



PEAK HILL PRESCHOOL KINDERGARTEN INC.

ABN: 25 722 406 078
P.O Box 64, Peak Hill, 2869
Ph: 02 6869 1655

Email: peakhillpreschool@aapt.net.au



Hi families and friends of PHPS,

As we come to the end of Term 2 and reach the halfway point of the year, it is fantastic to see the growth the children have made during Terms 1 & 2 and how settled in the preschool routine they have become. It has also been lovely to welcome some new children to the preschool during the term.

This term we welcomed Miss Jen, working from Wednesday to Friday. Miss Jen is an early childhood teacher and brings a lot of experience and knowledge to the preschool, particularly in disability support. Next term we welcome back Miss Vicky 2 days a week.

Next term we have 2 excursions planned in Week 3. The Monday group will go to Dubbo by bus to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day on **Monday 4th August at the Dubbo Regional Theatre and Convention Centre**. We have been invited to attend by the Aboriginal Early Childhood Outcomes team from the Department of Education as they have organised this day. The day will feature exciting performances from Playschool, Emma Memma & Elvin Melvin, a storytelling session with Aboriginal author Larry Brandy, and cultural activities from Talbragar Wiradjuri Aboriginal Corporation. There will be no cost to families. Excursion notes will be sent out via the OWNA app in Week 1 next term.

The other excursion will be held on **Thursday 7th August, with the children who attend preschool on this day travelling by bus to the Dubbo Regional Theatre and Convention Centre to watch the production Imagine Live**. This production is a celebration of creativity, friendship and our precious natural world. With the help of the audience, performers play and sing their way through the pages of Alison Lester's iconic best-selling book. We will also be going to the Victoria Park Play Space to play and have lunch after the play. There will be no cost to families. Excursion notes will be sent out via the OWNA app in Week 1 next term.

Each Thursday next term occupational therapist Helen Rowbotham, from Child's Play in Parkes, will be running a 10-week fine motor skill program with the Thursday group at the preschool. She will be at the preschool for an hour each Thursday working with small groups of children in activities to strengthen and develop their fine motor skills. Fine motor skills are so important because they enable us to perform many everyday tasks that require precise hand and finger movements. These skills are essential for self-care activities like dressing, eating, and personal hygiene, as well as for academic tasks like writing and drawing. This program has been made available through Project Sprouts, Parkes which supports the healthy development of children in the early years throughout the Parkes Shire.

Peak Hill Show will be held on Tuesday 19th and Wednesday 20th August. **The preschool will be closed on Wednesday 20th August for the show.** There will be a preschool display in the pavilion. We will be completing some entries with the children at preschool and encourage families to have a look at the show schedule when it becomes available to enter some items as well. The children love to look for the entries they have made and show their families.

Next week is NAIDOC Week. We will be celebrating NAIDOC Week with children, families and the wider community later in September. We will let people know the details closer to the celebrations. Don't forget to join Miss Jodi at the football this Saturday at the home game at Lindner Oval at 1pm for a special NAIDOC Storytime.

Miss Leanne will be holding phone appointments in Term 3 to catch up with families around their child's progress and development and the setting of new goals for their child if needed. We will let families know early in Term 3 when these will be held.

A big THANK YOU to those families that have already completed the Family Feedback surveys (the link to the Survey was sent to each family on Monday). If haven't already, please complete the survey as these let us know what we are doing well and where improvements can be made. The survey closes this Friday.

A reminder that this year Peak Hill Preschool is using the NSW Government Fee relief funding through the 2025 Start Strong for Community Preschools program to cover the full cost of fees each child to attend preschool for 2025 for up to 600 hours per year (15 hours per week). This is for those families who, upon completing the Fee relief Declaration on enrolment, elected to receive the subsidy at Peak Hill Preschool.

ON *this* MONTH

@PEAK HILL PRESCHOOL

Last day Term2 -----	04/07
First day Term 3 -----	21/07
Excursion – Children's Day -----	04/08
Preschool closed – SHOW DAY -----	20/08

AROUND THE COUNTRY

NAIDOC Week -----	6-13/07
National Tree Day -----	20/07
International Friendship Day -----	30/07

This term we were unable to begin our small group speech program as hoped with the mentoring support of Karen Trengove, speech pathologist from Learn2Communicate. We hope to commence the program next term. Although this is not therapy, it is one way we hope to support children and their families in accessing some speech support while waiting to see a speech pathologist (if needed).

