



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL ST LEONARDS NEWSLETTER



REDDAM

ELS

26th November 2021

Principal's Message

By Mrs Simone Cooke

Dear Parents,

Social learning and building collaboration, friendships and teamwork is a key element of Early Childhood Education. In all of the projects that our teachers set up each week there is an emphasis on building and sustaining relationships, both with peers and teachers. It is these social interactions with others which makes learning meaningful. Utilising our beautiful Reggio Emilia environment here at Reddam to act as a "third teacher" allows us the luxury of time and space to rotate our classes through a myriad of experiences which extends their thinking, questioning and curiosities. Providing positive experiences and interactions for our babies and children makes them feel comfortable to express themselves and feel good about the people they are becoming.

Helping children develop positive friendships skills, social values and empathy is a part of our day to day focus, which as you can appreciate is no easy task for our teachers, particularly as children progress from being highly dependent newborns into independent toddlers who are beginning to assert their control over the world! Teaching children to interact successfully with others, to express and regulate their feelings and to have a positive sense of self, lays good foundations for mental health as they grow and develop.

Establishing good friendships, learning to share and engaging with others on collaborative projects where small groups work towards achieving a common goal is used across all our classrooms at Reddam ELS. It encourages children to actively exchange ideas and not only increases interest among them but also promotes critical thinking. There is a lot of existing research to suggest that individuals who can work collaboratively with others develop better processing skills and retain information longer than those who work alone. Shared learning allows children to engage in discussion, take responsibility for their own learning and to view things from different perspectives.

Principal's Message Continued...

An integral part of our Stage 4 classes is building socialisation skills to assist in their transition to Primary school. Building team-work skills, empathy for others and teaching them how to negotiate issues they will encounter in the playground, all ensures that they head off to Kindergarten feeling confident in being able to build new friendships and deal with new unfamiliar environments.

Social and emotional security and development in a young child can never be overestimated. We are very fortunate here at Reddam to have both skilled and nurturing teachers who encourage their children to venture out, take risks and explore, yet are nearby to offer support and comfort, ensuring that each and every one is accepted and valued as the unique individual they are.



Stage 1R

By Ms Amanda Felton

The rain has certainly not prevented our little ones from their busy gross motor play! This week the children have been keeping very active with their MyGym work out! Our coach has created some wonderful intentional fundamental movement skills, which involves lots of balancing, such as building core strength through balancing on the on the ships bow, climbing stairs and walking the plank.

We have also taken advantage of our wonderful undercover playground to give our babies lots of active outdoor play exploring the garden, watering the plants, enjoying themselves and making friends. We focused this week upon how nature and water go together and the Babies had a wonderful time sharing this sensory experience together. We set up our water table and the children enjoyed actively participating with the miniature boats and floating and sinking.

After their gross motor play it was time to build those fine motor skills and practice holding chalk as we experimented and created a drawing that represents our own interpretation of nature and water. What a wonderful job our babies are doing collaborating with each other and making new friends ,as we it experience so many wonderful new experiences together.

Housekeeping News: Could all parents please label their children's socks and all other clothing items as some of our delightful Babies do have the same clothing. Thank you.



Stage 1R: Building Fine Motor Skills



Stage 1R: Exploring Our Environment



Nature & Loose Parts

“Children deserve to grow and learn in a place and alongside a force that is as wild and alive as they are.” **Nicollete Sowder**

As we are entering the final few weeks of our Nature and Loose Parts Provocation we have been focusing on building our vocabulary and our love for the outdoors and nature.

The children have been enthusiastically helping their teachers water our beautiful garden and we even enjoyed a spontaneous session of water play one afternoon as we were watering the plants and the children started playing with the water.

Our first sensory activity this week was rainbow coloured sand and small branches with bright green leaves. The children each had the opportunity to explore and investigate this activity. The children identified and named all the different colours they could see and we worked on our numeracy skills by counting how many leaves we had on our branches. All the children enjoyed the different textures in this sensory activity as the sand was rough, yet the leaves were really smooth. They all thoroughly enjoyed this activity and had so much fun with their peers as they did this activity in small; groups of four.

