



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL ST LEONARDS NEWSLETTER



REDDAM

ELS

26th March 2021

Principal's Message

By Mrs Simone Cooke

Dear Parents,

What a wet, wet week we have had! After being inside all weekend it was very important this week that our children had the opportunity to still have some outdoor play, get out and run, stretch their legs and, of course, jump in puddles!

Decked out in rain jackets, poncho's, rain hats and gumboots our little ones delighted in the timeless childhood joy of jumping in and out of puddles, squealing with delight as the raindrops fell on their outstretched hands and delighting in the freedom of being outside.

Of course the initial thoughts of allowing children to play outside on a wet day is that they may catch a cold. However, it is a myth to believe that they will get sick from being outside. As we know colds are caused by viruses and are not influenced by the rain. There are significant benefits of outdoor play for our children. Being outside on a wet day poses a different set of challenges to children, they are exposed to different sensory experiences and encourages creative thinking and gross motor movement.

We are very fortunate at Reddam to have lovely large outdoor play spaces where children can run, climb and explore. The importance of outdoor play for children's healthy development is grounded in a strong body of research, which shows that children who are exposed to unstructured outdoor play, which cannot be replicated inside, develop greater autonomy and creativity. The outdoor play environment offers opportunities for self-directed play which fosters imagination, co-operation and socialization skills. It is important that children are given the opportunity to get messy and play with mud, feel sand between their toes and enjoy the value of water play. Singing in the rain, scooping up water, catching raindrops and watching a rainbow emerge from a puddle provides real life engagement with concepts that increases their understanding of the world around them.

Principal's Message Continued...

Children who are exposed to natural elements from a young age develop a greater emotional connection with the environment and are also more likely to adopt ecological and sustainable behaviours as adults.

Outdoor play is extremely important for young children's development, both in terms of building physical gross motor skills but also for connecting them to the natural world. Having to negotiate stairs, climb equipment or navigate different surfaces provides endless opportunities for gross motor development, socialisation and a feeling of achievement.

Whilst we are very pleased to see a return to sunshine, we definitely made the most of the wet conditions this week and the wonderful fun, learning opportunities it offered!

EASTER MORNING TEA

We are thrilled to advise that with Covid restrictions easing, we will be hosting our first family event of the year and invite you to join us for an Easter Morning Tea next Thursday morning 1st April from 8am – 9am. This is a lovely opportunity to meet other parents and enjoy some Easter festivities. Could I also remind all families that the school will be closed over the Easter break on Good Friday 2nd April and Easter Monday 5th April.

We do hope you can join us for our Easter celebrations.



Singing In The Rain



Squishing Up My Bumble Bee & Hickory Dickory Dock

What a week! We had so much fun chasing, catching and squishing our Bumble Bees and playing with the sensory bees in their little hive whilst singing... "*I'm squishing up my Bumble Bee won't my mummy be so proud of me...*" . We then had the chance to get really messy and created our very own bee paintings. We did this by making yellow handprints across the page and then dipping our fingers in black paint to create black stripes on the bee. We were all amazed at how clever we are and spent a lot of time experimenting with the squishy sensation of hand painting.

This week we also learnt another Nursery Rhyme, "*Hickory Dickory Dock*" and thought it was very funny to see a mouse running up a clock. We create a lovely collage by using lots of different little bits of cut up paper, with outstanding fine motor-skills all the Babies really demonstrated how well they could pick such tiny pieces of paper and concentrate and share together, well done!

In circle time we spent some time acting out how to get the mouse up and over the clock as we sang "*Hickory Dickory Dock*," whilst some of these hand motions are a little harder, everyone gave it a try and there were lots of smiles all round.

Because of all the rain that was falling this week we certainly needed to keep up our gross motor play and so we engaged in many music and movement activities throughout the day. The children are becoming far more confident in their climbing and balancing skills and are really enjoying the challenges of My Gym exercises.

Well done to everyone as it has been a very wet but fun week.



Stage 1R: Painting Bumble Bees



Stage 1R: Exploring Hickory Dickory Dock



Stage 1E

By Ms Justine Heydra

In Stage 1E we had a fantastic week learning all about “Mini Beasts”.

