



REDDAM
ELS

REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL WOOLLAHRA NEWSLETTER

Dee's Message

04 JUNE 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

One of the human traits which has the most powerful impact on others is that of kindness. We all know how meaningful it is when someone shows us some kindness, especially when it is unexpected and unwarranted. A smile on a tough day, or a kind word, or some heartfelt gesture really does make life so much more special.

The teachers often comment on a kind gesture which one of the children has shown to a friend, or a gentle word of encouragement when one of them is feeling a bit left out. It warms the heart to see such young children reaching out to others, and then basking in the warmth which their kindness brings them too. Kindness really is a reciprocal action, where both people benefit.

As such, I was intrigued to read an article this past week, which mentions the professional kindness which teachers show to the children under their care. I have often commented to others how fortunate we are to have so

special a group of educators in the ELS, not only because of their excellence in what they do, but even more so because of the people they are – and the kindness they show the children.

The article makes the point that education is unlike most other professions, in that it is not only dealing with people, but that those people are the young, vital future of our country. How we interact with them will have a profound impact on the kind of people they become, and as such those interactions are all the more important.

The article makes the point that, "A teacher builds learner self-concept, resilience, and engenders humane values for each of their students, touching on the heart of our society well beyond their classroom, and they do this mindfully and through their applied and professional kindness." It goes on to remind us that "excellent teachers are kind people that bring that value to their teaching."

Dee's Message

I'd like to believe that this is the defining quality of what makes our teachers so special. They are inherently kind people, and they shower that kindness over the children in their classes. While they, like everyone else, might have tough days, at the core of who they are is a deep and abiding concern for the children, and this is most evident in the kindness they show them.

The American aviator, Amelia Earhart, said, "A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees." It would seem to me that this is particularly true in an early learning environment – our great hope is that future acts of kindness will find their roots here in the ELS and that the impact will be felt for many

generations to come.

As we celebrated National Reconciliation Day this week, we were made aware once again of the need to spread a bit of kindness and understanding among all the people of Australia. It was touching to note the gentle way in which the children responded to the stories they heard, the activities in which they participated, and the conversations about respecting and showing kindness to all people.

Have a wonderful weekend!

Dee Pitcairn
Principal



The Nest (1R)

Kiri Winders, Rachael Soegiono, Min Pattharasiritanarat & Rochelle Lundie

Last week we noticed an emerging interest in the toy dinosaurs amongst some of the children in the Nest. The children also really enjoyed the sand play activities from last week. With this in mind, this week, teacher Min was inspired to create a sand, rocks and trees adventure space for their dinosaur play. She found an amazing branch in the shape of a canoe from her home and bought it to the classroom to use as the centrepiece for this provocation. She also introduced some larger dinosaurs which excited the children immensely! This was a wonderful addition for learning and play in the Nest room. Providing an environment that follows the children's interest and inspires is a strategy that we as educators in the Nest aspire to as it nurtures dispositions such as curiosity, creativity, enthusiasm, energy and concentration.

During our morning activity time we transferred the big piece of canoe-shaped bark to the floor for the children to

explore. There were rocks, sand, dinosaurs and plants. This was a wonderful space for the children as they interacted and explored the area, giving inspiration to their imaginations as they interacted with the dinosaurs and sand. We could hear the children making dinosaur sounds and chatting away to each other. Later, Min added some little sieves to the mix, which added another dimension of fun and learning as they scooped, poured and constructed. They could see the sand falling from the sieves. The whole space provided endless entertainment and focus for our little ones as they played in this space happily all week.



The Nest (1R)

Kiri Winders, Rachael Soegiono, Min Pattharasiritanarat & Rochelle Lundie

Painting for Reconciliation Celebrating National Reconciliation Day.

It was so great to see our little ones all turn up in yellow on Wednesday to mark National Reconciliation Day. Teacher Helena bought along "Sorry Day" a children's book by Coral Vas's and Dub Leffler.

Teacher Rachael gathered a group of children in the library corner to read it to them. The children were particularly interested in the beautiful illustrations and Eugene, in particular, wanted Rachael to read to him for a longer period of time. We also created some beautiful yellow, black and red handprint paintings. Phoenix was so excited to do the painting, that he squished the paint in his hands, put both hands on the paper and rubbed them around enthusiastically. He made lots of little excited babbles and motioned for more when he finished his painting.

