



# REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL ST LEONARDS NEWSLETTER



**REDDAM**  
E.L.S.

19th February 2021

## Principal's Message

By Mrs Simone Cooke

Dear Families,

As we embark upon a new year at Reddam, it is a wonderful time to focus upon the tenets of "Being, Belonging and Becoming" that underpin the Early Years Learning Framework. Building personal identity, confidence and self-esteem together with a strong sense of belonging to community, provides our children with strong foundations for later success and happiness. The relationships that children develop in these early years as they begin to explore and develop interests and friendships, allows children to feel safe, secure and build greater understandings of the world around them.

As part of building their socialisation skills our children need to practise their friendship skills of sharing, turn taking, patience, co-operation, listening and sorting out problems and disagreements. Already you will notice that your child is able to identify their friends and often name them. They will even search for their friends on arrival to school and already feel strong connections to their peers. For some children making friends comes easily, for others they may feel shy and reluctant to approach other children on the playground or may not know how to appropriately deal with conflict. Disagreements may arise as children struggle to negotiate with others, deciding who gets to play with a toy first or understand that they cannot always win a game or be first in line. Some of these skills take many years to learn, but every day your child's teacher is working with your child, encouraging them to make "good choices", to respect their playmates, to negotiate with others, to share and resolve conflicts. There are different stages of development that your child will pass through as they build friendships and connections with others. These start with early friendships that are more self-focused toward greater collaboration, as children develop greater awareness of the needs of others and are able to display greater self control.

### Birth – One Year

In the first year of life babies early social communication will be with their immediate carers. This will be based on interactions of smiling, giving, touching and imitating. It is important at this age to be at the child's level when interacting and engage in much face to face communication. This supports social communication and encouraging social turn taking with games such as peekaboo. Children at this age need much repetitive play to increase understanding and consolidate new words and emotions.

## Stage 1 – 2 Years

Once they become toddlers, children are able to identify their friends by name. They play alongside one another in what we call 'parallel play'. They are beginning to develop a greater awareness of self and begin to see how their actions impact others through cause and effect ie if I take away a toy from someone else they will cry. Seating children on the same level and encouraging face to face interaction builds communication skills. At this stage we are teaching children skills to protect themselves if they do not like something another child is doing. We do this by teaching them to simply say " stop" I don't like it and putting up their hand in a stop signal.

## Stage 3 -5 Years

Our Preschool aged children have developed the capacity to now recognise and understand the thoughts and feelings of others. They start to engage in what we call "undifferentiated perspective taking". It is important to recognise, however, that they often confuse the two and do not consistently consider this information ( Gurucharri & Selman, 1982). At this age we are teaching the children the difference between making " good choices" and " bad choices" when playing with each other. At this age the children are already starting to show a preference for some friends over others. Co-operative play emerges at this age and children will often build towers together, join in pretend play and designate roles to each other and understand the need to share and take turns. At this age we focus on building self-control so that our children learn to control their emotions appropriately rather than being too impetuous. The teachers regularly encourage the children to recognise each other's feelings and emotions and identify body language, this is often done through modelling or role playing.

## Stage 5 -6

By the time our children are in Stage 4 they are capable of considering the thoughts and feelings of others and also seek peer acceptance. Children are more able to make predictions and think ahead and identify social situations, rather than merely responding in a knee jerk fashion. At this age we focus upon collaboration and are able to construct joint rules with the children in which they can understand the consequences of their actions, solve social problems and negotiate with others. The teachers encourage the children to develop strategies to self-calm, such as quiet counting when angry, brainstorm solutions and even self-reflect on what they could have done differently.

Have a wonderful weekend.





# Stage 1: 1R

By Mrs Amanda Felton

"Oooh" the Babies proclaim with excitement, as they watch the butterfly fly around them. They are so amazed by the action they stop to pause for a moment and watch with intrigue as the wings hover and flutter around them. "Hello!" A small hand reaches out to touch the butterfly. They watch in awe as it lands upon someone's hand. We all watch very closely, and wide eyes examine the insect.

