

# PIELC NEWSLETTER

April 2026



## A message from our director

### Dear Families,

As we come to the end of our first term together this year, I would like to share what a pleasure it has been to welcome back our returning families and to get to know those who are new to our PIELC community. You will all be very aware that child safety is one of our highest priorities. Alongside this, we are equally committed to ensuring every child experiences enjoyment, happiness, education and genuine care each day while in our environment. We have had a few staffing changes this year, and we continue to prioritise consistency, strong relationships and high-quality care for all children

### Kinder

You all may have received an email inviting you to participate (voluntarily) in a survey from the Victorian Department of Education regarding the Best Start, Best Life (BSBL) reforms. This survey relates to Free Kinder for three-year-olds and Pre-Prep (four-year-old) funded sessions. I encourage you to share your feedback as this input is valuable in shaping future improvements.

For families who wish to know more about 'Pre-Prep' changes, I've attached the following link:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/conversations-families-about-pre-prep>

### Child Safety at PIELC

Our approach to child safety and wellbeing is central to everything we do. Educators are consistently mindful of maintaining safe, respectful relationships, providing active supervision, and creating inclusive environments where all children feel secure, valued and heard.

All staff, casual educators, volunteers and Inclusion Support workers are required to hold a current Working with Children Check, adhere to our Child Safety Code of Conduct, and complete mandatory child protection training. All team members understand and uphold their responsibilities as mandatory reporters. Our staff are currently completing updated Mandatory Child Protection

Training to ensure we remain informed and confident in recognising and responding to concerns, in line with our requirements from the Victorian Department of Education.

We are committed to continuous improvement and embedding the Victorian Child Safe Standards into our daily practice.

For further information, please visit:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/about-child-safe-standards>

Thank you for your ongoing support. Please remember you are always welcome to come and chat - my door is open, and I welcome your questions, concerns or general enquiries at any time.

Thank you,

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## Child safety reminder

Please do not leave children alone in cars even for short drop offs and collections at PIELC and/or Cowes Primary School. Leaving children unattended in a car, even for a short period of time can be fatal.

Children are particularly at risk because they can lose fluid quickly, become dehydrated and suffer from heatstroke.

Take a look at the information below for additional information

**HOT CARS**

**Never leave your child alone in the car, not even for a minute.**

**Why?** The car can heat up really quickly and your child can become sick (distressed and overheated).  
**Leaving the window down has little effect.**  
**Why?** The temperature will still be so much hotter than outside.  
**The temperature inside a parked car can get 20°C–30°C hotter than the outside temperature.**  
Most of this temperature increase happens in the first 5 minutes.  
The inside of the car can become like an oven!

**HOT CARS**

**Try and do a 'look before you leave' routine.**

**Why?** Sometimes people are so busy that they have forgotten there is a sleeping baby in the car. Make a habit of always checking the back seat before walking away from the car.

**What to do if you see a child locked inside an unattended vehicle:**

- 1 Look for the parents or carers.
- 2 Call 000 if the parents can't be found or the child is in distress.
- 3 Wait for emergency services, or safely try to remove the child if you are concerned about their condition.

## Policy updates

Under recent amendments to the Education and Care Services National Law, we are required to inform you that we have updated these policies

- Safe use of Digital Devices and Online Environments
- Information and Communication Technology
- Supervision of Children
- Child Safe Environment and Wellbeing

These include photography, video and data storage practices, and cyber safety expectations.

These policies are available at the reception desk for anyone who wishes to read them.

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April 2026



## Speech pathology at PIELC

### Building Connection and Language Skills Through Everyday Routines

Daily routines at home are some of the best opportunities for connection and learning. Young children develop language skills when they work with an adult in meaningful, shared activities. These moments help children feel capable and valued, and give them a sense of how their actions contribute to family life.

Here are some ideas for home:

#### Parallel roles

This is when you and your child do the same task side by, for example:

- You fold towels while your child folds tea towels/face cloths.
- You wipe the table together, one cloth each.
- You water one plant while your child waters another.

#### Assembly-line roles

This is a simple “you → me → place” pattern, for example:

- You hand your child a toy, and they put it in the box.
- Your child hands you books, and you place them on the shelf.
- You hand out plates, and your child puts them on the table.

#### Complementary roles

Here, your actions support each other in different but connected ways, for example:

- Your child holds the dustpan while you sweep in the crumbs.
- You hold the bowl steady while your child stirs the batter.
- Your child opens the oven door while you put the pizza in.
- Your child holds the cup while you pour the milk.

When children are included in everyday routines they learn cooperation, problem-solving, communication, and emotional regulation, while connecting with their caregiver.

# Gumnuts

*Narelle, Harpreet, Kayla & Simone*

Hello from the Gumnuts Room,

We warmly welcome all our new Gumnut families to our service. It has been a wonderful start to 2026, and we are pleased to see the children settling in so well.

