



# REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL ST LEONARDS NEWSLETTER



REDDAM

ELS

21st May 2021

## Principal's Message

By Mrs Simone Cooke

*"We learn more about looking for the answer to a question and not finding it than we do from learning the answer itself" - Lloyd Alexander*

As Reggio Inspired teachers we aim to promote in each of our children an interest and curiosity, based on Inquiry based learning. This approach emphasises the children's role in the learning process and incorporates their voices. It encourages us, as teachers, to act as facilitators, co-constructing the curriculum from the children's questions and using their ideas to shape the direction of our provocations.

Fundamental to our programme is learning through play, with clear intentionality in our Provocations and Investigations. We see children as curious researchers, who should be provided with rich open-ended tasks which enrich and extend their thinking and creativity. This Term a vast array of projects are already underway in our classrooms, from STEM investigations, colour discoveries and Fairy Tale exploration to Mini Beast research, Indigenous perspectives and journeyed with our time machine back through time. Each classes' provocation has been selected based on the individual interests of each class and our teachers have constructed a 'mind map of possibilities', constantly posing questions for our children to extend their thinking. What are the features of a story? What does a plant need to grow? What is Science? Working alongside the children our teachers act as facilitators. They are not seeking a scientific answer to these questions, but rather are guiding the children's own inquiry by asking "What do you think?" It is not the answer which is important but rather the process that the child uses to find this answer.

As adults it is easy for us to think that answers are important. Yet as teachers we know that having a correct answer is only half of the equation. To be effective learners, children must know HOW to approach a question. By guiding children to develop a range of different strategies to decode information we are placing in our children's hands an invaluable tool. This will allow them to tackle problems and solve questions in a wide

## Principal's Message Continued...

range of situations, both at school and in the real world, giving them true ownership over their learning.

As partners in learning, we must not deny our children the opportunity to discover new knowledge for themselves by answering questions for them. Instead we provide them with the space, resources, inspiring learning environments and encouragement they need to explore. We listen, suggest, question and problem solve together. Inspiring them to be lifelong learners and inquirers.

By tapping into our children's innate curiosity and interest, our teachers here at Reddam aim to allow the children to explore through hands-on investigations, working collaboratively with others, where each child is an equal participant, sharing their thoughts and knowledge with one another and extending each other's thinking. As you walk from room to room, you will see this collaborative group work taking place, with each of the classes' provocations emerging from the children's interests, which is as diverse as our beautiful children.

As teachers we are in a privileged position of influencing young lives. This is a responsibility we here at Reddam do not take lightly. We are instilling in our children, not just the skills and knowledge they need to experience success in life, but their values, beliefs and foundations for learning. Rather than being merely passive recipients of knowledge we have an obligation to build creative problem solvers and innovative thinkers, equipping and empowering our young children with the necessary skills to solve whatever



# Stage 1R

By Ms Amanda Felton

A splash of yellow...oh look can you find the colour yellow, as we all look into the sensory box and examine the different yellow toys that we have found around the school. The Babies really enjoyed this experience and they all did very well taking turns and sharing with each other.

They followed on by doing their yellow drawing with chalk. As it was challenging for some of the Babies to hold the chalk and make marks or lines on the paper. As it is a learning experience with intentional teaching, encouraging Babies to use their fine motor skills and to follow basic instructions from their teachers.

Well done Babies, it's is great to see that everyone tries to do their very best.

Once again Baby gym was a big hit with the little ones practicing their balancing skills and gross motor skills, by kicking a ball into the goal area. Again this had its very own challenges as not all the Babies found this easy to do. Great effort everyone!



# Stage 1R: Exploring The Colour Yellow



# Stage 1R: Exploring The Colour Yellow



# Stage 1E

By Ms Justine Heydra

*“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.” ~ Friedrich Froebel*

This week in Stage 1E we continued our Autumn provocation. Our focus colours were orange and red and the children enjoyed exploring our autumn seasonal jars, leaves and natural resources.

During our provocation group times we have been learning our basic shapes (circle, square, triangle, oval, rectangle and star) All the children have been participating well and have really loved the opportunity given to each of them to identify or name a shape.

