



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL ST LEONARDS NEWSLETTER



REDDAM
ELS

29th January 2021

Principal's Message

By Mrs Simone Cooke

Dear Families,

What a wonderful start we have had to 2021. The teachers have been so impressed with how well the children are settling into their new learning environments and how quickly they are forming relationships with their new teachers and friends. We appreciate what an emotional experience it can be for both children and parents to adapt to change, and separating from parents in the morning can be particularly challenging after a long holiday break.

In these initial weeks our teachers' primary focus has been upon building connections with your children, establishing a sense of trust and security and providing the children with time and space to settle and adapt to their new settings. As parents there are many ways you can also assist in this process. These simple suggestions can greatly assist your child to separate happily each morning and feel secure and safe to explore, learn and thrive in their new class.

- Try not to allow your own anxieties and emotions to affect your child. It is understandable that you are feeling very emotional at the prospect of separating from your child. Children pick up on this and will know if you are tense and worried. Try your best to relax and reassure your child that they are going to have a good time with their friends and teachers. This eases your child's anxiety and allows them to embrace the day.
- Always say goodbye to your child before you leave and reassure them that you will be back to collect them at the end of the day. This builds trust and ensures that they know what to expect. Try not to draw this process out for too long or stand at the window and have a protracted farewell as this can be unsettling. Handing your child to the teacher for a hug or encouraging them to join an activity will make the morning separation far less stressful for you both. Please know that you are always most welcome to contact us to see how your child is settling for the day and our teachers will always contact you if they have any concerns.

Principal's Message Continued...

- In the First Day Information sheet you have provided us with you have outlined the Strategies you use to settle your child when they are upset. This is valuable information for the teachers and will be used through this settling in period and beyond. If your child has a specific comforter to be used at sleep time such as a blanket or dummy please ensure that you place it in your child's bag each day.
- When at home speak regularly about your child's friends and teachers and for older children you may like to consider arranging play dates with new friends as this helps children feel more comfortable and builds a sense of belonging.
- When collecting your child from school ask them about their favourite activity of the day, what stories they read, who they played with or what they ate for lunch. This allows them to share their experiences with you and makes them feel proud about their accomplishments.

Please remember that although your child may cry when you leave this is usually very short lived and only lasts a matter of minutes. You are the one that is definitely more likely to spend your day feeling miserable and It will not be long before you will find that the same child who cries loudly when you leave in the morning is the same one that doesn't want to go home at the end of the day.

These preschool years are filled with wonderful friendships, valuable learning experiences and precious memories and our teachers are there to guide and support your child through this process. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or concerns about your child's settling in process as we look forward to another exciting year of learning, discovery and growth at Reddam.

Have a wonderful weekend.



Stage 1: 1R

By Mrs Amanda Felton

A big welcome to the new and existing families that are part of our 1R room.

Our Babies have been settling in so well and we are incredibly proud of them all. The proof is in the pudding, their willingness to engage in a wide range of activities and try new experiences, which demonstrates that they are already feeling relaxed in their new environment.

Our Babies are already playing and interacting with each other during free play and they are also showing an eagerness to join in group time and are enjoying our songs and stories. These first weeks at school are important for laying foundations of trust and building secure relationships with their teachers. We are providing them with opportunities to explore their new environment whilst getting to know their individual personality traits, interests, and needs.

Enjoy the photos as it is a sneak peek into their little world at school.

Well done Babies, we are very proud of you!

Housekeeping-

Please label all clothing, shoes, socks, and comforters so there is no confusion when they are sent home.



Stage 1: New and old friends in our class!



Stage 1: Paint and Chalk Artwork!



Stage 1: 1E

By Ms Justine Heydra

"Children learn as they play, most importantly in play children learn how to learn." - O. Fred Donaldson

I would like to welcome all new and returning families to Stage 1E.

The past few weeks have been a busy time for our children and teachers, as we all settled into our new environment.

The children have spent the past few weeks getting to know their peers, teachers, and their new learning environment. Our priority this term is for the children to develop a strong sense of belonging that will continue with them throughout their time at Reddam. When children feel a strong sense of belonging and sense of pride in their families, their peers, and their school communities they become emotionally strong, self-assured, and better able to deal with any challenges and difficulties they encounter. This creates an important foundation for their learning and development and builds emotional resilience.

The children had a fantastic time this week exploring their outside surroundings both through water play and in the sandpit. A kind reminder that our School has a strict "no hat no play" policy. Our SunSmart guidelines require children to wear a hat and sunscreen and where possible, sun safe clothing, ensuring shoulders and back are covered. We ask that parents put suncream on prior to arrival at school and we reapply this again before mid morning outdoor play and afternoon play.