Hudson held out his hand and watched and listened to Helena carefully as she said, "Yellow for the sun, black for the Aboriginal people and red for the land". Eugene and Sophie waited patiently for their turn and giggled with delight at the sensation of paint going on their hands. Lyla absolutely loved this experience as she laughed and verbalised her excitement whilst rubbing her hands on the paper. Max and Freya were a little unsure about getting paint on their hands but after some encouragement put their hands on the paper and realised it wasn't so bad! Isabella was the first to volunteer. She let Helena paint her hands and smiled when she saw her print on the paper. Claire engaged in the painting experience for an extended time and Martin was so busy concentrating on building a big Lego tower that he had no time for painting! We thank all the parents for donating a gold coin for this worthy cause.



The Nest (1R)

Photo Gallery



Fledglings (1E)

By Tatiana Botrel, Jane Teh, and Nadia Breus

Creating Connections

Since we started talking about feelings in our classroom, a need for talking about the other people around us emerged in the Fledglings. The first step was getting the children to work together in different activities to encourage the many possibilities of connections between the students in our classroom.

This week we promoted activities where the children got to know their peers better. In the Mini Atelier, the children were invited to choose a random photo of their peers and then colour it with crayons. The teachers enjoyed this moment to encourage and support the conversations around the table, as the children noticed what was illustrated on the photo. For example, James chose a photo of Saskia painting with balloons, and he was excited to colour her eyes. Mila wanted to make Olivia's photo look like a rainbow, as she believed that Olivia would like that. Teddy picked up his own photo because he wanted to colour his "blanky" red. Halle giggled while looking at Luis's photo poking out his tongue. These are just a

few of the rich conversations we had together.

During circle time, we started noticing the different backgrounds we have in our group and we sang a good morning song in all the different languages such as French, Portuguese, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish and Japanese. The children had fun learning the actions for this new song. We also enjoyed the group time to see the pictures coloured in the Atelier and appreciate the artwork our peers made. We enjoyed this opportunity to talk about the children's favourite colours, toys, food, animals etc.



Fledglings (1E)

By Tatiana Botrel, Jane Teh, and Nadia Breus

As the children have become more participative in group time, we introduced a morning game where each child sticks their name label on the board to indicate that they have arrived at school. We then acknowledge the friends who stayed at home, putting their labels on a different column of our board. This activity brings a lot of excitement to our group as the children look forward to finding their name tag to place it on the board.

All these activities have the intention to extend the children's interest in their classmates, bringing a little more awareness of the others around them and encouraging friendships to blossom from here onwards.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity. Children learn to interact in relation

to others with care, empathy and respect. EYLF, 2009.



Stage 2

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

National Reconciliation Week, 27th- 3rd May, is a time for all Australians to learn about and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements. All Australians are encouraged to reflect on the part they play on our journey towards achieving reconciliation in Australia.

Every day in the Stage Two classroom the children sit in a circle in the morning and say an Acknowledgment to Country before we begin our group discussion.

"We would like to thank the Indigenous people for sharing their land. We promise to look after it, the animals and the people too. Hello Land, (touch the floor) hello sky (hands up high), hello me (touch hands to body) and hello friends (outstretch arms)"

Our circle in the morning is just like the aboriginal yarning circle. Yarning circles are a traditional part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture that have been used for centuries to learn from a collective group, build respectful relationships and to preserve and pass on cultural knowledge. The children were shown the aboriginal flag and as we identified the colours of black, red and yellow, we talked about what they represented. The red being for the land, the yellow for the sky and the black for the people. When we say our welcome to country, we all put our hands out to touch the ground and to say, "Hello land". For reconciliation week we painted our hands in the colours of the flag and sitting in our yarning circle, we created a display to represent us as the Kookaburra group.

Stories were read that included 'The Colours of Australia' by Bronwyn Bancroft and 'The Shape of Australia', during which we identified the many colours and shapes represented in the aboriginal art illustrations. We also read the dreamtime stories of 'Tiddalick the Frog' and 'How the bird got its colours'. We looked at the episode of play school - Acknowledgement of Country

([Watch Play School: Acknowledgement of Country on ABC iview](#)) celebrating Australia's first people. In this special episode, presenters Luke Carroll, Miranda Tapsell and Hunter Page-Lochard share knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and highlight the importance of caring for Country together. They examine stories, songs, music, dance and creative projects.

The Treefrog class read two books by Ros Moriarty, with illustrations by Balarinji, Australia's leading Indigenous design studio. 'Bush tracks' is a lyrical, fun story about tracking animals in the bush and 'Who saw turtle' a glorious exploration of the amazing migration of Turtle as she travels the world and then returns home to lay her eggs. To follow this up, the children used animal stencils and they used the aboriginal flag colours of black, red and yellow to paint over them with using their fingers as a brush.

