



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL WOOLLAHRA NEWSLETTER



Dee's Message

12 FEBRUARY 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

Undoubtedly one of the most touching moments for us as teachers – and no doubt for parents too – is to see a young child reaching out to another in kindness. The teachers have commented several times over the past couple of weeks regarding some of the children putting aside their own needs to show kindness and support for one of their friends who is feeling sad.

Particularly in these first weeks of the new school year, when surroundings are unfamiliar and children have to get used to being away from their families, it really can be overwhelming. Yet there is no surer way to feel comforted than to have one of your peers showing you some love and attention. While it may be said that some children just seem to be innately empathetic to the needs of others, there is no doubt that it can also be taught and encouraged.

Our teachers spend time every day ensuring that the children feel safe and noticed in their classes, and as the year goes by they build on this by helping the children to gain the words to describe how they are feeling. In conjunction with this, they guide the children to realise that other people also have feelings, and they encourage them to reach out in kindness and empathy.

We can probably all remember the advice given to Scout by her father in *To Kill A Mockingbird*, which is that one never understands another until you climb into their skin and walk around in it. Yet this is quite challenging for young children, as so much of their family's attention has been lavished only on them. Learning how to move from 'self' to a concern for 'others' is a process which takes time – and often many conversations and guidance from an adult.

Dee's Message

In the classroom, many opportunities arise each day for the teachers and children to put this into practice. When one of their friends is feeling sad, children can be encouraged to reach out to them and to involve them in what they are doing; and when disagreements arise, as they inevitably do when toys and other equipment have to be shared, the teachers can help them to resolve the issue by turning their attention to how the other person feels.

Children are generally good at reading faces, as we know only too well from their earliest days. Just as they read delight and acknowledgment in the eyes of their parents and other significant adults, so they are often adept at reading the emotions of their peers. However, reading more complex facial expressions can be really difficult for young children, which is why our teachers spend time showing pictures of different

expressions to the children, to help them identify how people probably feel in each image. This in turn gives them the ability to understand emotions not only in themselves but in their peers as well.

Henry David Thoreau asked the question, "Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?" We hope that this miracle starts in these earliest years of the children's lives and continues long into their adult relationships.

Have a great weekend and may your Valentine's Day be full of love and affirmation!

Dee Pitcairn
Principal



The Nest (1R)

Kiri Winders, Rachael Soegiono, Min Pattharasiritanarat & Rochelle Lundie

The Nest children came on in leaps and bounds in terms of confidence this week. It was wonderful to see our little ones settle relatively quickly after drop-off and be content to start their day. We introduced our good morning song "tik tok", when we all gather together at morning teatime. By learning this song each day, we are helping each child become familiar with each other's names, and helping to develop a sense of routine, belonging and familiarity in the Nest.

We also celebrated Valentine's Day this week! We decorated the room in balloons and hearts,

and the children were very busy creating their own love heart paintings and baking cookies for Mum and Dad. We asked our parents to contribute a love note to their little one written on a red heart that we displayed on our Nest tree. Our focus this week was on the value of love. We strive to create a loving space for our little ones by spending quality one-on-one time with each of them and having lovely cuddles at every chance. All the children are so adorable and easy to love – so it makes our job very fulfilling.



The Nest (1R) Photo Gallery



Fledglings (1E)

By Hannah Corrigan, Jane Teh, and Nadia Breus

Each week we offer activities that reflect both the children's interest as well as cultural and community events and celebrations. Valentine's Day started the week for our whole community and we especially think about the ones we love, while reading many books.

Leading on from this, the children each had the opportunity to mould clay into a heart shape. More detail was added with tiny fingerprints from each child. There are many benefits of children using clay as an art material, including motivating children to explore its sensory qualities, strengthening small fingers hands and wrists, and building children's imagination as they create. It is also calming and helps children relief stress through their hands.

Nearby, another table saw the children moulding soft red play dough, making hearts with little hands and pressed into shape with little fingers.

Incorporating the theme of love, a Valentine's Day sensory tub was created and displayed in our classroom. This sensory tub included red dyed rice, flowers, scoops and tubs to allow the children to fill their senses. The sensory tub encourages the children to use scientific process while they play, create and explore.

