

FEBRUARY 2022

GORDONNEWS

GORDON COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL'S NEWSLETTER
HELPING US TO STAY CONNECTED



Lots to enjoy in the
preschool garden at
the moment!

in
this
issue

p 2 - Update on COVID safety procedures

pp 3-8 - We hear a little bit from each of our
teaching teams about what's been happening in
each classroom.

p 8 - Purchase personalised name labels and
raise funds for the preschool!

p 9 - Sick children at GCP and some useful links
for parents.

p 10 - Bags and lunch boxes at preschool.

p 11 - Frequently Asked Questions (and answers!)

p 12 Afternoons at GCP.

p 13 - Dates for your diary.

UPDATE ON COVID SAFE PROCEDURES

QR coding in not required

- We have received advice from the NSW Department of Education (Early Childhood) that it is no longer mandatory for parents or teachers/staff to QR code into the building each day. We will therefore be taking our displayed QR codes down during the week.

Masks

- As of the 7th March, the public health requirement to wear a mask in Early Childhood Services has been lifted. Our teachers and staff at GCP will make a personal choice as to whether they continue to wear masks beyond this point. Similarly, parents can choose whether or not they wish to wear a mask beyond March the 7th. However, all of our teachers and staff will continue to exercise care and common sense. We will ask you to do the same. If there is a spike in cases, we will be wearing masks. If it is difficult to physically distance from others, we will wear a mask. If you wish to talk with your child's teachers in the playground, please wear a mask. If you are coming into the building in the afternoon (see below), please wear a mask.

Parents and access to inside the building.

- You may have heard that schools and some Early Childhood services are beginning to let parents indoors. At GCP, because our children remain unvaccinated, we are going to take a measured and slower approach. From week 8 of this term (14th March), if parents would like to pick their children up from the classrooms in the afternoons, then between *the hours of 2.30-3.15 you are invited to do so. However, parents must spend no longer than ten minutes in the classroom. If coming inside, please wear a mask.*
- We have decided to keep our morning routines the way they are for the moment. We will keep an eye on how the changes in schools are working, and we will move slowly in case there is an associated spike in COVID cases. The teachers and I discussed this at length. Our morning routine - although busy for our staff team as we ferry children into the building, has had some benefits. Children are separating more easily from parents/carers. We can see children developing self help skills, resilience, & problem solving strategies as they walk up the stairs or ramp and into their classroom by themselves.

NEWS FROM OUR CLASSROOMS

Blue Room - B2 (Mon/Tues)

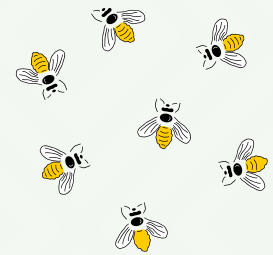
In the Blue room the children have been exploring colours. We have been using the 3 primary colours to make new colours. We have been experimenting with our fingers, rolling cars and golf balls through 2 colours to see the magic happen. They have loved listening to books about colours, especially the interactive book called Mix it up by Herve Tullet.



Yellow Room - Y2 Thurs/Fri

Over the last couple of weeks Y2 have been learning the preschool routines, have been connecting with class peers and educators and are starting to develop a sense of belonging to a group outside of the family unit.

Each day the children unpack their own bags, hang them on their hooks, wash their hands before signing in (name writing practice) and selecting an experience to engage in. We have been playing lots of games to try to help us remember each other's names like: 'My name is ..., he is..., she is....', 'Who's missing', 'Honey bear game'...



Isn't it funny
how a bear
loves honey?
Buzz buzz buzz,
I wonder why he
does?
Wake up Bear!
Your Honey's
not there!



One child is "The bear". They pretend to sleep in the middle of the circle. While they have their eyes closed, the honey pot is hidden behind another child's back. The bear is woken up by the rhyme and the bear has three guesses, asking each child "Do you have my honey?"