OUTCOME 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

2.1 Develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an emerging understanding of reciprocal rights and responsibilities

2.2 Children respond to diversity with respect

Stage 2 Photo Gallery



Stage 2

Photo Gallery



Stage 3

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

National Reconciliation Week

As we celebrate the National Reconciliation Week, we join hands with Reconciliation Australia's initiative to promote awareness and urge all Australians to do their role towards the harmonisation of relationships between and among Australians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This is the best time to commemorate the past, learn from it and leave a lasting mark; proving to ourselves that we are **MORE THAN A WORD; that RECONCILIATION TAKES ACTION.**

Our Contribution to Reconciliation

Our yarning circle included a recognition to the Gadigal and the Birrabirragail people with our acknowledgment to the country as our way of showing appreciation and gratitude to the indigenous people for maintaining the land that we are currently living on today.

Our experiences included reading of Aboriginal stories such as *'The Healthy Tribe'* and *'Tucker'*. We also played an Aboriginal inspired matching game and completed relevant art puzzles. Furthermore, we enjoyed and admired Aboriginal music such as Geoffrey Gurrumul's *Yunupingu* songs. Similarly, we sang *'Taba Naba'*, a song originating in the Torres Strait Islands just north of Australia. This song is accompanied by a sit-down dance where the dancers perform traditional movements corresponding to the lyrics. Another Aboriginal song we sang was *'Inanay Capuana'*. This song is thought to be an Indigenous Australian lullaby sung by Torres Strait Islanders in the *Yorta Yorta* language. Our journey also consisted of watching a short video on Aboriginal art and music (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Soq4M_hu-Nc), which paved the way to the creation of our class Aboriginal art project, influenced by *Judy Watson Napangardi*. The children collaborated and painted with earthy colours and natural materials on a large canvas.

What next: Continue with exploring Aboriginal culture, art, and music.

The Value of Friendship

The provocation for this term in Yuliya's class is *'The Value of Friendship'*. We have been learning about social and communication skills and linked it with self-identity, which are vital skills as young children learn to build and maintain friendships. The children have been provided with various opportunities to learn, discuss, and practice communication, empathy, social interaction, and self-identity through means of story time, games, outside play, guided meditation, yoga and singing songs related to friendships.

Friendly greetings, sharing and turn-taking has been in practice each day from the moment the children arrive at the school. The children were regularly seen greeting each other with a friendly smile, saying 'hello' and inviting one another to play. We often start the mornings with the children sitting in a circle of friends and looking at photos of them playing together in our book called *'How to be Friendly'*. This book was put together by Yuliya's class. While observing each other in the photos, we have been asking them *'What is a good friend?'* and *'How to be a good friend?'*

In the atelier, the children were invited to draw their friends. The focus for this creative and meaningful experience was for the children to be inclusive, caring and kind. The children's drawings were on display in Yuliya's class for everyone to admire.

Ultimately, learning the value of friendship is one of the most important life lessons any child can have, and teaching children to appreciate their friends can lead to a lifetime of shared memories.

Stage 3

Photo Gallery



Stage 3 Photo Gallery



Stage 4

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

Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week is commemorated from 27th May - 3rd June every year. [Reconciliation Australia](#) defines this week as the opportunity *“for all Australians to learn about our shared histories, cultures, and achievements, and to explore how each of us can contribute to achieving reconciliation in Australia.”* It is a week for us to build connections and to learn to value Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander Peoples’ histories, cultures and futures.

This week the children engaged in a variety of experiences to celebrate Reconciliation week. During our morning circle time, we sing our ‘Good Morning’ song and we acknowledge the traditional owners of this land, and their connection to the country.

*“Good morning earth,
Good morning sun,
Good morning resting stone,
And beasts on the run,
Good morning flowers,
And the birds in the trees,
Good morning to you,
Good morning to me”*

This week the children created an Indigenous-inspired artwork. Art is a powerful way to engage children of all ages. It is a very accessible form of communication in the Early Years, as children explore mark-making as a way of expressing themselves. We researched and learned about art forms of Indigenous people and used this as inspiration for our art provocation. The children enjoyed drawing indigenous style art designs onto leaves, which they collected during our Cooper Park excursion. They used liquid chalk pens to draw the designs. The children demonstrated their fine motor skills and visual design skills while enriching their understanding of symbols and art forms.

