



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL WOOLLAHRA NEWSLETTER



Dee's Message

28 MAY 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

What a privilege it is each day to be able to have our lives as adults touched by the spontaneity, irrepressible energy and joy of the little people who fill the ELS. It is inevitable that the worries of life sometimes press in on us, and it's in those times that we are most lifted by the cheerful laughter and enthusiastic embraces from the children.

These are precious children indeed and we are so conscious of the role we play in guiding, nurturing and encouraging them as they discover more about their abilities and interests. Nelson Mandela once said that, "The true character of a society is revealed in how it treats its children." How incredibly true this is – for the future of a society is planted as seeds in the youngest members of the community.

How we treat our children and the values we encourage in them will lay the foundations for the communities of the future. If we treat them with dignity and respect and if they see us treat others with that same dignity

and respect, we hope that they will learn to do the same in their own lives. So too, as we honour their individual voices, we trust that they will learn to respect the opinions and values of others.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which came into effect in 1990, was an important reminder of the place of children in society. No longer regarded as somehow less significant than adults, children were given protection from exploitation and abuse, through that legislation. The Early Years Framework here in Australia puts these rights into action, providing tangible ways of ensuring that all young children in our country are part of the ongoing process of 'Belonging, Being and Becoming'.

Dee's Message

Early childhood is a fascinating time of discovery, as the children learn so much about the social, physical and cultural dimensions of their environment. While it might be daunting at times, mostly it's a wonderful daily immersion in exploration. As educators, we are keenly aware of how important our roles are to guide the children safely through the challenges which might arise, but also to value their individual voices instead of allowing our own opinions and beliefs to determine theirs.

We hope too that as the children eventually understand that they have certain rights, they will honour the rights of others. Treating each other with kindness and respect lies at

the heart of all we stand for in the ELS. We look forward to a future in which the seeds of compassion and understanding, which have been sown in these earliest years, spring forth into beautiful and fragrant blossoms.

Have a great weekend!

Dee Pitcairn
Principal



The Nest (1R)

Kiri Winders, Rachael Soegiono, Min Pattharasiritanarat & Rochelle Lundie

We had another wonderful week in the Nest! The big flat leaves falling from the trees outdoors provided an ongoing fascination and learning for both children and teachers alike! We took the opportunity to get out and play amongst the fallen leaves as much as possible. The children were delighted as they ran or crawled through the leaves on the ground, stopping to pick them up or stomp on them to make a crunching sound, or watch the wind pick them up and fly across the yard. Theorist Jean Piaget believed that a child constructs their understanding of the world through many aspects such as listening, exploring and experiencing the environment.

We also took some carts and baskets out for them to add to their outdoor play. The children enjoyed climbing in and out of them, whilst others pushed them along. Many teamed up in twos or threes to help each other push the cart. It is lovely to see the children all connecting with each other as they play.

We also brought nature indoors this week. We set up the atelier table with trays of sand, and little bottles, scoops and spoons. The children enjoyed gathering around this table to play, experiment, transfer and tip the sand from one container to the next. We noticed that the children were happy to play alongside each other at the table and watched them as they stopped to interact with one another by passing a spoon or by pouring into the bowl beside them. The teachers in the Nest use these opportunities to support the children's social skills such as turn taking as they become aware of others around them. The children were also eager to help with sweeping up the sand after play. The introduction of little brushes and shovels has inspired them to help their educators sweep the floor. By participating in this way, they are contributing to and becoming aware of looking after our room

environment, which is in keeping with the EYLF Outcome 2: Children are connected to and contribute to their world.



The Nest (1R)

Photo Gallery



Fledglings (1E)

By Hannah Corrigan, Jane Teh, and Nadia Breus

Working Together

Following the activities that embraced the talk about the children's feelings last week, we have started to focus our work on developing the connections between the children in the Fledglings group. These connections can soon develop into friendships.

At this age, it is still difficult for the children to be completely aware of others around them. This is a natural process during which the children will start to understand that we are all different. This week we started to promote, during our routine, more moments where the children play together, for example, building a sculpture with wooden blocks, singing songs like "Row, row your boat" and "Ring-a Ring-a Roses" or simply just working together in the Atelier.