We encourage the children to use their class mates names "Do you have my honey James?"



Red Room
- R2
(Mon/Tues)



During the first term at preschool the children in the R2 class have been spending time getting to know each other and becoming comfortable in their new environment. We explore this daily by introducing ourselves with the yarning stick, singing name songs, playing games such as our photo card matching game and drawing self portraits.

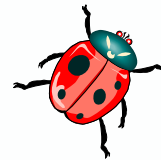


**DECODING OUR CLASS NAMES
WHAT DOES "R2" OR "B3" MEAN?**

WE HAVE FOUR CLASSES AT GORDON COMMUNITY PRESCHOOL.

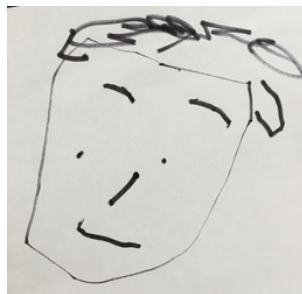
THE BLUE ROOM , YELLOW ROOM, RED ROOM AND GREEN ROOM.

The children have shown lots of interest in insects so we have been exploring this topic through factual books, creating an insect sanctuary and brain storming the names of various insects.



CHILDREN ATTEND OUR PRESCHOOL FOR EITHER 2 OR 3 DAYS PER WEEK. IF THEY ARE IN THE RED ROOM AND ATTEND FOR TWO DAYS PER WEEK THEY ARE IN R2 CLASS. IF THEY ARE IN THE RED ROOM AND ATTEND THREE DAYS PER WEEK THEY ARE IN R3.

HOPE THAT HELPS!



Email your child's teachers by emailing the classrooms.

redroomgcp@gmail.com for R2 and R3 teachers

blueroomgcp@gmail.com for B2 and B3 teachers

greenroomgcp@gmail.com for G2 and G3 teachers

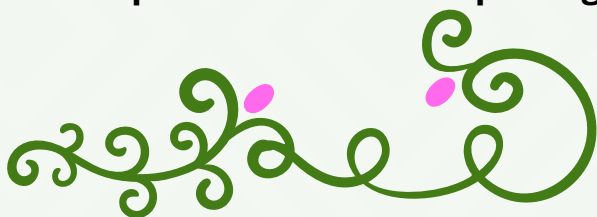
yellowroomgcp@gmail.com for Y2 and Y3 teachers

Green Room - G2 (Thurs/Fri)



We have already introduced the sharing bag to the children. The bag will come home with every family at least once a term. Each term will have a different focus. This term we are asking the children to tell us about themselves which they will then share with the class. A favourite colour? A favourite animal? We enjoy getting to know all about all our friends. We then put our findings in a book for the children to access whenever they want. Sharing bags are also a great way for children to talk in front of peers and staff. If you would like to include a family photo in the bag that would be great to share as well.

We have observed that many of the children enjoy art and craft activities. Playdough is very popular and we have been talking a little about animals. In our recognition of Chinese New Year there have been stories about animals and in particular tigers. Our literacy table has featured *Dear Zoo* and *Where is the Green Sheep?* A good place to spend time alone exploring books or explore alongside a peer.



Scan the QR code for a simple playdough recipe



NEWS FROM OUR CLASSROOMS

Blue Room - B3 Wed/Thurs/Fri

In the Blue Room, the children have been introduced to a variety of games such as Doodlebugs (matching colour and shapes), ladybug counting game, memory and shape and colour bingo. These games encourage social interaction, turn taking and develop observational skills.



Yellow Room - Y3 Mon/Tues/Wed

Y3

The last few weeks have seen Y3 make connections with both new and old friends and educators. We have had lots of discussions about similarities and differences amongst our group and about culture and where we all come from as well as our extended families. This has sparked us to embark on a project about culture and exploring our own and other cultures in more depth. We began the project by mapping out where each child and teacher was born and exploring these countries' flags and will progress from there.





