



# REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL ST LEONARDS NEWSLETTER



**REDDAM**

ELS

24th September 2021

## Principal's Message

By Mrs Simone Cooke

Dear Parents,

Building, inventing, creating and experimenting with loose parts is integral to the Reggio Emilia approach to learning and how children learn through hands on discovery. From magnet exploration to milk bottle top threading, our children love nothing more than recycling materials into new purposes and engaging in open-ended discovery, where their imaginations can run wild!

In creating sensory play activities our teachers will often source a variety of loose parts to enhance children's thinking and encouraging them to look at materials in different ways. The "Theory of Loose Parts" play, actually originated in the 1970's and was introduced by the architect Simon Nicholson who introduced the belief that loose parts in our environment empowers creativity. Loose Parts can be anything from corks, buttons, timber cut offs, pebbles, sticks to cogs, bottle tops and string. They are materials that can be used in multiple ways and can be combined with other materials. Here at Reddam our teachers use loose parts in their classrooms to support the children's learning, encouraging them to "think outside the square" and to use their creativity and imagination.

In keeping with our Reggio Emilia Approach, our children learn to work collaboratively with the materials and each other, constructing and deconstructing together and learning the

"processes" rather than the end product of learning. With this open ended focus the children can explore and create to their hearts desire, building confidence and autonomy and experimenting with informal units to sequence, classify, group and measure by size, dimension and area. If you find any pinecones, pebbles, shells, buttons, corks etc that you would like to bring along to help inspire our children's imagination and creativity they would be warmly received.

## Principal's Message Continued...

The sensory nature of loose parts makes it an appealing tool for young children to learn about textures, weights, patterns, shapes and the cause and effect that takes place when you rub, bang, tap or hit them together. When our children are engaged in loose parts play the agency of the child is apparent, as they are offered the opportunity for self-guided discovery where the possibilities are limited only by the imagination. Next time you find yourself with a child who proclaims to be 'bored', I would suggest going around your house and garden and collecting a range of loose parts and present them with the challenge of creating something for you. I think you will be amazed by the results!

“ When children interact with loose parts, they enter a world of “what if” that promotes the type of thinking that leads to problem solving and theoretical reasoning. Loose parts enhance children's ability to think imaginatively and see solutions, and they bring a sense of adventure and excitement to children's play” Daly & Belonglovsky, 2015.





## Constructing colours

It has been another amazing time in 1R this week as we explore colours through construction. Each of the Babies enjoyed investigating the coloured viewers and Kaleidoscopes and observing seeing how they can create lots of amazing pattern formations. For lots of fun the Babies extended their understanding by drawing onto foil with coloured pens, which they thought was very clever. This is great for their fine motor skills and concentration. The foil was a real hit with them as it offers a different medium for the children to work with. The Babies had a glorious time outdoors ,as they are building confidence and is understanding how to gauge risk taking at their own level as they become more mobile and adventurous. How clever our children are!

**Housekeeping:** Could I please remind all our families that it is important to label all items, as some of the children's belongings are very similar and they can get mixed up. Thank you from the Babies x





# Stage 1R: Exploring Art On Foil





# Stage 1R: Observing Kaleidoscopes





# Stage 1R: Developing Feeding Skills





## Community Helpers –Construction

*“Play isn’t something separate from the daily grind of life. It is not something to finally get to when work ends. Rather, play, like music, is a force that we feel in our bones and that whispers in our heart. As kids demonstrate, play is not over there, but forever here and now.”* **Vince Gowmon**

This week in Stage 1E and 1D, we concluded our Community Helpers provocation with Construction. We mainly focused on building and creating with natural materials and shapes. Our theme song this week was “when I build my house” and we used this song as our foundation for creating and building various structures.

Through building and stacking objects and natural blocks children learn how to balance things and how to keep and manipulate a tower upright. This activity also helps children improve and practice their hand-eye coordination and introduces them to early numeracy skills like size, height, comparison and opposites.

Our sensory activities were a combination of stacking natural blocks and playing with different coloured shapes to create various buildings or structures. Blocks enhances children’s problem-solving skills and language abilities. Constructing “creations” also builds great self-esteem and created feeling of success for all the children. They were extremely proud of their abilities to stack and create a tower and thoroughly enjoyed the experience when the tower fell over.

The children really enjoyed the colourful magnetic shapes that they each had the opportunity to play with as our second sensory activity. We practiced naming our shapes and colours and the children enjoyed creating their own version of a house as they played and explored.