Our main focus was the bee. In our provocation group time we sang a very interactive and exciting song “Beehive” and the children thoroughly enjoyed this song, with the bees hiding in the beehive and they were all very surprised when they flew out. This song also focused on numeracy as we had to count the bees as they came out of the hive. During our group time we also focused on the life cycle of a bee. The children were each given the opportunity to handle real-life specimens from nature and this hands-on activity sparked so much wonder, interest and curiosity in the children. The specimens consisted of the egg, larva, pupa, worker bee, pollen, queen bee, honeycomb, beeswax and honey.

Our sensory activities were also filled with different textures, insects and colours. Our first activity was different spiders in bright red sand. The children loved the red sand and being able to pinch and scoop it up with their hands. They also enjoyed hiding the spiders under the sand. This sensory activity promoted eye-hand coordination and small muscle control. The second sensory table activity was a variety of different mini-beasts and a combination of red and green gelatine cubes. The children really loved the wobbly texture of the gelatine cubes and enjoyed placing their different mini-beasts on the cubes.

Our art work this week was a very exciting bee painting. The children each had the opportunity to use two bees with black and yellow paint to stamp their very own bees. The children loved the texture of the bees and loved dipping them into the paint and stamping it on their paper. During the activity we sang our beehive song and also made the buzzing sound a bee makes.

Towards the end of the week the rain finally cleared and the children had the best time outside during sand and water play. Children’s exploration with sand and water help build various skills such as physical development, cognitive development and social development. All the children enjoyed being outdoors again and had a great time exploring both the water and sand tuff trays.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend.



Stage 1E: Outdoor Play



Stage 1E: Bumble Bee Art



Stage 1E: Mini Beast Sensory Play



This week was off to a wet and windy start with heavy downpour preventing many of us from getting outside over the weekend. As this continued into the week we invited the children to pack their gumboots and raincoats in case we got a chance to get out of the classroom. When the rain slowed to a light sprinkle and the air warmed up on Tuesday afternoon, a group of 2R children bravely ventured out into the playground where we found plenty of puddles awaiting them! Some were apprehensive at first, while some jumped straight in – literally! Soon they were all running and jumping around together, seeing who could make the biggest splashes, and enjoying the rain on their skin and the feeling of finally being outside again!

In the classroom our learning was focused on areas with much less rain than Sydney was experiencing. We took a trip to the sandy deserts, and the children were engaged in sensory and investigative learning experiences that looked at the plants and animals that are able to survive in such arid climates.

In small groups we talked about the things plants need to grow, which we learnt about when we did our gardening unit. We brought up how plants need water, but that in the deserts water was scarce, so how do plants such as cactuses survive? To explain this we used sponges and a small amount of water, to show how these special plants are able to hold on to any water they get to see them through droughts. The children were then invited to investigate what was happening for themselves, and they were so enthusiastic as they played with the sponges, soaking up all the water and squeezing it back out!

They loved the sensory bins, where they found multicoloured snakes hidden in the yellow sand. From this we observed many original dramatic and imaginative play ideas emerging from the children as they played. Some imagined the snakes as families, designating roles such as mummy and daddy, gēgē and mèimei, and baby snake, based on size and colour. Others began burying them under the sand, telling us “Oh no! Snake is stuck!”, before using another snake to hook their tails together and pull them to safety. Others preferred a more traditional approach, moving the snakes to make them slither through the sand or up their arms.

It is wonderful to see the children start to express their ideas and build on their knowledge and experiences through their play! As we near the end of our first term, we have been reflecting on how far they have come since the beginning of the year. We have witnessed so much growth in their confidence and huge developments in their language and communications skills, and this is evident in the many ways they show their learning through their interactions with their teachers and peers, and through observing their play.

Stage 2R: Singing In The Rain



Stage 2R: Sensory Desert Experience



Australian Landscapes / Beach

Our children are showing that age really is just a number when it comes to fighting climate change. Protecting our oceans & beaches is a key part of being responsible and showing respect for the environment.

The world's oceans & beaches benefit us in many different ways, providing us with food, influencing our climate and weather and offering us space for recreation. However, we take them for granted. Overfishing reduces fish populations, changes marine ecosystems, and millions of tonnes of plastic waste have already ended up in our oceans, killing or harming sea life. We need clean and healthy oceans & beaches to protect our own health and survival and to support future generations.