As part of our sensory activities this week, the children enjoyed playing and manipulating autumn playdough. This sensory activity helped to strengthen their small fingers, hands and wrists and also helped the children gain control over their hand and arm movements, which improved coordination.

Our book this week was a wonderful illustrated book, written by Natalie Marshall "Millie-Mae in Autumn" we explored the playful wind in Autumn, with a touch and feel element inside the book which the children thoroughly enjoyed.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.



# Stage 1E: Autumn Exploration



# Stage 1E: Exploring Natural Resources





This week we continued our topic on transport! The children loved playing with the small world setup, constructing train tracks, roads and bridges out of blocks, and creating their own vehicles out of Lego and magnetic blocks! This topic has been a wonderful way for us to assess their language and cognitive skills, as we ask them to identify the colours, types, and amount of vehicles they play with. It has also led to some very impressive language development, with many children attempting to pronounce increasingly complex words such as 'ambulance', 'helicopter' and 'recycling truck'!

We used our miniature cars in our art project, which saw the children dipping the wheels in paint and leaving colourful tyre tracks across their page. It was interesting to see the different ways they approached the task. Some left frantic, overlapping zig-zags as their cars zoomed up and down, while others slowly and carefully drove in circles. We used this as an opportunity to talk about the primary colours we were using, and how they created the secondary colours where the tracks crossed over!

Over the week we asked the children to help prepare for next week's theme – cooking! We will be exploring food; where it comes from, why we need to eat, and who is involved in all the steps on the journey from farm to supermarket to our homes. In small groups the children were invited to help their teachers in making playdough! Our favourite playdough recipe is super easy to follow, and uses common items from the kitchen, so making it together was very much like baking.

Allowing the children to be a part of cooking and baking is a wonderful way to engage them in hands-on learning and skill development. By laying out all the ingredients, explaining what ingredients are being used, why, and how much, as well as going through the process step by step, children utilise and extend their cognitive skills and language development.

As we will be using the playdough in cooking-themed play, we avoided bright food colouring and instead used cinnamon and nutmeg! As some families have asked how we make our playdough, below is the basic recipe we used!

## Playdough Recipe

- 1 cup plain flour
- ½ cup salt
- 1 tbs cream of tartar
- 2 tbs vegetable oil
- 1 cup warm water

Mix everything together in a big bowl, and add food colouring, glitter, or in this case spices, and add small amounts of flour until it reaches the right consistency. Then it's ready for the children to exercise their fine motor skills by kneading, folding, rolling and flattening the dough, strengthening the little muscles in their hands and fingers!

## Stage 2R: Creating Playdough



## Stage 2R: Miniature Car Track Artwork



## Stage 2/3

By Ms Gabriela Alvarez

Our time machine has taken us to Ancient Egypt and their fantastic Civilisation. Learning about History allows the children to comprehend our World, giving us a very clear picture of how the various aspects of society, have formed as is today. Ancient Egypt was the most advanced civilisation in the ancient world. There are so many firsts in Egypt, that we all know about, and that makes Egypt unique.

In our provocation, we start with the Incredible pyramids of Egypt, where they model inquiry processes, including wonder, curiosity, and imagination. They explore the lost treasures; and they were so excited to find treasures hidden in the sand under the pyramids. This activity also assists their mathematical skills where they were comparing how many treasures have found each.

We move to our hieroglyphic stamps, where children use their fine motor skills to select the different shapes of the hieroglyphic to stamp them around the paper. They also describe the different shapes they found like hands and feet; they also recognise different animals like cats and birds, which were very important in the Egyptian culture. This experience also helped the children to observe different examples of the many ways identities and cultures are recognised and expressed.

As we are explorers, our little archaeologists were extracting ancient pots from the Egyptians; they explored different identities and points of view in dramatic play and engaged in complex sensory-motor skills and movement patterns. Later we continued with the exciting Egyptian Mummies where the children were thrilled by the coffins and the gold treasures around them.