In R3, we have been focusing on engaging the children in experiences which provide opportunities for each child to feel recognised and welcomed as individuals while also supporting them to feel a sense of belonging within a larger group. The children have been participating in circle games, to help them to learn the names of their peers and introduce themselves to others. We have been learning the circle games: One Gorilla, One Flamingo and The Honey Bear Game.

RED ROOM

R3

An interest in finger plays and felt songs amongst the group has provided opportunities for the children to: learn new songs, explore concepts of language, rhyme literacy and numeracy. We have also come together as a group to learn some circle dances including The Gingerbread Man, The Train song and Standing on One Leg.



ONE GORILLA IN THE CAGE,
THE BIGGEST IN THE ZOO
AND ALL THE CHILDREN CAME ALONG TO SEE
WHAT SHE CAN DO
SHE CLAPS HER HANDS,
SHE TURNS AROUND
SHE WALKS WITH FOUR FEET ON THE
GROUND
AND THEN SHE WENT TO FIND A FRIEND SO
THEY COULD DO IT TOO

G3

MON TUES WED



The G3 children have been busy investigating our senses over the last few weeks. It started from an interest in the fruit trees in our garden. The children have explored senses of smell, taste and touch through listening to stories, engaging in hands on activities and playing games. In the meantime, the children are getting to know their peers and educators by participating in a wide range of learning experiences.



Ruby Simpson 

Evie Walker 

Alexander Olsen

THE MYERS 

[Shop for personalised labels](#)

Head to stuckonyou.com.au and enter the code GCPsydney at checkout to raise funds for our preschool to help add to our collection of books and equipment.

Take a look at this checklist... is your child's name on each of these items?

- Hat
- Morning Tea container
- Water Bottle
- Lunch Box

This will help our teachers to ensure all belongings go home with your child.

Thanks!

Put Your Name On It!

Sick Children at Preschool



Over the last few weeks our teachers have sent a few children home as they have presented with a cough, runny nose or generally unwell. Please know that sending sick children home was our policy before COVID and now that we are dealing with COVID (and unvaccinated preschoolers,) we will be even more vigilant about this.

None of our teachers enjoys making that phone call to ask parents to collect children. Many of our teachers are parents themselves, and they know what it's like to re-juggle a work day if their child is unwell. We get it. It's really hard to deal with a sick child when you have a day of work scheduled.

However, we **really** need your help on this. If you receive the phone call to come and collect your child - please take a breath and know that our preference is to have full classes of healthy children. We would prefer that your child was here enjoying his/her preschool day... but just not when they are unwell.

If your child has been coughing overnight or unwell the day before, maybe err on the side of caution and keep them home.

Plan ahead and discuss with your partner or other carers - what you might do if your child is or becomes unwell.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation and assistance.



[Why is play
important?](#)

[Meet the GCP
Team](#)
[learn a little more
about our
teachers,
educators and
preschool team](#)

[Healthy Eating for Infants, Children and Teenagers](#)

[Messy Play - Good for Children!](#)

[Gordon Community Preschool
closed Facebook Group for
parents and friends](#)

Bags and lunchboxes at preschool.

One of our goals at GCP is to support children's sense of independence. Over the next year (or two) we hope to help your child to manage many self help skills by themselves.

One of these includes unpacking and packing his/her/their own bag.

Tips that will help:

If you want to send food in an insulated bag, please make sure it fits easily in your child's bag. Children's belongings should all be able to fit into their back pack. - if they don't, they may need a bigger bag which makes it easier for your child to unpack and pack.

If the insulated bag doesn't fit, just pack the lunch box and morning tea in two separate lunch boxes. Food that needs to be kept cold will go in the fridge - (unless you specify otherwise). We won't put insulated bags in the fridge as there's not enough room and the bag insulates against the cold from the fridge.

Practice opening and closing your child's bag and packing and unpacking belongings. Keep it fun and positive. Children are still learning and developing the necessary hand/eye coordination and fine motor skills to manage all this.





