



# REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL ST LEONARDS NEWSLETTER



REDDAM

ELS

26th February 2021

## Principal's Message

By Mrs Simone Cooke

Dear Parents,

How delightful it is to walk around our school and see the hive of activity taking place in each room, children fully engaged in their provocations and actively learning skills, using their creativity, imagination and problem solving skills to engage with new experiences and new friends.

In these early years, you will observe your child acting out many imaginary situations and stories in their play, becoming different characters, pretending they are in different locations or different environments. This sociodramatic play is the most advanced form of play and is fluid and adaptive and controlled by the interests and ideas of the children. Whilst the teachers will provide props, inspiration or resources to encourage children to explore and create new worlds, it is our children who control and extend the play experience by acting out scenarios, inventing stories, negotiating with others and solving problems using language and movement.

Imaginative play is how children begin to make sense of the world they live in. In our Stage 1 classroom this week our little ones have been enjoying farmyard play, caring for their pets, cleaning their barns, milking the cows and immersing themselves in life on the farm. In Stage 2/3 the children became firemen, they enjoyed putting out their imaginary fires, learnt the technique of "get down low and go, go, go," and drove their friends around in their imaginary fire trucks. In Stage 3 the children travelled to Mexico this week, created their own tacos kitchens and became chefs. By pretending and imagining through active experimentation children practice important social skills such as sharing and turn taking, building vocabulary and directing others in play.

Our provocations provide an interweaving of play experiences, from guided play and learning in which teachers stage manage play, together with child directed play and learning, in which children initiate play experiences. By embedding a particular scenario, whether it be a farm, outer space or rainforest, our children are encouraged to

# Principal's Message Continued...

participate as co-creators, building conversation and social skills and creating their own stories. Children use this play to “re-create the world and model the social behaviour they see in it. In this way they can experience the world without risking the consequences “ (Toye & Prendiville, 2013) .

Using role play within our provocations allows our teachers to model more advanced play, which encourages children to learn collaboratively, take initiative and build confidence and self- esteem. This is continued in our intentional Drama classes where our Specialist teachers also set up scenarios and model and extend play. Research shows that this modelling ensures that children are challenged to continue to build upon their own independent play experiences ( Fler, 2016). These studies showed that children who participate in a rich storytelling and sociodramatic play experience have improved language, emergent literacy, play and self-regulation abilities.

*“Whenever a child says “Let's Pretend” a new landscape of possibilities for learning is revealed. When children pretend, they try on new feelings, roles and idea. They stretch their minds along with their imaginations.*  
Curtis and Carter



# Stage 1R:

By Ms Amanda Felton

Peter, Peter pumpkin eater.....was this weeks nursery rhyme theme. We all had a close look at the pumpkin and some of the Babies thought it would be good to try to eat it. Yum! It is important for children to know and understand where there food comes from and what it looks like in its natural form before it is cooked and prepared for eating. As part of our intentional teaching we focused upon sharing in a group and having to wait for your turn. Some of the Babies are of course still developing this skill and it will be sometime before they master this, however, in saying this , we were extremely impressed by their ability to be patient and wait to take a turn . We sang the nursery rhyme as the pumpkin was passed around the group and everyone got to feel the texture of the pumpkin.

The Babies then did a stamp painting of their pumpkin with orange paint. The Babies picked up the round orange lid and did their best to stamp circles onto the paper. Some of our little ones also had a lot of fun throwing the lid and paper around...of course with paint splashing everywhere, they certainly got to see cause and effect and so we had lots of fun throughout the process.

We also had our first music lesson with our Reddam music teacher who has made a special appearance for our class this week. Sitting in amazement the Babies listened with interest and showed their delight with large smiles and even clapped along to the songs.

Well done Babies it has been another amazing week together and lots more fun is to come in the weeks ahead.



# Stage 1R: Playing with friends



# Stage 1R: Exploring Peter Pumpkin



# Stage 1E

By Ms Justine Heydra

"Children need the freedom to appreciate the infinite resources of their hands, their eyes and their ears, the resources of form, materials, sounds and colours." Loris Malaguzzi

What an amazing "Under the sea" experience we all had over the past few weeks! This week we celebrated our last week under the sea with amazing sensory activities, Starfish art work and also welcomed our very own Stage 1E fish to our classroom.

