



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL WOOLLAHRA NEWSLETTER



Dee's Message

26 MARCH 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

“Cooking is love made visible.” So goes one saying about the value we attach to cooking and baking. We all have special memories of time spent chatting in a kitchen as a meal is prepared, or at the table as we share a meal with special people. Food – and its preparation – has the potential to draw people together and to provide moments which we will treasure for a lifetime.

Yet it's not only adults who enjoy these meaningful moments. Our children do too – and they are incredibly adept at replicating what they see us do in the kitchen or around the dining table. One only has to watch the little chefs and hosts in action in the ELS to see how much they have absorbed from the adults in their lives. Wonderful recipes are created in their play kitchens, tea parties are hosted (often with the most delicious of delicacies!), and meals are enjoyed with their friends and family members.

Food preparation and delicious meals can provide moments rich in potential for family members and teachers to engage with the children, even though they are still young. These interactions allow children to become part of the process of creation, while at the same time developing their language skills, as new words and instructions are introduced.

Even though it may be far easier for the adult to do everything while preparing a dish, by gradually including children in the process of making it they allow them to feel empowered and they are also able to enjoy feeling part of the end product. Sometimes the messy kitchen afterwards really is worth it, especially when one sees the look of pride on a young child's face.

Dee's Message

Involving children in cooking also teaches them about the basics of nutrition. It can guide them towards healthy eating habits and steer them away from fast foods. Spending time creating a healthy and tasty meal together can become a shared experience which children will remember for a lifetime. No doubt we can all remember special moments spent in the kitchen with a parent or grandparent. The tasty treats we created together, along with the conversations and laughter, all combine to create a rich tapestry of memories.

And of course, as we know only too well in the ELS, sometimes cooking doesn't even have to end with a 'real', edible product. In

the imaginations of the children, their tasty treats and elaborate meals are just as appealing as those created in their kitchens at home. And as they invite their friends and the teachers to taste their delicacies, they are becoming the chefs, hosts and creators of the future.

Wishing our Jewish families Chag Sameach.

Have an enjoyable final weekend of the term!

Dee Pitcairn
Principal



The Nest (1R)

Kiri Winders, Rachael Soegiono, Min Pattharasiritanarat & Rochelle Lundie

What a rainy wet start to the week it was!! As the children all came into class in the mornings, we used the opportunity to observe and learn about the rain. We went to the window to watch the rain coming down, the children were fascinated. "Drip drip drip", we said as we watched as the raindrops trickle down the window. We could see all the school children arriving in their raincoats and umbrellas and the big puddles on the ground. We sang "rain rain, go away" and this led to a discussion about the weather, water and wearing our raincoats and umbrellas. Later in the day when it was time to sleep the raindrops were noisy on the roof. Some of the children were a little unsure of this so we turned the noise into a little song: "patter patter go the rain drops drip drip drip". By observing and interacting with their environment, the children are learning about their world, and developing dispositions for learning such as curiosity, imagination and enthusiasm. One day, when it's not quite so rainy, we can put on our wet weather clothes and set out to splash in the puddles!!

This week in the Nest we spent some time preparing our decorations for Easter next week! Teacher Min helped the children to paint with their feet for a lovely easter surprise! It was wonderful to see the looks on their faces and hear the little giggles as they felt the sensation of the paint tickle their toes!

Later in the week, we started to mould some little eggs with coloured clay to prepare for our Easter hunt next week. Each child took a turn to choose a colour, and to pull and squish the clay to make an egg shape with their hands. Teachers Jane and Helena helped them to place little sparkles onto the eggs. It was another great activity to extend fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, language acquisition, imagination and creativity. We look forward to hiding and finding them next week!