Our Babies learning experience concludes with the butterfly nursery rhyme as our butterfly flutters around to land and disappear. As part of the intentional learning the Babies enjoy learning about the butterfly. They learn that is an insect and that it is very colourful and pretty. It has six legs, wings, and drinks nectar from a flower. They are intrigued by this interesting creature.

The Babies extend their understanding by recreating a butterfly painting. With help from their teachers they discover how to make a butterfly by placing dabs of paint onto the paper and then folding the paper in half. The Babies try hard to open the folded paper, some Babies are less interested in this process and want to move onto the next thing....by getting their attention. Excitement builds up and pop open there comes a butterfly so pretty and nice.

Outside in the great outdoors the Babies enjoy a little bit of sunshine and spend their free time reading books and playing with balls. They also enjoy the obstacle equipment, navigating climbing, crawling, and balancing, which is loads of fun for everyone! Well done Babies it has been another amazing week.





# Stage 1: Outdoor fun!





## Stage 1: Playing with friends





# Stage 1: Exploring butterflies!





# Stage 1: 1E

By Miss Justine Heydra

For a small child there is no division between playing and learning; between the things he or she does 'just for fun' and things that are 'educational'. The child learns while living and any part of living that is enjoyable is also play." Penelope Leach

Stage 1E, had another unbelievably fun and exciting week exploring animal habitats and "Under the Sea".

This week was filled with naming and identifying different ocean animals during our provocation group times. This promoted cognitive development together with speech and language development. The children had the opportunity to come up one at a time and select the ocean animal that was labelled. They selected the animals out of a large group of animals such as an octopus, shark, stingray, starfish, eel, sea turtle and whale. All the children were very excited and enthusiastic, engaging in this hands-on activity. The children were extremely proud of themselves for identifying the correct sea animal. Sorting and classifying is an important pre-numeracy skill for children to develop.

Our sensory table activity this week were bright and colourful and included different textures for the children to explore and experience through play. The first activity was finding different fish in between seaweed. This activity promoted fine motor skills as the children used their hands and fingers to grasp, hold and press the seaweed.

The second activity was exploring bright blue sand, sea shells and ocean animals. The children enjoyed the fine texture of the sand and many of them realised they could scoop up the sand with the different sea shells and enjoyed watching it pour back out.

Our Literacy focus this week was based on a sparkle book called "Fish finds a home" written by Glenn Johnstone. This is a lovely story about a little fish who is looking for a home and it has an environmental message. The children loved the different bright glowing colours on each page. The book stimulated the children's imagination and learning by using bright colourful illustrations combined with holographic sparkle shapes.

As part of our Under the sea exploration the children also had the opportunity to engage in both water and sand play outside. They had so much fun with the sea animal in the water and discovered the crabs hidden in the sand.



# Stage 1E: Sea animal sensory play





# Stage 1E: Sea animal sensory play





## Stage 2R:

Miss Madeleine Grant

This week the children of 2R took a stroll through the deep, dark wood as we explored the hidden world within forests. One of our favourite books to read is *The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson, so we took inspiration from this setting to discover the busy ecosystems that dwell beneath the canopy of the tall trees.

As a class we talked about the importance of trees; how they give us clean air to breathe, provide shade to protect us as we play, and their beauty within the natural landscape. The children were given a range of different leaves, twigs, pinecones and bark, and asked to examine these closely with the help of magnifying glasses. Their vocabularies and language skills were put to the challenge as we asked them to describe what they were experiencing; to recall the colours and shapes they recognised, the natural smell of the wood and leaves, the rough or smooth textures they felt, and the sounds it made as the leaves and sticks were crumpled, twisted and snapped.

Our art project used small branches from various trees and bushes in place of traditional paintbrushes. They dipped the leaves into a range of green paints to recreate a lush, leafy forest. As they painted we tested their knowledge of colours by discussing the different colours present. Some were lighter or darker, or had a more blue, yellow or brown hue, but they were all green.

