

In every child is a world waiting to be discovered. — Anonymous.

Highland Grove Preschool



**FEBRUARY
2026**

ON *this* MONTH

AT HIGHLAND GROVE

Kylie’s special holiday ----- 2nd until 16th
Finalise Philosophy Review ----- 6th
Feedback from families, children and staff regarding
our Enrolment and Orientation processes----- 28th
Emergency Evacuation Practices this month.
Lockdown Practices this month.
*(These practices are regulatory requirements, are
adult supported and are fun and easy for the children
to participate in. A note will be on the door on days
these practices have occurred).*

AROUND THE COUNTRY

World Wetlands Day ----- 2
World Read Aloud Day ----- 4
Safer Internet Day ----- 10
Chinese New Year ----- 17
Summers Day ----- 28
Ramadan ----- Feb 16 – Mar 18

Highland Grove has returned for 2026,
and we’ve had a wonderful start to the year.

Thank you everyone for your support and
enthusiasm for HGP. The children have been
enjoying wonderfully productive days, filled
with discovery and fun.

*We’d like to remind families to please ensure
that you read our emails as they contain
important information. We also appreciate your
involvement in our regular surveys. Thank you.*

*Be sure to let us know if you, or your partner, are
not receiving our ‘Day Sheets’ from the rooms at
the end of each day, as these provide a lovely
summary of our daily curriculum.*

*Please see Karen in the office if you have any
fee questions. She is happy to help. She just
has every Tue/Thur afternoons and
each Friday off.*





WORLD READ ALOUD DAY – FEBRUARY 4

Each year on the first Wednesday in February we celebrate World Read Aloud Day, a special global event that honours the joy and power of reading stories out loud. Reading aloud is a wonderful way to build language skills, spark curiosity and

imagination, and deepen the connection between adults and children as they share in a story together. **Find out more here**

SAFER INTERNET DAY – FEBRUARY 10

Safer Internet Day is a great opportunity for families to start important conversations about online safety, respectful behaviour, and how to make smart, responsible choices when using devices and apps.

You might like to explore age-appropriate online safety tips together, set family guidelines for screen time, or talk about what to do if something online doesn't feel right. By working together, we help build safer, kinder online communities where children can enjoy all the good things the internet has to offer! **Find out more here.**

BEST BLOGS

CLINIKIDS BLOG

clinkids.thekids.org.au

The Clinikids bog aims to provide practical and evidence-based ideas to support your child and family. it can be hard to navigate the sea of information from professionals, family, friends and the internet.

Each post is written by an experienced member of 'The kids research institute Australia' clinical team including Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Clinical Psychologists.

Hop Scotch and Harmony

hopscotchandharmony.com.au/blog

The Hopscotch & Harmony blog offers evidence-based insights and practical guidance on child psychology, parenting, and family wellbeing, authored by experienced psychologists.

It covers a wide range of topics including emotional development, anxiety, self-esteem, behaviour support, communication, and cognitive understanding to help parents and caregivers navigate challenges with children and adolescents. The blog also explores strategies for supporting mental health, resilience, and positive relationships, drawing on therapeutic approaches and real-world examples to make complex psychological concepts accessible and useful for everyday family life.

CRISPY PARMESAN PITA CHIPS WITH BEETROOT HUMMUS

TOTAL TIME 25 min | BAKE 5 min | SERVES 5

INGREDIENTS

Hummus

- 115 grams roasted beetroot
- 1 x 400 gram can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- Zest and juice of one lemon
- pinch of salt
- 2 cloves garlic crushed
- 2 tablespoons tahini
- 1/4 teaspoon cumin, ground
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- To serve – Greek yoghurt, toasted and finely chopped almonds, olive oil and coriander

Toasted pita chips

- 4 wholemeal pita bread, cut into small triangles
- 1 cup (80 grams) parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/2 cup finely chopped rosemary
- pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

METHOD:

1. Preheat oven to 180 C and line 2 oven trays with baking paper. Set aside.
2. **To make the hummus** – Place the beetroot, chickpeas,



lemon juice and zest, salt, garlic, tahini and cumin into the large bowl of a food processor. Blitz for 1-2 minutes or until creamy. With the motor running – slowly add the olive oil and blitz until combined. Pop the hummus into a bowl and place into the fridge whilst you prepare the pita chips.

3. To make the pita chips – Arrange the pita bread triangles on the prepared trays. Place the parmesan, rosemary and salt into a small bowl and stir to combine. Brush each triangle with a little olive oil and top with a little of the rosemary/cheese mixture. Bake for 5 minutes or until the cheese is melted and the pita chips are golden.
4. To serve – Place the hummus onto a small bowl, top with Greek yoghurt, almonds, olive oil and coriander. Arrange the pita chips around the hummus and dig in! Enjoy xx

Recipe and image from mylovelylittlelunchbox.com.