The children continue to be very interested in hiding and finding things. With this in mind, teacher Kiri decided to set up an Easter-themed provocation for the room that promotes this concept of object permanence, and in turn promotes their social skills. In the reading corner she set up a cosy nook with a pink carousel tent for the children to hide inside and play peekaboo with the soft organza net. Isabelle, Hudson, Cosmo and Claire, took delight in this game crawling in the tent with the comfy cushions and then crawling back out to "surprise!" Over on the egg provocation table, Max and Rochelle took an interest in the little egg game with animal toys inside. As they played happily alongside each other, Kiri watched them open and close the eggs with curiosity. The activity then turned into a peekaboo game. Kiri asked, "Where is the pig gone?" Max opened the egg and said, "ooh!" in surprise. Next Rochelle had a turn. "Where is the cow gone?" Kiri asked. She opened it. "Here it is!" She picked it up out of the egg to show Kiri. They continued the game as other children arrived to join in the game. This game also extends the children's fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in their hands and fingers as they twist and pull apart the little animals. Kiri also took the opportunity to extend language and cognition by naming all the animals. It was a popular activity for the children to freely come and go as they please.

Martin and Eugene loved to feed the rabbit with the carrots at the little carrot garden. We will continue with these activities with all the children over the next week leading to Easter.

The Nest (1R) Photo Gallery



The Nest (1R)

Photo Gallery



Fledglings (1E)

By Hannah Corrigan, Jane Teh, and Nadia Breus

Healthy Me

Following on from last week and the importance of movement in early childhood, this week the children were welcomed with a creative focus on fresh fruit and vegetables. The children engaged in making play salad in the kitchen, adding eggs and fruit to a healthy play lunch table setting.

We listened to a favourite story of "The very hungry caterpillar" with discussion of the healthy food choices and we sang "Fruit salad, yummy yummy".

The children were shown a basket of fruit and we discussed our favourite fruits, while also practising the names of the fruits. We explored the colours and the textures of each fruit. We further enjoyed practising our fine motor skills collecting cut fruit and veg from a bowl using little scoops and tongs. There was much interest, curiosity and enthusiasm, and big smiles all around, as they celebrated their efforts and rewards, as this activity requires concentration, co-ordination and dexterity and also a sense of pride and independence for each child.

Being healthy is also about moving and exercising our bodies, so during outdoor play the children had fun on the climbing bars, crawling through the tunnel and walking on the balancing beams.

Self Help skills

This week we looked at the independent me and the emergence of confidence and everyday skills in daily living. The development of self-help skills creates a sense of pride and independence. Using our rice from our sensory tub last week, we practised pouring from one cup to another, using co-ordination, strength and control, and then we practised sweeping the rice,

with lots of pride and satisfaction from the children completing this task. There is always much pride in helping to keep the environment tidy and being able to contribute this way by the children. We hope the children enjoy helping at home, while also learning to do things for themselves as well as sharing daily tasks.

Following on from our 'what we eat that helps us stay healthy' theme, squeezing oranges is another wonderful activity in which the children learn how to make their own orange juice and enjoy drinking the product of their own efforts. Little hands so quickly learn big skills with each day's growth and independence.

There were so many happy faces, as they discovered and embraced everyday life skills.



Fledglings (1E)

Photo Gallery



Stage 2

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

Investigations Through Play

Daily, we constantly observe the children at play. There are many different types of play and we know play is important for children as it encourages language development (communication, vocabulary, articulation), develops cognitive capabilities (builds connections, develops concepts, questioning, experimentation of ideas, problem solving) and develops social skills (engaging in play, rules, social conventions, turn taking, sharing, friendship groups). It allows children to experiment with ideas, take on different roles, and to practise and consolidate skills. It promotes creativity and imagination. The children are involved in activities that promote gross motor and fine motor skill development. They learn to respect others and to respect the environment. It helps the children to develop in their emotional learning (self-esteem, independence, ability to build resilience, self-regulation, confidence and self-motivation.)