Ancient Egyptians have a mystery around their culture that attracts the attention and curiosity of the children. In our group time, we read *"So you think you've got it bad?"* which shows how they live in this time compare to now. This book showed how important it was to be close to the rivers for water either for drinking or showering and also a way of transport, later we looked at the different style of life with the different hair-styles, how they dressed, the luxury of the Pharaohs with fantastic jewellery, the girls were thrilled with princess-like Cleopatra and were very excited to see a different kind of princess. We also read *"Pharaoh's boat"*, which discussed where they travelled and how many people they needed to move the boats.

We also explain how the pharaohs are the kings that ruled and discussed how they believe in different gods as a protection; As a favourite, they were thrilled how Egyptians will hide their treasures and how exciting it was for some to find them.

As children showed so much interest in the kings of Egypt, which are the pharaohs, the children painted around their faces to pretend to be one of them; they used the colour gold and covered then with pretend jewellery.

The mysterious adventures that we have had this week have thrilled our Stage 2/3, and we look forward to where else our Time machine will take us next week.

## Stage 2/3: Egyptian Sensory & Pharaoh Art



## Stage 2/3: Lost Treasures & Hieroglyphic Stamps



# Stage 3

By Ms Emily Chacon

*"This is a story of our changing planet, and what we can do to help it thrive."* **Sir David Attenborough.**

Learning about bees can be filled with exploration. During our minibeast unit, our pre-schoolers had an opportunity to create honeycomb, taste honey, and play fun bee games!

When the children were asked about their feelings and opinion on bees, their immediate thought was that bees sting, that they are something to fear when they are playing outdoors.

During our bug theme, I decided to put together some fun activities that show how bees are very useful, such as when making honey and helping our plants to pollinate.

As we have already learnt about plants and their anatomy, it was wonderful to see the children proficiently making the link between the two themes. Flowers have pollen and nectar in the middle of their petals which the bees eat and take back to their hive. We learned about the shape of honeycomb, and that the queen bee lays her eggs. The eggs are then placed into the cells, and from there they hatch into larva, grow into pupa and then they eat their way out of the cell. We also learnt that in a honey bee hive there are three different types of bees, the queen, who lays the eggs, the worker bees that protect the hive and collect the pollen, and the drone bees.

For art we created honeycomb on paper with bubble wrap and yellow paint. The children then drew their bees using black felt tip on watercolor paper. Once cut out the children then pasted their bees into their cell.

To assist the children's knowledge on the honey making process we watched a short film, which pictured the bees collecting the pollen and distributing it to the food cells in their hive. Afterward the children sat at the table and spread butter and honey onto their breads and made honey sandwiches. It was great for the children to see the honey being made and then make a tasty snack with honey. By the end of the week, the children were actually hoping to see bees outside, now that they knew more about these helpful insects.

In our literacy activity, I linked our bee unit and created an experience that encouraged literacy development. In a tray lay 'pollen' (coloured sand) and using bee alphabet cards the children then had to use their fingers to write a chosen letter. The children loved this experience, some even pretending that they were bees collecting pollen as they were writing.

# Stage 3: Exploring All Things Bee-autiful





## Stage 3: Bug Exploration



### *'How the birds got their colours.'* **Dreamtime story.**

This week, we enjoyed a new Dreamtime story called *'How the birds got their colours.'* It is a story about an injured bird who was helped by a parrot. When the parrot burst the doves sore foot, all the colours of the rainbow exploded onto the birds around them. The birds all kept their new colours until today. The children showed great interest in the story and asked many questions and made statements, such as:

"Can the birds change their colours?" asked Mia.

"One bird did not get colours cause he didn't help," said Harper.

"Why was the grub painted blue in the story?" asked Clementine.

"When the bird got a sore foot, I would take him to the vet to get all better," said Emily.

"The crow was not helping," said Darcy.

"How did the bird put his foot on the stick?" asked Everly.

"The sharp teeth had something sticking," said Odin.

"Some of the colours spit onto the birds" said Lachlan.

"The bird with the foot and the blood," said Kingsley.

"It has black, red, yellow and blue," said Arianna.

"The birdies didn't listen in the book," said Yvette.

"The crow didn't have colours," said Jaden.

"The parrot changed colours," said Arianna.

"The crow got colours," said Radha.

"I saw everything in it," said Paige.

"The stick bird feet," said Yonnie.

"The birdie went to the stick," said Emma.