This week we also welcomed some new pets into our classroom. Miss Fion and the children of stage 2/3 had a tank with tadpoles that they explored and learnt about. These tadpoles have now grown into little frogs and we have moved them to our classroom as they were perfect to combine into our nature provocation. The children were all extremely excited and had a lovely time looking for the frogs and studying their natural habitat. We discussed the lifecycle of a frog again as we have covered this in an earlier provocation on “Mini – Beasts”.

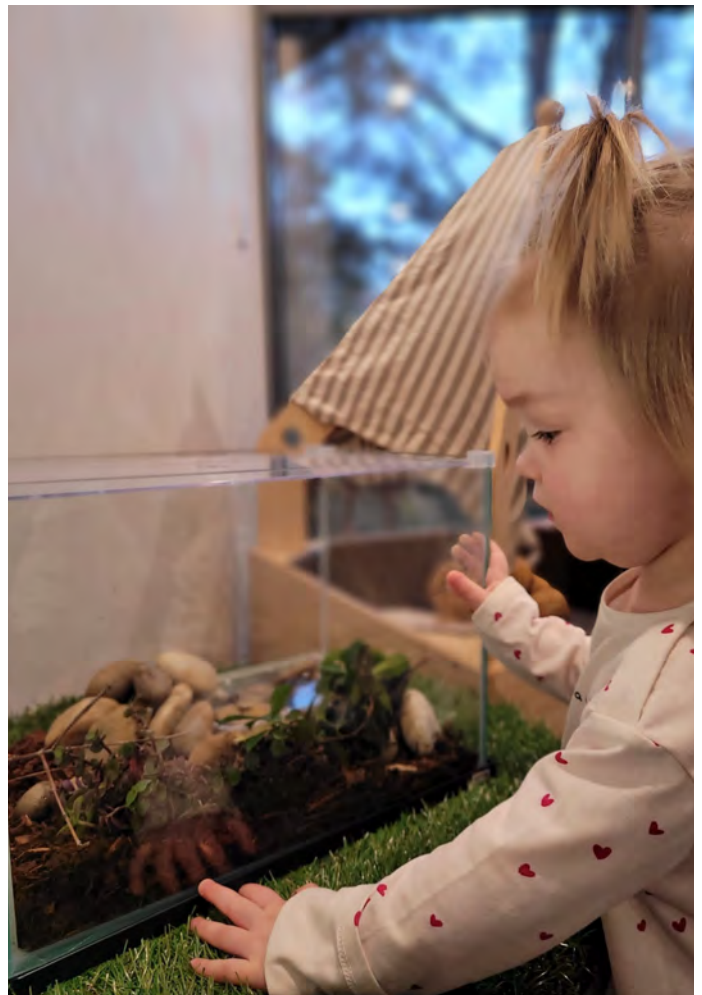
Our literacy focus for the week was an inspiring book called “Look inside Nature” by Minna Lacey and Carolina Buzio. This book explored the wonders of nature with gorgeous illustrations and ingenious flaps. We looked up in the trees behind the reeds and under the ground to see what was living there and discovered how plants grow and make seeds.

Lastly just a friendly reminder that we have the Christmas concert video recordings next week. Please refer to my email sent last week and if you have any other queries do not hesitate to call or email me.

Stage 1E + 1D: Once Upon A Rainbow



Stage 1E + 1D: Can You Spot The Frog



Becoming

This week we looked at the final component of our topic – becoming. For this we thought about the key skills that they will need as they embark on their preschool years. Their continued development has been our aim throughout the year, as we design our learning programme with the intent to challenge and extend their skills across the developmental areas. In the early years the best way for children to learn is through play, so our intentional teaching has been built into play-based and child-led provocations that allow them to learn without knowing they are learning.

Now the children are reaching the age where their language and comprehension skills are developed enough to directly involve themselves in our group discussions in an intentional way. Their self-awareness and sense of identity has evolved to a point where they are able to make meaningful contributions to the world around them. We have used their ideas and suggestions to guide our activities, and the children are starting to understand the reasoning and skills behind what we are doing.