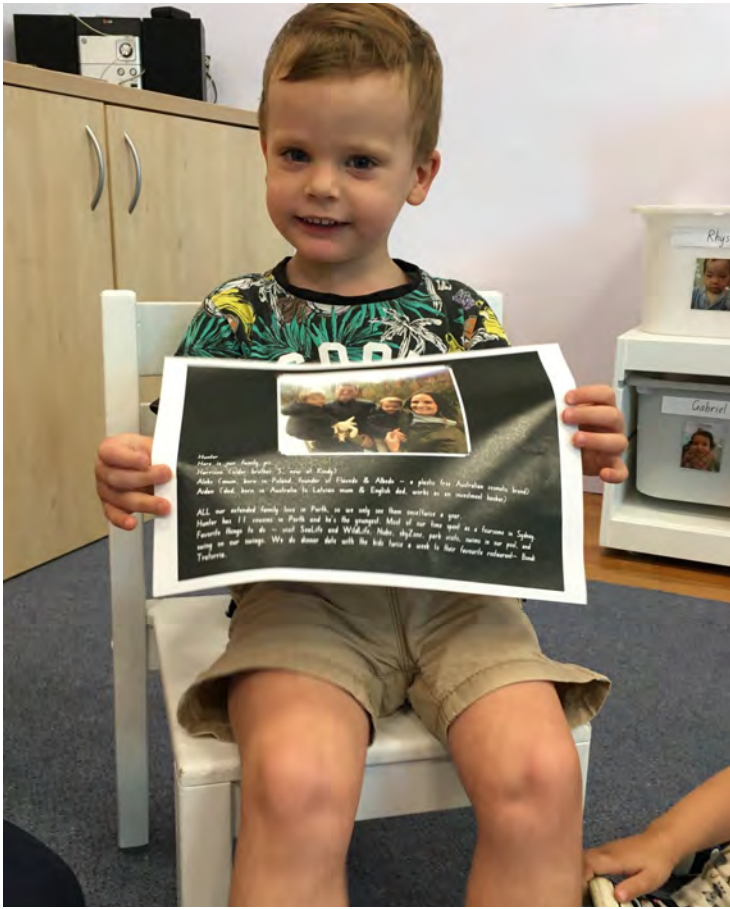
Over the past few weeks, many of our observations have focused on constructive and imaginative play as the children have been involved in using concrete materials such as Duplo. This is an open-ended concrete building activity that allows the children to practise their motor skills and develop their creativity. Children become involved in designing and creating imaginative representations. As the children select pieces to join together, they are learning to identify the differences between colours, sizes and shape. It can also be used to teach basic counting skills as we often count how high a piece may be. Playing with Duplo has also given the children to work as a team with either a peer or a

teacher to share and to collaborate on how to make bricks do what they want them to do. Of course, we do not just use Duplo – we also have magnetic blocks and clear stacking blocks and wooden blocks. The variety of building opportunities is endless.

Family Stories

A child's primary source of comfort is their family. Being part of a school community is an extension of that as the children connect with their teachers and their peers. As part of our provocation "Belonging" in the Kookaburra class this term, we have been working on creating an artwork of our families. The children have been sharing their family stories with the class and it has been lovely to see the joy the children have in seeing the pictures sent in and to show these to their class. Photographs help connect to family and bring back memories of what they like to do together. This has been an ongoing project over the past month as the children have been sitting with the teachers one on one to recreate their families through art. We have enjoyed seeing the children's excitement though this process.

Stage 2 Photo Gallery



Stage 2 Photo Gallery



Stage 3

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

The children in the Perceptual Atelier were introduced to a new Montessori activity this week. Sponging is one of the first basic lessons a child learns in an Early Childhood Montessori classroom. Whilst completing this activity, children develop visual discrimination and fine motor skills. They also work on focus and concentration. Completing a "work cycle" (i.e. from taking the tray from the shelf to putting the work back onto the shelf once finished) is a goal at this stage too. Another benefit to this exercise is that it helps to strengthen hands and fingers for writing.

All practical life activities help increase order, concentration, coordination, and independence. Following a series of steps helps to increase concentration skills even more. Early science concepts, such as absorption, are introduced while the child works with sponging water. This is a very calming activity that the children were all eager to have a turn, to see them line up to try something so simple and to see how engrossed they become with it, while repeating the activity over and over again, is really quite beautiful.