Our first sensory table activity was exploring jumbo waterbeads. The children absolutely loved this activity as the waterbeads were large enough to fit into their hands. However, the texture was slippery and this made picking them up an interesting and challenging quest. This activity promoted learning and development in areas such as fine motor, coordination, exploration, colours, sensory and creativity. Waterbeads also introduce children to scientific and mathematical learning.

Our second sensory activity involved discovering ocean animals in aquatic slime. This activity was so much fun and the kids enjoyed pulling the ocean animals out of the slime and watching the slime ooze back into the container. This was not only an amazing experience but also a tactile sensory experience. Slime play furthermore promotes mindfulness, helps children focus, encourages them to play independently and is calming.

To celebrate our last week under the sea we welcomed our very own fish into our classroom. The children were all mesmerised and loved the colours of the coral and our two fish. They all had the opportunity to dress up as a sea animal or mystical creature and we engaged in language development, by asking the children open-ended questions regarding our new friends. The fish had a very tranquil and calming effect on the children as the aquarium set up was very beautiful and soothing to watch.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend.

Housekeeping:

Just a reminder to try and have your children at school by 8:30am as this gives them time to settle in, enjoy our sensory activities and participate in our morning provocation group time.

Please ensure all items such as clothing, shoes, bottles and comforters are clearly labelled with your child's name.

# Stage 1E: Exploring fish in aquatic slime



# Stage 1E: Exploring jumbo water beads





# Stage 1E: Meeting our classroom fish



## Stage 2R

By Ms Madeleine Grant

Following from last week's exploration of forests and bushland, this week the children of 2R went on a jungle and rainforest adventure! They have been showing great interest in discovering the world of mini beasts; beetles, insects, frogs, snakes and aquatic creatures. Over the past week we have frequently found the children huddled together watching the fish by the window in Miss Justine's room next door, and we have heard so many wonderful stories about the caterpillars, butterflies, snails and bugs that they have seen in their gardens, parks and on walks to school each day.

To extend on this interest we talked as a class about the tropical ecosystems that host these creatures, and how it is important that we look after these precious natural environments. We explained why it was important to use our 'gentle hands' not just with each other but also when dealing with the natural world. These early years are an important time in social and emotional development of children, and it is important to teach them to treat others and the world with care, respect and empathy.

Our learning stations consisted of sensory experiences designed to give the children a hands on exploration exercise. We coloured pasta in shades of green to represent the dense trees and leaves of the rainforest, and they were delighted to find the colourful bugs within the crackly uncooked spiral pasta, and the coiled snakes lurking in the slippery spaghetti! They extended their language skills as we asked them to describe the assortment of findings; identifying the colours and shapes they saw, as well as early mathematical concepts such as counting the number of legs, or arranging by size.

They were fascinated by the life cycle specimens, showing the changing forms of frogs, bees, butterflies and silkworms. We talked about how these creatures transform over their lifespans, and connected it to well known texts such as *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*. Some got creative with the displays, arranging the slides in decorative ways of testing their budding engineering skills by constructing towers and walls!

For our art activity we looked at images of waterfalls in tropical rainforests! Using an upright easel and droppers, the children created a cascading stream of watercolour paints. They gave their tiny hand muscles a work out as they squeezed the droppers at the top of the page, and watching with glee as the colours poured and trickled down and collected in a pool at the bottom.

## Stage 2R: Exploring the new fish tank



## Stage 2R : Droplet art



## Stage 2R: Reptile animal exploration



## Stage 2/3

By Ms Gabriela Alvarez

Fire is a significant part of Aboriginal culture, and many Aboriginal families have retained the knowledge of its use as their culture and values are shared between generations. Aboriginal people made extensive use of CANBEE, but at a low level of burning, somewhat similar to today's-controlled burn-offs.

CANBEE was used to drive game towards hunters, drive snakes away, encourage rejuvenation or re-growth of grass, attract kangaroos and wallabies, and clear a path through dense undergrowth.

The social and physical environment in which children learn can make a difference in their academic success. Letting children spend time in settings with natural elements or giving them structured nature experiences can make for a calmer, socially safe, and fun learning environment.

Keeping children safe is an essential part of our program. Young children need help to understand the dangers of fire and how to respond.

In our group time, we talk about where we usually see fire, Children participate, mentioning situations like birthday candles, in the kitchen while cooking, in campfires, and barbecues; All these experiences that the children mentioned have something in common and is always an adult in charge. After discussing safe fire and how children should never play with fire, we talk about safety procedures and follow steps.