We also had a look at the Indigenous and

Torres Strait Islander flags. The children then used collage to design their own flag. We watched ABC Kids Play Schools episode “Walking Together” which explored songs, art and imaginative stories. On Wednesday, the children and teachers dressed in yellow to raise funds for National Reconciliation Week.



Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Stage 4

Photo Gallery



Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson

This week in Drama we had our final lesson on our topic 'The Magic Carpet'. This week's prompt question for both Stage 3 and 4 was "What is the first letter of your name?" I was so impressed at how many students knew their first letter.

To start this week, the children began by sleeping in their tents on Viking Island. We recalled that the owl had told us they needed our help in Egypt, so we unrolled our carpets and flew through the sky to Egypt. I told Stage 3 and 4 that I had forgotten what the pyramids looked like and asked them to make the shape with their bodies. In Stage 2, they copied my pyramid pose. I told the children that the blocks needed to rebuild the pyramid were very heavy and asked them to show me their muscles. In Stage 4 we have started to talk about mime: using our actions and not our words. I asked the children to mime picking up a heavy block and carrying it over to the broken pyramid. There were lots of convincing heavy faces and body positions.

After fixing the broken pyramid, we noticed that one of the other pyramids was open! We decided to go inside but didn't know what to expect. We started by sneaking, and then came across a whole series of booby-traps. We had to crawl through the tunnel, jump over the lava, tiptoe on the narrow pathway, and walk backwards to the final opening.

When we got to the main part of the pyramid, we sat down and had a look at some hieroglyphs. Stage 3 sang the alphabet song with me, and then we noticed that the Egyptians used pictures instead of letters for their alphabet! I tried to sing the alphabet saying the names of the pictures instead of the letters. This caused a lot of giggles!! In Stage 2 and 3, we made the shapes of some of the hieroglyphs with our bodies. Then, in Stage 3 and 4, we had to decipher a message. I asked the children to find certain pictures on the hieroglyph chart, and in Stage 4 asked them to write the letters underneath the pictures. Well

done to Ashleigh, Ben and Savannah for giving the writing a go! We saw that the secret message said, "Look Out!" We were so scared by the message that we ran out of the pyramid!

Once we were out safely, I told the children about the mummies that may have been in the pyramid. I asked the children in Stage 3 and 4 to line up along the wall and show me a mummy pose. I had to explain that this wasn't like Mummy at home!! We then played a stop/start game, played in the same way as red-light green light. I told the children that they had to mime, and I encouraged light feet. I told them that I would face away, but if I heard any noise, I would turn around. When I was looking at them, they had to freeze. If they didn't make any noise, I wouldn't turn around and they could "get me". The children did very well at sneaking up on me. When they tipped me, I chased them back to the starting line.

At the end of our lesson, we rolled up our magic carpets for the last time. Now that we were back home safely, we locked our carpets away so that they could recharge with magic. After all, we had been flying them for 5 weeks!! Next week we start on a new theme. Well done to everyone on an amazing 5 weeks on the magic carpet.

In the Nest and the Fledglings this week we began by singing Hickory Dickory Dock. We sang about the mouse and made sure to tick tock with our heads at the end of the song. I'm impressed with how much more movement Stage 1 have! We love to play peekaboo underneath the parachute. We finished by having a visit from the mouse, who also loves to play peekaboo. Special mention to Sienna and Alfie this week.

Music

By Nick Summerfeld

From May 27 to June 3 is Reconciliation Week across the country – an important week to acknowledge the First People of this land, and everyone who now calls Australia home.

Over the last few weeks, we have been exploring Indigenous Australian music and dance through listening, percussion circles and 'The Crane Dance'.

In Stages 3 and 4 we opened the lesson with our 'Expression Circle'. We've spoken about what makes us happy, so this week I wanted us to think about things that make us sad. We know that when mum and dad drop us off that can make us sad, so I wanted to expand on other things that can make us sad.

Once we were around the circle, we used our maracas to shake along to our warm-up scales. We sang ascending and descending scales on 'BAH' and 'LA'; revisited staccato scales on 'BAH' and introduced a new descending scale with vowel changes of 'MAH – MOO'. Quick vowel changes are great to help activate and strengthen articulators. When we were through our scales we sang through the 'Good Morning Song' – while Stage 3 followed with 'The Sunflower Song' and continued with our numbers; Stage 4 followed with shaking along to random number sequences before moving onto the new verse in 'Colours of the Wind'.