Starting off this Term Stage 1E engaged in different animals and their habitats. The children had a chance to explore under the sea, mini beasts, and old Macdonald farmyard through sensory play stations. The children enjoyed all the activities; however, they were most interested in the under the sea sensory play activity, which was the inspiration behind our Term 1 provocation of 'Under the sea'. This provocation will see the children explore the five layers of the ocean, different bodies of water, creatures under the sea and lots of art and science experiments. To further extend our ideas the children will be invited to engage in multiple sensory activities that will encourage the children to explore, manipulate and mould materials, building up their fine motor skills and coordination.

To further support the children's sense of belonging, we would like to remind all families to provide us with a family photo to create our 'family tree'. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to email me at justine.heydra@reddamels.com.au. We look forward to an exciting Term One.



Stage 1: Bugs and sea animals!



Stage 1: Exploring the indoor environment!



Stage 1: Exploring the outdoor environment!



Stage 2: 2R

By Miss Madeleine Grant

Welcome to Stage 2R

The past few weeks have been a wonderful start to the year in Stage 2R! The children have been settling into the new routines so well, and their confidence and comfort in their new learning environment has already grown so much!

As teachers we have been using this time to get to know the children and their families; discovering their interests and skills, fostering positive emotional bonds, and allowing each child to familiarise themselves with the environment at their own pace. During this time it is normal for children to find it difficult to separate from their loved ones at morning drop off, but we have been very impressed with the brave faces and confident smiles each morning, and the delighted squeals when they run to greet you at the end of the day.

The purpose of the pre-term period for us as educators has been to assess each child in a relaxed and informal way and use these early observations to guide us in the development of our learning programme. This has included activities that encourage them to utilise their reasoning and problem solving skills, such as puzzles and construction games; language and imagination through dramatic play; fine motor and sensory awareness with painting and texture exploration; and confidence during our group times as we sing songs, read books and share stories together. We have been observing their reactions to a range of stimuli to create learning experiences that will interest them and get them excited to participate in what we will plan for the term ahead.

Our first art project of the year has seen the children create self-portraits by painting over photos of themselves! As they painted, we asked them to talk about their features and expression and think about what colours they were using. We began with the primary colours, which blended into secondary colours and gave us an insight into each child's basic understanding and recognition of these concepts. We also looked at how they held their paintbrushes to observe their individual levels of coordination and fine motor skills. These paintings are up on the main wall to welcome them to their room each day, and they have shown such delight at finding their face and identifying their friends!

Housekeeping

- Please aim to drop your child off by 9am to ensure they are settled and ready to participate in our morning group time and learning activities.
- Ensure all children's belongings are clearly labelled so nothing goes missing. This includes bags, clothing, hats, water, and milk bottles
- Once term starts toys and comfort items will be limited to rest time only
- Please pack a change of clothes and ensure children have suitable clothing for the range of weather we are experiencing!

Stage 2: Welcome to stage 2!



Stage 2: Welcome to stage 2!



Stage 2: Welcome to stage 2!



Stage 2: 2/3

By Miss Gabriela Alvarez

I am...and I Belong

An important element of children's self-awareness is related to developing their emotions, and learning to identify and positively express feelings. Helping our children develop the skills they need to manage these emotions effectively is an important part of our Preschool programme. Like all areas of development, we need to teach our little ones about emotions and how to respond to them to develop healthy relationships with others as they grow and learn.

This is where the Feeling Family Balloon Sacks come in. The concept behind these filled balloon stress balls is that they are all different, and encourage children to identify different emotions such as fear, anger, joy, confusion. Different feelings and characteristics are associated with each one of the balloon sacks and helps explain emotions visually. It also acts as a conversation starter about feelings. We also went through a sensory activity to change the character's expressions with play dough choosing happiness, surprise or sadness. We discussed the name of feelings by giving them a label. Naming feelings is the first step in helping children learn to identify them. It allows them to develop an emotional vocabulary so they can talk about their feelings and express them appropriately.

During our group times, we read a range of books about feelings and emotions. Our favourite books were "Feelings" by Libby Walden and "Happy" by Nicola Edwards. *Feelings explored emotions: happiness, sadness, bravery, anger, and shyness. The book explained what an emotion feels like, physically, inside. It also talks about amazing values like bravery that empowered our children to confront once-scary situations. Happy talks about how mindfulness is all about connecting with ourselves and the world around us, and feeling simple senses like listening, tasting, touching, and discovering it makes us feel connected to our surroundings and happy.*

This week the children have also been invited to create an *All about me collage*. *A self-image is an intimate, bold declaration of identity. During the activity, the teachers gave the children a little bit of guidance, and we introduced a new vocabulary of emotions such as happy, sad, and angry. They enjoy the tactile experience of using loose parts and playdough to create 'crazy hair' and fill in the 'Complete the Face.'*

It was beautiful to see the children observing themselves using the mirrors and then creating their self-portraits. Through the process, they could explore their facial expressions and talk about their emotions.

