author of children's books and shared some of his *Story Doctors* book and sang a song about bush tucker and bush medicine. Playing the yidaki, or didgeridoo, he made a variety of Native Australian animal sounds for the children to guess and then role play. He delighted in the children's laughter at his funny stories of when he was a child, playing in the bush. Uncle Boori was delighted to see the pictures the children drew based on their understandings and enjoyment of his performance.
- **Kokoda community memorial** – children created flowers and participated respectfully in the community memorial for Kokoda veteran Reg Chard, or Grandpa Reg as the preschool knows him.
- **Taronga Zoo Mobile with Uncle Col**- Zoo Keepers from Taronga visited preschool to share some native Australian wildlife- a snake, frog, lizard and possum. Uncle Colin Hardy, an Indigenous Elder and Tamworth Country Music Icon

sang songs on his guitar about the animals, and the keepers shared facts. Children got to view the wildlife up close and even pat them!



Culture, Country and Belonging

Connection to Country and respectful inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives continued throughout the program. Children explored Indigenous stories, symbols, seasonal indicators, nature, local wildlife and ways of caring for Country. The visit from Uncle Boori and Uncle Col provided a particularly meaningful opportunity for children to listen, ask questions and connect stories, culture and belonging.

The children have engaged in weekly walks within the local community and have noticed the changes happening within nature- the weather warming up, different flowers emerging and the birds beginning to build nests. Of particular interest is our resident Tawny Frogmouths. Where have they gone? They are no longer in their roosting tree, the Oak at the front of the preschool.



Supporting Children's Wellbeing

Emotional wellbeing remained an important part of our everyday curriculum. Educators supported children to recognise and name feelings, communicate their needs, develop friendship skills and use calming strategies to help regulate their bodies. Children explored breathing, yoga, quiet spaces, puppets, colouring, stories conversations about emotions and connections with safe and trusted adults.

We have also continued to strengthen children's understanding of body safety, personal space, trusted adults and help-seeking. Educators are using visual resources, social stories, small-group experiences and language supports so that safety learning is accessible to all children.

We are using children's lived experiences during play to guide and develop this. We have a big collection of books, posters and songs that support conversations around this.

Continuing to Strengthen Safety

The preschool team has undertaken ongoing reflection and professional learning around child safety and active supervision as part of our Quality Improvement Plan. Educators have been focusing on intentional positioning, scanning, moving, listening, communicating and anticipating risks. Safety learning is also embedded through safe walking, sun safety, tool use, appropriate risk-taking and helping children recognise when they need support.



A visit in August from the Early Learning Child Safety Commission confirmed that the Preschool demonstrated compliance with all provisions of the National Law and regulations observed on the day- Working with children checks, qualifications including early childhood, child protection and child safety, ratios, active supervision, physical environment safety, educator understanding of child safety and protection and proof of ongoing reflection and training.

Part of our ongoing commitment to safety and wellbeing for all children also stems from our parent feedback and complaints processes. We continue to improve quality through our governance and practices and have reviewed and updated the following policies during this period:

Health Safety and Wellbeing
Work Health Safety
Staff Policy

Code of Conduct and created a Code of Conduct
Parent/Guardian Contract
Complaints and Grievances
Safe Environments



We have also reviewed and updated our Risk Benefit Assessments of Excursions and Social events to include parent/guardian and staff responsibilities in supervision along with relevant Code of Conduct practices.

A safe preschool community depends on **educators and families working together- Our shared responsibility**

Educators are responsible for: supervision → child safety → behaviour guidance → documentation → communication → confidentiality → appropriate follow-up.

Families support this by: raising concerns → communicating respectfully → protecting children's privacy → allowing educators to manage incidents → following the service's complaints process where concerns remain unresolved.

Together, we can model the same respectful conflict-resolution skills that we are teaching our children.

Our Preschool Community

Thank you to our families for the wonderful support shown throughout Term 3. We were especially grateful to the families who joined the zoo excursion, participated in Stories Under the Stars, contributed to Book Week and helped us celebrate our educators.

Family feedback this term highlighted how much families value the warm relationships, sense of belonging and inclusive environment created by our educators. We are proud of the strong relationships we continue to build with children and families.

