



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL WOOLLAHRA NEWSLETTER



REDDAM
ELS

Dee's Message

01 APRIL 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

As we draw to the end of the first term of 2021 and take a short break, it is with the realisation that many of our families will be celebrating significant religious events at this time of the year. Pesach and Easter are two of the events which hold a special place in the lives of many Jewish and Christian families, and they are two of the occasions which we enjoy celebrating with the children in the ELS.

As mentioned in a recent newsletter, we choose to focus on certain significant celebrations, not only for the benefit of those who follow a particular religion but also to open the children's eyes to the beliefs held by others. By doing so, we hope to foster a culture of mutual respect and understanding. A recent article quotes anti-bias and social justice advocate Louise Derman-Sparks, who poses this question, "How do we carry out our professional responsibility to authentically and sensitively

include the cultural perspectives and life experiences for all the families whose children we serve, while also fostering all children's emotional, cognitive and behavioral abilities to effectively and fairly interact with people different from themselves?"

We hope that as our children celebrate significant events with each other, that they not only enjoy the moment but that they gain greater understanding of the beliefs of their friends and their families. In a world which seems to be increasingly polarised, we trust that these small steps will create a future generation which celebrates diversity here in our own country and also in the broader global context. We hope that as our families in the ELS celebrate Pesach and Easter it will be a special and meaningful time for all.

Dee's Message

It is also worth celebrating what has been a happy term for the children and teachers in the ELS. After the privations of the past year, this term has been characterised by a lighter mood and enthusiastic little people filling the school. I am enormously grateful to all the teachers who continue to create an environment conducive to exploration, discovery and creativity. The personal attention they pay to each child helps to ensure that the classrooms are places where the children feel safe, noticed and cared for.

I am grateful for all their hard work and kindness this past term.

As always, I am also appreciative of the efforts of our support staff – the admin, cleaning and maintenance teams who ensure that the campus looks beautiful and that visitors and our own Reddam House families are made to feel welcome. Their dedication cannot be overstated, and I am grateful to them for all their cheerful input this past term.



Dee's Message

Thank you too to all our parents and caregivers. How special it is to have such an involved and passionate group of family members, who have walked alongside their children and teachers to make this such a happy term. We really do appreciate your involvement and input and we know that it makes a huge difference to the children.

Finally, a word of congratulations to all the children, who have come so far this term. If we think back to some of the tentative faces at the start of the term, and now look at their confident personalities emerging, it really is very special. We are so proud of all of them and we look forward to continuing the

journey of discovery with them next term.

Enjoy your break, for those who will be taking some time off. I have no doubt that those children who will be part of the Holiday Care programme will have a thoroughly good time, and that each day will be filled with enjoyable activities to excite them.

Dee Pitcairn
Principal



The Nest (1R)

Kiri Winders, Rachael Soegiono, Min Pattharasiritanarat & Rochelle Lundie

The Easter Bunny definitely arrived in the Nest this week! We were kept busy creating our own Easter Garden Mural which is on display in our entrance. The children each had a turn to paint their tiny footprint and to turn it into a carrot for the garden. They loved this experience as the paint tickled on their toes and they could see the print transfer onto the paper. We showed the children their complete creation, complete with little bunnies hopping up from the grass.

The children were also very busy exploring the various Easter-themed provocations such as the Rabbit garden and the egg/chicken table, which they did with wonder and curiosity. We learned the "Sleepy bunny" song, which they all loved jumping and hopping to!

They also enjoyed the cinnamon playdough to make their own pretend hot cross buns in the toy kitchen. To extend their learning, Teacher Helena led the children through a real Hot Cross Bun cooking experience. Each child had a turn to touch, pour and stir in all the ingredients. Later it was time to bake and eat them! Lastly, it wouldn't be Easter without an egg hunt. The children made their own clay eggs last week. The teachers hid them around the room. It was such a delight to see the children crawling around to find them! The smiles and giggles said it all. Happy Easter everyone!



The Nest (1R) Photo Gallery



The Nest (1R)

Photo Gallery



Fledglings (1E)

By Hannah Corrigan, Jane Teh, and Nadia Breus

We have reached the last week of Term One and what a wonderful and loving term it was. It has been great getting to know the new children and families as they begin their journey through Reddam ELS. Term One was packed with lots of educational activities, all whilst making your children feel safe and comfortable in their new environment.