What a fabulous start to the year! We have been so impressed with how well the children have coped with the extremely hot weather and adjusting to settling back into school. Thank you to the families that have sent through their family photos. The Children have been very proud of their pictures and have been eagerly sharing with their peers who the important people are in their lives. Such a significant experience for each of them!

"A strong, positive self-image is the best possible preparation for success." Joyce Brothers

Stage 2: Emotion balloons



Stage 2: Emotion balloons



Stage 2: All about me!



Stage 2: All about me!



Stage 2: Can you make a face?



Stage 3: 3 R

Miss Emily Chacon

Welcome to Term 1, 2021.

It has been wonderful seeing you all in the new year. Our first few weeks being back to school was focussed on ensuring the children have settled well into their new preschool classroom.

Our first provocation of the year is 'This is my world', throughout this topic we will be exploring not just different countries around the world, but also the children's world, their home life and school environment. We will be following the children's flow of interest and encouraging further development and research based on these. To assist with our topic, I ask all families to please email me a family photo, as well as any cultures or celebrations you have at your home. Our weekly program is on our 'communication board' at the front door. Here you will be able to see what your child will be learning through each session time, as well as what extra-curricular class will be occurring on that day

During our group times the children have been further developing their confidence and language skills in public speaking. We have been sitting in a circle and each child was asked to say their name and answer a question, whether it be 'who lives at your house?', 'what is your favourite colour?' or 'what is your favourite animal?'. It has been wonderful to see the children gain more confidence and eager to join in our group discussions. We began by learning our days of the week song (which goes along with the melody of Adam's Family), then explored different weather types. Each day we looked out the window and made a collective decision and placed the appropriate image on the board.

We look forward to commencing our preschool program which has been designed as a stepping stone for the children's formal years of schooling. We will be challenging the children cognitively and further developing their emotional and social skills.

House Keeping:

NO Toys:

I ask that all families please refrain from bringing toys from home as this disrupts the children at drop off. If your child needs a toy for rest time it is to stay in their bag until brought out for sleep.

School Uniform:

The children have now commenced the preschool program which means that all children need to be in school uniform.

Stage 3: Welcome to stage 3!



Stage 3: Welcome to stage 3!



Stage 3: Welcome to stage 3!



Stage 3: Welcome to stage 3!



Stage 3: 3/4

By Mrs Riina Andrew

Welcome back to 2021! What a wonderful start to the year we have had. All the children have come together and welcomed each other. New friendships have been created and old friendships have been rekindled. It is such a lovely sight to watch the class interact with each other and share holiday stories.

Thank you to all the children who have sent in their family photo, which we used for news time. The children have all enjoyed sharing their special family photo and standing up in front of the class. Some children love it so much that they want to present news every day! As the weeks go on, the children will become more confident with their presentation skills and talking to the class. We will also be working on expressive and receptive language and practising our question asking abilities and how to formulate questions instead of statements.

Provocation: 'This is me'

Self-Identities

Children learn all about themselves and construct their own sense of identity through their families and communities, therefore having a strong sense of self becomes a vital part of their development in the early years.

Through our 'This is me' provocation, the children will have a chance to explore themselves, both internally and externally through this exploration of self, I hope the children will discover something new about themselves and are able to create a stronger link between home, school and themselves. The outcomes of this topic will foster:

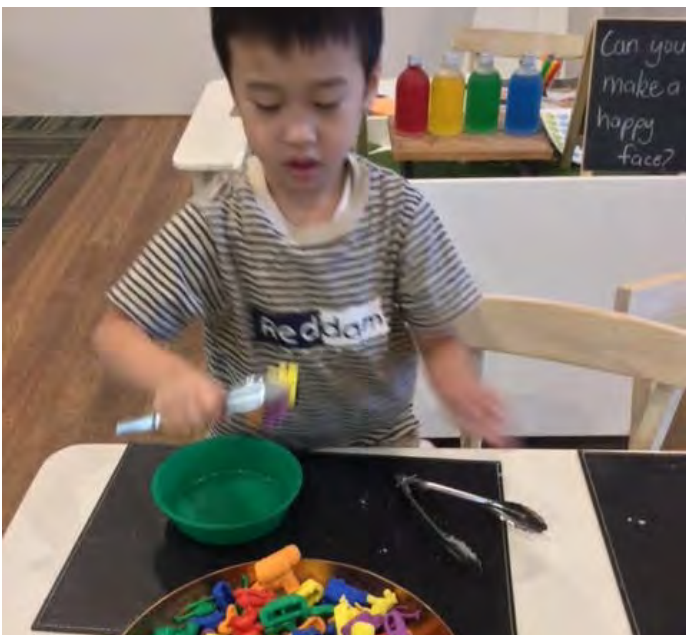
- Development of knowledgeable self-identities
- A feeling of being safe, secure and supported
- Development of emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience and sense of agency

The children were offered an activity based on Self Identities to foster this provocation. We sat at the table and looked at ourselves in a mirror. We discussed our facial features and were prompted to describe what we saw and then draw ourselves using coloured markers. We all took our time and carefully drew, looked at ourselves in the mirror and continued to draw again. Some great artwork transpired!

