



Our Preschool Turns 5 Years Old!

Cake, sausage sizzle, ice cream, candy floss, bouncy castle - all the ingredients were there for a perfect 5 year old party out on the lawn; the one ingredient we could have done without was the rain but even that didn't really put a damper on this special occasion!

It's hard to believe that five years have passed since the Preschool first opened its doors for business in February 2011, extending the Saint Kentigern journey from age 3 to 18. It was a proud moment for all concerned when our foundation preschoolers donned their Saint Kentigern uniform for the first time and stepped over the threshold of the new purpose-built facility on the Girls' School campus.

Time spent in quality preschool education is important to a child's learning and is well evidenced when a child transitions to school; it was a natural progression for Saint Kentigern to offer families the opportunity for an early childhood education.

Now five years on, the Preschool is thriving. Registered for a daily maximum of 50 children, the roll

is full with many families keen to secure a place for their three and four year olds.

When planning a celebration, like a special party for a 5 year old, every last detail can be accounted for - except the weather! A beautiful cake was baked and decorated by parent, Mrs Anna Perry and just to be sure, a trial blow out of the candles took place inside with preschoolers and foundation pupils, Chloe McGregor and Matthew Phipps, who are now in Year 5 at the Girls' and Boys' Schools. That was the one and only time the candles were blown out as a steady drizzle dampened any later attempts!

Rain notwithstanding, the sausage sizzle got underway, the candy floss machine was put into action, ice creams were served, the face paint went on and parents set up their picnic blankets - all under umbrellas!

Mrs Nash gathered the preschoolers to sing Happy Birthday and then the cake was cut. Not only did it look good but it tasted great too! Our sincere thanks to Mrs Perry for preparing this special treat!

Sue Nash,
Preschool Director



Preschool and the Beanstalk

The Preschool had their own version of Jack's well-known tale when they planted bean seeds. It was wonderful to see the joy on the children's faces when they started to sprout. Transplanted outside to the newly constructed bean teepee and totem pole, we soon witnessed how quickly beans can grow - no wonder Jack could climb up his beanstalk so quickly! The teepee was soon covered and became a great place to sit inside, read books and enjoy a quiet time during the day!

One morning some of the children noticed there were real beans on their beanstalk and the excitement was too much to contain. Picking them off and eating them became the order of the day - some children munched them - other faces told a different story! What a great garden to table experience for our youngsters - who also enjoyed them in their chicken chow mein for lunch!



From Garden to Table

Our children planted some seeded potatoes at the end of last year and have been waiting for them to grow - and yippee - they did! After the tops died away, the children set to work digging and were so excited when they could feel the potatoes in the dirt. Once washed, they cut them into pieces ready to put into a pot for cooking. Mashed with milk and butter, the true test was in the tasting and it was delicious according to the children!



Sunflowers

One of our 4-year-olds had grown a monstrous sunflower in his garden at home especially for Preschool. He brought it along to show at mat time and the children were so excited they asked to draw pictures of it at extension time. Sketching in pencil first before adding water colours made for some stunning art creations. What an awesome learning experience!





We Want to Move It, Move It!

The importance of children viewing sport and fitness as a natural part of their life starts young – and their enthusiasm can prove to be amazing!

With the sports programme renamed, 'Little Champs,' the children spend time each week with Harrison learning new skills - football, hockey, tennis, ball skills, team work, perseverance and lots of fun!

Our fitness programme continues each day with the children thoroughly enjoying our Jump Jam sessions with new songs and moves ... the favourite is 'We want to move it, move it' and, wow, do the children get into the groove!



Peace and Calm

Over the past three years we have incorporated opportunities for 'peaceful moments' into our programme and have introduced yoga as a weekly activity. With the purchase of individual yoga mats for every child, the enthusiasm for this has been phenomenal! After learning new moves each week from the A-Z of poses from A aeroplane, B butterfly, C cobra to their favourites, Tree poses and Happy baby, the children even started taking their own impromptu yoga classes!

Mindfulness with the children is about taking time to slow down, breathe and listen to calming CDs together as a group. This is of great benefit to all the children in their busy lives.



Celtic Day

The morning of Celtic Day started bright and early, with all the boys arriving at Preschool just before 8am to catch the bus down to the Boys' School. Dressed in tartan sashes, they marched behind the pipe band waving at everyone as they walked around the school field. The walk takes a long time, when you have little legs!

Being piped into the Sports Centre was a new experience; the drums and bagpipes are loud when you have to walk right by them! We joined in the ceremony and then had a chance to try the haggis. Some of the preschoolers loved it - others not so much!





We Will Remember Them

Our preschoolers showed a real interest in the build up to ANZAC Day, reading background stories, researching on the internet, making their own crosses and poppies as well as icing poppy biscuits that included a touching poem:

'I have a little poppy, as red as red can be, to show that I remember those, who fought to make me free.'

The 4-year-olds paid a visit to the Auckland War Memorial Museum to see the crosses in the Field of Remembrance; the children were overwhelmed by the number of crosses in the field - 1867 all adorned with a poppy and the name of a New Zealander who died during WW1. Inside the museum, they visited the ANZAC displays and discovered what the soldiers had to endure.

On return to Preschool, the children lay three crosses in our own 'Garden of Remembrance' and stood respectfully listening to the 'Last Post' before laying their own poppy on the fence around the story about the lives of the three soldiers.

Deconstruction Engineers

What better recycling than using old or broken appliances as a learning opportunity. Computer hard drives, printers, fans, iron, VCR player, stereo and a dryer were delivered to Preschool by our families. A special 'Deconstruction Workshop' was set up which saw the children with real screwdrivers of all sizes, pliers, hammers, spanners and scissors - all ready for action! The concentration and focus was priceless as they dismantled the electrical equipment; there was much excitement when the screws came out to reveal the mechanics inside each machine.



Fire Fire!

All schools regularly practise fire drills so our preschoolers were ready when we had to evacuate for a REAL fire in the Girls' School hall! A roll call was taken out in the car park to make sure everyone was safe before heading out the gate to Ranui Road - to wait with the Junior School girls.

Fire engines, ambulances and police cars were soon there to make sure everyone was safe - and the television cameras arrived too! The

police stopped the traffic on Remuera Road as we all walked across to wait at the park. When all was safe we headed back to Preschool to watch the firemen finish rolling up their hoses and cleaning up.

Amazing art work, dramatic play and mat time stories over the following weeks saw some fantastic learning about a real life experience.