Some of the children chose to use their fine motor skills to scoop and pour the rice while others enjoyed the feeling of the rice trickling through their fingers. These sensory experiences open the door to many learning opportunities such as imaginative play, language exploration, co-ordination and fine motor development.

The children have been reading books about love and showing particular interest in a book called "In my heart: a book of feeling" by Jo Witek.

This book explores different emotions a heart can have and it explains what an emotion can feel like. During morning group time we discussed what we thought the meaning of love was. The teacher led the discussion about the things we love.



Fledglings (1E)

Photo Gallery



Stage 2

By Daniella Gosty, Karla Cabezas, Shauna Corry, Sarah Noone, Roberta Sokame and Joyce Matsui

It has already been an amazing journey for the Kookaburra group and we are only five weeks into our first term (and only three weeks for our new friends to Reddam). We have already been able to observe a strong sense of belonging. In the Reddam ELS you will often see references or quotes from the EYLF on our documentation. For those families who are new to the world of Early Learning education, Belonging, Being and Becoming - The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) describes the principles, practices and outcomes that support and enhance young children's learning from birth to five years of age, as well as their transition to school. The framework offers a vision where 'all children experience learning that is engaging and builds success for life'.

The Kookaburra class has so far been engaged in a variety of experiences that offer the children the opportunity to focus on their social and emotional development and their language expression. As two and half year olds turning three there is so much happening socially and emotionally, and they are learning lots about relationships. Their play becomes more about engaging with their peers and joining in with a group. Common interests will always attract a crowd and this is where they learn to share what they are using and wait for a turn. They are practising their every increasing vocab and understanding of language to express their wants, needs, emotions, and their thoughts about the world.

Storytelling

Following on from our Australia Day celebrations, the children showed a lot of enjoyment when we read the story 'Wombat Stew' by Marcia Vaughan. To add to the storytelling, the children were excited to see the stew pot come out to help act out the story of Wombat stew! This classic Australian picture book tells the story of a

dingo who catches a wombat and wants to cook him in a stew. But all the other bush animals have a plan to save their friend. They trick the dingo into using mud, feathers, flies, bugs and gumnuts in his stew, and the result is something the dingo will never forget! In group time we used props to help us recreate the story. Each child had a turn at adding the ingredients from the story into a pot and mixing it. Did it taste good? The dingo didn't think so and ran away, with the wombat being saved from added to the pot.

We then created our own wombat stew using collage materials. The children had a choice of bugs, feathers, sticks and sand to add to their pots. YUM! These have been on display in the hallway.

Love is in the air!

We hope you all have a wonderful Valentine's Day with your families.

The children loved sharing the love with our celebration of love and friendship for Valentine's Day! They were excited about making a special card to be given where we used our handprints to add to the paper and added a heart with a special poem. When the children talk to us about who they love we always hear about their mums, dads, brothers and sisters.

Happy Valentine's to all.

Stage 2 Photo Gallery



Stage 2 Photo Gallery



Stage 2 Photo Gallery



Stage 3

By Christina Mandalidis, Susan Casey, Jason Corrigan and Yuliya Ginis

Our story Begins...

This week, the children in Stage 3 D were introduced to the book 'The things I love about school'. This book shares simple examples of positive thinking about the everyday situations which children experience. There are so many things to love about going to school. This book begins our first week of our Term One provocation 'Our Story Begins'.

The children have happily expressed their excitement about being in a new stage and having a new class, exploring new resources, areas and books. Our provocation this term is called 'Our Story Begins' This provocation not only reflects a new chapter on the children's learning journey but also encompasses their shared interest in books and storytelling. This provocation will allow us to plan activities around the children's growing interests and curiosities.

Loris Malaguzzi said: "Stand aside for a while and leave room for learning, observe carefully what children do, and then, if you have understood well, perhaps teaching will be different from before."

The children excitedly told the group what they love about school this year:

Ruby: "I like to read books with Zoe."

Billy: "Drawing at the table."

Joshua: "Building the Lego."

Yanni: "Making these stuff. The sticks and sticky things."

Emily: "Building the blocks. I make castles."