When we encourage the children to work together, they start to see how others around them have different ways of thinking about the same resource. For example, some children were playing with the wooden blocks on the table. Rafael and Maya wanted to build a line around the border of the table, while Luis wanted to make a vertical tower. After a while, while observing each other's work, Rafael and Maya joined Luis trying to make a tall tower together.

In the Mini Atelier, we took the opportunity to start the celebration of Reconciliation Week by creating pictures that represented part of the lyrics from the "Good Morning" song. We sing this song every morning at circle time as part of expressing our acknowledgment of the country. The key factor here is that rather than creating individual artworks, everyone collaborated to present the final piece, which is displayed on our documentation wall this week. Please take some time to appreciate this work with your child.

Learning Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- 1.1 Children feel safe, secure, and supported.
- 1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency.
- 1.3 Children develop knowledgeable and confident self-identities.
- 1.4 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

EYLF, 2009.



Fledglings (1E)

Photo Gallery



Stage 2

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

Discussing spiders

Giving children a voice promotes self-esteem and self-worth. By giving children a voice through choice, opinion, feelings and emotions children can develop and learn that they are important and valued. Feeling valued plays a large role in how a child learns. In order for them to play and explore, actively learn and critically think, they need to feel confident in their environment and have the knowledge that their voice and way of explorations will be noted.

By giving the children the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas last week, we were able to discover some insight into their current interest in spiders. We wanted to encourage the children's voices and imaginations further and with this idea in mind we chose to create yet another learning web to continue our investigation. The question we posed this time was, "What do spiders like to eat?"

This discussion initiated at group time, where the children were split into groups of seven for the purposes of listening, concentration and a one-to-one discussion. Here is what the children from the Monday to Wednesday group said. Gabriel: "leaves", Rhys: "dirt", Emily: "leaves", Hugo: "fire engines", Chloe: "roach", Georgia: "grapes", Benjamin: "bees", Zara: "beans", Coen: "lunch", Sarah: "spiders", Marley: "frogs", Thomas: "birds", Matilda: "chocolate biscuits" and Eliza: "grass".

The Thursday- Friday children also shared their thoughts, here is what they said. Hannah: "leaves", Islay-Rey: "spiders", Esther: "bugs", Mackenzie: "cucumbers", Jay: "cucumber". Leanne and Romy chose to maintain active listening.

Books including 'Incy wincy' by Keith Chapman and "The very busy spider" by Eric Carle have been used throughout our learning in spiders over the past weeks. It is through the book by Eric Carle that we discovered that spiders like to eat flies! But what do they use to catch these flies???

spider webs!!!

Spider webs are often spotted by the children whilst playing outdoors between the plants or branches in the tree. We wanted to recreate the webs in a safe and fun way with the children. Using masking tape and a hula hoop, the children were first invited to use their pointer finger to feel the texture of the masking tape which replicates the feel of a spider web, "It's sticky!!!" said Hugo and Matilda upon touching the sticky side of the tape.

The hula hoop became the base of our web and each child took turns to assist their teacher in sticking the tape to the hoop by stretching and creating lines/ patterns forming a big spiderweb. This was then used as a game, by using the pom-poms as an extension of the book "The very busy spider" who caught a fly in his web. The children had lots of fun throwing their pom-poms and watching these get stuck in the web.

EYLF Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

EYLF Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- Children develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, inquiry, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating
- Children transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another
- Children resource their own learning through connecting with people, place, technologies and natural and processed materials

EYLF Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes
- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts

Stage 2 Photo Gallery



Stage 3

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

As we continue to explore our provocation of Connections this term, the children were over-heard singing an old favourite song, 'Tell Me The Continents'. This helps the children identify the continents, combining the song with a continent puzzle. The children learn to identify not only the name of the continents, but also their location. As an extension of this, the children were invited to recreate their own world globe using the Montessori world puzzle.

