



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL LINDFIELD NEWSLETTER



REDDAM
ELS

12 February 2020

Principal's Message

By Mrs Kath Boyd

“See the world through the eyes of your inner child. The eyes that sparkle in awe and amazement as they see love, magic and mystery in the most ordinary things.” (Henna Sohail)

Reddam Early Learning Schools are guided by the highly-regarded *Reggio Emilia Approach* to early childhood education. Teachers at our ELS view young children as individuals who are **curious about their world** and have the **powerful potential to learn from all that surrounds them**. We expose every child to a wide variety of educational, creative opportunities that encourage self-expression, communication, logical thinking and problem-solving. Even the dramatic play experiences have been purposely offered – to enhance social and language skills. The thoughtful arrangement of furniture and selection of natural materials and loose parts encourages children to engage in playful inquiry. This reflective and pedagogically sound arrangement of environments and materials results in learning.

Our task as Reggio Emilia inspired teachers is to help children communicate with the world using all their capabilities, strengths and languages. If, by the time your child leaves our ELS for Kindergarten, he/she is a **confident** and **involved** learner (Reddam Educational Philosophy) then the road ahead will be that much smoother for them. It is immediately evident to Kindergarten teachers which students are curious and fearless learners, and which students are not equipped with the tools or confidence to 'learn'.

We present environments to the children that are invitations for inquiry. These environments have the potential to promote learning processes where children engage with one another and with meaningful materials - exploring, constructing and representing their understanding and theories. *“Reading and writing come after approaches to learning such as wonder (curiosity), self-discovery, problem-solving, interaction, exploration and play are established. Children learn best when they can make their own choices and set their own goals. Because each child is unique, multiple channels of learning must be celebrated.”* (Jennifer Berke)

I encourage parents to join our teachers and be joyful in your engagement with children as you observe and participate in this developmental and educational process.

“Learning and teaching should not stand on opposite banks and just watch the river flow by; instead, they should embark together on a journey down the water. Through an active, reciprocal exchange, teaching can strengthen learning and how to learn.” (L. Malaguzzi – 1998)

This approach also emphasises hands-on discovery learning that allows the child to use all their senses and all their languages to learn. The *Hundred Languages of Children* is the belief that children use many, many different ways to show their understanding and express their thoughts and creativity. Each child is thought to have a hundred different ways of thinking, of discovering, of learning. Through drawing and sculpting, through dance and movement, through painting and pretend play, through modelling and music, each one of these *Hundred Languages* is valued and nurtured. These languages, or ways of learning, are all a part of the child. Learning and play are not separated. We do not give the children stencils to colour-in, but instead present them with a blank piece of paper, a variety of resources and provocations which ignite their creativity.

Within the Early Years Learning Framework there are three basic concepts that children's lives are characterised by. They are *Belonging, Being and Becoming*. The provocations for each class this term all focus on the concept of developing the sense of **belonging** within each child:

- 1R: **Storytelling, Songs & Nursery Rhymes**
- 1E: **All About Me**
- 2R: **Who Am I?**
- 2E: **This is Me**
- 3R: **Belonging: Our Interests**
- 3E: **The World Around Me**
- 4R & 4E: **Belonging: Where Do I Belong?**

"Belonging: To understand that you are part of a group, feeling that you are part of a family. Having a feeling that you are linked with others and experience important relationships. A child's sense of belonging can be referred to their relationships with family members – recognising mum, dad, siblings, grandparents etc. Within early childhood, a child's sense of belonging can relate to how comfortable a child is within the setting, having a sense of trust and security with childcare professionals. When a child has a sense of belonging they are more confident, feel more secure, be more creative and more likely to explore the world of learning." (EYLF – 2010)

The final **2021 Parent Information Sessions** took place on Tuesday evening. Thank you to the many Stage 2 and 3 parents (& grandparents) who joined us in one of the four different locations around the school. Congratulations to Sara, Skye, Grace, Luan, Deb and their teaching teams for organising these relaxed, informative events. The presentations and handouts have been emailed to all families. If you (all Stage 1 – 4 Reddam ELS Lindfield Parent) were unable to attend your child's Parent Information Evening, please make an appointment to talk to your child's Core Teacher about the communication that was shared.

Wishing you all a restful and safe weekend.

Pictured above: Luca (Stage 1R). Pictured below: Light Table Shape Experience in Stage 4E.



Happy Chinese New Year!

May good fortune fall upon our families who are celebrating the transition to the Year of the Ox!



Artwork credit to our talented Teacher/Artist, Kai.

**"Five little ducks went out one day, over the hills and far away.
Mother Duck said, 'Quack, quack, quack, quack.'" (Nursery Rhyme)**

This week we are focusing on **Five Little Ducks**. This is a very popular nursery rhyme with the children. Throughout the provocation, we discussed the sound that ducks make and also incorporated colour recognition and numeracy. Miss Natalie followed up with an experience with a felt board and sung the *Five Little Ducks* song using felt ducks and then incorporated numeracy counting numbers 1-5 by also applying the actions of the ducks swimming away in the pond.