Focus Article: Why boredom is actually good for young children

In today's fast-paced world, boredom can feel uncomfortable for children and adults alike. With busy schedules, extracurricular activities, and screens always within reach, moments of "nothing to do" are becoming increasingly rare. When a child says, "I'm bored," it's tempting to step in straight away with an activity, a suggestion, or a device. However, boredom is not something to fear or fix. In fact, it plays an important role in children's learning and development.

Boredom gives children the time and space to think, imagine, and explore at their own pace. Without constant stimulation, children begin to look inward for ideas and outward for possibilities. This is often when creativity flourishes. A cushion becomes a mountain, a cardboard box becomes a rocket ship, and a stick becomes a magic wand. These moments of imaginative play help children develop problem-solving skills, flexible thinking, and confidence in their own ideas. Unstructured time also supports independence. When children are not directed by adults or scheduled activities, they learn to make choices for themselves. They practise deciding what to do, how to do it, and how to keep themselves engaged. These small decisions build a sense of autonomy and capability, helping children feel confident in navigating both play and everyday life.

At home, allowing space for boredom may feel challenging at first. Adults often worry that children need to be constantly entertained or productively occupied. However, children do not need expensive toys or planned activities to learn. Simple, open-ended materials are often the most powerful tools for play. Blocks, dress-ups, recycled materials, loose parts, art supplies, and everyday household items invite children to explore freely and creatively. These materials encourage experimentation and imagination rather than a "right" or "wrong" way to play.

Time spent outdoors can also transform boredom into meaningful learning. Nature offers endless opportunities for discovery, watching ants carry food, collecting leaves, splashing in puddles, or building cubby houses from sticks. Outdoor play supports physical development, curiosity, and connection to the natural world. It also allows children to experience change, risk-taking, and problem-solving in a real and engaging environment.

Boredom plays an important role in emotional development as well. Feeling bored can bring up emotions such as frustration, restlessness, or disappointment. Learning how to sit with these feelings and work through them helps children develop

emotional regulation and resilience. Over time, children begin to understand that uncomfortable feelings pass and that they have the ability to find solutions for themselves. These builds coping skills that are essential for school and life beyond the early years.

It's also important to consider the role of screens in children's experience of boredom. While digital devices can be entertaining and educational in moderation, constant access to screens can reduce opportunities for deep, imaginative play. When children are used to instant entertainment, boredom may feel more difficult to manage. Creating regular screen-free time allows children to rediscover the joy of play, creativity, and exploration without external stimulation.

In early education and care services, we value play that is child-led, open-ended, and rich in learning opportunities. Educators intentionally create environments that allow children to explore their interests, follow their curiosity, and engage in sustained play. By allowing similar opportunities at home, families can support continuity between preschool and home life, reinforcing the skills children are developing each day.

Embracing boredom does not mean leaving children unsupported. It means being present, observant, and responsive while allowing children the freedom to lead their own play. Sometimes this involves stepping back rather than stepping in trusting that children are capable of finding their own way. Over time, families often notice that children become more creative, more independent, and more confident when given space to simply be.

So next time boredom appears, try pausing before offering a solution. What may feel like "nothing happening" is often the beginning of something meaningful. In the quiet moments, children are learning, growing, and discovering who they are.



Read more about the benefits of boredom

See link via QR code
Retrieved from childmind.org

ALPHABET KABOOM!

You will need: popsicle sticks, marker and a small bucket of cup

Set up: Write each of the 26 letters of the alphabet on a different popsicle stick. Write the word "Kaboom!" on 6 additional popsicle sticks. Put all the popsicle sticks in a container, with the letters pointing down into the bucket so you can't see them.

How to Play:

1. Players take turns picking a popsicle stick out of the bucket and reading the letter on it. (Sometimes we'll also add in the challenge of saying the sound the letter makes or a word that starts with the letter.)

2. Each player collects as many popsicle sticks as possible before drawing a "Kaboom!" stick.
3. If a player draws a "Kaboom!" stick, he or she returns all his/her sticks to the bucket.
4. The winner is the player with the most sticks when time runs out (you can set a timer for as long or short as you want).

Variations:

The possibilities are endless with this game:

Family names, sight words, rhyming words (what rhymes with...?), syllables (how many syllables are in...?) basic math facts, telling time, adding money

Source: themanylittlejoys.com



HEALTH & SAFETY: Self-Care Skills: Why Doing Things “By Themselves” Matters

In the preschool years, children are learning so much more than colours, letters, and numbers. Everyday self-care skills like toileting, dressing, and eating play a powerful role in children’s development. While these tasks may seem small to adults, they are big milestones for young children and help build independence, confidence, and a strong sense of self.

When children practise self-care skills, they are learning that they are capable. Pulling up their own pants, putting on shoes, or using a spoon independently sends an important message: “I can do this.” Over time, these moments of success help children develop confidence, resilience, and pride in their abilities.

Toileting, Dressing and Eating: More Than Just Daily Tasks

Self-care routines are rich learning opportunities. **Toileting** supports body awareness, independence, and self-regulation. **Dressing** helps develop fine motor skills, coordination, and problem-solving. Figuring out which way clothes go or how to manage buttons and zips takes concentration and persistence. **Eating** independently builds motor control, patience, and confidence, as children learn to listen to their bodies and manage meals at their own pace.