Our focus for Term 1 has been on building strong, caring, and trusting relationships with both children and their families. We value these connections as the foundation for a positive and supportive learning environment.

The Gumnut children have been developing their gross motor and coordination skills. Many are beginning to take their first steps, and we are supporting this exciting milestone through a variety of activities designed to enhance their physical development, including indoor and outdoor obstacle courses.

We have also been exploring colour recognition, with children learning to identify and name different colours through play-based experiences.

This term, we enjoyed celebrating special events such as St Patrick's Day, Harmony Day, and engaging in Easter craft activities.

As the warmer months come to an end, we kindly remind families to pack warm clothing for their children, ensuring all items are clearly labelled with their name.

Thank you for a lovely start to the year, we look forward to a busy and fun-filled term 2

Thank you,

The Gumnuts room team  
Narelle, Harpreet, Kayla & Simone



# Explorers

*Diana, Bianca, Jasmin & Carol*



We have had a fantastic start to the year in the Explorers Room. It has been wonderful to welcome back familiar faces and to see children transitioning smoothly into the group, alongside warmly welcoming several new families to our community. All children have settled in with enthusiasm and are engaging positively with the program.

This term, the children have enjoyed exploring our outdoor environments, including the garden, climbing structures, sandpit, and swings. Indoors, we have encouraged creativity through a variety of art and craft experiences, including activities for Valentine's Day. We have also embraced cultural learning by celebrating events such as Chinese New Year, St Patrick's Day, and Easter.

A highlight of the term was our cookie-making experience, where children were able to choose their own cutters, colours, and explore different sensory textures while creating their own treats.

Thank you for your ongoing support. We look forward to a vibrant and engaging Term 2.

Warm regards,  
The Explorers Team

# Blossoms

*Emma, Keely & Julie*



The Blossoms have welcomed many new children this year with some of the Explorers having moved up to our space, as well as new faces who have started their Early Learning journey at PIELC. It has been a small period of adjustment for these children, who are now all settled and thriving in their new space and we love seeing their smiling faces when in attendance.

We have had a busy term in regard to the children's interests as we kick started the year celebrating love for Valentines day. The children promoted their fine motor skills by cleverly using a ziploc bag filled with water as a stamping tool, to create beautiful painted roses to give to their nearest and dearest.

We were fortunate to have a baby Kookaburra visit us in the yard and this prompted the children to want to learn more about the birds we have in our yard. We worked collaboratively to make bird seed ornaments to hang from our trees to give the birds a tasty treat. The process of measuring and mixing the ingredients strengthened the children's mathematical and scientific skills and the end product highlighted their connection to the world and its natural environment.

Another collaborative project, this time with the Seal group, has been displayed in the centre's foyer and focuses around kindness in tune with Harmony Week celebrations, which was celebrated in March. The children were all invited to add their hand print to the display in a mark of togetherness, collaboration, role modelling, teamwork and empowering children's voices.

The children are all very excited for the Easter bunny to arrive so we have been working hard on our special craft. The Blossoms are loving the glitter is involved and are taking their time to perfect their artwork before it is used to decorate our room window.

As we come to the end of Term 1 we, as a team, are already planning exciting experiences for the children for next term and look forward to welcoming more new friends to the Blossoms.

We wish all our families a safe and enjoyable Easter!

# Wallabies

*Pennie & Leah*



It has been a busy start to the year for our Wallabies children. Leah and I have really enjoyed getting to know all the Wallabies and their families.

The Children have been finding their sense of belonging in their new learning environment. They have been busy exploring every inch of the Wallabies, from building with the blocks, racing the monster trucks, the Frozen castle and looking after our baby dolls in the hospital and animals at the vet dramatic play areas. The children have been leading their own learning by sharing with us their interest and what they would like to explore. Bugs have been a big interest all term.

The Wallabies children have a passion for Music, singing and dancing. We have already had many dance parties. Arts and craft experiences are also very popular. Making our own name bracelets. Also working together making our beautiful rainbow for St.Patricks day.

For the lead up to Easter we set up our Chick Adoption Station where they got to choose a chick, name their chick and complete their Adoption certificate promising to care for it. This was so much fun and I'm sure it will be a core memory the children will talk about all year.

Self help is a huge part of being in the Wallabies. Please ensure your child is wearing clothes they can pull up and down to go to the bathroom. Heading into the cooler months wearing shoes that are fully enclosed will ensure they can participate fully in all outdoor activities safely. Please pack spare clothes and gumboots so we can enjoy the mud patch.

We hope you all have a Happy Easter break.

*Pennie & Leah*

# First year of kinder

## Emus, Joeys & Possums

2026 has commenced with a few changes in the kinder program with the Emus moving classroom and we welcomed new staff to the 3-4 year old space. Patrice joined us as the Emus teacher and Kaytie joined Paige in the Joeys.