Our Stage 1R have been engaged in a wide range of learning experiences. During the week, the children were invited to a small world play, which offered ducks and hens figurines, with extra accompaniments felt board, faux grass and natural loose parts which included pine cones and wooden dots. This offers the children the opportunity to practice their imagination, social skills and fine motor skills. To assist the children in identifying 'Mummy Duck', 'Daddy Duck' and the little ducklings - so adorable!

The children had such a great time splashing in the water with rubber ducks; there was Mummy Duck and five little ducklings, which reinforced their learning. 'Oh no!', the ducks needed to be rescued so the children were engaged and fascinated with the game by concentrating on manipulating the sticky tape and trying to release the ducklings.

Our creative experiences offered the children opportunities to experiment an art process with a sponge that was shaped like a duck's feet by pressing down on the page and creating a foot imprint. Another word for duck feet is called a 'paddle'. During the process, paint brushes were used as the main tool and using the colour yellow with sand mixed in, the feeling of the sand texture assisted in supporting their sensory stimulation. Also, the children were learning to use a range of media to express their ideas in creative ways through process art.

For our literacy and language group times, we read books focused around ducks such as *Ducks, Apple, Egg* by Glenda Millard and Martina Heiduczek.

Next week we are travelling to the sky and finding the bright shiny stars with *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star*.

Hope you have a lovely weekend!

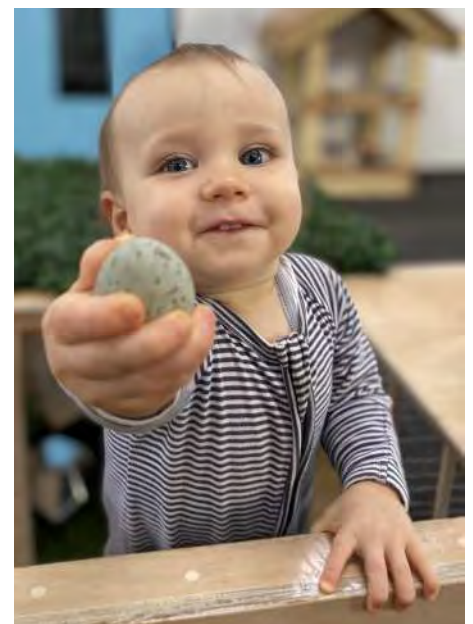
Natalie & Doris



Stage 1R: Five Little Ducks



Stage 1R: Exploring Ducklings



Stage 1R: Extra Snaps



“We are all different and that’s beautiful!” (Karen Salmansohn)

Following our **All About Me** provocation, this week we focused on **Who Am I?**, which was inspired by the practice of building a sense of belonging amongst our children in the 1E environment. Embracing one’s unique self and each other’s differences promotes an understanding of one’s identity and gives them confidence in partaking in their own early learning journey.

To continue building a strong sense of perception, we prepared experiences that invited our children to discover more of themselves. At group time, they reflected on their ongoing learning experience about the days of the week, weather and, most importantly, their names. Creatively, we used paddle pop sticks with children’s faces as a prop in a self-recognition activity as we playfully sang the tune of *Where is thumbkin?* with them. The sense of surprise waiting for their faces and names to be called directly stimulated and encouraged prolonged participation and focus from our little learners.

In another group learning activity, Mr. Big Bunny helped us to recognise and identify our body parts. More so, the children were very excited to engage in shadow play. A torchlight created patterns and shapes on the wall and it was visually appealing when moved across surfaces boosting children’s sensory development and eye-hand coordination whilst chasing the beam.

Increasing our early literacy skills, we read and enjoyed the book *Children Just Like Me* by Anabel Kindersley and Barnabas Kindersley. It celebrates children from around the world, displaying their unique and distinct features. Similarly, we read *What Did I Look Like When I Was Baby* by Jeanne Willis and *My Shadow* by Robert Louis Stevenson. These were two delightful stories about how some look the same and some looked very different.

During our creative experiences, the goal was to encourage the children to create self-portraits using natural resources as well as revisiting their previous experiences on textures, finger and hand manipulation and creativity development. They were also fascinated by making reflection drawings using mirrors and washable pens. Extending on this, we designed a graph with different hair colour images to be grouped and matched them with the children’s hair colours. This experience provided children with a sense of community and togetherness and expanded their knowledge of diversity and differences.

Another equally important and fun activity we learnt was scaling and sizing our 1E children. It was as exciting for them to step on the scale as looking at their individual height measurements on the wall. All these to promote self-awareness and become enthusiastic participants of their own learning.

Next week, we will continue to learn more about our body parts. Try singing *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes* with your precious children at home.