At times children become unwell at home or at preschool. Families are advised to keep children at home if they are unwell. As a rule of thumb, if a child requires paracetamol (Panadol), they are not well enough to be attending preschool. If a child has had vomiting or diarrhoea, they must not attend preschool until 24 hours after the last loose bowel motion or symptom. For the safety and wellbeing of all the children who attend preschool and the educators, we ask that families adhere to these measures. If a child becomes unwell at preschool, parents/carers will be contacted (or emergency contact if parents/carers are unavailable) to collect the child from preschool.

This term educators have been reflecting on drop off and pick times. We have noticed when children are dropped off late (after 9.30), they miss a lot of the morning play session and also find it more difficult to settle in as their peers are already playing with others. It would be really good if children could arrive as close to 9am as possible to have a happy start to their preschool day. In the afternoons we also have pick-ups starting any time from 2.30pm onwards. This is also unsettling as every time the doorbell rings the children jump up to see if it is their grown-up and this interrupts story time or other group activities that are happening at the end of the day. We ask that children be picked up between 2.50pm and 3pm where possible. Adhering to these times, helps form great habits in preparing children (and families) for 'big' school. Of course, we also understand there are times where these times, in the morning or afternoon, are not possible due to appointments etc. We thank you for your cooperation.

Please remember to have a set of spare clothes in your child's bag as sometimes they have toileting accidents, or they get wet or dirty playing and want to get changed.

A reminder to update your child's enrolment form on the OWNA app if any of your details change, such as phone numbers or the emergency contacts of your child or any of their details. It is especially important when we need to contact a parent/carer or emergency contact when a child is ill or in an emergency.

Last day of Term 2 is Friday 4 July. The first day of Term 3 is Monday 21 July.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to ask one of our educators or myself.

Cheers,
Narelle Elias
Director

Our Learning This Term

This term at PHPS we have been focusing on colour knowledge, shape knowledge, fundamental movement skills and social skills. We have been working on these through stories, songs, games, discussions, educator guidance and support, puppet show scenarios and free play experiences based around our learning topics. We love seeing how engaged the children are and watching their skills and understandings progress in these areas!

This term we have also been engaging in the Sounds, Words Aboriginal Language and Yarning program as a whole group, which helps the children build language skills. The children are engaging very well with this, and those children participating in small group sessions have had a very positive response and are enjoying chatting with Lizzy (speech pathologist from RFW) in their weekly sessions.

I have been completing Ages and Stages questionnaires with all our returning students this term to help gather information on where we can best focus each child's individual goals. It has been pleasing being able to compare last year's results with this year's results for our returning preschoolers and seeing so much growth in their skill levels! As Ages and Stages questionnaires are completed, these and the children's individual planning cycles will also be uploaded to OWNA for parents to view. If you have questions, concerns, or any input you would like to add please feel free to get in touch or have a chat with me at preschool.

Leanne Hurst
Educational Leader



Balance Beam

Short Draw a line on the ground with chalk and you've got an instant balance beam. Then, have your child walk along the beam, jump along the beam, walk heel-to-toe from one side to the other, walk backwards, and (for kids who are older) do cartwheels or hop. You can also make this more difficult by drawing a squiggly line on the ground to do the same movements.

Source: weareteachers.com

HEALTH AND SAFETY: Mid- year burnout

Why You're So Tired—and What to Do About It

At the middle of the year,, many of us find ourselves wondering: *How is the year already halfway over?* It's cooling down, weekly routines are well and truly underway, and that list of ambitious New Year's resolutions is... somewhere, probably under a pile of drawings, lunchbox containers, or unfolded laundry.

The middle of the year can feel like a slog. We're far from the freshness of January and still a long way from the finish line of December. It's no surprise that many parents feel a little stuck, stretched, or simply exhausted right about now.

So, what is mid-year burnout—and why does it hit so hard?

It's that feeling of running on empty after six months of go-go-go. Between school drop-offs, packed lunch-making, work commitments, and extracurricular juggle, the rhythm of daily life can start to feel more like a grind than a groove. Add in darker mornings and shorter days, and it's a recipe for sluggishness, self-doubt, and emotional fatigue.

Here are some gentle ways to ease the slump and rediscover a sense of calm and clarity as we move through the middle of the year:

1. Pause and Reflect (Not Panic)

Instead of beating yourself up over resolutions that haven't been met, try reframing the moment. Mid-year is a great time to reflect—not on what hasn't happened, but on what *has*. Did your child start daycare or pre-school this year? Did you survive school holidays? Did you keep the household (mostly) running? That's worth acknowledging and celebrating.

