

Dr Harry Little Preschool Association Inc.
2021 Prekindergarten Report Annual General Meeting
By: Christina Nankivell

Dear Committee,

The Prekinder Year of 2021 has been fun and enthusiastically well-attended onsite with the exception of COVID-19 Lockdowns keeping most children at home creating lower numbers at different times. Never-the-less the children and their families have continued to be engaged in the Program and eager to connect. The Prekinder Team of Maria (Miss K) and I have prioritized inclusion of all children whether they have been at Prekinder or learning at home through supplying Online ideas/ Links and Pickup Packs for children to have materials from Kinder to create with. Our primary focus has been to provide a nurturing, safe and welcoming environment throughout this year via familiar routines, consistent staff and proactive support to the children (by teaching them to self-regulate, identify their own feelings and strongly encourage kindness and an awareness of others' well-being).

Over the year, the children have shown great curiosity and interest in exploring and learning in many areas. In particular, sensory experiences have been popular such as waterplay, sand play, playdough, rice play and painting. These have been of huge benefit to the children's well-being and sense of identity from the very beginning of the year to the present day, creating calming and engaging places to be and to be able to build relationships with their peers as well as opportunities to learn and practice taking turns, share and have a conversation with others. The Home Corner, Block Corner and Book Corner also provide the chance for this also. We have enjoyed many story books together, especially returning and requested favorites such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears and The Gingerbread Man.

The children have been very keen to share with us the importance of their own families and this has been reflected through providing opportunities in the Program for the children involve family in their play at Prekinder. We have supported the children creating gifts for family members for Mother's Day, Father's Day and will begin this week for Christmas coming up. The children have talked fondly of their younger siblings with many new babies having arrived this year, so home corners have been set up with babies and accessories as well as outside play in the cubby with prams and books about families/babies.

Other popular experiences have been outside play on the outdoor equipment such as monkey bars, swings, slides, obstacle courses and sandpit using large muscle movement of climbing, jumping, running, sliding, swinging and digging. Creating craft and using imagination with scissors, pasting and the sticky tape dispenser have allowed the children to practice their fine motor skills and gain independence and confidence. Pasting has been a familiar and comforting “go-to activity” for many children this year. Singing songs and dancing on the mat has also provided an enjoyable opportunity for the children to join in when they feel comfortable, learn new vocabulary and gain an opportunity to master pitch and rhythm from a variety of songs. Also many skills have been learnt through mat times including listening, following directions and contributing to conversations with their own ideas and thoughts, which contributes to their sense of agency.

The Prekinder Team is so grateful for being able to be part of and support the children’s education this year even though it has been tricky to maneuver the restrictions at times. We wish to congratulate all the children and their families and carers for their resilience and persistence, well done to all! I want to say a huge thank-you to Miss K and the Committee for all their support throughout 2021. Thanks for everyone’s efforts, all is appreciated very much.

Christina Nankivell

PreKINDER Teacher –Dr Harry Little Preschool