Charity, Heather, Mia and Suki



Stage 1E: Self-Recognition



Stage 1E: Learning About Ourselves



Stage 1E: Extra Snaps



“Children have real understanding only of that which they invent themselves.” (Jean Piaget)

We believe that all children should feel that their world is a safe place where people care about them and their needs. When children feel a sense of belonging, they develop confidence and self-identity. In early childhood, and throughout life, relationships are crucial to a sense of belonging. Belonging is central to being and becoming in that it shapes who children are and who they can become. A child learns and develops a sense of identity through their relationships and experiences at home, family interactions and their environment. As they play, learn and try new things, they develop an understanding of their own identity.

We started Term 1 with the provocation **Who Am I?** and the focus of the week was *Discovering Myself*. Children were invited to a variety of learning experiences and activities to develop their self-awareness which impacts their capacity to see themselves as uniquely different from other people. They have explored their faces through engaging activities and experiences to gain awareness of the facial differences and similarities. They began to see the beauty and variety of human beings. Children also started to learn to read and interpret facial expressions which is an important aspect of social-emotional development. This experience can be linked to Rousseau's theories. He believes that it is important to develop a child's character and moral sense, so that the child can learn to practise self-mastery and remain virtuous.

Teachers in Stage 2R helped the children develop an understanding of themselves as significant and respected in order to develop pride and strength in their own personal and cultural identity, as well as respect for others.

The light box provided the perfect backdrop for a puzzle matching experience. Individual images of the children were cut in half and placed on it. The children were then encouraged to either find their other half or pair their photo with one of their peers. This experience allowed 2R children to become more familiar with their classmates.

Children explore their surroundings with fingers and hands. Our children explored their creativity to create their handprint using paint to encourage a hands-on discovery with the added benefit of fine motor and sensory play. This experience helps the body and brain to integrate information such as that needed for later spatial concepts, math and language.

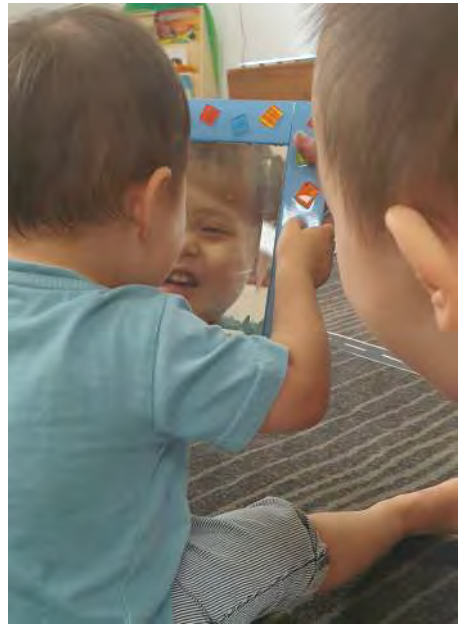
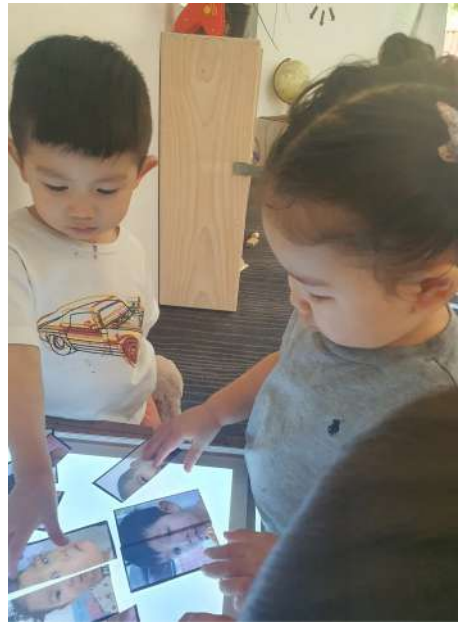
As young children are simply attempting to find their place in this big world and trying to make sense of the concept of family, next week our focus will be *My Family*. Children's growing awareness of diverse family structures provides rich opportunities to help them celebrate family diversity and engage them in conversation about who is in their family, who lives in their household and, more importantly, who takes care of them. Improving child development is best achieved in early education and care environments when there are strong family partnerships.

Have a great weekend everyone!