"The splashed the colours," said Chloe.

We then decided to create our own birds using two different mediums. The first was through process art. We used black markers to first draw our bird and the second step was to paint over that drawing with watercolour paints. The second activity was to create a bird shape from playdough and add eyes and feathers to the playdough to make our own 3D model.

So far, the children have shown a great love of this Dreamtime story the most!



# Stage 3/4: Bird Creations



## Stage 3/4: Producing Bird Tracks



## Stage 4

By Ms Emily Brazel and Ms Lauren Doughton

Wow! What a week of fun it has been, this week we moved on to the Science component of STEM. This means learning what science is and science experiments. This area of STEM is lots of fun, we first needed to explore what is STEM? We sat the children down to discuss their thoughts and opinions on what they believe science might be. We had many answers and they were all right. But in the end as a class we settled on the definition of; Science is 'The study of the world around us.'

As a class we looked at what is a question? How do we ask a question? What words make up a question? With all of this in mind we asked the students to provide us with a question in relation to science. These are some of the replies;

- "What floats on water?" asked Eden.
- "Why do flowers need water?" asked Tanisha.
- "How does a rocket ship engine work?" asked Cody.
- "How do volcanos erupt?" asked Harvey.
- "How did dinosaurs die?" asked Joseph.
- "What is science?" asked Isabelle.

We also talked about the word Hypothesis and what this meant. From this we talked about a planned experiment that saw us putting white flowers into different coloured food colouring. We asked the children to all come up with a prediction that they thought might happen when we put the flowers into the food colouring. Some of the predictions were;

- They might explode.
- They will die.
- They won't grow.
- The flowers will change colour.
- The flowers will turn into mud .
- The flowers will turn into diamonds.

All of the children's predictions were great. We then asked them to write their prediction down as a writing task. Finally we were able to perform the experiment and the children were able to see what happens.

The other fun and exciting lessons that we performed this week was 'walking water' this is where we used paper towel, food colouring, cups and water to make the water walk from cup to cup.

Both of the experiments that we did this week do take time for the results to show but when it happens the results are very cool. Each day we are having the children rush in to view the experiments to see if there are any changes. All the teachers are enjoying listening to the children's conversations in relation to these experiments.

Please enjoy our photos of the experiments and the different activities that we have participated in this week. We can not wait for next week where we will be doing more experiments but this time we will be looking at chemical reactions. Stay tuned!

# Stage 4: Hypothesis Scientists



# Stage 4: Experimenting With Water Colour



# Stage 4

By Ms Maddie Criss and Ms Sarah Ross

This week Stage 4 continued their journey into the world of Fairy Tales through the exploration of the story "*The Three Little Pigs*." The central idea behind the story of "*The Three Little Pigs*" is that taking time to perform a task the right way is wise and hard work and dedication pays off. This provocation saw the children take on the roles of the characters of the story such as the little pigs and the wolf in construction tasks and during creative dramatic play. We are loving watching the children immerse themselves into the magical world of fairy tales.

## House Collage

Stage Four were invited to design their own house this week using a range of materials. Collaging helps to build children's fine motor skills in addition to fostering their awareness of colour and textures. The children first discussed with their teachers the different elements needed for the foundation of their house such as a door and windows. It was wonderful to hear the children discussing which fantasy rooms they would have in their houses and who lived in their homes with them. They then used their creative minds to bring colour and individuality to their houses. They all look amazing!

## Writing

After the children had constructed their collage houses, many asked to continue drawing images of their dream home and most asked for assistance writing what they had drawn under their image. The children's writing is progressing beautifully, and we are so proud of their attempts to sound out what they are trying to spell.