The children have truly enjoyed all the wonderful occupations we have covered during this term with our Community Helpers provocation, and it has been delightful to watch and support each of them as they have grown and developed so many different skills.

Outdoor play has encouraged the development of the children’s gross-motor skills by participation in various outdoor activities. With the warmer weather we have been doing water play and enjoying our new mud kitchen.

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend and we are looking forward to an exciting vacation-care program.



## Stage 1E + 1D: Construction Play





# Stage 1E + 1D: Construction Dramatic Play





# Stage 1E + 1D: Enjoying The Outdoors



## Elmer!

For our final week of term we looked at another of our favourite books “*Elmer*” by David McKee. This is the story of Elmer the elephant, who isn’t like the other elephants in his herd; while everyone else is ‘elephant colour’ Elmer is a patchwork of every colour imaginable, and he never fails to make the other elephants smile and laugh. The book is a beautiful story about individuality and teaches that it is okay to be different because it is our differences that make us special.

At the end of the story the herd holds an Elmer Day parade, where the elephants decorate themselves with lots of colours and patterns, and Elmer disguises himself as a regular elephant. We created our own elephant parade, using our toy elephants and a rainbow of playdough. The children rolled and flattened and pressed the playdough to their elephants, decorating them however they chose.

As they adorned their elephants we looked at the illustrations and asked the children to talk about what they saw; which designs were their favourite and what colours they had chosen. We encouraged them to extend their descriptive language skills, and use the prompts to talk to their peers about what they were doing. By moulding the playdough over the elephants they utilised their fine motor skills and dexterity, immersing themselves in the task as they created their three dimensional artworks.

We took inspiration from the scene in the story where the rest of the herd is standing in formation, and set up an activity designed to examine the children’s cognitive and mathematical skills. They were given placemats with straight, wavy and zig zag lines, and a range of coloured stones. They instinctively started placing the stones on the placemats, either tracing along the lines or creating patterns around them. Through this we were able to gain an insight into how their wonderful little minds were working as they created sequences and carefully selected which colour stone came next.

As we reach the end of another term we have been looking back on what we have learnt together and as teachers we are thrilled with the developmental leaps they have all made! Each child has made great progress with their confidence and resilience, their language and communication skills continue to advance, and the social and emotional wellbeing is reinforced by the strong bonds they have formed with their teachers and with each other.



## Stage 2R: Creating An Elephant Parade





## Stage 2R: Pattern Making





## Stage 2R: Outdoor Play





## Here We Are

We have reached the end of the Third Term and what an incredible Term it's been! Our outer space provocation was action packed with lots of experiences going on to keep everyone busy and engaged. Over the term, the children had access to many meaningful experiences and took part in many spontaneous play opportunities. We now know all the planets names and their characteristics, we engaged in imaginative play with props and dress-ups, we read a wide selection of books related to space, we were involved in a variety of art experiences and lots of physical play outdoors, these are just some of the many experiences that captured the children's interests.

To draw a conclusion to our Outer Space provocation, we decided to re-visit one of our favourite and provoking book, "Here We Are" by Oliver Jeffers.

*"Well, hello.  
And welcome to this Planet.  
We call it Earth."*

Our world can be a bewildering place, especially for our little ones. Full of questions the children had a chance to explore what makes our planet and how we live on it. From land to sea, sky to galaxies, we investigated all possibilities within outer space. Some things about our planet are still complicated but things some can be simple. We talked about we just have to be kind to one another, and we will be able to find all the answers. The story got the children really thinking about planet Earth and its surroundings.

We love to build on the children's interest, continuing to offer opportunities to learn and play when we see a particular topic. This week, those interest led to the creation of a night-time sensory bin to explore. A combination of blue rice and a few loose parts made a fantastic sensory bin. The children dug straight into it. Milk lids became planets as they scooped, arranged, poured and dumped creating their own little galaxies.

Following up on the children's interests, we made a truly out of this world galaxy playdough and it was definitely a favourite. The dough was very silky and smooth, and the children got lost in their own world stretching, pulling, building, creating different planets, asteroids and others. We gave the children some marbles and glow in the dark stars and they found all sorts of ways to play with it.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the parents who cooperated with our provocation. The children have utterly enjoyed all the space related experiences and the learning is evident. Thank you for the overwhelming feedback, it is being great to hear and get to know all about the space discussions going on at home.



## Stage 2/3: Night Time Sensory Play





## Stage 2/3: Making Magnetic Rocketship





## Stage 2/3: Friendships!





# Stage 3

By Ms Emily Chacon

## Dinosaurs

Just like that... Term 3 has come to an end.