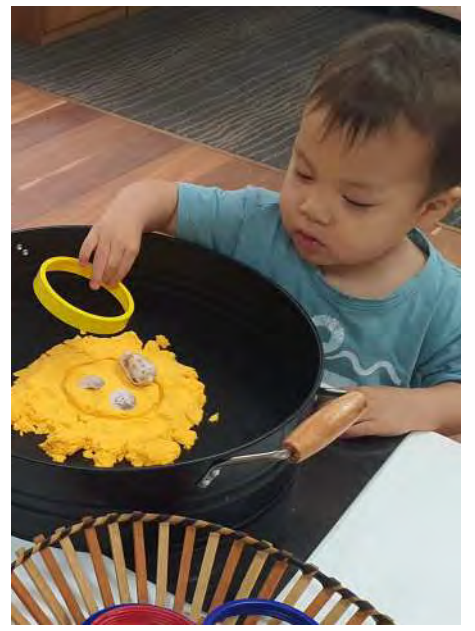
Sara, Manoela and Vivian



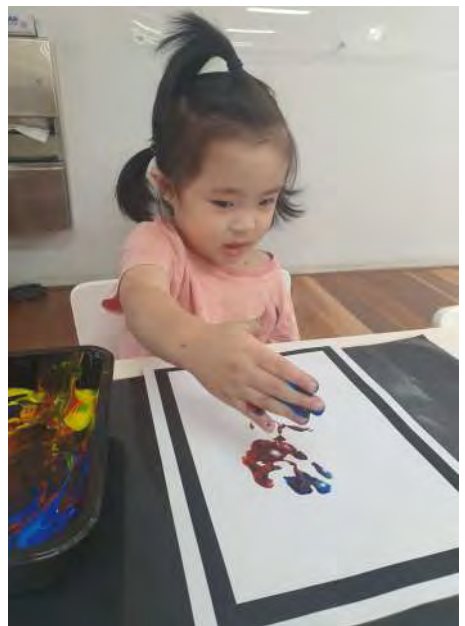
Stage 2R: Exploring Our Faces



Stage 2R: Loose Parts Face Mandalas



Stage 2R: Handprint Painting



“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.” (Mahatma Gandhi)

Our focus in 2E this week has been **Our Pets**. This exploration of our animal friends has been a wonderful opportunity to further share our home life with each other sparking conversation between peers and teachers alike. We are creating a home away from home for our children with an atmosphere of sharing happy memories or dreams of having one.

What is it about animals that children and adults are drawn to? Who hasn't been on school grounds and felt the excitement of seeing the family of bunnies that call our grounds home? Our “Big Walks” around the campus not only develop gross motor and fundamental movement skills but also contain an element of wonder. Can we tiptoe quietly enough as a group so as to not scare the family away? Can we get close enough to see into their eyes and feel the connection of a moment of trust between two different species sharing the same space peacefully?

Our 2E children embraced the focus this week wholeheartedly, demonstrating care and gentleness while participating in our provocations. We have created our own artistic representations of animals using different mediums through the week. Sculpture, drawing, collaging and painting have produced careful works and conversation during the process. Children have identified parts of an animal's body or face and used their estimation skills to express either a photographic provocation from the ‘Belonging Tree’, a book or from their own memory recall. Our pet hospital dramatic play saw narrative, creativity, problem solving, empathy and respect shared between peers or moments of solitude in silent exploration.

At our sensory trays we invited children to explore bubbles, sponges and animals of all shapes and sizes for a careful grooming session. We asked questions during this play session such as “Is the water warm enough?”, “Do you think the animal can breathe if her face is under the water?” whilst the open ended play was conducted. These questions ignite cognition, empathy and respect towards animals that will last a lifetime. Our present day has been forever changed, speculatively, due to the poor treatment of animals. As each generation learns and feels more for the creatures we share Earth with, hopefully we as a species, see in helping animals, we are helping ourselves.

Have a lovely weekend!

Skye, Tracey and Georgia



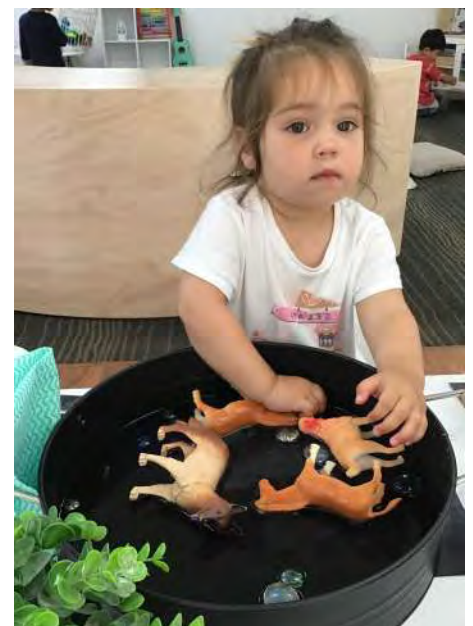
Stage 2E: Our Pets As Artistic Inspiration



Stage 2E: Musically Inspired



Stage 2E: Caring For Our Animals



“When animals become the basis of conversations between children and adults... the animals become a shared project and interest to be talked about. It creates empathy, which means helpfulness, caring and a sense of responsibility. It also encourages an ethical attitude towards people, animals and nature” (Svensson, 2014)

This week we have been very busy getting in the rhythm of Stage 3! At our daily ‘Morning Meetings’ we have collaborated to decide on what our class expectations and policies should be, we then made a group poster and placed it on our provocation board so that we are able to refer back to it. Having the children decide the class expectations is a beautiful way to hear children’s voices and make it visible in the classroom. The children also show pride in contributing to their classroom, creating a sense of belonging.