It is clear to see that the children are incredibly happy, which can be seen throughout the day as their little faces light up with contagious smiles as they engage in learning and play. The children's confidence can be seen growing each day as they engage in their daily routine. By now the children are starting to feel comfortable and are happy playing with each other, as is evident in the positive social play experiences which are emerging.

We did many things this week to prepare for Easter, such as reading books, decorating eggs, having discussions and embracing a sensory tub of shaving foam and eggs.



Fledglings (1E)

Photo Gallery



Stage 2

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

As we reflect back on the term that was, we would like to acknowledge the wonderfully positive and trusting relationships which the children have developed, not only with their friends but also with their teachers. This can clearly be observed during drop-off times where most of the children will happily walk in and be greeted by happy smiles of old and new friends such as Penelope who is often greeted by Georgia or Sarah R. who is often excited to show everyone a toy (Monday – Wednesday children) and Islay-Rey who runs into school to greet her teachers or Lucas and Esther who usually walk into school independently and ready to start the day ahead, as they take their teacher's hand and wave goodbye to their parents (Thursday – Friday children).

It has been a term full of new discoveries, new experiences and opportunities which has allowed the children to further explore friendships, learn more about each other's family stories and cultural backgrounds. For the Tree Frog and Kookaburra children their respective Provocations were based around all the mentioned elements with the focus to ensure that all children feel connected, safe and secure within their new classroom routine and new environment.

Over the past week, the children from both groups continued to learn about the Easter celebration, which is celebrated by people all over the world. The celebrations within the Tree Frog Group involved learning new songs about bunnies, including "Little Peter Rabbit" and the game "Sleeping bunnies" in which children pretended to hop like the cute little furry creatures who often come around during Easter to hide eggs!

We also looked at various Easter-inspired books which include "Egg Hunting we will go" by Jay Laga'aia and "Little Barry Bilby"

by Colin Buchanan and Roland Harvey, amongst many other picture books which were shared by the Kookaburra group. Based on these picture books, the children from both groups were inspired to create their individual artwork piece which was to decorate an Easter egg – the children from the Kookaburra group used stampers and pastel colours (or "creamy colours" as described by the children) to decorate the eggs. The children from the Tree Frog group used water colours and thin brushes to decorate their own Easter egg.

We were incredibly proud to see some of the children who at the beginning of the year did not show much interest in Art activities now willing to participate in creating their artwork for this celebration. This once again demonstrates the sense of comfort and security within the Stage 2 environment.

The Stage 2 teachers are very excited to see the continuous growth of our wonderful children throughout the Holiday Care period. We wish you all a safe and happy holiday if you are travelling and if you are staying in we cannot wait to have lots of fun with your children!

Stage 2 Photo Gallery



Stage 2

Photo Gallery



Stage 3

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

Mindfulness

The children practised some yoga and guided meditation this week. We read 'I am Yoga' by Susan Verde. This wonderful book introduces children to yoga and mindfulness in a fun and easy way!

"Yoga has the power of transformation. Not only does it strengthen bodies and calm minds, but with a little imagination, it can show us that anything is possible."

We also learned the 'I Am Yoga' song by Emily Arrow: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSEN5Mj4kUY>

Learning about self-awareness aids the children in friendly and calm interactions with one another. An example of this is using the breathing technique when you are feeling sad or angry. The children have been taught to take three deep breaths to soothe themselves to make the right choices, actions, or words.

What makes me a kind friend?

During the group, we read the story "The Rainbow Fish". The group listened attentively, and we discussed what we would do if we were the rainbow fish – would we give one of our special scales away? It was great to see the children using their prior knowledge, thinking back, and showing ownership for their actions.

The group explored their emotions in a positive way and displayed their strong sense of identity, confidently joining in the discussion and talking about what makes a good friend. To help the children with developing friendships, we played a game called 'Sandy girl/ boy' in our circle of friends.

We discussed what being a kind friend means and what are some things we can do.

- Angie: "Play and share with Sofia."
- Luca: "Cuddles."
- Arthur: "Hugs."
- Josiah: "Show a real tiger."
- Noah: "Cuddles to make them happy."
- Sofia: "I will share a toy."
- Violet: "Share my Lego with Bella."
- Owen: "Share Choo Choo trains and cars."
- Austin: "I will share a fire engine with Owen."
- Max: "Sharing."

In our Art Atelier the children were invited to create their own rainbow fish collage, which is now displayed in our classroom for everyone to admire.



Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

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

A Sense of Identity. . .

