



# REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL ST LEONARDS NEWSLETTER



**REDDAM**

ELS

13th August 2021

## Principal's Message

By Mrs Simone Cooke

Dear Parents,

An element of Reggio Emilia that our children at Reddam enjoy very much is Light table exploration. Light plays a significant feature in Reggio classrooms, and is used quite intentionally in our schools, as you will have noticed with our large glass floor to ceiling walls. This is inspired by a belief that the use of light, both natural and artificial, facilitates the children's view of both the outside world and internal spaces of the classroom, allowing the environment to act as a "third teacher" and to promote magical experience where children can wonder at the world around them.

When exploring the natural element of light, it becomes a material, much like a language does, offering new opportunities to communicate, explore and manipulate to make new meanings. The addition of light into the children's environment transforms and stimulates the senses. Including mirrors allows our children to become more aware of themselves and develop their sense of identity. The children love exploring their reflections and shadows and are curious about how light and dark occur within their world.

Using light tables, mirrors and reflective surfaces encourages our children to investigate the interplay of light and shadow. It provokes and encourages exploration and investigation, with endless possibilities. From creating rainbows, mixing colours, patterning, sorting, classifying and experimenting with light, our children make new discoveries about the world they live in.

We use light tables in a variety of ways, for inspecting detailed objects, tracing images, improving fine motor writing and drawing skills or creating intricate patterns. Adding elements to the light table such as tissue paper, 3D shapes or found materials transforms the table into a completely new experience, where the opportunities are endless. This type of open-ended discovery is very important for encouraging problem solving and experimentation. Studies conducted by Lowenfield in 1975 found that inte-

## Principal's Message Continued...

grating light tables into pre-literacy assisted children in being able to break down complex forms by offering them opportunity to trace and imitate which increased confidence in their fine motor skills and promoted a greater willingness to 'have a go'.

Whilst teachers may provide the natural resources, materials and light source, it is the children themselves who guide the discoveries. We are constantly amazed at the creative ideas, inventions and discussions that emerge from their explorations with light. We must never underestimate the importance of offering our young ones a stimulating environment in which they can explore, discover and create.



# Stage 1R

By Ms Amanda Felton

We've had loads of fun this week with our new friends. We are relishing our expanding independence and growth as our vocabulary expands, our gross motor skills develop and we enjoy the opportunity to build confidence in our school environment. It is so wonderful to see how proud our little ones are of their new found skills and the lovely trust and connections they build with us their teachers.

This week we took advantage of all the wonderful sunshine and our new outdoor environment to do lots of climbing, rolling, sliding, crawling, balancing and running. Exploring our outdoor area is so much fun and everyone loved the obstacle course which we set up in the playground.

Offering our children wheeled toys such as prams, bikes and our little beetles encourages them to increase their balancing skills and delight in the independence of doing something for themselves.

This week we also enjoyed a special Bubble wrap painting and construction play task. In this activity we ran the trucks over the bubble wrap and squished the paint to make a colour mixing effect. The Babies showed great coordination with their gross motor skills and wonderful sharing skills, as we drove our trucks around roads. This reinforced that the Babies do understand how to play together and show reciprocation towards their peers.

Great job little ones I wonder what exciting activities next week will have in store for us.



# Stage 1R: Bubble Wrap Painting



# Stage 1R: Reading & Playing With Friends



## Stage 1R: Outdoor Play With Big Friends



# Stage 1E

By Ms Justine Heydra

*“A child must know that he is a miracle, that since the beginning of the world there has not been, and until the end of the world there will not be, another child like him.”* **Pablo Casals**

Welcome to week 4 of term 3. This week in Stage 1E we explored the wonderful and fascinating world of Veterinarians. During this provocation the children explored the work of a veterinarian and the importance of keeping pets safe and healthy. During this provocation week we continued developing our language, mathematical, fine-motor, gross-motor, concentration and coordination skills through various sensory and fun activities.

Our Literacy focus was a beautifully illustrated book *“Fearless”* written by Colin Thompson and our provocation song was *“Bingo dog going to the vet”* The children really enjoyed this song and the actions we incorporated into this catchy and fun song.