Our investigation on turtles continues, with looking specifically at what we already know and what we would like to find out. Theorist Piaget believes that for children to continue to learn, they must build upon their knowledge, revisiting what they already know to figure out where to go next. In our yarning circle, the children were able to express the physical aspects of turtles *“They have flippers,” “They can swim,” “Turtles lay their eggs in the sand”* and *“Turtles have flippers.”* These yarns allow us to really focus on what the children are saying, what they understand and what they would like to know next. Later in the week, we played a literacy-based game which invited children to begin alphabet knowledge as they engage in letter recognition and letter sounds to find their name and the names of their friends. Once they called out the name, they were invited to jump into the middle and were asked *“What do you want to know about turtles?”* The answers showed curiosity and thoughtfulness such as wondering what they eat? How many are there? How do they sleep? These answers are the beginning of our programme for the coming weeks.

This week we started our ‘Turtle Project’, this is a part of our process art which we hope to work on for the whole term. Setting the materials out in front of children, I asked them to guess what we could be doing, instantly, a child commented that the basket looked like a turtle shell! We explained that we would be making a paper mache turtle, using donated newspapers, glue and the basket. We learned that week that there are seven different species of turtles and that we would need to collaborate together to decide which type of turtle we will paint once it’s finished. This group project encourages the children to be involved in hands-on art. Lorina (2018) discusses Piagets’ theory which encourages children to *“be able to see, touch, taste, smell, move, and hear the things they are learning about. This is called ‘concrete learning’*. Our project allows children to co-construct meaning as they work together to make the turtle shell.

As an introduction to the concept of endangered species, one of our learning groups had the children count and group different types of sea creatures. Then, by subitising, the children were able to place the groups of animals in the ‘Endangered table’ which had headings of ‘Critically endangered’, ‘Endangered’, ‘Vulnerable’ and ‘Least concerned’. This experience was challenging as the children wrapped their head around these new terms on top of demonstrating their ability to count using one-to-one correspondence, group the sea creatures based on their characteristics and then subitise them to be able to categorise them. The goal of this experience was to introduce these key terms so that we are able to revisit the ideas in depth as well as introducing early numeracy skills.

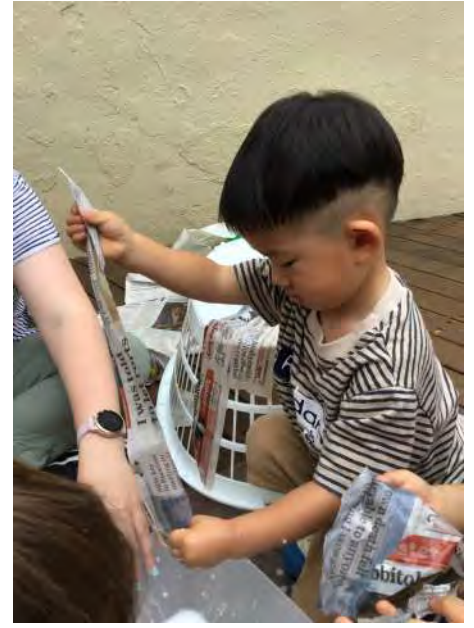
As a part of our emerging literacy and numeracy skills, we have been including elements of counting and writing into our small groups and table top experiences. The children are still very interested in cicadas and as a result, we encouraged the children to order and sort the cicada shells based on their size as well as placing number cards on the table for the children to count out the cicadas, building on their cardinal number recognition and one-to-one correspondence counting. Similarly, we have added letter cards to a sandbox to help refine their fine motor skills, alphabet knowledge and emerging writing skills.

We look forward to learning more about minibeasts and turtles in the next few weeks, learning together along the way.

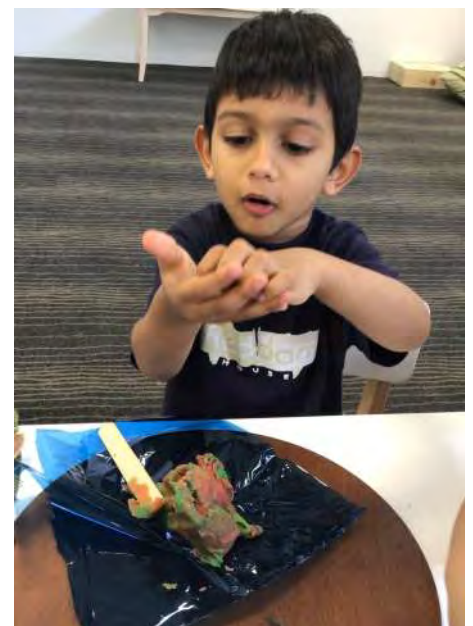
Grace, Pa, Margaret, Indi, Kai, Priya



Stage 3R: Turtle Project



Stage 3R: Sea Creatures Sensory Play



Stage 3R: Cicada Sorting and Alphabet Writing



“What we see changes what we know. What we know changes what we see.” (Jean Piaget)

Welcome back to another fun-filled week of learning! Over the past week, we have been instilling a sense of belonging amongst the children in the room as we explore our provocation for this term, **The World Around Me**. This allows ample opportunities to get to know one another better. Our focus on *My Family* has begun to give shape to a learning environment where the children feel safe, secure and supported as individuals and as part of a community.