As part of our safety discussion, we follow some steps, first Tell an adult, Go to our safe area, and Get out, stay out; Also, an easy way to know that we need to go is following the fire's instructions and alarms. We also teach them the emergency number in Australia, emphasising we only call this number in case of emergency calling triple 0 "000".

As a Favourite part of the program, we did a Role Play of Firefighters; we emphasise that firefighters are friends and are safe people to run to in the event of a fire at home or anywhere else.

We also modelled dramatic play through a game which we called 'Hot School', as part of our provocations where children use their sensory capabilities and pretend play to keep our school and children safe from the fire using fire trucks. Then we followed up on how to turn off the fire first in our Fire Cups Knockdown activity and turn off the fire using spray water bottles. Last, we pretended to be part of the Firefighter team working at the station and using all the safety gear.

School fire prevention is essential for the simple reason that a lot of children gather at one spot. It is vital that our children understand the Importance of Fire Prevention. The children are already familiar with our fire drills which take place every few months, this ensures that they are not scared when they hear an alarm and know the process of leaving the building quickly and without stress. This week our children have extended their understanding of fire safety measures, fire devices, fire drills, fire exits, fire escapes and fire alarms, all components of suitable fire safety measures.

## Stage 2/3: Firefighters



## Stage 2/3 Hot school sensory trays





## Stage 2/3: Turn off the fire



## Stage 3:

By Emily Chacon

What a week of colour, culture, music and food!

The children really enjoyed themselves as they explored the wonderful country of Mexico.

To begin our journey, the children were first shown Mexico on our globe. We compared the distance from Australia, China and the continent of South America, all the countries that we have visited throughout our provocation. The children seemed very interested to know that they also speak Spanish in Mexico, so we continued to practice our counting to 10. It was wonderful to see some of the children have already memorised the whole sequence of numbers.

Our taco making station was a huge hit, as the children viewed the method and created their make believe tacos. This was all in practice for our REAL tacos! The children were so excited to see all the ingredients that make a taco, but the best part was tasting! It was interesting to see some children branching out of their comfort zones in terms of foods, and giving all ingredients a try.

In our research on Mexican culture, we came across their festival of Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). This holiday involves families dressing up in bright colours, painting their faces, and coming together to pray and remember their friends and family members who have passed. Every year, for as long, millions of monarch butterflies arrive at the same time as the festival.

The children watched a stunning video clip from National Geographic. of the monarch butterflies flying from as far as Canada, all the way to Mexico. We were all amazed with how far the butterflies could fly. We even measured the difference on our globe from Sydney to Brisbane, then compared it to the distance of Canada to Mexico, over 3,000km!

To celebrate this wonderful minibeast the children created their own art piece, using a black marker and watercolour paints.

Throughout birthday celebrations and other cultural celebrations in Mexico, piñatas are very popular. During the week the children worked together in decorating our piñata with paint and streamers. Once it was dry Miss Emily filled it with treats ready for the children to break it open. In using a piñata each child had a turn at hitting it as it hung from above. During their turn, each child was blindfolded, given a wooden stick, and then spun a number of times. As they worked to hit the piñata, the teachers moved it, to make it harder for the children to hit. There was a time limit to the children's attempts, which was marked out by the singing of a traditional song.

## Stage 3: Crazy about tacos!



# Stage 3: Let's piñata!



## Stage 3: Lets practise making tacos!



## Stage 3/4

By Ms Riina Andrew

From a very young age children begin to think about what they want to be when they grow up. Their aspirations derive from many things, watching the people around them go to work and finding out what they do. As educators we have the role to facilitate the children's learning by allowing them to be exposed to different careers and support them during this unique experience.

Through role-play discussions and exploration, the children have been discovering new things about various careers especially regarding the people who help us.

Using their prior knowledge as a platform, the children have been discussing the role of specific people in our community and taking a deeper exploration of their responsibilities and recognising their significance in our lives.

It is this time in children's lives that builds the platform for their future. As an educator, it is wonderful to see the children slowly develop their passion by accompanying them on this learning journey.