Monty: "My favourite thing is building."

Sienna: "Drawing my family and pictures of me."

Oscar: "I like building with the blocks."

Frankie: "I like playing with the babies."

Zoe: "Drawing pictures with you."

Hunter: "I just love my school. I'll make it red."

Xavier: "Building a tower really big."

Elizabeth: "Playing with the dolls."

Oscar T: "I only like all of my new school."

Matthias: "Climbing the bridge in the playground."

Harvey: "Play with the animals."

Alfred: "These sticks and put them on the wall."

The drama corner of our classroom has become a popular area for the children to play. The kitchen has had some plates, cups and cutlery added, there has been a makeup table set up, and this past week some dolls and a cot were introduced and they have become very popular amongst all the children in our group.

Dramatic play is a type of play where children assign and accept roles and act them out. It is pretending to be someone different and new like a superhero or someone well known like a Mum or Dad. Sometimes children take on real world roles, while other times they take on fantasy roles. Either way, it is play that involves breaking down barriers of reality and it results in serious and natural learning.

Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

By Cassandra Holmes, Jane Pledger, Sandra Carberry, Nina Bergel and Kristina Rocchi

Love Is in The Air

This week was all about LOVE! Every February, we celebrate Valentine's Day by giving flowers, candy, and cards to those we love. We do this in honour of St. Valentine. You may be wondering "Who is St. Valentine?"

There are many legends about St. Valentine. One legend is that Valentine was an imprisoned man who fell in love with his jailor's daughter. He sent the first 'valentine' to his love when he wrote her a letter and signed it 'Your Valentine'. These words are still used on cards today.

Perhaps we'll never know the true identity and story behind the man named St. Valentine, but this much is for sure...February has been the month to celebrate love for a long time, dating way back to the Middle Ages.

In the lead-up to Valentine's Day, we asked the children what they would like to create for their expression of love. The children answered straight away: "A love heart". For their artwork, the children in Nina's group coloured shaving foam in shades of pink and red and purple and placed white paper over the top to create a print on the paper. Once it was dry, they drew a heart using a template on their print and cut it out.

To extend on our creative expression, during group time we read the book "When I'm feeling loved", by Trace Maloney. This book further promoted the opportunity to discuss how special it is to feel love, warmth and security. We explored that a hug, a smile, being calm and patient are everyday signs of love. We agreed that when we feel loved we have a healthy self-esteem, become free to love others and engage within the world with less fear. After reading the story, we further reflected on our own feelings of love as I posed the question "What is love?"

Here are the children's comments:

Luca: "Love is when you love someone, like a person."

Abigail: "Love is in our heart and we share our love because it is nice."

Chenglin: "Love is give a kiss and play with somebody."

Ostein: "Love means love my Mummy and Daddy and brother. There are a lot of things I love."

Edison: "Love is when Mummy hugs me and plays with me."

Abigail: "Love is in your heart and we share our love because it is nice."

Lulu: "Love is giving flowers and kisses."

Sam: "Love is a name."

Luna: "Love is a love heart."

Frank: "Love is someone who loves another."

Charlotte: "Love is something we do to our Mummy and Daddy."

Eloise: "Love is kisses."

The children's Valentine's Day creations and photographs can be admired on display in our Stage Four Piazza.

We wish all the families a wonderful weekend filled with love.

Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson

This week we continued with our exploration of the question "What is drama?" To start the lesson, we always have a shake of the parachute. We went around the circle and named colours in Stage 1 and 2, and named our favourite foods in Stages 3 and 4. We also had a sing of "heads, shoulders, knees and toes".

In Stage 2 the children had a go at some imaginative play. We pretended that the floor had magically changed surfaces, and we pretended to be walking on sharp bindies/weeds, slippery ice, sticky mud and hot lava.

Actors need an audience. I placed the children against a wall in the room. This was where the audience sat. We practised turning on our listening ears and watching eyes, and we discussed what being a good audience member would look like. Audiences always clap at the end of a performance. We also practised a bow.