To end our first provocation of the year, 'A new journey', we took a moment to appreciate the present as we explored our 'Sense of Self' through drawing our very own portrait.

The children were recently given an opportunity to draw a portrait of themselves. They were first given the time to sit and look at their own reflection in the mirror, discovering the many features that make them who they are. They were then able to draw what they saw, adding in all the little extra details that make them unique.

Displaying the children's beautiful artworks in our 'Piazza' helps to strengthen their sense of belonging: "We belong here, this is our place."

We will revisit this experience later in the year and observe how our perception of our image has grown and how we have developed our 'Sense of Self'.

Below are some words from the children:

Stella- "My dad has the same eyes as me, but my mummy doesn't. Everybody in my family has the same hair."

Tim- "I got a nose and eyes and lips. I have silver hair like my mum's. My sister has brown, and my dad has black."

Sivan- "My mum has the same eyes as me. I have brown curly hair like my mum."

Owen- "I have 'circley' eyes like my dad. I have clean teeth and pointy up hair."

Jeffrey- "I look like my dad. I have black eyeballs, white clean teeth and black soft hair."

Jarvis- "I have goggly eyes. I have lots of freckles and I look like my Grandpa."

Daniel- "My eyes are brown. My hair is curly and shiny like my mum's. My Grandad did have curly shiny hair when he was little."

Isabella- "I have blue eyes just like my dad."

James- "Well, I have coloured green eyes but sometimes they are blue. My sister has blue eyes."

Dylan- "I look like my mum. I have black hair and black eyes".

Billie- "Did you know my daddy has the same colour eyes as me? My skin colour looks a bit like my brother's."

Quentin- "I have a square head and black eyes. My hair is spiky, and I look like me."



Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson

Thank you everyone for a wonderful first term of Drama. We have had a wonderful term of jumping down the rabbit hole, flying into space, meeting Miss Smelly Cheese and becoming toys in her shop.

It has been a pleasure to teach all the children and they all have such wonderful imaginations. Next term we will start focusing on drama techniques, learning new words and applying them in class.

This week it was Stage 3's turn to go down the rabbit hole. They were all very excited about going down the burrow (tunnel). We began by reaching up high on our tippy toes to get the magic potion so we could shrink and fit down the rabbit hole. They all took turns going down the hole and thought it was hilarious when I got stuck and came out looking like a caterpillar!

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 (ordered 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 them he was cheeky, purple and had a big smile – or was it a grin? He was hiding behind me, grinning away. We

copied the stance of the cat in the pictures using different levels.

In the Nest to Stage 2 classes, we recapped the lessons we had done this term and picked a few of our favourites to redo. The children loved going into space, the circus and meeting the mouse from Hickory Dickory Dock. We went on an adventure through the woods, meeting animals along the way, and we found a nice place to have our picnic. We did some circus tricks and flew into space. We decided it was time to come back down to earth as we had had a busy day and needed a nap.

Well done everyone. Thanks again for all the wonderful Drama lessons this term. I'm looking forward to Term 2 already!

Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson



Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson



Music

By Nick Summerfeld

Breathing is such an automatic function – when was the last time you stopped to think about your breath?

When we sing, breathing is one of the most important factors, but conscious breathing can also be beneficial in day-to-day activities. In Stages 3 and 4 this week we looked at diaphragmatic breathing through the game 'Balloon Belly'.

To begin the lesson though, we started with our 'Expression Circle', going around the room and asking what makes you happy, which encourages independent thinking. Some of the answers are so sweet – 'my friends', 'my teacher', 'going to the park and seeing animals'; while some are very real like 'sleeping makes me happy'.

On to our breathing: the children were given a balloon and they lay on their backs for 'Balloon Belly'. The idea is they rest the balloon on their stomach and as they inhale the balloon rises, and it fall as they exhale. Diaphragmatic breathing is very efficient and it has many benefits such as:

- Reduces stress and anxiety
- Slows the heart rate
- Improves oxygen intake into the blood
- Assists with focusing during meditation
- Helps relax muscles

After this, we lined up around the piano, holding our balloons to incorporate them into a focusing exercise. While we sang through our warm-ups of 'BA', 'LA' and 'MOO', the children had to simply hold their balloon in front of them without throwing them in the air or creating a distraction for others – once we got through our warm-ups, they were free to sing and dance with their balloon during 'The Good Morning Song'.

Once our voices were warm, we continued our work on our numbers exercise, with some classes in Stage 4 working on getting down to '2', while Stage 3 is on '5'.