The children selected one continent at a time, placing it on their page and tracing around each puzzle piece. They then chose different coloured pencils to colour in the individual continents, trying really hard to stay in the lines and displaying appropriate use of their drawing tools. The children used a shadowing technique to rub a crayon or to use the nib of a pencil on its side, which is a bit tricky, to represent the oceans and continents. There was fantastic focus and concentration as the children worked through each step to create their world globe and they named the continents as they worked on each one.

Song:

Tell me the continents, Tell me the continents, Tell me if you can

North America, South America, Europe, Africa and Asia.

What about Australia? Don't forget Antarctica

Tell me the continents, Tell me the continents, Tell me if you can!

The children have also been introduced to another new Montessori activity. The Montessori Metal Insets consist of five flat metal squares, in each of the squares is a metal shape cut-out. The Metal Insets are accompanied by colour pencils, white square paper, and a tray specifically designed to hold the paper and insets.

The children were free to select the shape/s they wished to use and the colour/s. They traced the outline of the shape and then shaded the shape in a continuous motion. The Metal Insets help to prepare the hand for writing but what does this really mean? Metal Inset work can help the child to:

- Grip and hold the pencil (and hold the pencil upright).
- Refine hand control to steady the pencil.
- Develop movements of straight and curved lines, in preparation for letter formation.
- Develop hand-eye coordination, to make small, coordinated movements.
- Experience the result of pressure on the pencil (light and dark), experience gradation of colour.
- Develop fine muscles in the hand but also the larger muscles required for sitting

and maintaining posture for writing.

- Focus the mind, develop and strengthen the child's concentration.
- Make movements up and down and left to right (when filling in or shading), which is significant when reading and writing.

The children have also been introduced to a Montessori numeracy activity named the cards and counters. The cards and counter bring the abstract into the concrete, allowing a child to feel the units as they count. Cards and counters are materials that consists of ten number cards, and 55 round red counters. This work is typically organised on a floor mat in the Montessori classroom, as it requires a bit of space. Firstly, the child, with the help of their teacher, places the cards in numerical order, starting with 1 at the top of the far-left corner. The cards are placed with a bit of space between them in a straight line. Not only does this appeal to the child's natural sense of order, but it's also very visually appealing.

After the cards were in order the children were invited, taking turns, to begin counting. The red counters each represent one unit and this emphasises for the children the fact that each number is made up of different quantities. Naturally, the counting begins at 1 and then progresses. As the children move on to 2 and 3 it is important to note that there are specific spaces for each counter. For example, the even numbers are placed in rows of two, indicating the difference between odd and even numbers, which is one of the direct purposes of the cards and counters. If there are too few or too many counters the children will know that they have to look over the material make sure that they have counted correctly.

As the seasons change and we feel the first chills of autumn the children and teachers alike have begun to layer up. Many of the children's jackets and jumpers have buttons and zippers which the children have difficulty manipulating. For this reason, this week the children were introduced to the Montessori dressing frames. The Dressing Frame is a key Montessori Practical Life material which helps children to develop independence and care of self as they learn to fasten different clothing items. These frames hold material and different types of fasteners which children may encounter while dressing. The Dressing Frames' primary purpose is to teach children how to dress themselves through mastering different clothing fasteners. This process also tests a child's hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills, as they work with each material. The children were first introduced to the Large Button Frame and Button Snap Frame and as their skills level builds they are challenged with harder frames, such as the Zip Frame, Small Button Frame, Buckle Frame, Lacing Frame etc.

Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

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

This term in Krissie's class we have been very busy exploring and connecting with nature.

We firstly began this wonderful journey by discovering the amazing world of bees. The children were fascinated by these little creatures and they asked many questions,

Lucy: "How do bees hold onto the pollen?"
Owen: "How do bees get pollen from the flowers then make honey for us?"
Sivan: "Why do bees have nectar?"

We researched many of the children's questions and along the way we also discovered many interesting facts we didn't know about bees. Did you know that bees turn the nectar into honey by gurgling in their mouths and then spitting it out into the hive?