2. Adjust Your Expectations

Your energy isn't infinite. If you're feeling burnt out, it may be time to reassess what's realistic for this season of life. Could some goals wait? Could some things be simplified? Try replacing your long to-do list with a "today I will do just one helpful thing" mindset. That's often enough.

3. Create Mini-Moments of Joy

Burnout often stems from giving, giving, giving—with no space to recharge. You don't need an entire day off (though if you can swing it, do!). Try carving out 10 minutes to drink your coffee in peace, take a walk, read a few pages of a book, or just sit in silence. These micro-breaks can be surprisingly powerful.



4. Reconnect With Your 'Why'

When routines feel monotonous, remind yourself why you do what you do. Maybe it's the smile at pickup, the way your little one snuggles into you at bedtime, or the values you're quietly instilling through all your efforts. You're building a childhood—and that's no small task.

5. Make Space for Support

Whether it's a chat with a friend, a quick vent in a parent group, or saying yes to help when it's offered, don't carry it all alone. Community matters—especially when the days feel heavy. You're not the only one feeling tired right now.

This season might feel like a slump—but it's also a checkpoint.

A chance to breathe, regroup, and gently shift course if needed. You're doing so much more than you realise. Let June be a moment to pause—not to judge yourself, but to honour your effort and keep moving forward with kindness.

Need a little more support?

If you're finding the load particularly heavy right now, you're not alone—and there's help available. You can speak with your GP, connect with a local parent support group, or reach out to a service like [PANDA](#) (Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia) for free, confidential support for parents feeling overwhelmed. They're there to listen, guide, and help you find your footing again.

PANDA is a well-respected Australian organization offering support for all parents and caregivers—not just new mums—and they understand the complex emotions that come with parenting.

LETTER INVESTIGATION

You will need a set of letters (magnetic, foam or wood) and a picture book.

Here are a range of activities you can do to introduce your child to letters and give them an awareness of print. Take out the letters and let your child play with them. They may sort them, look at them, line them up or talk about them. **Help** your child notice that some of the letters have rounded parts, some have straight edges, and some have holes in them. **Ask** your child if they know any letter names. **Find** the ones they know. **Use** the letters to write your child's name. Some children may know how to do this on their own. Say each letter of your child's name as you point to it. Tell your child, "We are going to read a book that has all of these letters in it. Let's see if you and I can find the letters in our pile to match the ones on each page!" Language and literacy readyatfive.org



FOCUS: Getting ready for 'Big School'

Starting school is a major milestone—not just for your child, but for you too! It's completely normal to wonder if your child will be *ready* for this big step, especially in the year leading up to it.

The good news is school readiness is less about academic skills and more about your child's ability to manage daily tasks, connect with others, and feel confident and curious in a group setting.

Here's what really matters in the lead-up to kindergarten—and some easy ways to support it at home.

What do children need to know before starting school?

Children don't need to know how to read, write, or count to 100 before they start school. Instead, educators look for a range of **social, emotional, physical, and communication skills** that support a smooth transition into the classroom environment.

Here is what matters most:

Independence: Can your child open their lunchbox, go to the toilet, and pack away toys or books? Can they dress themselves? (Manage zippers, shoes, jumpers) Can they pack and unpack their bag and look after personal belongings?

Social skills: Are they learning to share, take turns, and follow simple instructions? Playing cooperatively with others and engaging in imaginative play.

Emotional regulation: Are they beginning to manage big feelings with support and express needs with words?

Communication: Can they understand and respond to questions and simple instructions? Are they curious and asking questions of their own? Are they listening during stories or group activities.

Cognitive and Early learning skills: Can they recognise their name? Are they interested in books and numbers? Can they identify some colours and shapes? And are they beginning to count small numbers of objects?

Physical skills: Can your child hold. Pencil, crayon or paintbrush? Are they learning to use scissors? Are they climbing, jumping and balancing. Do they use fine motor skills like threading, drawing or building?

How Can I Help at Home?

You don't need to turn your home into a mini classroom. In fact, **learning through everyday life and play** is the best way to build school readiness. Here are some simple ways to help your child grow in confidence and capability:

Talk Often and Listen Well: Have regular conversations, ask open-ended questions ("What was your favourite part of today?") and encourage your child to share their thoughts. Language development is a big part of school success.