Continuing on after Bingo visits the vet, the children engaged in a creative counting game. We created two puppies on a big box and cut out the mouth area. The children then each had the opportunity to feed the puppies some bones, while counting the bones as they placed them into the puppy's mouth.

Our sensory activity was a puppy paw created out of felt with bright red band-aids. The children could help and assist fixing the puppy's paw by placing band-aids onto the injured areas.

The most popular and fun sensory activity was our tuff tray experience where the children had the opportunity to develop their fine motor skills and concentration. Each child was given the chance to scoop "Dog Food" into our dog bowls. "Bingo" our class puppy thoroughly enjoyed his food.

The children were very excited and engaged by this activity. They giggled and laughed when Bingo gobbled up his food. Filling and scooping activities help develop fine motor skills as well as using math concepts such as less and more. This sensory activity helped the children coordinate their hand movements with what they were seeing and feeling.

Our dramatic play corner was filled with educational and practical toys relating to our provocation. The children loved dressing up as a vet and nursing our class animals back to health.

Wishing you all a safe and happy weekend.

# Stage 1E: Feeding Bingo—Vets





# Stage 1E: Syringe Art & Puppy Paws



# Stage 1E: Playing Outdoors With Friends



## "Oh Help! Oh No! It's a Gruffalo!"

This week we took a stroll in the deep, dark wood as we explored the world of "*The Gruffalo!*" This book by Julia Donaldson is a favourite among the class, and one that is often requested in our reading group times. The children love the story of the clever little mouse, and are great at helping us teachers out by filling in their favourite lines as we read it together!

We set up a dramatic play table inspired by the deep dark wood. Here the children found small puppets of the little brown mouse, as well as the fox, owl, and snake that he meets in the along the way. They chose their characters and played beautifully together, sharing the puppets so everyone had a character to play with and a space at the table. Some chose to act out parts of the story, while others invented their own dialogue and scenarios as they interacted with each other through their characters.

Dramatic play is a fantastic means of getting the children utilise their ever expanding vocabularies, and encourages them to extend their language and communication skills in a fun and engaging manner. We encouraged them to verbally interact with each other, and talk openly about the direction they were taking in their play. The well known theme of the activity gave the children a sense of familiarity with the roles and scenarios of the book, but as they got to playing together we saw the storylines evolve as they adapted to each other's contributions.

During group times we made the mouse's favourite food – Gruffalo Crumble! To do this we adapted a simple Weetbix slice recipe to include the Gruffalo's characteristics. First we read the book, and the children were asked to keep in mind the all things the mouse says to describe the terrifying Gruffalo; "his eyes are orange, his tongue is black, he has purple prickles all over his back!"

The children took turns adding the base ingredients, before we added the special Gruffalo ingredients:

- Chopped up dates for his tongue
- Orange smarties for the eyes
- Purple smarties for the prickles
- Green smarties for the poisonous wart at the end of his nose

Cooking is a great way for children to get immersed in valuable early learning skills. It gives them an insight into mathematical and scientific concepts such as quantity and measurement, and they can watch as the separate ingredients combine and transform into a new substance. By cooking in a group they practice turn-taking and patience, which they demonstrated beautifully as they waited for everyone to have a go and ensuring everyone was able to participate.

"Well Gruffalo" said the mouse, "You See  
Everyone's afraid of me!  
But now my tummy's beginning to rumble  
And my favourite food is...  
Gruffalo Crumble!"

# Stage 2R: Role Playing The Deep Dark Wood



# Stage 2R: Creating Gruffalo Crumble!



## Stage 2R: Outdoor Play



## Stage 2/3

By Ms Fion Tse

In our Outer Space provocation this week, we learnt about constellations. Constellations are a big concept, so in order to make sense of children, we made star dot-to-dot type constellations drawings. The little dipper and the big dipper were easily recognisable. To make the constellation art, we placed the stickers on the papers then we drew the lines with a chalk. This art project was really about learning about the idea of a group of stars that are named and form an image once joined together.

