

**Chatterbox**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to Holy Family Early Learning Centre for preschool 2020!

As we come to the end of the first week we can confidently say that the children have settled in really well and are beginning to adjust to their new environment. While there are a few tears in the morning on occasions the children are quick to settle and are starting to understand the daily routine, expectations and procedures. Many children have been talking about bushfires in the last few days which is understandable considering the terrible summer we have all experienced and are still experiencing. Children tend to process information and life events through play so the teachers are giving the children the opportunity to express their concerns and fears through play scenarios and individual conversations. Many of the children’s drawings and paintings have been about bushfires this week. If you or your family have suffered any trauma in the holidays regarding the bushfires please speak to your class teacher who will be able to assist you and your child with resources to help deal with the trauma.

Each year the Holy Family primary school chooses a religious theme for the year. This year’s theme from Matthew’s gospel is ‘***love thy neighbour as*** ***thyself***’ which is very fitting considering the outpouring of generosity that has occurred from both within Australia and around the world for victims of the bushfires. The preschool children will learn about the significance of this theme throughout the year.

 **Important Information**

\*The **CORONAVIRUS** is of course forefront in our minds as more people in Australia have been diagnosed with the virus. If anyone has travelled to China in the last 14 days please see Michelle as a matter of urgency. Information regarding Coronavirus has been placed in your child’s file box. More information will be distributed when it comes to hand from the ACT Health Department. An email from our school principal Mrs Anne-Marie Marek and the Catholic Education office has also been emailed to families.

\* **BUSHFIRES** around Canberra have been very worrying in the last few weeks. Please be assured that we have very specific policies and procedures as part of our compliance regulations regarding evacuation in the case of bushfires.

\* **SMOKE HAZE** has also been prominent in Canberra in the last months. Please be assured that the educators and teachers monitor the smoke conditions throughout the day at the following website. <https://air-quality.com/place/australia/canberra/6b4d3d4e?lang=en&standard=aqi_us> When the conditions are unhealthy the children play inside.

\* **ACCOUNTS** We do apologise for the difficulty some people are having in reading their accounts. The formatting is completely out of our hands as it is subject to CCMS. If you are having difficulty understanding your accounts we ask that you please be patient and speak to Emma in person. Please check to make sure your CCS entitlements have been confirmed.

**\*CARE** bookings. If you would like to make a booking for Before or After School care please ring the ELC office and speak to Kim Ehlers then please follow up with an email to elcc.holyfamily@cg.catholic.edu.au. It is always better to have bookings in writing as well as a phone call.

**\*SIGNING IN on iPads** Please remember to sign your child in and out each day as this is a legal requirement we must adhere to. It is important that parents sign in to either before school care or preschool and children must be signed out each afternoon from either preschool at 3:00pm or after school care.

**\*PARKING** Thank you to those families who are parking at Fadden Pines and walking through the underpass to drop off and collect the children. The parking police fined quite a number of people today who had parked on the nature strip closest to the church. Parking on the nature strip blocks the views of drivers exiting the car park and is extremely dangerous so please park at Fadden Pines.

**Upcoming ELC events**

*Five Minute touch base interviews- meet and greet*

In week 3 the teachers will be available to meet with you in the mornings or afternoons for a quick 5 minute catch-up to discuss any aspects of your child’s development or how they have settled in. This is not compulsory, merely an opportunity to meet and touch base if you would like to. The teachers will place a timetable outside their classrooms next week. If you would like to meet your child’s teacher please write your name in a time slot that suits you. Please remember this is a quick 5 minute touch base interview. If you have many things to discuss with your child’s teacher please arrange an alternative time to meet after preschool.

 *Whole School Mass 18/2/20*

On Tuesday the 18th February the preschool children will join the primary school for our first whole school Mass. Parents are warmly invited to attend.

*Pancake Day 25/2/20*

The children will make pancakes in class to celebrate Shrove Tuesday, the day before Lent.