During Term 1, a key focus for the kinder teams has been getting to know the children and building strong relationships with both the children and their families. These relationships are essential in helping children develop trust with their educators and feel a sense of belonging within the group.

The children have adjusted well to the routines and expectations of the kindergarten day. They are developing increasing independence by managing their lunch boxes, understanding snack and lunch times, separating confidently from parents and caregivers at drop-off, using the bathroom independently, and making choices about activities and play partners.

Our kindergarten program follows the Early Years Learning Framework, which is centred around five key learning outcomes. The program is play-based and offers a variety of hands-on learning experiences both indoors and outdoors, supporting learning in both small groups and individual activities.

### **\*Outcome 1: Children Have a Strong Sense of Identity**

Children participated in “All About Me” activities, which provided opportunities to share information about themselves, learn their friends’ names, and talk about their interests and preferences. Harmony Day was also celebrated, giving families the opportunity to share aspects of their culture and encouraging children to appreciate and celebrate diversity.

### **\*Outcome 2: Children Are Connected With and Contribute to Their World**

Children have become familiar with the kindergarten classrooms and outdoor spaces, learning where resources are located and how to care for their environment by packing away and working cooperatively. They have also explored the wider school grounds, including the oval, school gym and playgrounds, helping to develop their confidence, familiarity with the school environment, and gross motor skills. As part of our learning, the children were also introduced to the Bunurong people as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and learn.

### **\*Outcome 3: Children Have a Strong Sense of Wellbeing**

A range of experiences have supported the children’s physical and emotional wellbeing. Activities designed to strengthen fine motor skills help prepare children for drawing, writing and cutting, while movement activities support coordination, balance and core strength. Music and movement also encourage body awareness and coordination. Through books, games and group discussions, children are learning to recognise and name emotions and develop strategies to help regulate their feelings.

# First year of kinder

## Emus, Joeys & Possums

### **\*Outcome 4 Children are Confident and Involved Learners**

Children are encouraged to explore, investigate and express their ideas through play. This term the children have been exploring colours and colour mixing, learning how primary colours combine to create new colours through a variety of creative activities.

We offer open-ended play experiences as it allows children to explore their ideas, imagination and creativity without fixed outcomes, helping to build problem-solving skills and confidence. Providing choices during play also supports independence and decision-making, while encouraging children to follow their interests and engage more deeply in learning.

### **\*Outcome 5 Children are Effective Communicators**

Literacy development is an important part of the kindergarten program. Books are available to children throughout the day, and storytelling is a regular and valued part of our learning experiences. Some groups have begun using Take Home Literacy Bags, which help extend literacy learning beyond the classroom. Our Kindergarten Lending Library has also commenced, allowing children to borrow a book each week from our collection of high-quality picture books to share with their families. Children are also encouraged to develop their oral language skills by sharing their ideas and speaking with the group.

### **Reminders coming into term 2**

- Please ensure all children's clothing is clearly labelled so items can be easily returned.
- As the weather becomes cooler in Term 2, please remember to send your child with a jacket so they can continue to enjoy outdoor play.

We wish all of our children and families a safe and happy Easter break and look forward to welcoming everyone back for a busy and exciting Term 2.

# Second year of kinder

## Bilbies, Penguins & Seals

It has been a wonderful start to Term 1 in Pre-Prep. We have really enjoyed getting to know all the children and families as everyone settles into the kinder environment. The children have been busy exploring, forming friendships and building confidence in their new surroundings.

**(VEYLDF Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity).**

Throughout the term, the children have engaged in a wide variety of learning experiences. They have enjoyed exploring colour mixing, shaving cream play, cooking experiences, making playdough, dancing and singing songs.

These activities encourage creativity, curiosity and collaboration with peers.

**(VEYLDF Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners).**

Kindness and respect for each other's perspectives has been an important focus for our group this term. The children have been learning about what it means to be kind to others. **(VEYLDF Outcome 1 & 2: Developing empathy, respect and positive relationships).**

The children have also begun using drawing journals, which provide a wonderful opportunity for them to express their ideas, interests and stories through drawing while developing their verbal and expressive language skills. **(VEYLDF Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators).**

Several programs this term have supported children's confidence and communication skills. The Talk About Box allows children to bring a special item from home to share with the group, helping them develop confidence when speaking in front of others. **(VEYLDF Outcome 5: Children engage with a range of texts and communicate ideas).**

Another exciting opportunity has been our regular visits to the CPS school gym. Each group attends fortnightly sessions where children enjoy large movement activities using basketballs, scooter boards and hula hoops, as well as participating in group games such as Duck, Duck, Goose and What's the Time Mr Wolf? These sessions provide valuable space for active play while supporting the development of gross motor skills such as running, jumping and balancing. **(VEYLDF Outcome 3: Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing).**

It has been a fantastic term watching the children grow in confidence, independence and friendships.

We are very proud of the way they have embraced new experiences and challenges. We look forward to continuing their learning journey together in Term 2.