Upon reading books in our group times such as *Just The Way We Are* by Claire Robertson and Jessica Shirvington and *Things I Love About My Family* by Trace Moroney, the children are developing a greater awareness of diversity among families, which have similarities and differences to their own. This led us to discussions about how there are many different kinds of families and how they are all unique and special. Both children and teachers shared aspects of their own family life, family members and the kinds of things we like to do together. To bring a piece of home into the classroom, the children were invited to bring in a family photo to add to our *Family Tree*. They have been so proud to point out their own family, to talk about who is in the photograph and where it was taken.

This week has seen a lot of interest in building and construction with various materials as the children were challenged to build their own homes. This led us to explore the many different types of homes that there are and to talk about where we live ourselves. To support this sense of belonging further, our creative experiences included self portraits, where each child made a collage of themselves with a picture of their face and a choice of assorted materials. A child's self-portrait can reveal many things. As with a piece of art, it shows the development of a child's fine motor, observation and focusing skills whilst giving insight into a child's self-concept. They turned out super cute and stirred up a lot of laughter among the children!

We have placed a huge emphasis on building positive relationships in the room these past few weeks and we continue to see strong friendships forming as we all settle into our new routine and environment.

Next up on our learning journey will be the exploration of many different cultures from around the world. We intend to look into traditions, food, clothing and celebrations. Please feel free to share any aspects of your own culture with us as we endeavour to celebrate the traditions, customs and beliefs of every family in the 3E class. As educators, we believe that learning about cultures helps children appreciate diversity and cultivate a keen interest in the world at large.

Lastly, we would like to say a big thank you to all the parents who attended our Parent Information Evening on Tuesday, it was a pleasure to catch up with all of you.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Deb, Priya and Luan



Stage 3E: Making Our Family Tree and Self-Portraits



Stage 3E: Construction and Building My House



Stage 3E: Extra Snaps



“Ensuring that every child feels a sense of security and belonging within the school enables each child to accept and participate actively in transforming situations that are part of learning experiences.” (Loris Malaguzzi)

The Stage 4 children have settled into the classroom nicely and have established a warm and trusting rapport with the teachers. Each day we observe them growing in more confidence as they get used to the rhythm of the day, expand their friendship groups and share their current interests. Our Term 1 Provocation **Belonging: Where Do I Belong?** is well underway as we asked ourselves, “*What does it mean to belong to our families?*” Our first story of the week, *What I Love About Family* by Trace Moroney helped us understand that our families should make us feel loved, safe and protected, and that we love receiving hugs, kisses, and reassuring words from our loved ones. The children then studied various family structures, identifying each member including parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and if they were from a big, medium or small family unit.

Our next story was called *Just the Way We Are* by Claire Robertson. We met all sorts of families on the same suburban street. Some had grandparents living with them, some had parents who had separated, some had same-sex parents, and some children lived with their adoptive families. The children then shared who are in their immediate and extended families too. Miss Lauren showed the class her Family Tree and explained that a “family tree” is made up of many branches with different family members sitting on each one, from youngest to oldest. Miss Lauren started with herself and her two younger sisters at the bottom of the tree. Next came her mum and dad, her dad's brother (her uncle), her step-mum, step-dad, then her maternal grandparents, her paternal grandparents and her great-grandparents on her mum's side. The children asked lots of questions and were curious to see how the tree grew and expanded with more and more branches.

After learning about family trees, we read *Stickman* by Julia Donaldson. Stickman lives in the family tree with his stick lady love and his stick children three. Poor Stickman ends up travelling so far away from his family. Will he ever get back to the family tree? In the atelier the children were invited to create their own family trees, sponging green paint and drawing on their canvases. Mixed materials were also provided to give the trees texture. The children were asked what they love about each of their family members and the teachers scribed their answers.

Miss Emily loves retelling classic fairy tales and this week she treated us to the story of *The Three Little Pigs* using character puppets. The children commented on each type of house that was built and why the straw and the sticks weren't as strong as the bricks. The children were captivated by this story and had the opportunity to further their comprehension skills by telling repetitive parts of the story, such as “*Little pig, little pig, let me come in!*” and pretending to blow the house down with the Big Bad Wolf. After the story we discussed what our houses were made of and how they keep us warm and safe.