One thing the children have been particularly interested in lately is drawing. Whenever we have asked them what they want to do during free play, a significant number of them have been requesting we get out the pencils, textas and crayons. After our self-portraits last week they have been interested in creating representational drawings – telling us what they intend to draw and having their artworks begin to resemble this.

Drawing is a great way to build a range of cognitive and fine motor skills in young children. Through continued practice they refine their coordination and visual analysis skills, and exercise the muscles in their fingers to give them the strength and control that will help them next year when they begin writing. We've noticed improvements in their pencil grip, which correlates to their advancements in drawing. Where they once used a clenched fist and moved their whole arm to scribble across the page, we are guiding them to move into a modified tripod grip and moving from the wrist to give them more control over small movements, and allow them to better recreate their visions onto the paper.

A reminder that we will be recording our Christmas Concert on Monday at 10am. For children who attend on Monday please pack your white outfit in a labelled bag for us to change them into before the show. For those who will be coming in especially for the recording please bring your child in their outfit by 9:30am.

Stage 2R: Developing Fine Motor Skills



Stage 2R: Alphabet Skills



Stage 2/3

By Gabriela Guimaraes

Little Explorers

Playing outside gives children the chance to explore the natural environment and have adventures. This week we had our focus on outdoor play, building independence and straightening friendships. The children loved playing games, testing their physical limits, expressing themselves and building their self-confidence.

When children are outside they have more space and freedom for big movements like running, jumping, kicking and throwing. Physical activities like these are good for your children's health, fitness and physical development.

Spending time outdoors might lower children's chances of developing short-sightedness. And a bit of safe play in the sun can be good too, small amounts of sunlight exposure can help boost vitamin D levels.

While playing outside we also like to encourage the children's ability to be creative and come up with their own games. Our pre-schoolers learned along the year to play with their peers in a courteous manner. Respecting each others space, being kind and inclusive. Those elements are part of the Reddam Grace and courtesy program.

Make believe is another favourite outdoors. We went on bear hunts, we chased dragons and we flew like butterflies. All using our imagination.

Finally, playing outdoors with others encourages social development and collaboration. This is because play teaches children how to work together in groups, which includes learning to share, negotiate, and solve conflict.



Stage 2/3: Little Explorers



Stage 2/3: Little Explorers



When I Grow Up

This week has been very important for the children's development in problem solving.

We engaged the children in scenario based lessons where the children had to work together to solve problems and act out scenes.

On one table the children were given wind up cars and created tunnels using magnetic tiles. The children worked together and independently to try and get the car from one side to the other without running into the barricades. It was interesting to see the different levels of communication and language skills being used to describe and assist their partners to make it through the course. By working as a team, children develop important life skills like problem solving, listening, leadership and creative thinking. Nurturing teamwork skills also develops higher levels of confidence, self-esteem, empathy and compassion.

As the children are growing up they are beginning to face different challenges within friendship groups and daily experiences. The teachers have been assisting the children to promote mental health and resilience in the classroom.

By assisting the children in:

- building positive relationships
- teach social emotional skills
- foster positive emotions
- identify strengths
- assist in building a sense of meaning and purpose.

Coping with stress, at any level and any age, in a positive way is known as resilience. Building such resilience has many health benefits. Children who are resilient can recover from setbacks and get back to living their lives more quickly. And when children overcome setbacks and problems, it builds their confidence and helps them feel more capable the next time a problem comes up. Resilient children are often good at solving problems and learning new skills. This is because they're more willing to try again even if things don't go the way they want the first time. When things don't go well and children feel anxious, sad, disappointed, afraid or frustrated, resilience helps them understand that these uncomfortable emotions usually don't last forever. They can experience these emotions and know they'll be OK before too long. Resilient children are less likely to avoid problems or deal with them in unhealthy ways, like getting defensive or aggressive or intentionally hurting themselves. Resilient children are also likely to have better physical and mental health than children who struggle to be resilient.