This week we first visited our ocean rockpool and play dough activity, where the children explored the different animals and shells under the sea. They also predicted and hypothesised, to develop an increased understanding of the interdependence between land, people and animals. We also enjoyed recreational activities common on Australia's beaches where children engaged in dramatic play and pretended to surf with their favourite character, visited the Great Barrier Reef and created the different reef colours and experimented with bubbles on our science table.

Every little action counts. There are many simple ways to encourage children to protect our oceans & beaches, encouraging our children to become environmental heroes, we invited them to help us clean the beach in our provocation using tongs. They took all the plastic and straws out of the sand and learnt the difference between natural elements and plastics. In our group time, we also shared some experiences and discussed how to keep our ocean and beaches healthy, for instance, doing a local clean up, reusing disposable items, reducing plastic use and eating sustainably sourced fish.

As part of our discussion, we talked about the Great Barrier Reef and how important it is for all the sea animals; we displayed some images, and the children showed great excitement to see all the beautiful colours in the reef. To extend on this excitement the children created their own reef, choosing from our watercolours and putting salt on the top later and observing the effect this had about their watercolour art.

By understanding how everything is connected in the ocean and how we interact with it as humans, our children learn to care for and protect the ocean because they want it to be a better place – not just for the fish but also for themselves.

“We know that when we protect our oceans, we’re protecting our future.”

Bill Clinton.

Stage 2/3: Coral Reef Science & Surfing



Stage 2/3: Clean The Beach



Stage 2/3: Ocean Play Dough



This is My World

Namaste!

This week the children have been very busy exploring the colours and cultures of India. Throughout the week the children dived into mandala making. Various gems, colourful sticks and rocks were provided for the children on a mirror. We explained to the children that mandalas are special circles that have unique meaning to each artist. The children were encouraged to begin in the middle, and for all their lines, symbols and colours radiate outwards, remembering to keep symmetrical.

Thank you to Vikram and his family for bringing in “Peppa’s Diwali” to read with the children. The story assisted the children in understanding the cultural celebration and meaning of the Diwali festival. At the end of the story we made a mind map of the ways Diwali is celebrated. Watching fireworks, lighting candles, visiting family and eating foods together, and celebrating new beginnings and the triumph of good over evil.

Throughout the week the children engaged in some yoga. Yoga was developed in Northern India over 5,000 years ago. The children got really involved, strengthening their core, controlling their breathing and balancing their bodies. Each child had their own mat and spread out across the room. Miss Emily guided them through stretches while listening to calming music.

Next week is our final week of Term 1! The children have really enjoyed our provocation of ‘This is my World’. During our last week the children will be revisiting the countries that we have researched over the term. We will be setting up an ‘airport’ for dramatic play. Dramatic play is a type of play where children accept and assign roles and act them out. In this experience the children will be encouraged to dramatize an airport and an act of travelling.