On May 20th we celebrated World Bee Day. We acknowledged the importance of bees and how we need the bees to help to pollinate the crops we eat and that also feed farm animals. "If we didn't have bees there would be no honey," said Billie. "The cows would have no food," said Owen. "And then we would have no milk," added Isabella. "Or yoghurt," said Stella.

To conclude this exploration, we celebrated by tasting some sweet golden delicious honey and by making yummy honey sandwiches. While the children were tasting the honey, I asked them to stop and think about what it tastes like. Does it taste like a flower? Does it taste sweet or sour? "It tastes good and sweet," said Daniel. "I think it taste just like flowers," said Jarvis.

Many of the children expressed their love for honey and often ask if we can have honey sandwiches on the morning tea menu.

Earlier on this week we read a lovely story called 'Butterfly Beach' by Polly Caldwell Bookwalter, which has sparked an interest in butterflies. We will continue to build on this

interest throughout the term.

After much anticipation we finally began our Bush Connections programme down at Cooper Park. The children look forward to Tuesdays where they get to spend the morning immersed in nature. The children become one with nature as they peel back its layers and discover something new each week. "Krissie I just can't wait go to the bush," said Jamie. "Why can't we go to the bush every day?" added Stella.

An important part of building on our nature interest is learning how to be mindful and how to connect with nature. The children are learning to be present in nature, to slow down and spend time to look, watch and wonder. Taking notice of plants, listening to birds, smelling the earth, watching the waves crash, touching the ground, the grass, the soil, a feather, a leaf or the bark on a tree. There are so many wonderful things that connect us to nature.

Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Stage 4 Photo Gallery



Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson

This week in Drama we continued on our topic 'The Magic Carpet'. This week's prompt question for Stage 4 was "If you found a new island, what would you call it?" There were lots of great suggestions like "Frozen Island", "Dinosaur Island" and "Lollypop Island". We didn't go under the parachute this week and I told the children that we were going to use the parachute at the end of our lesson for a little surprise!

To start our adventure this week, the children began by sleeping in their igloo where we left off last week. We unrolled our carpets and flew through the sky and landed on a long boat. I showed the children a picture of a long boat from Viking times. In Stage 3 and 4 we became one long line, holding the shoulders of the person in front of us, and sailed through the seas looking for an island. In Stage 2, we sailed in our individual boats. Well done, Noah and Max in Stage 3, on your creative miming!

We eventually found an island and mimed hopping off our boats and exploring. We played a game with music to explore the island, just like a game the Vikings used to play. When the music played, the children ran on the spot and when the music stopped, they had to bop down.

After exploring the island, I showed the children some pictures of the Vikings who lived there. We saw pictures of farmers, warriors and royals. We decided we needed to make a campfire and somewhere to stay for the night on the island. The children collected imaginary sticks and brought them back to the circle. We used our fingers to create a fire. In the pictures, we saw that the Vikings collected wheat and liked to make bread. Stage 3 did very well at miming making bread and cooking it over the fire. We searched in our backpacks and found that we had packed marshmallows (how lucky)! We cooked some over the fire and mimed a yummy face when we ate them.

It was time for the parachute surprise! We

unrolled the parachute and lifted it up to make our tent. The children hid underneath and pretended to sleep. We heard a sound from outside and came to sit on top of the parachute. The noise was an owl! The owl told us that, while flying over the world, she saw something in Egypt! One of the pyramids had fallen over. The owl knew that we had magic carpets and asked us if we would fly to the pyramid and help rebuild it next week. Of course, we said yes!! Next week we are going to fix the pyramid.

In the Nest and the Fledglings this week we began by singing Old MacDonald. We sang about pigs, cows and sheep. Well done the Fledglings on pointing to your nose each time we oinked! We then had a look at a picture of a tractor and became tractors around the room and garden. We finished by shaking the parachute.

Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson



Music

By Nick Summerfeld

To warm up our eyes, ears and brain, Stage 3 and 4 opened the lesson with a game of 'Around the Circle' to help us focus. Clapping too early, late or slow sees them get 'out' until one person is left standing. This game has also been helpful to teach good sportsmanship.