*"Come run the hidden pine trails of the forest
Come taste the sun-sweet berries of the Earth
Come roll in all the riches all around you
And for once, never wonder what they're worth."*

Once we through our singing, we moved onto 'The Crane Dance'. This week I split each class in half. One group created a percussion circle and played along to the music and dance with their wood sticks, while the other half danced around the circle.

Playing together as a group helps to build confidence but is also bonding – the children encourage each other to play and enjoyed playing while their friends danced around them.

To end the lesson, we used the Piano Play Mat to work on our musical letters – ranging from A to G. One at the time the children were asked to read the letter they were shown, think of a word that begins with that letter and then find it on the play mat.

In The Fledglings and Stage 2 we opened the lesson with 'Wheels on the Bus', followed by our single note warm-ups on 'MA'; and in Stage 2 we attempted our first ascending scale on 'MA'. Once

our voices were warm, we sang through some sing-a-long songs – 'With our maracas, our Fledglings sang and danced through 'The Sunflower Song', while Stage 2 moved through the 'Music Man' actions pretending to play a piano, violin and saxophone.

Working on our fine motor movements, we used our castanets to click along to 'Twinkle Twinkle' various, simple beats:

1 2 3 4
1 and 2 and 3 and 4

Before playing as fast as we could and changing hands.

Stage 2 continued working on the movements to 'The Crane Dance' and before adding music.

The Fledglings ended the lesson by working on jumping and timing with step-claps to 'Gahloomph'. I laid out the lily pads and we worked on forming one line to jump across the pond.

Stage 2 used the Piano Play Mat and lily pads to stomp, hop, jump and walk backwards across the mat - walking backwards proved to be an interesting challenge for some of our youngsters. Some were super confident and trusted themselves, while others required a little assistance.

Down in The Nest I sang 'Hallelujah' as the kids made their way over and settled. Though many of the kids would be unfamiliar with this song, many of them still moved along to the music and melody.

Once we were all settled, we sang and did our actions to 'Open Shut Them' at various speeds; used our maracas to shake along to 'BINGO', 'The Sunflower Song' and we got everyone up for our 'ABCs' while adding in our freeze. It's so great to see the toddlers building in confidence - especially young Freya who now collects her instruments from me and gets involved in shaking and the other activities I bring.

Once we were done with our maracas, we spent some time working with our castanets to strengthen our fingers. Some of the older kids like Eugene and Max have got it down to one hand, and others are still working with both.

We sang through 'Twinkle Twinkle' and tried to also click as fast as we could before pulling out the Play Mat which they absolutely love.

Encouraging the children to walk across the mat, Freya got involved again which makes me so happy, while others like Phoenix required a little assistance to walk across the mat.



SPORT

By Bella Kable

During our Physical Education lessons this week we began with a collaborative warm-up game that focused on teamwork and communication. Students were to run as fast as they possibly could around the Adelaide Hall and Ballet Studio until I called out a number. This number signified the groups that students had to make. This game required plenty of communication, which Stage 4 were very successful at. The students' grouping and counting skills were put to the test with two options given, for example groups of 3 or 4, and it was great to see students sorting each other into groups to ensure all of their friends were included and in the correct groupings. Below is a photo of the Stage 4 students gathering in a group of 10! This game was an absolute success, and we will definitely be using this for another warm up in the future.

Stage 4 then moved on to balancing and running activities with bean bags, which the students absolutely loved. We practised walking and running backwards, walking and running while throwing the beanbag as well as balancing the beanbag on their heads, which the students always find to be a hilarious challenge. Stage 4's skills with the bean bags

continue to improve every week!

Stage 3 focused on their hopping and jumping while learning how to complete a hopscotch. Hopping is a big progression from jumping and it was great to see all the Stage 3 students focusing hard and trying their best to learn or improve their skills. The students were excited to complete the hopscotch, with many commenting that they had seen them on their street or their local park!

Both Stage 3 and 4 focused on their jumping for the last activity. Students practised jumping over a skipping rope which was held by myself and one of their peers. Firstly, students had to jump back and forth to practise the jumping movement required with a skipping rope. We then began to move the rope from side to side and eventually lifted it off the floor to challenge the students. We will continue to practise our skipping skills in weeks to come and eventually introduce a large skipping rope for the students to practise with.

I hope you all have a great weekend and I look forward to seeing you next week for more fun and games in Physical Education!



Happy Birthday



Reddam Early Learning

would like to wish a very happy birthday to

**Ashley Ma, Callum Krigstein, Cecilia Chen, Alfred Lehrer &
Chloe Marshall-Teoh**

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

We hope you have a fabulous day!