As they played we talked about the kinds of animals we would find in a forest. Creatures like those in *The Gruffalo*, as well as native animals that live in the Australian bush such as koalas, possums, and birds. We took our learning into the playground to discover what was living in the shade of the garden, and the children were delighted to find snails nestled among the long grass. This provided a fantastic opportunity for the children to learn not only about the ecosystems that exist all around us, but also about respect and caring for the natural world as they gently observed the creatures before leaving them in their environments.



## Stage 2: Creating art through the natural world





## Stage 2: Exploring nature





## Stage 2: Finding living friends outdoors





## Stage 2/3:

By Miss Gabriela Alvarez

Aboriginal peoples past and present are the natural resource managers of this land. For tens of thousands of years, Aboriginal people utilised all aspects of our land and water to sustain their lifestyles, work cohesively with the environment, and keep themselves and the ecosystem fit and healthy. Aboriginal communities have a spiritual and customary living relationship with water in all its forms, through creation stories, water use as a resource, and knowledge about sharing and conserving water. Aboriginal people have a holistic view of land, water and culture and see them as one, not in isolation.

Natural early childhood environments are places where children can reclaim the magic that is their birthright, the ability to grow and learn to their fullest in their unique experiential way through the joy of exploration and discovery in the natural world. However, perhaps even more important, the natural elements offer the hope that children will develop the environmental values to become the future stewards of the Earth who will preserve the diversity and wonder of Nature.

There is something about the ocean that makes it so mesmerising. Maybe it is the size. Maybe it is all the different creatures that we can find in it. Either way, children enjoy learning about the ocean and sea life. Even if children cannot visit an ocean, they enjoy imagining what it would be like and engaging in the ocean inspired pretend play where our first provocation is inspired.

Extending our learning about the water, we also explored different kinds of bodies of water. Starting with Ice World. This is a sensory activity for children that involves playing with ice, water, and sea themed props. The fantastic thing about sensory play is that it opens the door to many fantastic learning opportunities such as imaginative play, language exploration, fine motor development for pre-writing skills, coordination, social interactions and so much more.

Providing the children with Sensory play opens opportunities to talk about and use describing words to communicate what is being experienced. How the ice felt on our hands, cold, freezing cold, if we leave our hands on it for too long, we learn that it hurts because it is too cold. The ice also felt slippery, smooth, and looked clear and see-through. We joked about how it would feel if we were to have a bath in it. The wonderful thing about open-end play opportunities is that they can grow and take on a whole new direction. Our ice world was left over the day to melt. So, at the end of the day, it became a whole other interesting play opportunity, where children enjoyed catching all the sea creatures out of the water.

Making a rain cloud in a jar was also a fun and easy way to teach children about the water cycle and how it rains. The children learnt about how clouds form when water vapour rises into the air and condenses onto tiny dust particles when billions of these droplets come together into visible cloud forms. Making a rain cloud in a jar is a simplistic model of how it rains, but it gives young children a hands-on visual that is extremely valuable to their learning. Plus, it is fun!



## Stage 2: The Ocean





## Stage 2: Rain clouds and ice worlds





## Stage 2: Rain clouds and ice worlds





# Stage 3:

Miss Emily Chacon

Buena Tarde!

This week we explored the continent of South America! As some teachers and families come from different countries in South America, we decided to travel across the continent. From brilliant Brazil, amazing Argentina, rocky Peru and colourful Chile.

We explored cultures, listened to music, learned dances, played soccer, and learnt how to count in Spanish. It was wonderful to see the children become so immersed in these exciting new countries.

We began the week by viewing our world map to see where South America was located, and how far it was to Australia and China. We then focussed on Brazil and discussed their Carnival festival that is celebrated just before lent. In the festival everyone dresses up in bright colours and dances to amazing music. Each child was then invited to create their own head piece using glitters, paints, feathers, and colourful stickers. Once completed we had our own Carnival in the classroom with music, bright lights and of course our wonderful headpieces.