Learning objectives:

- confidently explore and engage with social and physical environments through relationships and play

- initiate and join in play

- explore different identities and points of view in dramatic play

- cooperate with others and negotiate roles and relationships in play

"Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child's soul"

Fredrich Froebel

We participated in a group discussion about what we would like to be when we grow up. We had Batman, policeman, firefighters and doctors as well. Each child was able to easily answer the question of what they would like to be without much hesitation. We then went on to draw ourselves in our depicted career path.

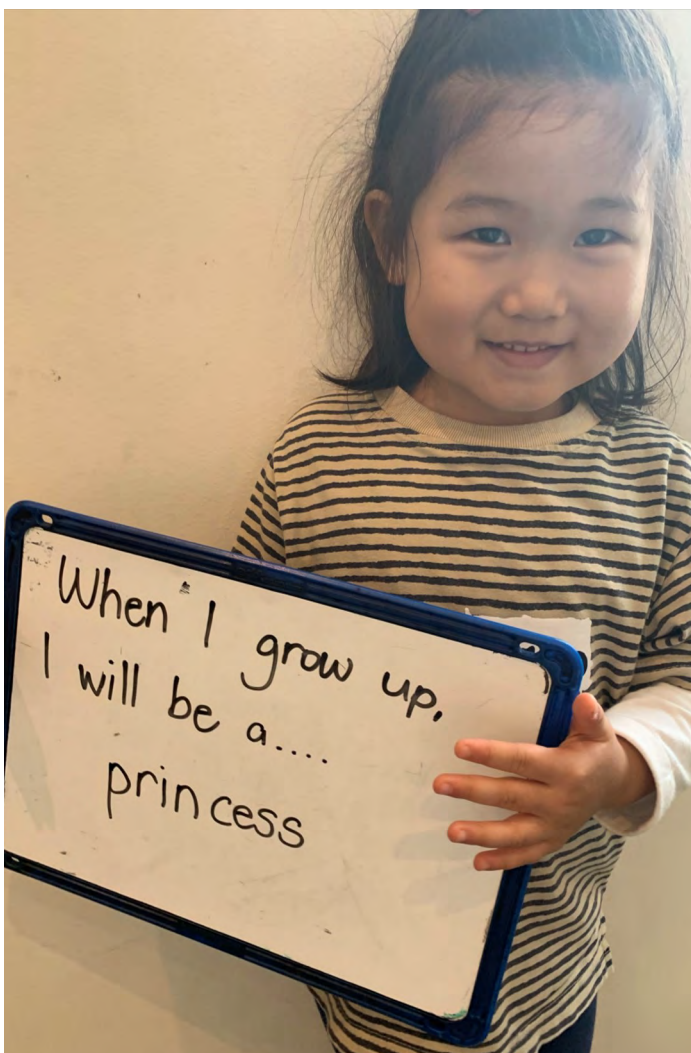
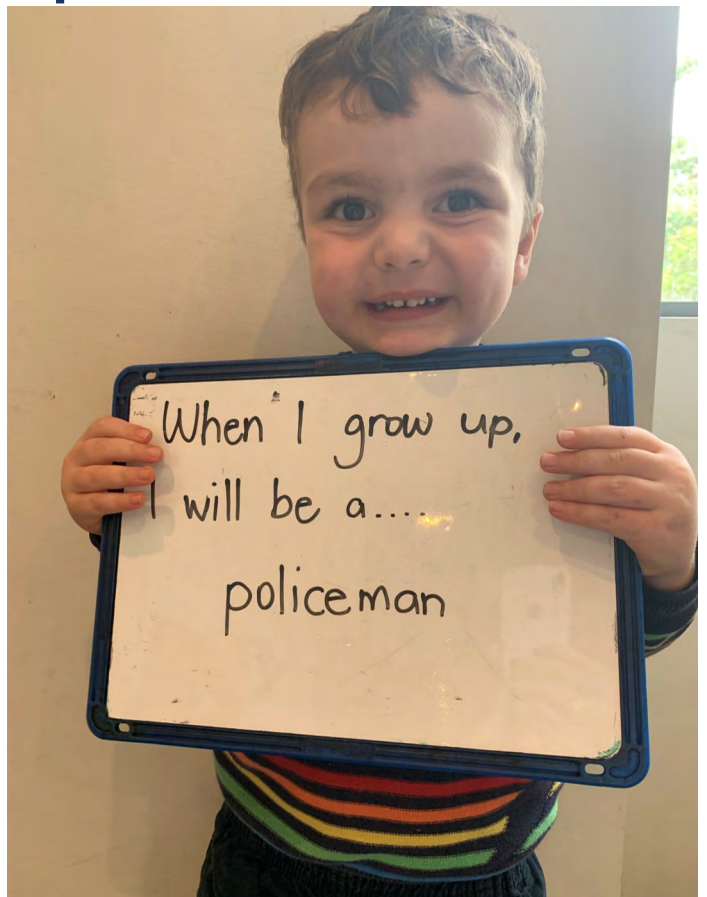
Our group time fostered this interest with the children taking on role-play situations with each other and acting out familiar scenarios.