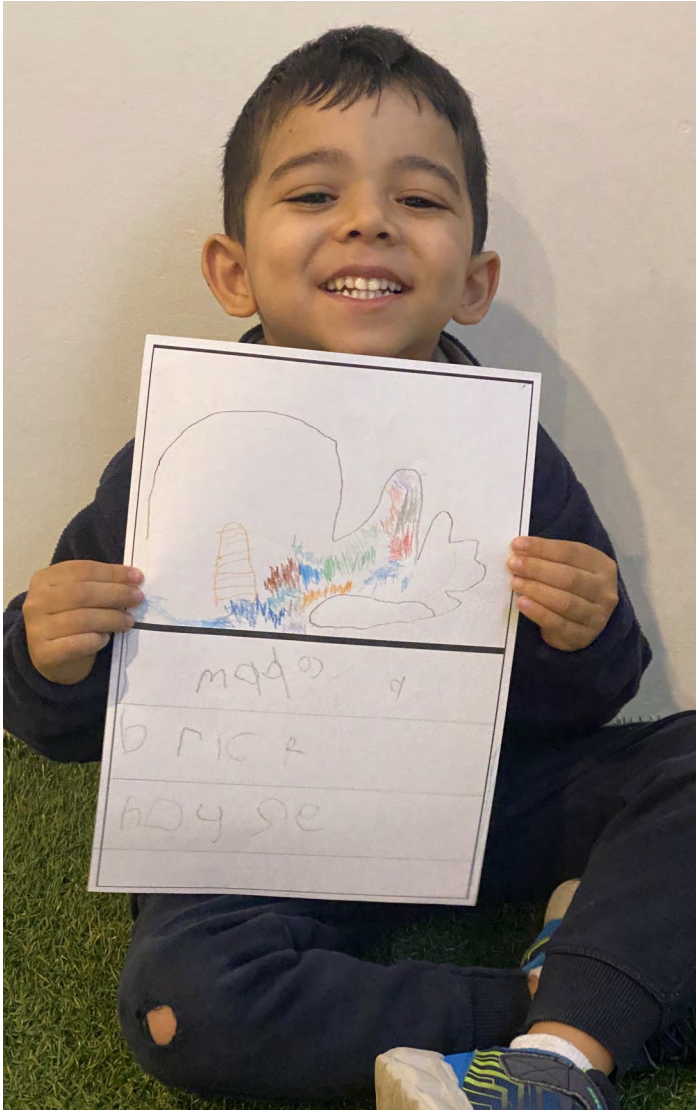
- "I made a strong house," said Audrey.
- "I made a candy house," said Aran.
- "I made a rainbow house," said Isola.
- "I made a brick house," said Hayley.
- "I made a paper house," said Anna.
- "I made a house using transformers," said Isaac.

## Beebots

Stage Four children were given the opportunity to put their programming caps on and use the BeeBots again this week. The children planned out a sequence of steps and then programmed the robot to manoeuvre its way through the story map of "*The Three Little Pigs*." The children developed their directional language and applied computational thinking to solve open ended problems. The children loved having the opportunity to work with the robots again this week.



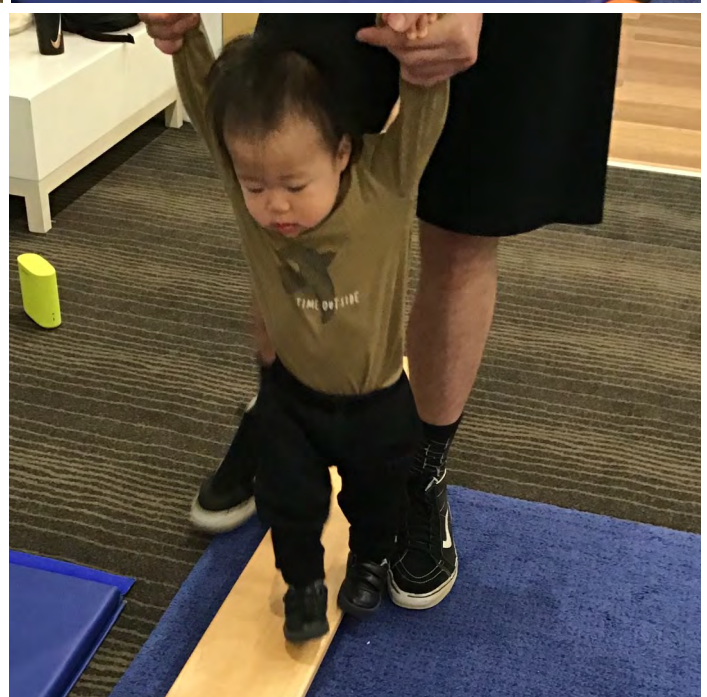
# Stage 4: Creating House Collages & Writing