Around the classroom, the children engaged with a variety of learning experiences that incorporated their current interests. The children enjoyed holding sea shells up to their ears to listen to the ocean, and used magnifying glasses to study the shapes, patterns and textures. Numeracy was promoted where the children looked at family photos and counted the amount of people in each one, placing it with the corresponding number. The class also explored 3D shapes on the light table, created 3D shape nets using toothpicks and plasticine, and balanced irregular block shapes on top of one another to make intricate structures. Shapes were used to create faces, and flower-shaped puzzles, glass tiles and mirrors were provided to create mandalas to understand symmetry and patterning. Fine-motor skills were promoted as the children manipulated pegs to attach miniature clothes to a clothes line.

Through interacting with these experiences, the children had the opportunity to further their understanding and development of:

- Fine-motor skills, dexterity and hand strength (this is important when manipulating and controlling the chosen toy or material, and aids with developing their pre-writing skills.)
- Problem solving skills as the children figured out the best way to create structures and shapes.
- Flexible thinking skills as the children adapt to the materials and the provocation pictures that are provided.
- The ability to test ideas as they engaged in trial and error and;
- Perseverance in the face of construction challenges and negotiating the sharing of resources.

We have been taking advantage of these sunny, summer days and spending most of our mornings outside as much as possible. During our outdoor play, we found a leopard slug on our reading mat so we observed him slide along before we relocated him back to a safe spot in the garden. The children navigated the play equipment and balance beams, and enjoyed some water play using cups and scooping nets. Some of the children also took pleasure in exploring a muddy patch of ground, using wooden spoons to turn it into soup with some extra water. This interest inspired the class to start creating a 'Mud Kitchen' area to further our understanding of fundamental math and science skills as the children created mixtures and experimented with weight and capacity.

Next week we will extend on our provocation and share more about our homes, including our extended family members and pets.

Wishing our families a relaxing weekend and a Happy Lunar New Year!

Miss Lauren, Miss Emily, Miss Rebecca, Miss Angela, Miss Vivian and Miss Allegra



Stage 4R & 4E: Self-Portraits and Exploring Families



Stage 4R & 4E: Exploring Shapes (Part 1)



Stage 4R & 4E: Exploring Shapes (Part 2)



Stage 4R & 4E: Enjoying The Outdoors (And A Leopard Slug!)



Stage 4R & 4E: Children's Interests



Hi champs!

This week I taught the children how to play the *shark and the stingray* game. The sharks and the stingrays cross over the ocean without “boofing” into each other. I encouraged the children to go faster and faster and we were running around in circles. Crazy!

We all found our own hoop and I instructed them what to do with the hoop – jump into the hoop, jump out of the hoop, jump over the hoop, walk around the hoop, etc. We all had a turn to spin the hoop, wait for it to fall onto the ground and jump inside it. Wait, wait, wait and jump!

Parachute! I brought a parachute with me today and we got to play many games like ‘keep the ball up’ and ‘popcorn’! Then, I placed some hurdles on the court and we did some throwing **OVER** the hurdles in front of us. Then, we did some **ROLLING UNDER** the hurdles. I held up a hoop and we threw our balls **THROUGH** the hoop.

I set up an obstacle course for us with hurdles, beanbags, tunnel and hoops and we tried to cross the circuit from one piece of equipment to another, always remembering to cheer for our little friends. YAY! That’s how good sports behave!

Hot balls... we ran around the court and I rolled “hot balls” towards the children’s feet. We needed to really use footwork skills and tried our best to dodge the balls.

I then divided the children into two relay teams, using a beanbag as a baton. I set up hurdles for both teams and we had races jumping over the hurdles like real big kids! I always tell the children *“it’s not important who wins, it’s just awesome to have some fun and be a true sport.”*

See you next week champs!



Namaste, everyone!

This week in Yoga the children challenged themselves by doing some complicated yoga poses.

To start the lesson, we all sat on our Yoga mats and sang our "Namaste" hello song. I then told the children today we would be doing some tricky poses and they were very excited but first, we had to warm up! We began with easy poses which we all knew such as dog, cow and cat poses. Once the children got warmed up and ready, I showed them a few tricky poses, for instance, lying on the side and lifting one leg up like a crocodile opening its mouth, then moving down the leg to make the crocodile snap.

The children were all extremely eager to give each "tricky" pose a go and announced, "Look at me!" when they had successfully achieved the position. This was a great opportunity for the children to further their ability to persist, problem solve and show pride in themselves as they stepped out of their comfort zones to try something new. Research has also shown that practicing Yoga can increase children's attention span and improves concentration.

I then showed the children a super challenging pose by placing two hands down and put my heads in between them then trying to balance. The children were very impressed that I could hold myself upside down. Many children loved these poses because they were fun to try!

To finish off our Yoga lesson, we lay down flat on our backs for 5 minutes of *Savasna*. We all pretended that we were floating on a very soft cloud and took big deep breaths together. I have found this to be enormously beneficial for children as they are able to relax and re-centre before they go and play again. The *Savasna* breathing techniques are also a great tool for teaching children to regulate their emotions throughout the day.