Stage 3: Welcome to stage 3/4



Stage 3: Welcome to stage 3/4



Stage 4:

By Ms Lauren Doughton & Ms Emily Brazel

I am confident

What a wonderful start to the year we have had. All the children have come together and welcomed each other. New friendships have been created and old friendships have been rekindled. It is such a lovely sight to watch the class interact with each other and share holiday stories.

This week we welcomed Stage 4 back to our school term with an exploration of self-identity. The children were eager to participate in a range of exciting activities that promoted literacy, numeracy and creative arts skills.

What is your name?

During provocation play this week Stage 4 were able to practice their literacy skills by using the whiteboards to create their first name. Throughout this experience we discussed individually with each child about letter formation, left to right and how we use capital and lower-case letters. It was lovely to see each child have a go at writing their name. The children were not only enjoying the opportunity to showcase their ability to find and copy their name but also enjoying the opportunity to learn and recognise her peers names. Having name play as part of the morning routine has an abundance of cognitive benefits for children, therefore it is important that each child finds the time to sign-in at their own sign-in book to ensure they are set up, established and recognised as part of the class for the day ahead.

This is me!

This week we begun our art concept by creating our very own self-portraits. The children were given a piece of paper and black pen in order to create. They first looked in the mirror at their face, discussing with their teachers the various features on their face such as their eyes, nose and mouth before setting to work. This allows teachers to guide the children in how to draw basic body shapes, as create a self-portrait that allows for maximum amount of artistic freedom. After the black outline was done it was time for the colour. The children used their fine-motor skills to paint with watercolour inside the black with a small thin brush. Once they had finished with the self-portrait the children were each asked to write the sentence 'my name is....' This encouraged the children to practise letter writing, tripod grip and concentration skills, whilst allowing them to feel part of the group.

Our goals for the year

This week we began discussing with the children their goals for the year and what they would like to achieve before they start school next year. It was lovely to hear all the beautiful words that the children were informing us. Experts believe that by children being able to set their own goals it provides them with the foundations to complete further achievement outside of school (Atieno 2018).

Housekeeping

We would like to request that all children arrive on or before 9 o'clock each day so that they can gain the most out of our educational program. We begin our numeracy and literacy teaching and extra-curricular classes at this time.

Stage 4: Self portraits



Stage 4: All about me!



Stage 4: Self Confidence



Stage 4

Ms Maddie Criss & Ms Sarah Ross

Family portraits.

Our families are our first experience of love and friendship and children's first opportunities to make lifelong memories. Families shape children's morals and actions and provide them with the opportunity to become constructive members of society. This week the children were invited to create a representation of their family using markers. We asked the children "Who is in your family and what do they look like?". Each child's drawing was unique with different members of family included.

Self Portraits.

This week we encouraged the children to draw self-portraits. To complete the self-portraits, the children sat in front of a mirror and were given time to look at and discuss what they could see in their reflection. Most of the children noticed their whole face first and so drew a circle before adding the details of their unique facial features. When they began drawing, most of the children were very serious about what they were doing and spent much of their time looking at each individual feature before they drew it. Some of the children could not wipe the smiles off their face as they watched themselves draw. The act of drawing a portrait allows children to spend time studying different aspects of the face such as eyes, chin, ears, nose, mouth and hair and encourages them to work out how all of these features fit together.

The children used a leaf to help them create their body. When choosing their leaf, the children considered what colour and shape leaf reflected themselves.

As an early learning setting, it is important that the children in our care are comfortable and feel truly accepted for who they are. Portraits are a personal and bold declaration of identity as they decide how they want to present themselves and what is important to them. This can aid children in building positive relationships with themselves and those around them.

Our Learning Goals

Stage 4 engaged in discussion about their learning goals this week. The children explored the term 'goal' and what it means. From this Stage 4 considered what they wanted to achieve or improve on as an individual. As young children continue to develop, they need to build confidence in their own abilities. Creating learning goals gives children a sense of agency in their learning and allows them to learn about topics relevant to their own lives and needs.

Some of the children's learning goals included:

"I would like to learn how to draw butterflies" – Amelia

"I would like to learn how to cook yummy things" – Alan

"I want to learn how to jump really high" - Leo

"I would like to learn how to play tennis" - Thomas

"I would like to learn how to build train stations" – Lachlan

"I would like to learn how to cook popcorn" - Isola

"I would like to make sure I always share" - Bella

Stage 4: Can you draw your family?



Stage 4: First day of stage 4



Stage 4: Can you draw your family?