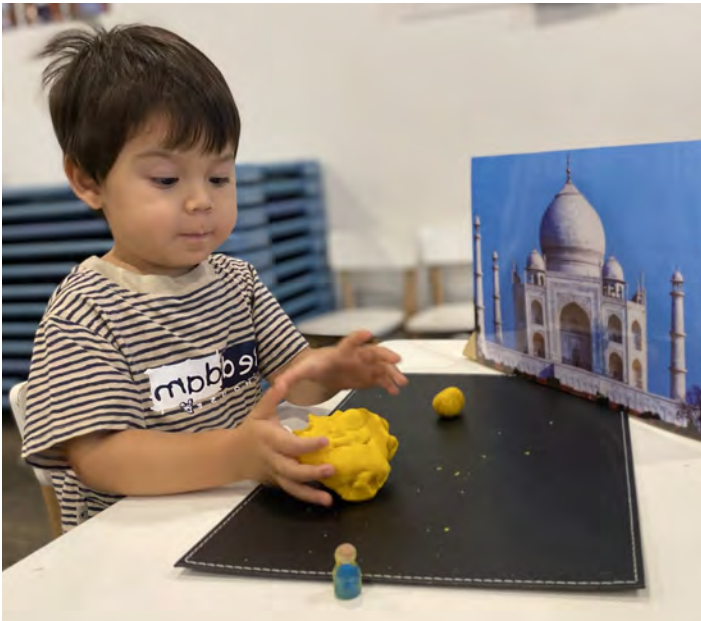
Stage 3: Discovering Letters



Stage 3: Creating Mandalas



Stage 3: Creating Mandalas



Scavenger Hunt

Due to class requests this week, we revisited a colour scavenger hunt. We worked in small teams to spot certain colours around the school. Each team had their own clipboard and created a tally of how many particular coloured items they could find. After exploring our environment and logging our findings, we reconvened to tally up our results and decided that colour was everywhere we looked. This activity then took on another direction (as requested) we began to play "Eye Spy". Each child had a turn of spying and guessing the items that we could see in the classroom and the greenspace. The children also supported each other by giving clues to help their peers guess the items spied and keep a record of the colours found.

Hand Prints

Following on from our primary colour provocation in previous weeks, we recapped our knowledge of this subject. Each child was asked to choose two primary colours. The teacher then assisted the child to paint each hand a different colour. Both hands were then placed on a piece of paper to make hand prints. Now for the best part, each child was encouraged to rub both hands together to create a secondary colour.

"I know I will make purple," said Darcy.

"Orange!" exclaimed Emily.

"It's going to be green," stated Everly.

We all were able to predict the secondary colour that we would create when rubbing our hands together. These predictions were evidence that previous learning had fostered colour mixing knowledge.

Literacy Group

This week we enjoyed a very special story book called *"In My Heart"* by Jo Witek. Starring the same little girl in the same charming illustration style as *"Hello In There!"*, *"In My Heart"* explores emotions--happiness, sadness, bravery, anger, shyness and more. Unlike other feelings books that tend to oversimplify, *"In My Heart"* lyrically explains what an emotion feels like, physically, inside. For example: "When I get really angry, my heart feels like it's going to explode!"

Each class member was able to describe an emotion and how that makes them feel. We then were able to relate these emotions to colours and spoke about them in a group setting, for instance, red is angry and hot, yellow is happy and warm and blue is cold and unhappy!

Stage 3/4: Scavenger Hunt



Stage 3/4: Creating Hand Prints



Stage 3/4: In My Heart



“I am Creative”

Creative experiences can help children express and cope with their feelings. Creativity also fosters mental growth in children by providing opportunities for trying out new ideas, and new ways of thinking and problem-solving. This week the children were invited to participate in a number of experiences that allowed them to express their creativity and imagination. Teachers encouraged the children to dive deeper into their creative selves to understand about different techniques of art. By exploring arts, we are inviting the children to gain self-confidence, as they try new painting experiences and materials. The children are getting exposed to art techniques and getting familiar with different texture.

We are exploring this idea of being creative through a number of table activities, allowing them to express their individuality through art and how the work is made. The children are encouraged to make their choices to what materials they want to use to create the work. Being creative is conveyed in a variety of ways i.e. art, music, dance, puppetry, drama, construction and more.

I am creative through story telling

This week the children were invited to create their own story and artwork to go with it with their teacher. Firstly, as a group we read a short story, discussing together how a story is made i.e. beginning, middle and end and as well the structure of a story. When teachers share engaging stories with children, it provides numerous opportunities for language learning. Teachers can use storytelling as an opportunity to develop numerous language skills including making meaning (listening skills), vocabulary, grammar, understanding of stories/narratives and more. Each child had the opportunity to create their own picture with meaning with their teacher, working at their own pace. It was lovely to see and hear all the beautiful stories and conversations that took place. Have a look on the wall at your child's lovely work!

I am creative through art

Creating art expands a child's ability to interact with the world around them and provides a new set of skills for self-expression and communication. Not only does art help to develop the right side of the brain, it also cultivates important skills that benefit a child's development. This week the children were invited to participate in a number of art experiences such as oil pastel drawing and colour wash, chalk drawing and foil painting with various sized brushes. The children had the opportunity to try a variety of art experiences with their peers, rotating activity effectively. They were encouraged to think about the square and use their imagination and creativity to express their own ideas to make meaning. During group time the children came together to discuss ways they think they can be creative in the classroom.