While looking at Peru, the children were told about Machu Picchu, the new seventh wonder of the world. The children were shown pictures of the unique structures and were invited in a class discussion on how they think the buildings were created so high in the mountains. Using small blocks, the children were then able to create their own version on Machu Picchu.

In South America, the art of music is very popular. Throughout our morning group times the children were invited to stand up and dance along to the beat of Latin music. It was interesting to see the children move differently than usual, with many hands in the air and swinging hips.

The National dance in Chile is the 'la cueca', where a boy and a girl will dance around each other in circles waving handkerchiefs in the air. The children were each given a tissue and shown the steps of dancing the 'la cueca'. It was great to see the children so open to new cultures and eager to try new experiences.

This week has been a fantastic festival of colours, music, and Latin fever!



## Stage 3: Creating our own head piece!





## Stage 3: Our creations!





## Stage 3: Creating our own head pieces!





## Stage 3/4:

By Mrs Riina Andrew

This week at provocation time, the children were offered an experience of building their own 3D version of their homes. Working alongside each other, the children used the shaving foam as glue and sponges as bricks and created their own houses. 'Mine is big', was exclaimed by a class member, 'it's my house' said another member, 'it's my house with all the bricks and for my family' stated another classmate. Each class member had the opportunity to revisit this experience again during the day and created different masterpieces.

Using the family photos as inspiration, we decided to make collages of our own families in our homes. Each child sat at the table and first labelled all the members in their family photo. This led onto a counting experience where we compared the number of family members per photo and added up groups of girls and boys as well. We then went on to tell each other where their family photo was taken. Working in small groups, each child was able to draw on a window for each family member that lives in their house. Each window was then pasted onto a house shaped paper. Some children added doors to their collage and some children decided to draw flowers or grass on their artwork.

Our favourite song this week was called 'How many people live in your house?'. Some of the children enjoyed the song so much that they were heard singing it later that day and incorporating it into their play. This interest followed on from last week as the children enjoyed using their own (and other children's) photo blocks. Some of the class were seen partaking in role play situations in a family home. They took on the characters of parents and pretended to cook the dinner and watch the television. Most of the children seemed familiar with this role play situation as their language was conversational during this experience which showed a level of familiarity of this environment.