Read Together Daily: Storytime builds vocabulary, listening skills, imagination, and attention span. Let your child choose books, point to pictures, and talk about what's happening in the story.

Practice Routines: Help your child become familiar with the kinds of routines they'll encounter at school—getting dressed in the morning, sitting for a meal, packing up toys, or washing hands before eating.

Encourage Playdates and Group Play: Playing with peers teaches important social lessons: turn-taking, problem-solving, cooperation, and navigating friendships. Even a simple trip to the playground can help build these skills.

Promote Confidence with "I Can Do It!" Tasks: Let your child do small tasks by themselves, even if it takes longer. Practice zipping a jacket, packing snacks into a lunchbox, or putting shoes on the right feet.

Talk About School Positively: If your child is starting school next year, begin to talk about it in gentle, excited ways. "When you go to big school, you'll have your own lunchbox!" or "I wonder what games you'll play with your new friends." Keep it light and reassuring.

Remember: Every Child Develops at Their Own Pace

It's okay if your child isn't ticking every box just yet. Kindergarten teachers know that children come in with a range of abilities and experiences. The most helpful thing you can do is support your child with love, patience, and confidence that they'll grow into their next big adventure.

If you ever have concerns about your child's development, don't hesitate to speak with your preschool educator, GP, or child health nurse—they can guide and reassure you.



STAYING WARM WITHOUT BREAKING THE BUDGET OR THE PLANET

It's getting pricey to stay warm, making cold weather feel bleaker. Energy prices have skyrocketed. Luckily, keeping warm is something we can help with - even when that includes contributing to a reduced carbon footprint. Here are some of our tried and tested energy-saving warmth tips for you to consider.

Have you tried... Using microwave heat bags, covering up with blankets, keeping your feet warm? Make your house cosy, wear a neck warmer, humidify the air using an oil diffuser. When it is out sit under the sun and grab some rays.



Close curtains promptly at dark to keep the heat in. Take advantage of kitchen and bathroom heat. Warm up with hot beverages. If you can, make sure your home is insulated properly. **Find more info here**

BLOW PAINTING

If you let the possibility of mess stop you from enjoying art with your child, you will miss all the fun!

You will need:

Watercolour paper (Kmart has a great selection)
Kids acrylic paint
Cups
Straws
Droppers or teaspoons
Large foil BBQ trays (contains the mess)

Set up:

1. Cut paper if needed so it fits inside your foil trays.
2. Squirt about a tablespoon of paint into a cup, one cup per colour. Water down the paint to a light milk consistency.

How to create:

Using droppers or teaspoons, add small amounts of paint to your page. About pea size (though children will do as they like and that is totally fine too). Use the straws to blow the paint around and make different patterns.

Noteworthy:

Explore mixing colours by using primary colours or avoid brown by just using warm or cool colours.

Have fun!



CARROT CAKE BLISS BALLS



TOTAL TIME 30 min | MAKES About 30

INGREDIENTS

2 carrots, grated [approx. 2 cups of grated carrot]
1 cup rolled oats
1 cup pecans (or nut free version: replace with 1 cup oats)
1 cup (100 grams) almond meal (or nut free version: replace almond meal with 1 cup coconut)
1/2 cup desiccated coconut PLUS 1 cup to decorate
6 medjool dates, pit removed
1/3 cup coconut oil, melted
1/4 cup maple syrup
1 teaspoon vanilla bean paste
1 teaspoon cinnamon, ground
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg, ground
1/4 teaspoon mixed spice, ground
1/4 teaspoon ginger, ground

1. **Place** the carrot, oats, pecans, almond meal, coconut, dates, coconut oil, maple syrup, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, mixed spice and ginger into the large bowl of a food processor.
2. **Blitz** for 1-2 minutes (scraping down the sides of the bowl when necessary) or until smooth.
3. **Place** the remaining 1 cup of desiccated coconut onto a large plate.
4. **Take** heaped teaspoons of the mixture and with oiled hands roll into rounds.
5. **Roll** each ball in coconut to coat.
6. **Place** in the fridge for 3-4 hours to set. Enjoy x

Store carrot cake bliss balls in an air tight container in the fridge for 3-4 days. Bliss balls are freezer friendly. Store in an air tight container for up to 3 months.

Image and recipe from Mylovelylittlelunchbox.com