

Bush Baby News

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TERM 1 WFEK 10 2020

CHAIRPERSONS REPORT

How things can change in a few short weeks!

Since our last newsletter we have gone from planning Easter Hat Parades, and fundraising activities for the preschool year, to all of a sudden facing arguably the greatest challenge our society has encountered in living memory.

The challenge is great, but so is our community, and if we each do our small part, we can help stop the spread and slowly return to life as we knew it.

As you will have seen over the past few weeks, preschool staff have been working tirelessly within the guidelines set by state and federal governments to try and ensure the health and wellbeing of all those who walk through our preschool gates. Whilst we always maintain very high standards of hygiene, the staff have been proactive in increasing these standards even further, and putting in place additional procedures such as limiting 'extras' at pick up and drop off, and hand washing before entering the preschool building to help protect our preschool and wider community.

I would like to commend and thank the staff for their creative and can-do approach to implementing the government guidelines, particularly as these have changed rapidly as the pandemic situation has evolved; and thank you to our families for your support of the measures put in place to help protect all preschool families.

As we are all aware, as of last week the NSW State Government directed that all schools (including The Oaks

DATES TO REMEMBER Term 2

Monday 27th April –

Friday 3rd July

- Sunday 10th May, Mother's Day

Term 3

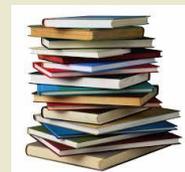
Monday 20th July –

Friday 25th September

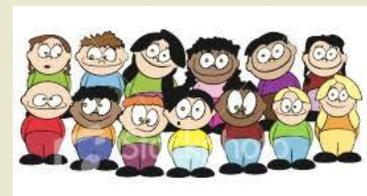
- 17th-21st August, Science week



- 22nd – 28th August, Book week



- Sunday 6th Sept, Father's day
- 7th, 9th & 11th Sept, Class photos



Preschool) were to remain open, but where possible, children that could be cared for at home should be cared for at home.

The vast majority of our preschool families have been in a position to keep their children at home. This has impacted staffing levels required on any given day, and understandably has given rise to questions about whether fees will be charged for families keeping their children at home as per the government advice.

The Board met late last week to discuss these and other matters related to the impact of COVID-19. Families can be assured that financially our preschool is in a secure position to weather this initial storm, but with uncertainty over further restrictions, lockdowns or simply how long we will be asked to care for our children at home, the Board will meet regularly (via video conferencing if required) in the coming weeks and months to continue to make decisions on the operational aspects of preschool based on the most up to date information at hand.

At the heart of what the Board will always try to achieve is fairness and support for our families and staff, while ensuring the preschool remains secure and in a strong position to continue to serve our community and meet future challenges that may arise.

I am pleased that the outcome we were able to reach at last week's Board meeting is both fair and supportive of both families and staff. In short, for staff we have been able to make provisions that will give financial security in the immediate future, flexibility in accessing leave entitlements as this situation continues on, and importantly, a guarantee of job security once preschool returns to normal operation. For families, fees will be waived for the last two weeks of Term 1 and this will continue into the foreseeable future as we wait to see when children will be advised to return to preschool.

Understandably there is a great amount of uncertainty at this time, and many families are being affected by job and income loss, so we hope that this halt to fees will go some way to providing a small amount of relief to household budgets.

At the same time, although preschool is operating in a much reduced capacity, there remains fixed costs such as insurances, utilities, lawns and maintenance, as well as wages that continue to be paid. To this end we invite any families wishing to continue to pay their fees to the end of Term 1 to please contact our Office Administrator, Mrs Swain, via email (admin@theoakspreschool.com.au) and advise of your decision. Any fees collected in these last two weeks of term will help to offset some of these fixed costs as we move forward. For

- 21st -25th
Sept, Walkathon



Term 4

**Monday 12th October –
Friday 18th December**

- 7, 9 & 11th Dec,
Concert and
graduation

any families choosing to 'donate' the remainder of their Term 1 fees to preschool, can I say, a very big THANK YOU in advance.