Self-portraits are a fantastic way for children to explore their sense of self and build their self-identity. In Stage Three we love doing self-portraits with our groups at the beginning of the year. In preparation for this, we read the book 'All About Faces' by La Zoo. A science book unlike any other, 'All About Faces' shows children how to find their own answers about the body part they see every time they look in the mirror. Is there any part of the body that fascinates a child as much as the face? A face can frown or cry and show happiness or anger. With simple words and delightful pictures, the face, with its many parts, is explained in terms that young minds can grasp. The children learn about themselves, each other and they foster a sense of belonging within the classroom.

The children's identity is one that they will be constantly developing and changing. Part of their identity is based on how they perceive themselves, emotionally and physically. This is why self-portraits are a great way for the children to express and show their own perceptions of themselves. They used a mirror to look at their own reflections and used their hands to feel different parts of their faces and bodies to understand their shape. Then they took to an A4 page with a simple black marker to draw themselves.

"My head is a triangle. This is me. It's an angry Clara." Clara

"It's Hector." Hector

"I have eyes and a nose and a tummy, legs, arms, hair." Louis

"It's me with a smiling face." Anna

"That's my tummy with my belly button on top." Finley

"It's me and daddy." James

"My hair and my feet." Daliya



Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

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

Representational drawing: Self-Portrait

Representational drawing is the art of drawing realistically. It is making your drawing resemble the real world as closely as possible. The children have been working on a representational piece of art: a self-portrait.

The simple act of drawing plays an important role in a child's physical, emotional and cognitive development. Drawing allows children to express emotions, experience autonomy, and build confidence. When children explore facial expressions in self-portraits, they are introduced to the vocabulary of emotions such as happy, sad, and angry, and begin to develop emotional literacy.

All drawings can show the development of a child's fine motor skills, observation and focusing skills. A self-portrait can also give an insight into a child's self-concept. It is a good way for an adult to see a child through that child's own eyes.

The children were invited to sit at the table to create their unique portraits. They spent some time observing their reflection in the mirror, looking for detail and discussing it with their teacher as they engaged in drawing their representation of themselves. It is always so interesting and valuable to be present when children are drawing, to see them capture the details that they are representing on paper.

These unique, representational self-portraits tell us that the children are confident, observant and curious.

As an extension of this, we read a book 'I Think, I Am' by Louise Hay. Through this book children can learn and understand the powerful idea that they have control over

their thoughts and words, and in turn, what happens in their life.

From reading this book, we found out the difference between negative thoughts and positive affirmations. Fun illustrations and simple text demonstrate how to make the change from negative thoughts and words to those that are positive.

After the story, the children held up their self-portraits and said something positive about themselves.

- Clara: I'm good at drawing love hearts.
- Hugo: I'm good at reading books.
- Taylor: I'm good at making friends and I want to play with everyone.
- Ridley: I'm good at running.
- Margaux: I'm good at drawing and cutting.
- Mila: I'm good at cutting and painting.
- Remy: I'm good at running.
- Maya: I'm good at drawing.
- Elia: I'm good at painting.



Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson

In Drama this week we jumped in and out of books, meeting the characters in the stories and playing games. I wanted to explore the characters in the children's favourite books as well as the all-time classic stories and fairy tales.

One of my favourite books is Alice in Wonderland. I loved it when I was little, as I imagined my own wonderland in my head while my mum read the story to me. So, I thought we would explore the storyline and meet some of the characters in the story.

In the Nest and Fledglings, we began by discussing rabbits. A number of questions were asked including:

- Have you ever seen a rabbit?
- Have you ever had a rabbit for a pet?
- What do rabbits look like?
- What do rabbits eat?
- Where do rabbits live?
- How do rabbits move?
- Do rabbits have long ears or short ears?