# Stage 4: Bee- Bot Sequencing



# My Gym



# Piano

By Mr Alan Tang

This week at piano lessons at Reddam ELS: Children across all stages were started with finger exercises to help them build a sense of confidence and connection with the instrument. Stage 4 were given a choice of learning "Mary had a little lamb", "Ducky's Song" or "Baby Shark", by doing that it allowed children to take ownership of their own learning. Stage 3 and 3/4 learnt the "Ducky's song". Stage 2 focused on the Potatoes song this week. Stage 1 was introduced to single melody lines of a number of nursery rhymes, playing monophonic songs to children at this age enabled them to recognise different melodies. Looking forward to next week.



*"Alone we are smart. Together we are Brilliant."*

Namaste Families!

Happy Friday and thank you for reading our weekly news. Classes this week have been lots of fun. I brought a Yoga Dice Game which contains six dices with several yoga poses in different colours. With this game I intended to encourage children with body movement improvisation and self-expression as well as group play. For stages three and four I placed them in pairs and explained that they had to work together on sharing and rolling the dice and doing the yoga poses together. In all classes children demonstrated great participation and great team work skills. They spoke to each other, did the poses together and took turns rolling the dice. They even asked me many questions on how to perform certain poses and their names. They demonstrated great enthusiasm for yoga and their engagement between the groups was amazing. Next, they swap colours with groups next to them and every single class flowed really nicely.

For the younger children from stages one and two I invited one at a time to roll the dice next to me and the rest of the group followed the yoga poses under my instructions.

And we ended with our resting meditation followed by a calm and relaxing song.



This week in drama we continued on our topic 'The Magic Carpet'. We began the lesson, as always, by sitting on the parachute and singing our hello song. This week our parachute prompt question was "what's your favourite type of Season?"

To start our adventure, the children reminded me that last week we went to the dinosaur museum on our magic carpets. We got our carpets out of our bags and rolled them out, ready to go somewhere new. I told the children in Stage 3 that there was a weather warning! High winds and rain could make our journey treacherous as we were flying somewhere far, far away. While we were flying, the children showed me that the winds were making their carpets wobble and had to hold on tight! We got sucked into a tornado, spinning around and around, and then it started to rain none of us had brought an umbrella, so we covered our heads. We landed our carpets in the snowy Arctic.

It was freezing in the snow! We search through our backpacks and luckily found a beanie, some gloves, a big snow jacket, a scarf and some snow boots. The children mimed with me to get dressed for the snow. then reached up high into the sky to check if it was cold, then huddled in a small ball to show that it was. We then used our fingers to show snow falling from the sky.

I showed the children some pictures and guided the children to use their bodies to look like the photos. I showed them a snowflake, a walrus, a penguin, a polar bear, and (the funniest of all) a beanie! Well done everyone in Stage 4 for making such great shapes!

In Stage 2 then put on their ice-skating shoes and glided through the classroom as if skating on ice. When I called "freeze", they had to stop and copy my pose. Well done to Emma, Charlotte, Ben and Amelia for balancing so well on one leg!

I showed the children a picture of an igloo and asked whether we could try and make one. We would have to carry big ice blocks that were heavy and slippery. We then became the igloo as a whole class. We decided to go inside the igloo to get warm. I asked the children to use their ears and listen. Outside, the wind was howling. "What does the wind sound like?" I asked the children. We made "wooshing" noises with our mouths. I prompted "now I hear the pitter patter of snow falling" and we used our hands to make the sound on the floor and on our laps. I then added "I think I hear thunder rolling through" so we stomped our feet. Stage 3 thought they could hear the distant growl of a polar bear, and squawk of a penguin, so we tried to make those sounds, too. I challenged the children to make all these sounds at once to create a sound scape. I was so impressed, we haven't done this before and Stage 3 did exceptionally well.

To finish our adventure today we did the Snowky Pokey, the children had lots of fun and giggled at the actions.

We rolled out our sleeping bags and set up to go to bed. When we wake up in our igloo's next week, we will use our magic carpets to fly somewhere else. I wonder where we will go next week!

# Drama