Art allows your child to master those skills in a fun and creative way. Holding crayons, chalk, pencils, markers, and paintbrushes will help your child practice grasping, holding, and utilising tools in much the same way they would while writing whilst building up the small muscles in the hands and fine-motor skills.

Stage 4: I am Creative



Stage 4: I am Creative



Stage 4: I am Creative



Stage 4

By Ms Maddie Criss and Ms Sarah Ross

This week Stage 4 became designers as they emerged into the wonderful world of textiles. The children developed their communicative skills and fine motor skills through the exploration of textiles techniques and fabric manipulation in a fun and engaging way. We developed our hand-eye coordination, language skills, problem solving skills, sequencing ability, creativity and concentration through weaving, threading, sewing, finger knitting and tie dying!

The children in Stage 4 learnt about international fashion designer Coco Chanel's life journey. They heard about her early life in an orphanage, where she was able to demonstrate her talent with a needle and thread, to her time as a hat maker and fashion designer. The children learnt about how Coco Chanel overcame and rose above the initial adversity she faced for her alternative clothing styles and how being different and thinking differently is what makes the world so beautiful and diverse.

Tie Dying

This week, Stage 4 had the opportunity to demonstrate their creativity as they became tie dye masters! We had an amazing time folding, scrunching and tying fabrics and ultimately... making a mess! The children loved researching the tie dye process and how to make different patterns appear on the fabrics depending on how the rubber bands were tied. No matter how the children knotted or twisted the fabric, it looked fantastic! The children quickly learnt that the tighter they put the rubber bands on, the whiter the fabric stayed in those specific spots. Not only did the Stage 4 children have a wonderful time creating their own unique patterns on the fabric, but they also developed their hand strength and coordination through the folding of the fabrics and tying of the elastic bands.

Weaving

Weaving is the action of forming fabric by interlacing threads together. This week, the Stage Four children created their own colourful fabric by interlacing thick ribbons together on a weaving loom. Stage Four loved expressing themselves artistically through creating patterns and we were so impressed to see them work through problems encountered in a logical matter such as the fabric getting tangled.



Stage 4: Tie Dying



Stage 4: Weaving



Stage 4: Weaving



My Gym



Piano

By Mr Alan Tang

This week at Piano lessons at Reddam ELS Stage 3 and 4 were taught "The Potato Song" from the Oxford Piano Method from the UK. It was a great simple song which required children to recognise keys C, D and E. It also had simple lyrics along with simple rhythm which helped to develop musical timing for the children.

A number of students from Stage 3/4 requested to learn "Baby Shark", therefore a few of them had first hand experiences playing their favourite song. Stage 2 revised on identifying the pattern of the black keys and finding D for Dog. They had also practised finger exercises with me to build up finger strength. Stage 1 were adorable audiences. It was always a pleasure to play for them before their nap time.



“Be helpful. When you see someone with a smile, give them yours.”

Namaste Parents,

Another week has passed and we had so much fun practising yoga. This week we continued on exploring the book “Let’s Play Yoga” by Marcia de Luca which is filled with lovely stories that benefit children on expanding their social, emotional and physical development and behaviour.

This time we read the story of “Ustra the Camel”. The meaning of the story was about our readiness to support and help others. Ustra went to travel far away across the desert to bring a doctor to a sick king. Children from Stages 3 & 4 seemed to understand the lessons of Ustra the camel as we went through a lovely discussion of how important is to help our families, friends and teachers. Children from Stages 1 & 2 used pictures to make it visual and we sang songs. After the story we began to practice our yoga poses using a set of yoga cards with written instructions. Through reading the instructions I was encouraging children’s interest for reading. A few children from Stages 3 to 4 asked to if they could try to read the cards.

The chosen pose of this week’s class was the Camel Pose or ‘Ustrasana’ in Sanskrit. ‘Ustra’ means Camel, ‘Asana’ means posture. This pose we perform by kneeling down, hips and chest forward and up, hands back on heels, and the gaze is facing up.

We ended each session by going on a guided meditation through the desert on a relaxing ride with Ustra the kind and helpful camel.