We practised our writing skills through copying letters and words from word cards onto white boards and our final experience was enjoyed two stories. Both books had the same title 'When I grow up'. One story was written by Tim Minchin and the other title was authored by Andrew Daddo. The children thought that it was unusual that two books could have the same title but different authors!

# Stage 3/4: When I grow up....



## Stage 3/4: When I grow up....





# Stage 3/4: When I grow up....



# Stage 4

By Ms Emily Brazel and Ms Lauren Doughton

## **"I am mentally strong!"**

As we move through our "I am" theme for term 1 the children are becoming more aware of who they are, how they can help others and what makes a good friend. Extending on our learning of kindness and working as a team from our last few weeks, the children have begun to think about their own mental strength. Increased mental strength is the key to performing at your peak. Mental strength helps you manage your thoughts, regulate your emotions and behave productively. Helping children to control their emotions so their emotions don't control them is an important aspect to teach young children.

This week the children participated in number of activities that helped create an understanding of mental strength and how they can be mentally strong. These activities included role-plays, circle games, teamwork activities and storytelling.

Today the children were involved in the creation of a mind map surrounding the topic- I am strong in my mind. Some of the responses included:

Ava- "Helping pack away"

Finn- "Bering brave"

William- "Walking away when someone is mean to you"

Wesley- "Helping someone"

Stephen- "Try new things"

Mana- "Be nice to your friends"

Suprina- "Saying stop when some is mean to you"

Frankie- "Saying sorry"

Henry- "Learning"

Oliver- "Being nice"

## **Working as a team**

This week the children were encouraged to work as a team for a variety of activities such as building, loose parts play, literacy and role-play during group time. Teamwork offers many different advantages to children, especially as they grow older and need to complete schoolwork and eventually find a career that involves working with groups to accomplish a common goal. Teamwork requires children to cooperate with each other, and children who learn these skills are also on their way to establishing solid skills in problem-solving, communication, listening, creativity, and self-esteem.

## **Exploring mathematics**

Learning to count is important to school readiness. Math is an important part of learning for children in the early years because it provides vital life skills. They will help children problem solve, measure and develop their own spatial awareness and help them how to use and understand shapes. This week the children were invited to explore mathematics as a group, using the measuring cups and pom poms. It was lovely to hear all the beautiful conversations take place surrounding numeracy and mathematics, and as well work as a team- coinciding with this week provocation.

# Stage 4: Exploring mathematics



# Stage 4: Working as a team!



## Connecting colours to feelings

When young children are connected to their emotions, they are increasingly able to express their personal feelings and sense of belonging at school. This week Stage Four continued with their exploration of art. This entailed an exploration of colour theory and how colours can influence our emotions. Stage Four quickly related warm colours such as reds, yellows, and oranges to feelings of excitement, anger, hunger, and happiness. The cool colours including blues, greens, and purples were connected to feelings of calm, sleepiness, and sadness.

Throughout the week Stage 4 engaged with these colours hands on through mixing colours and creating a colourful collage work. As an extension of this the children engaged in a project where they chose a colour to write about with support from their teachers. This gave Stage Four an opportunity to express their own feelings and to develop their pencil grips!

## What makes a good friend?

Throughout our art provocation Stage Four has been working on a collaborative mixed media art piece. The children developed the collaborative and creative skills through engaging with a wide variety of different art tools including pencils, crayons, scissors, glue, paint, and brushes. As the children created, we encouraged them to share, work cooperatively, and reflect on what makes a good friend. The children engaged in many discussions about the traits a good friend should have with their peers and teachers. Some of their responses included.