Sensory play was a great way to engage children's senses as their little brains and skills are developing. It allowed them to tangibly interact with the world around them in a safe and stimulation manner. I enjoy using sensory play to engage the children in hands on learning, particularly when the real word focus of our study may be otherwise out of reach, just like the constellations!

As our focus this week were stars, the children were invited to paint constellations by using star cookie cutters. They loved creating star prints with different coloured paints. This art experience encouraged children's fine motor development as well as shape and sorting.

After reading the book *"How to Catch a Star"* by Oliver Jeffers, the children were invited to catch they own stars by using tweezers. We carried out this experience to encourage the children to count the stars on by one slowly after collecting them. During our group discussion, the children had a chance to come up with their own idea on how they would catch a star. Here are some of the answers;

"We can fly on rocket ship and we can go to the space and catch a star," said Leo G

"I can jump up high to catch my star," said Sammy.

"I Got a star on my shoes so I can get it from my shoes," said Alice.

"We can get on an aeroplane, or a helicopter, or a spaceship," said Flynn,

"We can ask from the moon and it will give us a star," said Tianze.

"I can reach stars when I grow bigger," said Rose.



## Stage 2/3: Creating Constellations





## Stage 2/3: Catching Stars



## Stage 2/3: Outdoor Play With Friends



## Dinosaurs

Over the course of our dinosaur provocation, the children have been very interested in volcanoes and their structure. Last week we joined in on a stage 4 lesson, and the interest has further developed from there.

The children loved our volcano experiment from last week, so we decided to do it another two times. This experiment really engaged the children in understanding the function and structure of a volcano while erupting.

In the afternoon the children were broken up into small groups, each child was given a board to lean on, a black/brown & red pen, and a piece of paper.

The children listened as Miss Emily explained the different sections of a volcano, its walls, magma chamber, main vent and its secondary vent. She explained that when a volcano erupts it sends out an ash cloud and volcanic bombs, which are rocks and larger debris that are thrown into the air during an eruption. Miss Emily slowly drew an erupting volcano on the board and encouraged the children to draw along with her. When finished the children were very proud of their efforts and eagerly showed Miss Emily and their friends. This experience was new to the children as we haven't done anything like this before. Each child easily followed along even after doubting their abilities. It was amazing to see the children maintain focus, feel successful and express their ideas and feelings.

Following on from this experience the children came on at a time to create their own volcano art. Using a black pen to draw their outline and watercolour paints to add colour.

Our table activity engaged the children in a sizing experience. On a board were three sections marked small, medium and large. The children then needed to place the different sized dinosaurs into their correct category. This experience engages the children in problem solving, logic and perseverance.

## Housekeeping:

Please ensure that your child does not bring any items/toys from home. We are not responsible for lost/damaged toys.

The only items that will be accepted are for show and tell.

# Stage 3: Exploring Volcano Structure



## Stage 3: Sorting Dinosaurs



## Stage 3: Outdoor Play With Friends



This week, we started to explore the topic of sequencing.

## What is Sequencing?

The definition of sequencing is the ability to understand how a series of events occur in order and the approximate duration of those events. An example of duration might be, which takes longer, getting dressed or walking/driving to school?

## Why is Sequencing Important?

Understanding sequences of events helps children recognize patterns and make sense of the world around them. Sequencing skills are a pre-cursor to learning how to tell time, but they're also important to the development of other skills such as learning how to read sequences of letters.

To foster this topic, the children were provided with sequencing cards and had the opportunity to place these cards in the correct order of how the event happens, such as, the order when brushing our teeth. The children all had a turn of 6 different sequencing events and assisted each other when they found one sequence of challenge.  
Fun Positional Language Activities and Games

You can teach positional language to preschool children through many different types of experiences and we decided that we would like to play a musical game. We gathered in a circle and played the game 'Hokey Pokey'. The words of the song tell us to use different body parts and to use the left or right side of our bodies. It was a bit tricky getting the sides correct and we loved it so much that we plan to revisit this dance game many times over the next few weeks.