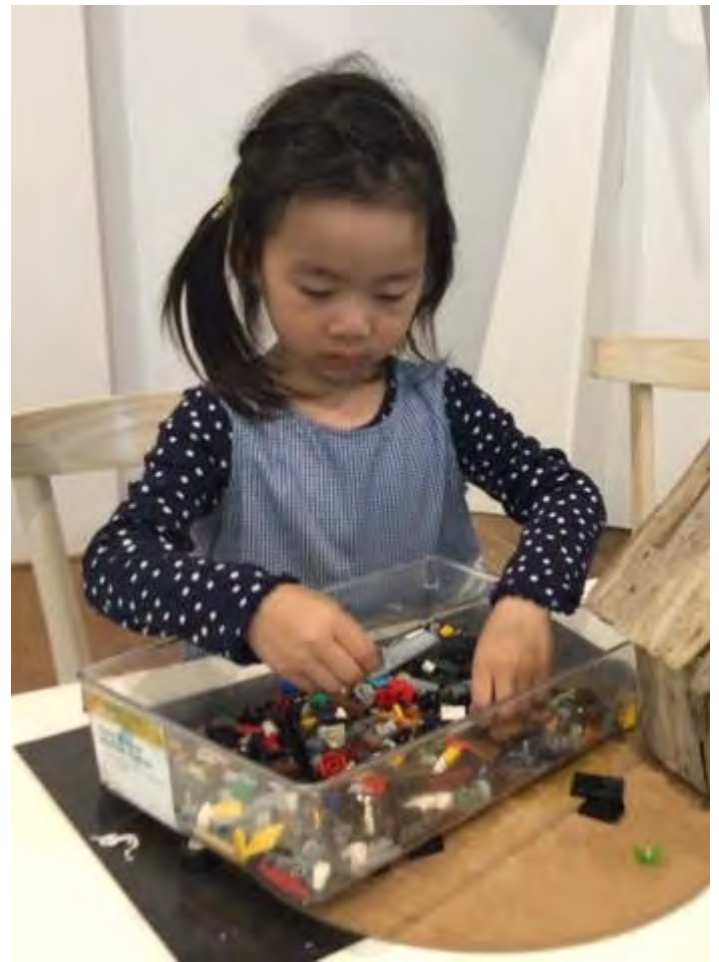


# Stage 3: Our family home





## Stage 3: Making 3D homes using Lego





# Stage 4:

By Miss Emily Brazel and Miss Lauren Doughton

## I am kind!

As an extension of last week's provocation "I am connected to my friends", teachers decided to continue discussing to the children about how they treat their friends and show kindness towards one another. Experts have determined that showing kindness changes the brain, and that selfless acts of giving provide physical and emotional benefits needed for a well-rounded individual. This is why it is essential for children to learn kindness early on. Acts of kindness increase energy and give a wonderful feeling of optimism, as well as heighten a sense of well-being and self-worth.

Teachers began the week by brainstorming with the children about what is kindness and how they think they can show kindness in the classroom. Some of the children's responses included:

"Saying nice words" Mika

"Being nice and happy to them" Jason

"Asking them if they want to play with you" Frank

"Giving cuddles" Suprina

"Be kind to them and say hello" Eden

Throughout the week the children were read a number of stories such as "In my heart", "Happy", "My feelings" and "Have you filled your bucket today?". These stories allowed the children to understand the importance of empathy, compassion and the overall sense of acceptance for others.

## In my heart

This week the children were read the book "In my heart", which explores a full range of emotions, describing how they physically and inside- hearts can have so many feelings! Once this book was read teachers set up an individual art experience which encouraged each child to use their creative and imaginative skills. A black marker was given for the child to draw a single heart of the watercolour paper, using the book a visual stimuli. Once their heart was drawn the children were given a variety of water colours the choose from in order to collage their paper. It was lovely to see all the different love hearts and colours on the papers. Each child's is unique and individualised in accordance their own emotions. Have a look on the wall for your child's wonderful art piece.

## Let's collage!

The children were given a love heart, variety of coloured paper, scissors and glue to create their own love hearts. They were first asked the cut out the hearts, developing their fine-motor and cutting skills, hand-eye co-ordination and concentration skills. Once this was complete the children set to work collaging. They enjoyed spending time at this experience alongside their peers, communicating effectively about their creation. After each child had finished creating they articulated with their teachers about how their heart feels and why.