After we got around the circle, we stood around the piano ready for our warm-ups. Starting with 'BA' on our usual ascending and descending, the children selected other animals to imitate, incorporating the various scales we have learnt. Monkeys sang 'OO OO OO OO AH'; horses 'NEIGHED' over a staccato; birds 'TWEETED' over short trills; cows 'MOOED' over a descending scale; and elephants bubbles their lips.

Now that our voices were warm and ready, we sang through our 'Good Morning Song' and 'Open Shut Them', before moving onto our numbers. Stage 3 continued to work on getting down to '4':

8 7 6 5 4 5 6 7 8

While Stage 4 have reached down to '1', I challenged them a little by throwing it out of order and see if they could repeat after me.

After our numbers, Stage 3 had a sing through 'ABCs' with our maracas at an increasing tempo. I tested their reaction time and self-control by adding in freezes – when the music stopped, they stopped, which never fails to inspire some giggles around the room. Stage 4 went onto our song for the term 'Colours of the Wind' and it sounds PRECIOUS.

We continued learning our movements for Indigenous Australian 'Crane Dance' and added it to music, which was nice.

To end the lesson, we had a quick game of 'The Floor is Lava' where the children had to step across the stones independently without my help to the beat of the metronome.

In Stage 2 and The Fledglings, we opened

the lesson with our single note scales singing and counting:

Ma Ma Ma Ma Ma - 4 3 2 1

We sang through our 'Good Morning Song' and 'Wheels on the Bus' before picking our maracas for 'The Sunflower Song' with our farmers. The Fledglings moved onto our 'ABCs' at an increasing tempo with the added freeze.

Stage 2 moved onto our rhythm animals with our maracas layered with our stomps. Working on our timing and coordination, we revisited 'DOG', 'CAT' AND 'SPI-DER' before heading to the zoo! Both stages sang and ran around the room to 'We're Going To The Zoo' - The Fledglings are so much more confident with the actions and getting involved.

To close the lesson, the Fledglings had free play on the xylophones, while I worked with the children to identify the different coloured blocks.

Stage 2 continued learning the movements for the Indigenous Australian 'Crane Dance' and we began adding in the music. To bring the energy back down, we had a sing through 'Twinkle Twinkle' before our 'Goodbye Song'.

Music

By Nick Summerfeld



Music

By Nick Summerfeld



SPORT

By Bella Kable

Stage 3 and 4 were absolutely incredible this week during their Physical Education sessions. As it was pouring during our Stage 4 lessons on Monday we had to start with 'Stuck in the Mud'. This has become a tradition in both the Stage 3 and 4 lessons where all the students know that we start with this game. It was very exciting for all of the students, who were eager to volunteer as our 'Mud Angel' and our 'Mud Monster'.

This week with Stage 4 we focused more on our kicking, shooting and teamwork skills. It is really important in these lessons that we incorporate more and more teamwork, so that students learn how to share and work collaboratively. It is also essential that our Stage 3 and Stage 4 students learn to lose and cope with the potential emotions when this does happen.

During our Stage 4 lessons the students were split into four teams of 2/3 and they practised their shooting from different angles and distances from the goal. We turned this into a mini competition which required students to keep count of how many goals their team had scored. We then stepped it up another notch with a goalkeeper, who had to defend four balls at the same time! Students love to be the goalkeeper and are becoming more

skilled at timing where their body needs to be to prevent the ball from rolling into the goal.

Stage 3 warmed up with some balancing and running/walking activities. We recreated egg and spoon races with outstretched arms and bean bags, which the students found hilarious. The students also practiced walking and running with the beanbags balanced on top of their heads. These activities are super easy to recreate at home with a pair of socks and are great fun.

Stage 3 also practised their kicking again, except instead of working in teams, we worked on individual goal shooting and technique. This week I did not position and hold the ball in front of the students' legs and allowed them to practise kicking by themselves. This ultimately meant that we had a few missed kicks, but it ensured that each student practised this skill without assistance. Stage 3 improved at this as the lesson progressed and I am excited to continue working on this next week.

I hope you all have great weekends! See you next week for more kicking and shooting practice.