I then performed a little rabbit dance that the children watched and then repeated using their own ears. Frankie, from the Fledglings, told me she had a very fluffy tail and Hallie bopped up and down to the music. Next, the children used their imaginations to go down the rabbit hole (tunnel) before arriving at the tea party. At the tea party there was a picture shopping list (scavenger hunt). We all worked together to find the objects that had been hidden around the room and then sat down to have our party.

In Stages 2, 3 and 4 we jumped into the Three Little Pigs book and heard the Wolf, but he sounded a bit too scary, so we jumped into another book, Little Red Riding Hood and again we saw a Wolf who looked very scary, so we jumped back out of the book. In Stages 3 and 4 the children told me what their favourite stories were. A lot of the children in Stage 3 told me their favourite book was Peter Pan. I love Peter Pan too, as it's a story that continues to inspire and fascinate us, and never grows old – just like Peter himself.

We discussed what and where Wonderland might be and some of the children already guessed. I told them that we were going to

explore Wonderland and meet some of the characters from the book.

The first character we met was the White Rabbit who said he was late! But what was he late for? I dressed up as the rabbit and acted out the song. The children loved this and wanted to do it too. We then used mime to wrap a present for the party.

The next character we met was the Queen of Hearts. She was very angry that someone had painted her flowers black and needed cheering up. We played a game of the Queens Says (played like Simon Says) – one of the children dressed up as the Queen of Hearts, and as soon as they put the costume on, they became powerful and instructed the others to do what she said, otherwise she would become very mad (order them to jump up and down, spin around, balance on one leg, polish her shoes etc.) As the children did these actions, we discussed the status of the Queen, by referring to a pack of cards.

The Cheshire Cat was popping out and surprising us from all parts of the room and I asked the children to see if they could find him. I told him he was cheeky, purple and had a big smile, or is it a grin? He was hiding behind me, grinning away. We copied the stance of the cat in the pictures using different levels. I asked why the cat was looking so cheeky. Savannah said he was hiding something, and Freya said he had been pulling a funny face.

We ended the class at the Mad Hatter's Tea Party. I brought in some props for the tea party as well as some rhyming words. Words were placed in a hat in the middle of the table (at the tea party) and they had to use the word they had picked to finish the sentence or say a word that rhymed with it and make up a new one. We had some wonderful sentences including, 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Cat, why are you hiding in the Mad Hatter's Hat?'

Well done, everyone, on another wonderful week of Drama!

Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson



Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson



Music

By Nick Summerfeld

This week in Stages 3 and 4 we focused on listening and controlling our movements. We began the lesson with 'The Silent Game' – a super fun way to check if the children's listening ears are on, and get them focused. The aim is simply to be as silent as possible while performing various tasks. I try to catch them out by asking them to clap their hands; hi-five their friends or when picking up a maraca.

After silently lining up around the piano, we warmed up our voices with some simple 'BA' scales at an increasing tempo before singing our 'Good Morning Song'.

Continuing our understanding of pitch, the children used scarves or balloons to demonstrate that they could recognise the differences in pitch. Once we had a round of throwing our item in the air, I asked each child to close their eyes and identify a 'high', 'middle' or 'low' pitch.

Picking our maracas back up, we then marched around the room to 'The Ants Go Marching', a simple exercise to help the children step in time to the song. At first, we marched to a simple '1 – 2 – 3 – 4' beat, before we half-timed it to '1 – 2 – 1 – 2'. To challenge them further, I added a pause on every second beat to make '1 – pause – 3 – pause' or 'step – pause – step – pause'.

Once our ants were tired from marching and stomping, we sat down and I introduced the children to a metronome to prepare for 'The Floor is Lava'. In this activity, the ground turns into lava and the only safe zones are the rocks on the floor. Following the pulse of the metronome, the children step from rock to rock on each beat to help develop their sense of timing. This is a great exercise which progresses through the year as the children cross the rocks with some help, to eventually challenging them by stepping to a rhythm later in the year.