Thanks for a wonderful lesson!



This week during our Mandarin lesson, we started the class by singing the *Hello* song and said “Good Morning” to one another in Mandarin. We then learned the words for body parts and did an action song pointing to each body part as we sang.

I then told the children all about *Chinese New Year* and what it means to people who celebrate that festival. As it is a traditional holiday for Chinese people, they gift each other money in a special red envelope called *Hongbao*. This is often used for other celebrations such as weddings too.

In the Chinese New Year, people enjoy a traditional sweet rice cake called *Nian Gao*, similarly to what people in Australia do during Christmas with the traditional pudding each year. I then passed one around the class, so the children could see what it looks and feels like. Some of the children shared that they have had *Nian Gao* at home before and other children shared that they like pudding!

Each year for this yearly celebration, families place *Chuntiao* (banners) and lanterns at the entrances of their homes, flanking the doorways for good luck and to protect their home from bad energy. These are changed every year in accordance with the Chinese calendar.

Lastly, I explained that the Chinese calendar follows the Lunar calendar, told them the folktale of how the Chinese calendar came to be and each child had the opportunity to choose their favourite animal. I told the children this year we will be transitioning to the *Year of the Ox* on Friday, 12th February and that will be the beginning of lots of traditional Chinese New Year events.

All the children seemed to enjoy our Mandarin class and were very eager to celebrate the Lunar New Year at school!

Thanks for a fabulous lesson and I'll see you next week!



Hi wonderful families

This week we concluded our exploration of the question **“What is Drama?”**

As usual, to start the lesson we had a big shake of the parachute. We then all went around the circle and named the colours. In Stages 3 and 4 we named the colour we were sitting on and our favourite desserts. After we had all had a turn to contribute to the group discussion we sang *Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes* along with the actions to get warmed up.

Stage 2 had a go at some imaginative play. The children pretended that the floor had magically changed surfaces and we pretended to be walking on sharp bindis/weeds, slippery ice and sticky mud. The children's faces lit up as each of the surfaces changed and they had to walk with “funny feet” across the floor.

Actors need an audience. To practice being an audience, I placed the children against a wall in the room. This was where the audience sat. We practised turning on our listening ears and watching eyes, and we discussed what being a good audience member would look like. Audiences always clap at the end of a performance. We also practised how to bow at the end of our piece.

Actors have to be good at pretending. I then pulled the children aside in groups of 4 (as the audience stayed where they were) and gave a scenario to each group for a scene. The children acted out the scene, and then bowed to signal the end of the performance. The audience then had to clap and guess what the actors were doing. Some examples included: stomping, being hungry lions, and crocodiles who snapped up a nice fish.

Stage 4 extended on this and made some picture postcards. They made a frozen image of a beach, a forest, and a haunted house.

We finished with a visit from three mice in a present box in Stages 1, 2 and 3. The children loved playing peekaboo with the mice and helping me count their ears, whiskers, noses and feet.

Thanks for a fabulous lesson and see you next week!



In this week's Music lesson, 'Mr. Guitar' came back to play! The children gathered around to say welcome back and I re-introduced them to all of his different parts like his neck, body and strings. We even got to say another hello to our string friends, Eddie and Edwina, who live on Mr. Guitar's neck. We then learnt about a new string, 'A' for animals! We went around the class naming animals you would find on a farm, recreated their sounds and then sang *Old McDonald Had A Farm* together using our new 'A' string.

After our singing, I introduced the children to my friend Lucas, the Musical Spider. We watched a couple of videos of Lucas playing his own tiny instruments and singing to us, showing that anyone can make music no matter how big or small. The last song he sang was *Incy Wincy Spider* which we then played and sang along to on our 'A' string, just like Lucas playing on his harp. We used our hands to do the actions and create spiders of our own.

I then played a final video for the children where Lucas played many instruments together in a band. We saw how multiple instruments and percussion together creates a much fuller sound than a single guitar or voice. We practised our air guitar (our pretend guitar) and body percussion (clapping, tapping, stomping etc) together to get ready to dance and sing along with our friends in our own makeshift band. We listened to *You've Got A Friend in Me* whilst listening out for the different guitar and percussion elements.

To finish off the lesson, we said goodbye to our new friends and gave Mr. Guitar's belly one more tap before finishing up. Overall, the children loved engaging with Lucas and helping to learn and sing his song and all encouraged each other to continually participate throughout the lesson.

Looking forward to seeing you next week!



Happy Birthday!

A very happy birthday to our children who are celebrating their special day this week. We wish you all the best!



09/02—Xavian (4R)



13/02—Sanne (3R)

Congratulations!

The Reddam community grows wider! Best wishes to our families who just welcomed a new member to the world.



**Lauren, David and Daniel (2E)
welcomed baby Alexander on 02/02**



**Katherine, Marty and Thomas (2E)
welcomed baby James on 05/02**