Across the term, the children have explored different periods that the dinosaurs lived. We found it very interesting that not all dinosaurs lived together, they were separated by both time and geography. The 'Age of Dinosaurs', the Mesozoic Era, was separated into three consecutive time periods, Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous.

Last Term we really focussed on reducing, reusing and recycling. Thinking back on all that we learnt, we decided to make our own diorama for our dinosaurs. Miss Emily guided the children in creating shapes and outlines of trees, grass and a large volcano. It was fantastic to see the children working together and advocating their creativity and imagination into the project. Once it was dry, we added the dinosaurs and dived in!

Continuing on from the diorama box, we created another small world. Using a toy volcano, sand and sticks we created a land for dinosaurs to dig and roam. Listening to some of the conversations from the children, it was amazing to hear how much information they have retained throughout the term.

"This dinosaur lived in the Jurassic period"

"Let's see the fossils from this dinosaur"

To celebrate our provocation coming to an end, the children engaged in some fun biscuit decorating.

Before we started the children called and voted on three different colours. We tallied the results and the three highest were the colours we were going to use. On a round biscuit each child spread their icing on, when finished they were given a gummy dinosaur to place in the middle. Our dinosaur egg creation was complete and ready to be eaten! Of course this was the best part!

Thank you all for an amazing Term 3!

Enjoy your break!

### Reminders:

- During Vacation Care, we will not be doing 'Show & Tell'. Week one of Term 4, we will begin from Week 1 from the roster.
- No toys are to be brought to school. There has been an increasing amount of toys being brought to school. They will be sent home at the door, and will not be allowed in the classroom.



## Stage 3: Creating A Volcano





## Stage 3: Decorating Dinosaur Biscuits





## Stage 3: Spring Has Sprung!





# Stage 3/4

By Ms Riina Andrew

## Fractured Fairy Tales

To finish off the term, we tried our hand at writing our own fairy tale. Each class member had the opportunity to add their own part to the story and we all enjoyed each other's input toward the story below:

*Once upon a time, there was a little girl who went to see her sick granny. Goldilocks smelt some porridge and when into a bedroom. Then a giant came along and a witch called Radha appeared. Radha the witch ate the lollies on the table and smelt some more porridge. Radha and the giant went outside and had a picnic of sandwiches. A crocodile came to the picnic and ate the sandwiches, the witch and the giant. The crocodile then went to drink some water and have a sleep.*

### The End.

Each child was very excited when I read the story that they had created and wanted to make this story into a book so we did! The children were given pre-made booklets to write and draw pictures on to make their own story books. Using their imagination, the children were able to illustrate the above story with their own ideas and interpretations of the story and its characters. Taking this story further, the children had the opportunity to build a scene using Lego pieces to create the set of the story. Working in small groups, the children discussed the giant and crocodile and created these characters with the Lego pieces. They also made a bedroom for granny and some sandwiches!

A fun term was had by all as this provocation turned out to be the most enjoyable one yet!

Thankyou also for the lovely fairy tale books that you have been sending to school with your children. We have enjoyed sharing these with each other very much and looked forward to each morning group when we explored a different title each day!