In Stage 2 and The Fledglings we started the lesson with 'Hokey Pokey' which got faster

and faster. After singing through some simple, single note scales on 'MA', which are great to help create familiar sounds and strengthen the articulators, we worked through our Good Morning Song and into our morning sing-alongs of 'Wheels on the Bus' and 'ABC'.

Now that the children have learnt 'The Sunflower Song' and 'We're Going To The Zoo', we can now look at adding 'The Music Man' to the list. This is an easy song both lyrically and melodically, but it encourages the kids to get involved by thinking of what instruments they know and then to act them out. Some of our Fledglings are finding their feet, but each week they are more confident to join in.

Inspired by all the rain, I set up a 'pond with stones' and played 'It's Raining, It's Pouring' while the children had to step across the pond, and then crawl across the rocks to avoid the rain cloud. This is a fun movement activity and the kids enjoyed getting away from the rain. It also helps to build their listening skills to stay in a line. To calm the lesson down we sat on the floor and worked on our fine motor movement with some finger isolation to 'Twinkle Twinkle'.

In The Nest I started the lesson with 'Here Comes The Sun' as the children settled and all made their way to the rug. After our 'Good Morning Song', and as I encouraged the children to clap their hands or knees, we sang through our actioned songs of 'Wheels on the Bus', 'Open Shut Them' and 'ABC. Moving onto movement, the children danced to 'The Sunflower Song'. It's still early days to get all the movements for 'We're Going to the Zoo', but the kids enjoyed the show we put on for them!

Our little ones are sensory and expressive, and they always love to see what variety of instruments I bring to explore. To end the lesson, we had some free play on some percussive instruments like drums, claves and wood blocks.



Music

By Nick Summerfeld



SPORT

By Bella Kable

This week was an incredible week of not only weather, but also Physical Education. All students were incredible at switching in and out of their raincoats between lessons and moving venues when the rain arrived on the basketball court.

In light of the weather, students learnt a new game this week: 'Stuck in the mud'. This game involves a tagger; the Mud Monster attempting to tag all students before the 'Rain Angel' can crawl through their friends' legs to allow them to run freely again. This game is a great display of teamwork and commitment, with students who were the designated 'Mud Angels' going to all lengths to crawl, and sometimes dive through their friends' legs. As the game continued there were two designated Mud Monsters and two designated Mud Angels. This ensured that students worked together to determine how they would best tag or 'save' as many friends as possible. Both Stage 3 and 4 could not get enough of this game, so we will definitely play this again when it is raining.

Both Stage 3 and 4 also practised their ability to stay in a line with different locomotive movements in the game 'Sensible Snake'. At first, students followed me in all directions as we performed different movements such as marching, galloping, skipping and jogging. Students were introduced to the word 'jogging' this week and we practised our 'slow running' or 'jogging' in a line which moved in all directions. Students in Stage 4 became the leader of the line and enjoyed having control over where we moved to and when we froze. This was lots of fun!

For the remainder of our lesson, we focused on our rolling skills again. At first, we focused on rolling the ball further distances than we had last week. I continued to move further and further away from the students as they

attempted to roll their ball all the way to the pool noodle I was holding. A lot of the students even managed to roll the ball halfway down the Adelaide Hall or basketball court, which is a great effort.

Stage 4 progressed to learning to roll the ball with accuracy. We played a game that can easily be played at home with a tennis ball and any household items. We used cones for our game. The cones were spread at differing distances and angles and students had several attempts at rolling the balls towards the cones. Once a cone had been hit it was eliminated from the game. We played this until all the cones had been hit by at least one student. Stage 4 are getting better and better at rolling every week!

I am looking forward to next week already!
Thanks Stage 3 and 4!



SPORT

By Bella Kable



SPORT

By Bella Kable



Happy Birthday



Reddam Early Learning

would like to wish a very happy birthday to

**Montgomery Bligh, Zoe Dubossarsky, Thomas Rogers,
Mila Tagand, Frankie Moffat-Murphy, Sergio Argrou,
Sophie McCabe & Joshua Lopis**

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

We hope you have a fabulous day!