For those families that have already paid fees for the last two weeks of term and do not wish to donate these fees to preschool, a credit will be applied to your account.

If you have any further questions relating to fees, or preschool operations moving forward please contact Mrs Downie or Mrs Swain on 4657 1327 or admin@theoakspreschool.com.au. In the case of a total shut down, the preschool email address will continue to be monitored and educators will remain active on Kinderloop.

Finally, as we all do our part staying home and away from other people, let's remember that social distancing and social isolation doesn't mean social disconnection. While this pandemic is a whole new level of surreal for us all, I for one am grateful that this is happening in a time where connection to the outside world is as simple as picking up a device! The preschool staff have been busy using Kinderloop to help our kids stay connected with preschool, their educators and friends, and I would encourage as many families as possible to join in the fun! I know there are some other great ideas that the educators are working on to bring both connection and, let's be honest, some relief for mums and dads at home with the kids, so stay tuned to Kinderloop for updates as these ideas come to life.

Likewise, if you have any ideas on how educators and kids can stay connected during this time please don't hesitate to contact Mrs Downie and share your ideas.

On behalf of the Board, can I once again thank all our preschool families and of course our wonderful, dedicated staff for all that you have done and are doing to support our preschool and wider community through this most difficult of times.

With Easter nearly upon us I would also like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a safe and importantly, a healthy Easter, whatever it may look like for you and your family this year.

I look forward to bringing you further updates from the Board in due course, and I sincerely look forward to the day when we are back bumping into each other around the preschool gates at drop off and pick up time.

Kind regards,

Bec Pollard

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Please continue to check Kinderloop for updates and activities that you can do with your children during this time. There are many families contributing ideas, so keep those photos and ideas coming.



PRESCHOOL OPERATIONS

As per current (as at Friday 27/3 2.30pm) government regulations, The Oaks Preschool will be operating for children to attend on their enrolled day for families who are working, particularly in emergency and essential services.

At this stage, pending further lockdown announcements, this will continue until the school holidays. We have two/three staff daily to care for any children who attend, so if you are in these categories, please feel free to attend. Please let us know if you are intending to attend. Fees will continue to be charged for families who attend.

EASTER HAT PARADE AND MOTHERS DAY RAFFLE

Both these events will be cancelled due to very low attendance at Preschool. We are very sad these cant go ahead. If you have already made your hat, share it on Kinderloop and we can share with others your creative hats and Easter excitement.

BABIES

Congratulations to the Page Family on the safe arrival of Hudson, a brother for Noah and Lucy.



KINDERLOOP – KNOW HOW AND KEEPING IN TOUCH

Items can be shared (just post to your child's name). This will go to educators, who will share periodically with other families. If you want to communicate privately with educators, for now put "keep private".

The document image down the bottom will open up any items that have been attached, including the newsletter.

If you are having difficulties with Kinderloop or cant access it, please email the Preschool and will try to find the problem for you. This will be the way we communicate with you about re-opening, shut downs and anything else of extreme importance.

Here is a brief explanation of some of the features on Kinderloop that we will use during this time of children not attending Preschool.

We aim to provide 1 educational activity per day for the children to complete, we are encouraging families to post the picture of their creation or activities they have been completing at home and we will share these with the other families.

Some of these activities will be in the form of a word document. This can easily be opened by clicking on the page icon at the bottom of the post. (Located next to the learning tags icon, far right hand side). Refer to the image below.

Other activities will require printing off to complete. Video's are also a great idea, however kinderloop does limit the size of videos you are able to upload.

Please feel free to share your own activities on kinderloop and we will ensure they are appropriate before sending them to all families. We will gather up the children's posts and send them out in the afternoon to families so we are not flooding you all day.



To all our families, please stay safe, stay isolated and follow strict hygiene procedures. We hope to see everyone healthy and back safely when we are able to operate as normal.

The teachers.