These skills also support school readiness. Children who feel confident managing their own basic needs often transition more smoothly into group settings. They can focus more on learning and social relationships when they feel secure in their ability to care for themselves.

Independence Builds Confidence

Independence doesn’t mean children have to do everything alone. It means giving them opportunities to try, practise, and learn even when it takes longer. When adults step in too quickly, children may miss the chance to develop confidence in

their own abilities. Allowing children time to attempt tasks, make mistakes, and problem-solve builds perseverance and self-belief.

Children who are trusted to try often surprise us. They develop a sense of ownership over their routines and take pride in what they can do. Over time, this confidence carries into other areas of learning, play, and relationships.

Supporting Without Rushing

In busy family life, it’s easy to rush daily routines, but slowing down where possible can make a big difference for children. Allowing extra time for dressing, encouraging children to feed themselves, or calmly supporting toileting helps children feel capable, confident, and respected. Support may involve gentle encouragement, breaking tasks into smaller steps, or modelling rather than taking over. Phrases like “Take your time” or “I’ll wait while you try” remind children that effort matters more than speed. Remember, every child develops at their own pace, progress is gradual, and confidence grows with patience and practice.

Working Together

In early education and care services, educators support self-care skills through everyday routines. Families can reinforce this at home by providing time and opportunities for children to practise independence. These everyday moments help build confidence, resilience, and a strong belief in their own abilities.



Read more about developmental self-care skills and how to support your child

See link via QR code
Retrieved from occupationaltherapy.com.au

Sustainability CORNER

EGG HEADS

Gardening is a wonderful way to help children learn about sustainability and caring for the environment. Whether you have a large garden, a small patio, or live in an apartment, planting seeds shows children that they can grow food and plants almost anywhere using simple, reused materials.

This activity encourages **reuse and waste reduction** by using empty egg cartons or eggshells as seed trays instead of buying new pots. With just a little soil, some seeds and water, children can turn everyday items into something useful, learning that many materials can be given a second life rather than thrown away.

Choosing fast-growing seeds such as radishes, fava beans, lentils or chickpeas helps children see quick results, reinforcing patience and responsibility as they care for their plants. Flowers like nasturtiums and marigolds grow easily and can later be used in salads or to decorate meals, helping children make connections between gardening, food, and reducing food miles.

Through planting, children learn where food comes from, how plants grow, and why caring for the earth is important small actions that support a more sustainable future.



Image & Activity Source: klorane.com





LEFTOVERS STAMPING

Introduce children to the sensory joy of **creative stamping using everyday leftovers!** This simple, calming activity supports fine motor development, creativity, and sustainability by transforming food scraps and recycled materials into art tools.

You Will Need:

- Leftovers such as celery stumps, fruit off-cuts, bubble wrap, or small pieces of cardboard
- Paint
- Paper or cardstock
- A plate or large lid for paint
- Something to protect your workspace (newspaper or a tablecloth)

What to Do:

Set up a space ready for painting by covering the table and preparing your materials. Pour small amounts of paint onto a plate or lid and spread it slightly to make stamping easy. Laying out all materials within reach helps children work independently and confidently.

Encourage children to dip their leftover items into the paint and press them onto the paper to explore patterns, textures, and shapes. You might like to suggest using warm colours or cool colours together, this helps keep colours vibrant and avoids muddy brown tones. Allow children to experiment freely, noticing how different objects create unique prints. This open-ended approach invites creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving.

Seasonal Tip: Valentine's Day

Fold cardboard or thick paper in half to make a card. Use a celery off-cut to create rose-shaped stamps and design a handmade card to gift to parents, grandparents, or friends. A wonderful way to create art, reuse materials, and celebrate creativity together! **Go to Kiwico to check out these stamped napkins!**

THE HIGHLAND GROVE TEAM:

We are delighted to introduce you to 2 new educators at Highland Grove.

Heidi is our new trainee and will complete her Certificate 3 in Early Childhood Education and Care over the next 18 months.



Danniella is a new casual educator for Highland Grove. She has her Certificate 3 in ECEC. Danniella will continue filling staff absences across all 3 rooms, and we are delighted to have her onboard.



HGP PUMPKIN PATCH:

Welcome baby Violet! Little sister for Thea in the Starlight Room. Congratulations to Elizabeth and Seth.

How wonderful to hear of the arrival of baby Zahli , little sister for Lylah in the Sunshine Room. Congratulations to Sharna and Mitch.

We know that these bundles of joy will bring much love and laughter to your families.

5 Minute MOVES

CRAWL CHASE

When was the last time you got on your hands and knees and crawled like a baby? Give it a go, it is quite tiring and is a great brain workout too.

This activity is simple and requires no equipment just a little space. It is tag on all fours, take turns being 'in' everyone gets into crawling position and crawls away trying to avoid being tipped! *Have fun.*