# Stage 4: In My Heart Creations





## Stage 4: In My Heart creations



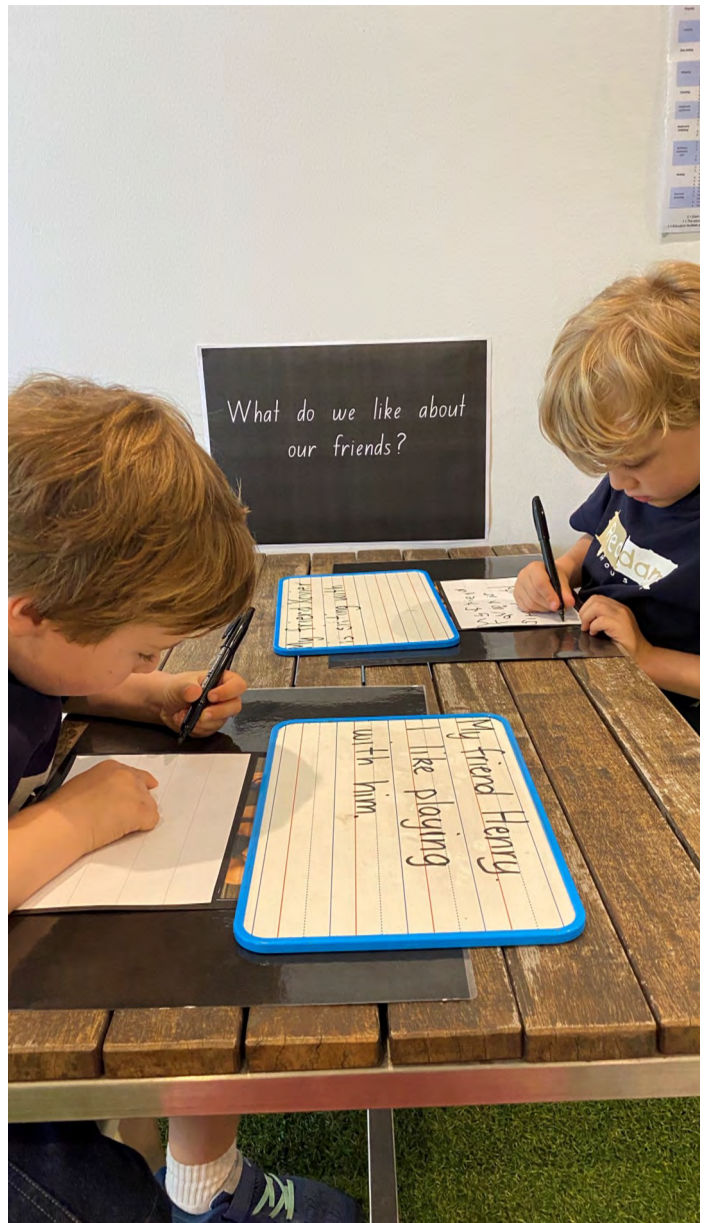


# Stage 4: What do we like about our friends?





# Stage 4: What do we like about our friends?





**“Creativity is inventing, experimenting, growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes and having fun.”**

Mary Lou Cook.

Art plays a vital role in a child's physical, emotional, and psychological development in addition to promoting their motor and social development. This week, we used art as a vehicle for expression that was enriching and engaging. Art provides children with an additional communication tool in which they can express their feelings and thoughts and we ensured all our stage four children had a safe environment to explore their imagination in.

## **Framing Fun**

This week the children engaged in some framing fun using natural loose parts. From sticks and rocks found from walks in the bush to seashells and stones collected when at the beach, the children had a range of parts to choose from and assemble in their own creative way. The children discussed the different textures of each item and their potential histories. It was wonderful to see Stage Four reconnect with nature and discuss fond experiences with each other after an item stirred memories.

## **Collaborative Art**

There is no right or wrong way to engage in art. Art is an expression of someone's creativity and imagination. This week, Stage Four children created a collaborative art piece focusing on cooperation instead of competition. The children offered words of praise and encouragement to each other as they used a range of tools to create one final product. The children developed their patience for one another, their respect for their peers and their overall social skills.

## **Combining photography with floral arrangements**

Last week we noticed many of the Stage Four children creating arrangements on the outdoor grass area with the flowers and leaves that had fallen from the surrounding trees. After one of the children started putting the flowers in their hair, we decided to provide the children with the opportunity to decorate their hair with flowers within the room this week and turn it into an artwork. The children combined photography with floral arrangements to create uniquely beautiful images



## Stage 4: Natural art





## Stage 4: Natural art





## Stage 4: Frida Kahlo inspired artwork





## Stage 4: Frame artwork





# My Gym





This week the children continued their introduction into Piano lessons at Reddam ELS St Leonards. It was exciting to see that the children were starting to get used to structure and routine at Reddam this week. The students were introduced to the key "D for Dog". Some advanced students in this group performed finger exercises in front of the whole class. A student named Kingsley had learnt C major scale as well, which was extremely rare for this age group. Stage 4 students taught how to find the key "C for Cat" and "D for Dog" and most of them played a simple piano tune with the key C and D. In conclu-





# Yoga