*Welcome Sausage Sizzle 25/2/20*

On Tuesday night the 25th February all children and families are invited to attend our welcome BBQ in the preschool playground from 6pm to 7pm. This is an opportunity to come together in our preschool playground, to meet parents from your child’s class and for the children to show off their classroom and art work to the parents, siblings and or grandparents. The ELC will provide sausages, bread and a piece of watermelon and we ask that you bring a water bottle for you and your child. Please note no alcohol is allowed on the ELC premises A note about the Welcome BBQ will be placed in your child’s file box next week.

*Ash Wednesday 26/2/20*

The children will attend a prayer service in the church on Ash Wednesday to receive their ashes on their forehead. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the time before Easter.

*Canberra Day 9/3/20*

The school and ELC will be closed on Monday for Canberra Day.

*Harmony Day*

On the 18th March the children will celebrate Harmony Day. Children can dress in orange (the universal colour of harmony) on this day. Any children from culturally diverse backgrounds who have special traditional costumes are also invited to wear their traditional costume on Harmony Day.

*Fun Food Day*

 The 18h March is also our first Fun Food Day. Lunch orders can be placed through **Qkr** if you would like your child to have a lunch order on that day. Details on how to log into Qkr are below.

1. Download Qkr on phone or iPad
2. Register- Select country of residents and follow instructions.
3. Find our school. Our school will appear in ‘nearby locations’
4. Register your child/children

 Crunch ’n sip and morning tea need to be provided as normal if the children are having the Fun Food Day lunch. A note will also be in the file boxes closer to the date with details of the food available on the day.

*Athletics Carnival 1/4/20*

The preschool children will join with the primary school to run in a race at the athletics carnival. Parent helpers will be needed to help walk the children under the under pass to Gowrie oval and to cheer on the children. A note with details on the carnival will be placed in the file box closer to the date.

*Nutrition Magician 1/4/ 20*

On the same day as the athletics’ carnival the Nutrition Magician will come to preschool to teach the children about healthy eating through games and magic tricks.

*Palm Sunday Liturgy 6/4/20*

On Monday 6th April the preschool children will re-enact the Palm Sunday liturgy on the alter in the church with the primary school. Parents and grand parents are invited to attend this special celebration.

*Good Friday 10/4/20*

Preschool and primary school closed.

School Holidays 10th April until 26th April.

Term 2 begins on Monday 28th April.

**Preschool Curriculum Self-Regulation Why is it Important?**

 In the first term of preschool the staff at the ELC spend a great deal of time helping children understand their emotions through stories, role play, puppets and the PALS (Playing and Learning to Socialise) Program. The following article on self-regulation from the Kids Matter website describes the importance of self-regulation and how it contributes to helping children gain independence.

As part of life, children are exposed to new events and experiences such as their first day at preschool, moving house or the birth of a sibling. Babies and young children may be frightened and upset by these new experiences and express their distress in a number of ways such as crying, withdrawing, bedwetting or clingy behaviour. When parents and carers respond in a caring way, for example, with a calm tone of voice, holding, rocking and gentle touch, children learn they can feel comfortable and safe again. They learn others will be available to help them notice and understand their feelings and behaviours and provide comfort when needed.

 Parents and carers act like an ‘emotion coach’ and with their help, children can learn to regulate their feelings and behaviours. Being able to manage feelings and behaviours is called self-regulation. Emotional and behavioural self-regulation contributes to young children’s growing independence. It is this growing ability to control their own feelings and behaviour that eventually allows a child to become more skilled in their relationships with children and adults, for example, when playing together or making decisions together. In the preschool years, children’s self-regulation skills are still developing and can often go up and down. Being able to consistently regulate their own feelings and behaviour is a major task for a young child.

 By school age, children become more flexible and are better at regulating their own emotions and actions. When children learn to self-regulate they have stronger friendships and relationships with others, are more able to pay attention and learn new things and deal better with the normal stresses and disappointments of daily life. Parents and teachers contribute in many ways to children’s ability to regulate emotions. Sensitive and comforting care from warm, supportive and trusted adults helps children develop self-regulation.

Have a great weekend with your beautiful children and let’s hope we will see some rain!

Best wishes,

 Michelle Dudley

 Director

7/2/20