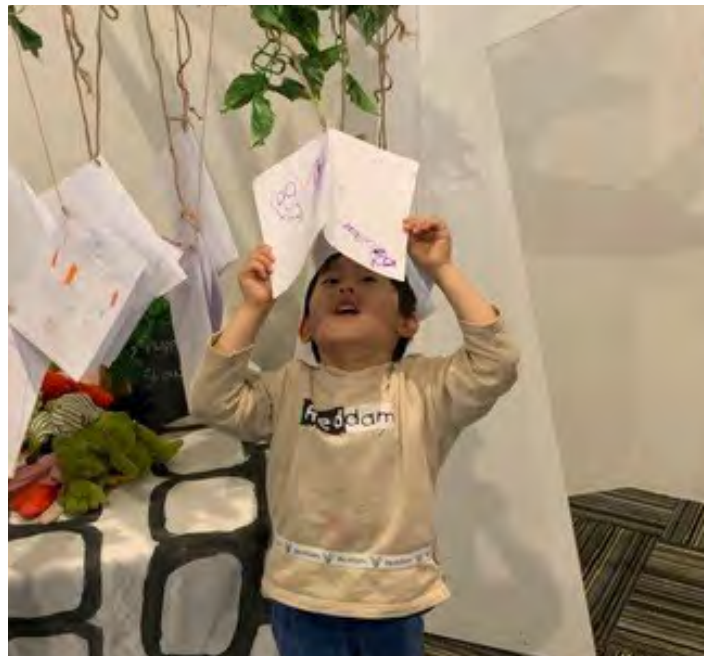


## Stage 3/4: Writing & Creating Fairy Tales





## Stage 3/4: Reading Fairy Tale Books





## Stage 3/4: Sharing Is Caring





## Term 3 Highlights

As we are drawing to the close of Term Three 2021, it's time to reflect on the term we have had with the children. This term the children have been developing new skills, learning about becoming resilient, forming and strengthening relationships and have been engaging in the term's provocations. This term we started off with learning about Natural Disasters we

started off with looking at volcanoes and then weather patterns and storms and so on.

The children participated in activities that allowed them to work together as a team and collaborate with others. As we made our way through the term, the children were provided with an engaging and exciting program that incorporated different natural disasters from all around the world. This supported our classes cultural backgrounds and saw the children thrive with their writing and literacy skills, experiment with different resources and hypothesise and engage in our Natural Disaster

During this crazy time, stage four teachers would like all of our wonderful families to know the following. Be kind to yourselves. Many of you are continuing to educate your children yourself during this challenging time. If you are having difficulty with the added pressure of now being your child's teacher, please remember that they already learn from you everyday through simple acts. You do not need to replicate your child's school experience. Just keep being the teacher you already are to them. Read with your children, cook with your children, sing and dance with your children and enjoy the simple things with your children. Quite simply... continue to be the kind hearted parents that you are.

We understand that many of you are facing difficult times ahead. If there is anything we can do to support you or if you need someone to talk to please reach out to us. We are only an email or phone call away. You and your child's wellbeing is of the utmost importance to us.

### **Moving forward:**

Next Term we will be focusing more on our school readiness ensuring your child is ready to go to school in 2022.

Miss Lauren, Miss Ciara, Miss Sophie and the stage four staff want to thank you all for an amazing term and we can't wait to see each child develop even more than what they have and to continue to foster their education and needs.



# Stage 4: Term 3 Highlights





# Stage 4: Term 3 Highlights





# Stage 4: Yoga & Sports!





# Stage 4

By Ms Maddie Criss and Ms Sarah Ross

## Pigs on the Farm

This week Stage Four explored the world of pig farms. An integral part of managing a pig farm is ensuring the care and happiness of all the pigs living there. With this in mind, the children explored how to care for pigs, what their needs are, and about their social lives.

Pigs love belly rubs, wiggle their tails when they're happy, have unique personalities, enjoy affection and cuddles, and are not only capable of being easily trained but can perform complex tasks and have excellent memories. In all the ways that matter, pigs are no different to dogs who hold a special place in our hearts and homes.

### Art

To represent the sunny and unique personalities that pigs display, the children were invited to create an artwork of a pig at a farm. Firstly, the children created a water-colour background consisting of beautiful sunny skies and fresh green grass. Next, the children drew their pig with markers and coloured it in with crayons. In the end, the children discussed the different features of their artworks with their peers. We are so proud of Stage Four's greatly improved fine motor skills and dedication and persistence when approaching challenging artworks.

### Numeracy

This week the Stage Four children challenged themselves with two different numeracy activities which saw them practice a range of different skills such as; number sense, one to one correspondence, subitising and fine motor skill development.

### Muddy Pig Counting Patterns

Many of the Stage Four children were excited to share that they knew pigs love mud and on our learning journey we learnt that pigs wallow in mud to keep them cool on hot days. As an extension of this interest the children were invited to create some muddy patterns on pictures of pigs. The children rolled dice and practiced subitising and calculating the amount of dots on each dice and added them together. To support the children with this mathematical process the children were given a range of brown loose parts to count out on their pigs. Once the children had counted out the correct amount and placed them on their pig they could see a brown muddy pattern on their pig and also prove or disprove if their initial calculation was correct!

### Pig Tail Sorting

As the children continue to diligently practice their fine motor development in preparation for school they were invited to practice this skill while also practicing an early numeracy skill prior to analysis and sorting of data. With the help of a teacher the children created many colourful and curly pig tails and used tongs to sort them into the correct coloured categories. The children loved sorting, sharing and negotiating the amount of colours and tails between peers.



## Stage 4: Pig In Mud Counting





## Stage 4: Creating Pig Art & Pig Tail Sorting





# Stage 4: Gym Class & Sandpit Play