Thank You to Our Educators

We would like to acknowledge the whole educational team for their flexibility, teamwork and commitment throughout Term 3. Educators continued to support one another, reflect on practice and share strategies that strengthen children's learning, wellbeing and inclusion. We also celebrated Educators Day and appreciated the kind messages (spoken, emails & cards), treats, flowers and support from our families. Our Director, (supported by 2026 Management Committee) created a buffet lunch for our 2 day and 3 day group educators as a small appreciation for their commitment to the preschool and families. In reviewing the feedback from families, this is what we highlight that you value the most:

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Genuine care, warmth and affection

- Families repeatedly expressed gratitude for the love, care and affection educators show their children.
- Parents described the preschool as a **safe, nurturing and supportive environment** where children feel happy, valued and loved.
- Families recognised that educators care about children as individuals and genuinely want the best for them.



Knowing and understanding each child

- Parents particularly valued educators' **deep knowledge of their individual children**.
- One family specifically highlighted how educators notice and remember the small details about their child, meet him where he is at, recognise his strengths and celebrate his progress.
- Families recognised that this individualised approach helps children feel understood, secure and confident.





Patience, kindness and understanding

- Parents repeatedly acknowledged educators' **patience, kindness, compassion and understanding**.
- Families expressed appreciation for the way educators support children through challenges and respond to their individual needs.





A strong sense of belonging

- Families described the preschool as a place that feels like **home**.
- Parents commented that their children are excited to attend preschool, enjoy their time there and have developed strong relationships with educators and friends.
- One family shared that their child has already "fallen in love with the school and everyone here."

Professionalism and dedication

- Parents recognised the professionalism, passion and dedication of educators.
- Families acknowledged the significant effort educators put into creating a **fun, engaging, inclusive and meaningful learning environment**.

- Parents expressed strong trust in educators and appreciation for the work that happens every day, including the work that may not always be visible.

Inclusion and individual support

- Feedback particularly recognised the inclusive environment created for children with diverse needs.
- Families valued educators' ability to understand individual children, adapt their approach and provide consistent support.
- One family expressed that the depth of educators' knowledge of their child and their ability to recognise his strengths and potential was deeply uplifting.

Children's happiness and learning

- Parents repeatedly linked educators' work with their children's **joy, confidence, development and willingness to attend preschool**.
- Families described their children as happy to come to preschool and enjoying the learning environment.
- Parents recognised the impact educators have on children's growth, relationships and emerging independence.

Overall, families feel that educators do much more than provide care and education – they create relationships and an environment where children feel safe, known, included, valued and genuinely loved.

It tells us the following about our practices and curriculum:

- building **secure, respectful relationships** with children;
- knowing children as individuals and responding to their strengths, interests and needs;
- creating a **welcoming and inclusive environment**;
- supporting children's emotional wellbeing and sense of belonging;
- maintaining strong partnerships and trust with families;
- providing engaging learning experiences through caring relationships;
- celebrating children's progress and potential; and
- creating a preschool environment where children **want to be, learn and belong**.



Our team is very proud of this feedback- relationships, belonging, learning through interests, where children's wellbeing and safety is paramount, are our daily goals.

Looking Ahead to Term 4

As we move into Term 4, we will **continue to focus on children's confidence, emotional literacy, relationships, independence, school-readiness dispositions and transition to school, connection with nature and curiosity**.

We will also continue strengthening intentional teaching **and making children's voices, family perspectives, safety learning and educator reflection visible within our planning and documentation**.

We continue to **send well wishes and healing vibes to both Jo** (2 day group) **and Cathy** (3 day group). Unfortunately both will be continuing their healing and on leave for term 4. Maybe we'll get a visit or two when they are capable. **Rachel** will continue supporting the 2 day group and **Michelle** and **Nok** in the 3 day group.

Jenny will return from her long service leave and holidaying in Europe in week 2.

April will return from her year long maternity leave. We look forward to having her back in the environment, **in the 3 day group**, and are sure she's going to love getting to know the children and families.

The **Term 4 Agenda** has been sent out to all families so you know what to look forward to and be prepared for. It's also on display at the front sign in area.

Don't forget to ***'save the date'*** for the last day of term, which is **party day and Graduation from 2026**

Finally, **preschool photos** will be taken in week 3 of term 4. Due to the retirement of our long term, photographer, we are trying something new this year. **Nicole Anderson, an Alumni of Concord West Rhodes Preschool and local professional photographer** (her studio is in Concord) will be creating a special package just for our preschool. This is a fabulous opportunity to get first class photos of your child and their group, not just your standard school photo. More information will come out with ordering envelopes in week 1.










Thank you for being part of our preschool community 💚

We look forward to another term of learning, laughter, exploration and connection together!

A reminder of our contact platforms:

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