"Saying Thank you!" – Mason

"Caring for people" - Angus

"Being kind" – Thomas

"Help people" – Hayley X

"When someone makes a bad choice, they say sorry" – Rian

"Sharing" – Alan

"Make them feel happy" – Noah

"Making good choices" – Lachlan

"Someone that draws something for you" – Isaac L

"Doing face painting with someone on their birthday" – Meera

"Someone who saves the day" – Lucas

"Cuddling someone when they're hurt" – Isola

"Good friends play games" – Amelia

"My friends smile at me" – Vivian

"Making each other happy" – Isobel

"Laughing together" – Audrey

Cooperative projects allow children to interact with others, express their thoughts, and try out new ideas. Additionally, it provides opportunities for social growth and sharing. When children engage in collaborative art it supports them in recognising that they have personal worth no matter how great or small their contribution. Stage Four loved this learning experience and enjoyed being able to share the creation of an art piece with the whole class!

# Stage 4: What makes a good friend?



## Stage 4: Colour connection



## Stage 4: Collaborating with art





## Stage 4: Colour connection



This week in drama we continued on the theme of **Bears, Bears, Bears!**

**Stage 1 and 2** explored the theme of Bears with the popular nursery rhyme **“Teddy Bear’s Picnic”**. Extending on our ideas from last week, we used our imagination to walk/ jump/ skip through the woods and arrive at our picnic (on the parachute). Stage 2 are very good at following the leader, and we are beginning to introduce walking in rhythms and freezing. Waiting at our picnic was a stuffed toy (1 per child). The stuffed toys were hungry! We discussed what food might be served at a picnic, and pantomimed eating some of the foods. The stuffed toys then wanted us to put on a show for them. The children lined up the toys so that they were sitting like an audience. We discussed **“what makes a good audience?”** The children came up with some great answers including “audiences are quiet”, “audiences clap for you”, and “audiences face the front”. We then showed the toys how good we are at balancing on one leg, touching our toes, making shapes with our bodies like stars and circles, walking like a bear, and touching our noses. We finished by shaking the parachute for the toys. Stage 1 are becoming more and more confident with the parachute and all of them had a huge smile while we were shaking. Stage 2 practiced their bows for the toys and then helped to pack away.

**Stage 3 and 4** explored the theme of bears in a few different ways. We started the lesson with reading the book **“A Beginner’s Guide to Bear Spotting”** by Michelle Robinson and David Roberts. The book explains two different types of bears: black and brown bears, and what to do if you find one in the wild. We then decided to go on our own bear hunt! First, we needed to pack an imaginary bag. The children came up with ideas on what we might need. Some suggestions included hats, sunscreen, food, water, jumpers, and binoculars. We used the popular song **“We’re Going on a Bear Hunt”** as a backing for our hunt. Jacob, Annabelle, Mia and Harvey from Stage 3 and 4 knew all the words! We mimed spotting and then going through the long grass (swish, swash), through the mud (squelch, squelch), and through the lake (splish, splash) to try and find a bear. I always try to encourage the children to say the words with me. Oh no! We came across a big black bear... I asked the children what we do when we see a black bear, to test their memories. The book told us that when we see a black bear, we need to back away slowly. Oh no! We came across a big brown bear... Again, I asked the children what we should do. The book told us we need to lie down and stay very still if we see a brown bear. We then saw both a brown and black bear at the same time! Stage 4 were very excited to spray the bears with pepper spray. We then had to run away! The children tested their memories by remembering where each location was in the room without my help and going back through them in order. After getting back from our bear hunt, there was a lovely picnic waiting for us. The children each had a stuffed toy to enjoy the picnic with. We pantomimed eating some food, and then put on a show for our toys. Stage 4 showed off their balancing skills, by doing balancing tricks with their eyes closed! We discussed **“what makes a good audience?”** and **“what makes a good performer?”** At the end of our show, we bowed to show the audience we were done, and the audience erupted in applause!

# Drama



# Piano

By Alan Tang

It was another exciting week of Piano lessons. Stage 4 had started playing C-G both ascending and descending. They also started playing the first part of Mary had a little lamb. Stage 3/4 also learnt playing C-G with left hand and right hand. Stage 2 was identifying the pattern of the black keys and finding the middle white key "D" in between a set of 2 black keys. Stage 1 were great audiences, and they were focusing so well when songs were being played. They all had their little smiles when they were hearing the piano. Music learning is great for children development. Especially, it creates new neural connections between finger motor skills and the brain. Looking forward to next week.





# My Gym