Stage 3: Exploring Primary Colours



Stage 3: Photo Day



Investigation Numeracy

This week we took our new found knowledge and skills of simple mathematical equations one step further and decided to share this in a group situation. Using butcher paper, I wrote mathematical equations, which we discussed together regarding what the plus, minus and equals symbols represent. I then added in numbers to the symbols and asked the class if they knew the answer. Some children were able to share their answer verbally, some children used their fingers to help them work out the answer and others held up the number of fingers that they thought would be the answer. Each class member has been very engaged with the week's numeracy exploration and ask to revisit this activity during the day.

Another numeracy themed experience this week, was the 'Tap it out!' table. Using large printed number cards, each child had the opportunity to choose a card and say the number that they had chosen. Together we then took some tapping sticks and tapped together the number on the card, counting as we tapped. The experience allowed the children to count together in a pattern or rhythm sound and focus on stopping at the number of the card chosen.

At the art and craft table this week, the class were given the opportunity to use their writing skills and print some numbers of their choice. We then practised our scissor cutting skills by cutting out the numbers that we had written and paste them onto our paper. Some children chose a variety of numbers and wrote them all, while other children preferred to concentrate on one or two numbers and writing alot of the same number. Each child used their own imagination and creativity to create their own work of number art!

We have also been enjoying more counting songs this week, we were inspired to sing 'Ten in the Bed', after we shared a story with a similar theme. We also learnt a new song called 'How Many Fingers on one Hand'.

We also spent some time practising our Christmas songs this week. The children are all very excited and cannot wait to dress up in their concert clothes and ask me every day if it is the real Christmas Concert day! They are all super excited to perform!

Stage 3/4: Coin Counting & Uno Fun



Stage 3/4: Number Counting & Writing



Stage 4 School Readiness

Teamwork

Group games are fantastic for children; not only are such activities fun and engaging for the children themselves, they're also an opportunity to learn skills such as teamwork, co-operation and creative thinking. Team building activities also give children the chance to build relationships with each other and develop their social skills. Children under the age of 5 are filled to the brim with curiosity about the world and the desire to learn. It's the perfect time to introduce important life skills such as teamwork, creative thinking and cooperation. At this age, they may be too young to grasp such concepts through theoretical learning so learning by doing is an excellent way to impart these skills.

Group games for children are also great for building self-esteem. Through such activities, children learn more about their capabilities and stretch themselves to achieve goals that they may have thought unattainable. The self-confidence that they gain through successfully completing team building games can transfer over to other aspects of their lives such as school, extra-curricular activities and family.

Another benefit of team building activities for children is that they get to develop their social skills. Team building games typically require participants to work closely together to attain a desired result. Children learn how to communicate, articulate their ideas and compromise with others during the course of a group game.

It is important that you encourage your child into team building/ social situations whether this be a sport, art class, learning languages or just allowing them to mix with other children at the park. I see everyday children who are reserved, not confident, shy, only want to hang out with adults etc these are all signs that your child needs to work on their social skills and independence especially when they are going to Kindergarten next year. This week we mixed all the children up and taught them some new games that they can do with their friends to "break the ice" One activity the children really enjoyed was to get a balloon and put it on their forehead and press it up against another child's head and together they had to control the balloon without touching it. This game allowed the children to strategise and work together on how they were going to get from A to B without dropping it. We saw the children communicating with one another to get their ideas across.

REMINDER: Lauren's class dress rehearsal/ Videoing is on Tuesday 30th November Please bring your child's Christmas concert outfit in ASAP. If you have any questions please see Lauren.

Stage 4: Teamwork



Stage 4: Photo Day





Piano

By Mr Alan Tang

Another week had passed in this rainy weather of November. The children at Reddam had enjoyed another week of Piano's lessons. This week Stage 2 demonstrated their ability to count the number of "D" on my portable keyboard, they had also learnt that there are 88 keys on a full size piano. Some children showed ability to follow complex instructions to play "Brother John", which was amazing to see Stage 2 has developed focusing skills and cognitive ability at such an early age. Stage 3, 3/4 and 4 had the freedom of choice between "Brother John" and "Old MacDonalld" with a number of children who specially requested "Baby Shark". They had also learnt about Major and Minor tonality. It helped them develop musicality. With Christmas around the corner, we are going to look at Christmas songs next week. Thank you.



My Gym



My Gym



Physical Education