I then pulled the children aside in groups of 3-4 (audience staying where they were) and gave a scenario for a scene. The children acted out the scene, and then bowed to signal the end of the performance. The audience then had to clap and guess what the actors were doing. Some examples included being hungry lions and finding something nice to eat and then

falling asleep, stomping elephants who were thirsty and found a nice watering hole, and crocodiles who snapped up a nice fish.

Actors have to be good at pretending. In Stage 3 and 4 we have been talking about our imaginations and that we can pretend to be anything we want: animals, objects, characters from stories etc. This week we continued with the forest theme and imagined that the room we were in had big trees, lots of flowers, we heard snakes, saw a bear sleeping and went fishing. Some of the children extended the drama and told me what colour their flowers were and what they smelt like. I asked one child to describe what the snake looked like and some children wanted to leave the bear the fish we caught too!

Stage 4 extended on this and made some picture postcards. They made a frozen image of a forest, a haunted house and a park. Next week we will visit a house in the forest. I wonder who it will belong to?

We finished with a visit from the owl. We turned the lights off so the owl wouldn't get frightened and discussed where owls live and what they eat.

Well done, everyone!



Music

By Nick Summerfeld

I hope you all had some time to relax over the holidays and are keeping healthy. I'm super excited to be back and looking forward to the year ahead!

This term in music I want to explore sound and making instruments ourselves. Over the last two weeks in Stages 2, 3 and 4; we have been making our very own paper plate shakers. The children were introduced to a number of musical notes; 'quavers' , 'crotchets' and 'minims' and on the back of our shaker the children were asked to draw these notes in a variety of colours to decorate their shaker. This helps build Visual-Motor Integration (VMI), which is the communication between visual and motor skills.

After we were done decorating, we stapled out plates together and filled them with coffee beans. To help celebrate the Lunar New Year, we used a variety of gold, yellow or red streamers and pipe cleaners to also decorate our shakers. The red is the colour of luck, and gold is for fortune. Some children wanted a blue streamer, and others expressing themselves with 'rainbow' by using all three.

In Stage 2, before finishing decorating our shakers and waiting for the glue to dry, we used our shakers during our warm up songs. Our kids love moving their body's and jumping around to some of their favourites - they even remembered 'The Sun Flower Song' which we haven't done in over two months! With a few new faces, they quickly felt comfortable in joining with dancing with all their friends.

In Stages 3 and 4, we started the lesson sharing something with love as Valentine's Day is coming. Our Expression Circle is a great way for the children to build confidence in sharing and speaking - as we also have some new friends joining us, it's a great way to get to know them too! We refreshed our brains with our 'Good Morning

Song' and some warm up scales on 'BA' and 'LA' to help get our articulators working before moving into the challenge for this term. Our challenge this term will be the choir warm up of 'Numbers', except this time we will sing it backward from 8.

8
8, 7, 8
8, 7, 6, 7, 8
8, 7, 6, 5, 6, 7, 8

This is a great exercise for the brain because it involves counting and thinking of what comes next. Keeping in time with the piano and the group, but also keeping in pitch - it's a full brain workout!

In The Fledglings and The Nest, I like to ease our way into the first few weeks. As some of the children are adjusting to a new and changing environment, I began the lesson with a slow and calm 'Good Morning Song' and 'Twinkle, Twinkle'. With the Fledglings, we shook our maracas along too 'ABC', 'B.I.N.G.O' to help get them involved before standing up and stomp around the room. In 'Twinkle, Twinkle' we used our sleigh bells on our wrists to encourage the children to move their body and make noise with the bell.

In The Nest we sing some of the favourites, but slower renditions; the babies will sit and some become mesmerised by the music. To help build their confidence we encourage them to collect their own maraca to shake along with. Some are comfortable shaking along straight away, and others slowly join in as we progress through the lesson. To encourage their movement we used the 'Piano Play Mat' - little do they know they'll soon grow to love this and be stomping, jumping and running across it. For now though, I'm happy to get them walking and crawling across the mat .

Music

By Nick Summerfeld



Music

By Nick Summerfeld



Happy Birthday



Reddam Early Learning

would like to wish a very happy birthday to

**Jarvis Burnham, Francesca Brown, Ren Cook
& Theodore Rosen**

who celebrate their special day this week
and over the weekend.

We hope you have a fabulous day!