We also enjoyed programming the Bee-Bots. As we have been learning positional language for the past two weeks, we felt very confident with left, right, above, below etc and used these new skills to make our Bee-Bots move in the direction we wished it too. Working with one other peer, each pair of children discussed which way they wanted the Bee-Bot to move and planned how to get it there! Great team work 3/4!

## Stage 3/4: Programming Bee-Bots





# Stage 3/4: Exploring Positional Activities



## Stage 3/4: Outdoor Play With Friends



## *“Rain is just confetti from the sky”*

Children are often scared of thunderstorms, but they love jumping in puddles of water and looking at rainbows after a storm ends. Making observations about the weather and discussing climate are great ways to teach children about science, especially since weather is something children can easily relate to and understand. Whether it's clear and sunny or rainy and windy outside, weather and climate affect children's lives every day.

The weather is always changing and can be measured and observed by people of all ages. Each day Stage 4 children looked at the weather and we discussed what they observed.

Providing the Stage 4 children with weather information also gave us the opportunity to talk with them about the importance of being on alert when there's a chance of bad weather and knowing what to do if a severe storm or natural disaster occurs.

With this all in mind we started the week by discussing what we thought a storm was and how does this become a natural disaster?

We received many great responses;

“When it storms it thunders and I’m not scared!” said Evander.

“The first part of the water cycle is called evaporation,” said Alexander.

“Thunderstorms are very loud,” said William M.

“A storm is when the clouds get angry,” said Stephen.

“The water cycles is what predicts the weather,” said Joy.

We also looked at the water cycle process, by teaching the children this concept they had a better understanding of how storms happen. When we spoke about storms we included rain, thunder, snow and hail storms. The children were able to view images of the different storms. Throughout the week we had many fun and hands-on activities for the children that created many conversations.



# Stage 4: Exploring The Storms



# Stage 4: Exploring Storms & Science



# Stage 4: Outdoor Play With Friends



## **Fruit and Vegetable Farming**

Fruit and vegetable farming provides a good lesson on where our food comes from as well as the botany of plants and the care for something living. This week Stage Four spent time exploring what is needed to grow food and planting their own seeds.

## **Tomato Counting**

The Stage Four children practiced their one to one correspondence as they read the numbers written on tomato picture cards. Next, the children counted out gems to match the number on the tomato. This learning experience was a great opportunity that supported Stage Four's understanding of how numbers correspond to specific quantities.

## **Welcome to the Farmer's Market**

The Stage Four children created their very own farmers market and sold their produce to their peers. The children set prices in the shopkeeper role and also played the role of the customer as they wrote grocery lists and paid money to the shopkeeper in exchange for delicious fruits and vegetables. This learning experience introduced the children to the use of real life money in their play. This supported Stage Four's concept of understanding surrounding the importance of money in our everyday lives. As a class we spent time discussing why we need money and ways we can earn money too!

Additionally, Stage Four practiced and developed their expressive, negotiating and problem solving skills as they discussed topics such as; roles in play and the worth of the fruits and vegetables they were purchasing and selling. Through these processes the Stage Four children demonstrated their ever growing capacity to become confident and cooperative learners.

## **How do fruits and vegetables grow?**

After participating in a literacy group where Stage Four explored how fruits and vegetables grow the children were invited engage in an explorative experience where they planted their own vegetable seeds. The children spent time putting on gardening gloves, carefully digging holes in the soil to plant their seeds and watering them. The Stage Four children expressed that they loved this learning experience and that it made them feel like real farmers!

As an extension of this interest the children were invited to create an artwork representing root vegetables growing out of the ground. First, the children used water colours to paint a background of the sky and soil where their vegetables would be planted. Next, they drew the vegetables using oil pastels. The children made sure to draw the important parts of the vegetables including their roots in the soil. Through this learning experience the children were able to demonstrate the knowledge and understandings they had gained through representational art.

# Stage 4: Farmers Market & Tomato Counting





# Stage 4: Growing Plants & Vegetable Art



## Stage 4: Playing Outdoors With Friends