Continuing our focus on sound this term I reintroduced 'Find That Sound', but this time I introduced the musical quality 'TIMBRE'. Timbre, or tone colour, is used to describe the qualities of a sound – so to keep it simple in Stage 3 we used 'hard' and 'soft'. Using our sound boxes the children could identify that the shells and metallic beads sounded 'hard'; and the 'paper' and 'plastic leaves' sounded 'soft'. They each took turns to come up and try to match the tone colour of each box.

In Stage 4 we played 'Find That Sound' but we went on a hunt! I gave each of the children a mallet and we went into their classroom to explore different

sounds we could find. They found 'hard' and 'soft' sounds, while also seeing the different sounds different objects produced such as 'plastic', 'wood', 'glass' and 'metal'.

In Stage 2 and The Fledglings we opened the lesson with a coordination exercise - 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes'. The children love going faster and faster, and as per their request I always see if they can keep up!

Before singing, we warmed up our voices with simple scales on 'MA' before moving into our 'Good Morning Song'. We started by clapping along, then slapping our knees before standing up and stomping.

This term I've tried to encourage lots of movement across these two classes within our exercises to help build confidence and strengthen our major motor skills.

Once standing we had a quick sing and dance through 'The Sunflower Song' before introducing our new song, 'I Am The Music Man'. We introduced a 'piano' and 'violin' to act along too. This song layers as all the instruments play one after the other. The kids enjoyed clapping, acting and dancing along as we sang through.

After our new song, the children took a maraca and we all shook and stomped to simple beats. Layering the exercise, I played 'Ants Go Marching' as we marched around the room. We marched to a steady beat, shook as fast as we could and tried to skip around the room.

Using the Play Mat, the children formed a single line as we took turns in stomping, jumping and even trying to hop across. As well as the motor movement, it helps to teach patience as the children await their turn.

In The Nest I sang 'Remember Me' as the children settled on the mat. Once the children were seated, we sang through 'The Good Morning Song', 'Open Shut Them' and then 'The Sunflower Song' to get us moving and working on our coordination. After we sang through our movement songs, the children were given castanets to click along while we sang through 'Twinkle Twinkle' to help improve our fine motor movements.

Encouraging a trip back to the zoo, the children clapped along as I imitated animals around the room. To end the lesson, the children had free play on the Piano Play Mat and on my keyboard, which sparked a lot of interest with little Max and Eugene!

Music

By Nick Summerfeld





SPORT

By Bella Kable

For our last week of Physical Education, our students were very active! Our first game was a take on Cops and Robbers; a household classic. Students were given the role of either police officers, robbers or the 'hero'. This game challenged the students' spatial awareness and teamwork. We always begin walking or marching in our first attempt at a game to ensure the students understand the concept and are aware of the space around them. We then progress to skipping or galloping and then to running once students are aware of the space and the aim of the game. Our students are very familiar with this process now.

Each student had a turn at a different role, which was great! This game has definitely been one of our favourites and it is awesome to see the smile on each child's face as they 'save' a friend from jail or are 'saved' by a friend. Our students are becoming more and more confident at running in spaces with their friends and it is great to see minimal collision as students are developing greater spatial awareness and proprioception. It is definitely a great game to play over the holiday break!

Stage 4 practised their rolling and aiming again this week with the game 'Volcano Monster'. Students were positioned in a circle that was approximately two metres from the cones that they had to knock over. At each attempt, if students knocked over a cone, this was handed to me and added to the 'volcano'; the pile of cones. The faster that students managed to hit the cones, the faster the 'volcano' erupted. Each round, students moved further and further away from the circle of cones, challenging their power and aim.

Stage 3 also practised their rolling and ball-handling skills with a game of 'hot potato'. Students sat in a circle with their knees

crossed and had to pass the tennis ball around to each of their friends as quickly as possible. We then added an additional ball and challenged students by having the balls move in opposite directions. Stage 3 were really fast at this! We then moved on to catching and rolling where a tennis ball would be passed to an individual student and they would have to return it to me as quickly as possible. This game was entertaining as four balls were eventually introduced and students had to ensure they were well and truly on the ball!

That's a wrap on Term 1! I hope everyone has a great Easter break. I will see you all in a few weeks' time for more fun and games.



SPORT

By Bella Kable



Happy Birthday



Reddam Early Learning

would like to wish a very happy birthday to

Presley Hatzimanolis, Bailey Yu & Aaron Cho

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

We hope you have a fabulous day!