Will my child learn to read at preschool?

Children develop in their own time and while at preschool they are continually acquiring skills which will support their literacy learning..

There are many early literacy concepts and understandings that need to be developed before children begin reading. Our programme is language and literacy rich and aims to provide a solid foundation for future reading and writing.

My child doesn't talk about friends yet - should I be worried?

*No! It's early days in our preschool year. Relationships and friendships take time to develop. It's very normal for children to play **alongside** each other, rather than **with** each other at this time of the year. Instead of asking your child "who did you play with?" - Try asking them "what was the thing you liked best about today?".*

So what are they actually *doing* and *learning* at preschool?

Settling In

As we settle into our new preschool year, there are so many new things with which children need to become familiar and comfortable.

Imagine you are starting a new job - there are the names of new colleagues to learn, systems and routines to get used to - you may spend more time on orientation than actually doing any work!

It's the same for your child. The first term is largely spent on helping all children (even our returning children) to settle into the preschool day. We help children learn where they can find pencils, paper and books. We help reinforce routines like bathroom or morning tea routines. Where does our rubbish go? Which bathroom should I use? Where is the paper towel? We play games and sing songs that help the children get to know each other. We might play singing games in a circle, where children choose a partner.

We reinforce the learning of names as we transition from one activity to another by name games, or finding words that rhyme with our names.

A Sense of Belonging

We also spend time helping children to feel like they have a general sense of well being and belonging. We do this by displaying their photos and birth dates on the wall, we might display family photos in the classroom. We have group experiences where we read stories about families and ask children to talk about *their* family. We have a roster where each child has a turn of being the "special helper" for the day. The special helper helps to carry the shoe basket outside, helps hand out lunch boxes, among other tasks. These activities (and more) help children feel valued and help in developing that all important sense of belonging.

This is just a tiny snap shot of some of the learning that is taking place at preschool this term.



Rainy Days at GCP

Parents and carers – on rainy days, please use the side exit gate for both entry and exit.

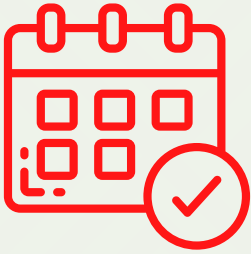
The path outside the Lifeline Building becomes quite flooded when it rains, so please feel free to avoid the puddles and enter via the exit gate.



Afternoon pick up

It can be very difficult at afternoon pick ups to hear what parents and carers are saying behind their masks. We are trying hard to remember names and classrooms, however masks also make it tricky to recognise people. It helps us if you can use a name card, stating your child's name and class. We have some already made up cards in the colour of each room. Keep the card in your car, ready for use. You could also make your own at home.





Dates for Your Diary

ZOOM Meeting For Parents

We will be forwarding details during the week to all families as we will be holding a zoom meeting for parents. We aim to answer any questions you may have, and to give you the chance to hear a little bit about what happens at preschool and what your child's class has been doing over the last few weeks.

Dates and times for these meetings:

Blue Room (B2 and B3) - Monday 7th March at 5PM

Green Room (G2 and G3) - Tuesday 8th March at 5PM

Red Room (R2 and R3) Thursday 10th March at 5PM

Yellow Room - (Y2 and Y3) Friday 11th March at 5PM

Zoom links to be sent this week.

Educational science/natural world based programme for the children - Justdream Productions

Monday 21st March for Y3/G3 and B2/R2 a visit from some insects, bugs and the opportunity to learn more about these fascinating creatures.

Friday 25th March - R3/B3 and G2/Y2 - all about Dinosaurs!

**Parent Teacher Meetings for all of our two day classes
this term - ie R2, (28th March) B2, 29th March) Y2 31st
March and G2 1st April - more details to come. (meetings
will be held via zoom or telephone).**

**That's all for this mammoth edition of the Gordonews!
Kind Regards, Felicity Barclay - Director**