



# REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL WOOLLAHRA NEWSLETTER



## Dee's Message

18 JUNE 2021

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

There is a wonderful saying, which captures the magic of childhood, and reminds us that even as adults we should continue to seek the many treasures in life. It says that "No matter how old you get, may you always stop to fill your pockets with smooth stones, empty snail shells, and other little treasures."

There is so much of beauty and wonder to be found in nature, especially in the eyes of the little people in the ELS. Whether in the colours of freshly fallen autumn leaves, or in the tiny insects that roam the ground, or in the textures of grass, leaves and bark... there is always something new to explore, to roll around in one's fingers, or even to taste. Because, as we all know, what better way to explore anything than by putting it into one's mouth!

The changing seasons bring different colours, textures and experiences. They prompt us to wrap up warmly, or to discard our wrappings to enjoy the warmth of a sunny spot. The cooler months also provide sensory

experiences which the summer doesn't, such as the comfort of a woollen jersey, or of huddling together in class with your friends to listen to your teacher reading your favourite story.

It is interesting how, in the winter months, with more time spent indoors, there is an even more special connection between the children. It is as if the cooler temperatures outside make their interactions all the warmer. Whether in creating art, or in entertaining their guests for 'tea', or in dressing up together in a corner of the classroom – the conversations seem somehow more animated and intense.

# Dee's Message

While these interactions are primarily about enjoyment and being lost in the moment, they serve another important role. As one researcher points out, "When children are with their peers in preschool, these interactions give them a chance to hear language in real time and practice using language with their peers."

Exploring language is a critical part of any young child's development. Whether in mimicking what they hear adults say, or in the conversations they have with their peers, each day is a new opportunity to develop communication skills, which will become so important in later years. Their range of vocabulary is extended, and ever more

complex sentences are strung together. And hopefully, just as these moments of learning and discovery are rich with meaning, that desire to keep learning will continue throughout their lives.

Have a happy weekend!

**Dee Pitcairn**  
**Principal**



# The Nest (1R)

Kiri Winders, Rachael Soegiono, Min Pattharasiritanarat & Rochelle Lundie

## Revisiting our herb garden:

Earlier in the term our little ones had an experience of planting their very own little herb garden. After which, we regularly watered the plants and put them out into the sunlight. However, sometimes nature doesn't want to play with us! They didn't grow very well! This didn't deter us from gaining some learning from this, however. On Tuesday, Teachers Kiri and Helena bought in some fresh herbs from their home gardens for the children to see and experience fully grown herb plants. This was a wonderful sensory learning experience as the children were curious to smell and look at the herbs as we passed them around to each child. We took the opportunity to talk about the different herbs: there were sage, thyme, mint, basil, coriander and parsley. Each herb obviously had a different smell. "What does it smell like?" we asked the children. It was interesting to see the little noses scrunch as they came across a smell they didn't like! "Would you like to taste it?" was another question we asked. Some were a little unsure about the new textures and smells whilst others gobbled them up!

## Baking time!

On Wednesday and Thursday we engaged in a baking experience using the herbs to make some delicious cheese scones! The little chefs all came into play here as they enjoyed mixing and stirring and of course eating the yummy scones for afternoon tea!

This experience marks the end of the cycle of learning in the Nest during which we have experienced the benefits and pleasures of a shared learning experience, from planting, nurturing, growing and eating our food.

Learning Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners



# The Nest (1R)

Kiri Winders, Rachael Soegiono, Min Pattharasiritanarat & Rochelle Lundie



# Fledglings (1E)

By Tafiána Botrel, Jane Teh, and Nadia Breus

## What a Colourful Week!

Since we started investigating the Fledglings students' preferences as a part of getting to know our peers better, a new interest was created in our routine. The teachers started to observe that quite often the children mentioned colours in their conversations during the different activities in which they participated, including group time. For this reason, the experiences offered this week encouraged the children to not only identify and name colours but also understand a little more about primary and secondary colours.

Rainbows, coloured building blocks, pop it game, coloured shapes and other resources were placed around the classroom to give everyone the opportunity to have a turn to engage with these resources.

In the Atelier, the children used jumbo markers to create a colourful drawing while singing songs about rainbows. In this activity, not only did the children explore colours, but they were also very interested in patiently putting the lids back on the markers!

Thinking of playful ways to support the learning of colours, we invited the children to be scientists for the day, participating in different experiments with colours. First, we created sensory bags by mixing different colours. The bags were used on a flat surface so the children could make different marks on them by using their hands and fingers.

In the second experiment we soaked coloured candies in water. Before adding the water to the plate, Teacher Nadia spoke to the children about the colours displayed on the plate and she also questioned the children what they thought would happen with the candies once we poured water over them. Although the children can't fully express themselves yet, we observed the way they were looking at the plate imagining what was about to happen. Nadia slowly poured the water in the centre

of the plate and in just a few seconds we could start observing the water becoming a beautiful "rainbow" on the plate.

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners. Children develop dispositions for learning such as curiosity, cooperation, confidence, creativity, commitment, enthusiasm, persistence, imagination and reflexivity. EYLF, 2009.



# Fledglings (1E)

By Tatiana Botrel, Jane Teh, and Nadia Breus



# Stage 2

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

## Loose parts play

Over the term, our provocation 'Construction' has given the opportunity for the children to be involved in the self-selection of construction-based materials. The children's love of building has continued and through exploring this provocation the children showed a keen interest in shapes, and as such this is what we have focused on in our group times. In the classroom we set up an area of loose parts: a mix of objects as an extension for the children to use their imaginations. While the duplo, mobilo, magnetic shapes and small blocks have continued to be a popular choice to create with, we have seen some lovely work being done at the loose parts table. 'Loose parts play' is simply exploring, creating and engaging with a variety of open-ended objects in any way the child wants to. Children use these objects in all kinds of ways. There is no right or wrong way to play with loose parts, so children are free to explore, creating and engaging with a variety of open-ended objects in any way they want. It is also a holistic activity – that means it allows children to practise and develop skills across all areas of development. They are using fine and gross motor skills, they can practise problem solving, social skills, maths, science, language, and literacy skills. They are also using their imaginations, being creative and getting a variety of different sensory inputs. There is an emphasis on experimentation. Children are like scientists inventing and re-inventing.

When children are playing with loose parts, sustained and focused learning is often observed, and the agency of the child is clear. EYLF - 1.2 Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and sense of agency. 1.4 Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect.

## Ice creams and Pizza

There is always a big emphasis on dramatic

social play in Stage Two. As we know, dramatic or pretend play supports social-emotional, language and cognitive development by providing opportunities for children to practise important skills with their peers. This gives children the opportunity to share ideas, solve problems together and build conflict resolution skills.

This term we started with the office play and had fun listening to many conversations on the phone: "It's Bobby speaking". In the kitchen play, Elliot said, "I'm making dessert." When asked why he was wearing the oven mitt he said, "Because it's hot." At the pizza shop, the menu was being used to decide what toppings were being put on the pizza. Chef hats and aprons were worn as Maggie made a little tart and Maison was putting together a pizza, carefully placing the ingredients of mushrooms and salami on top of the base and then putting it in the oven. Ocean said, "I have to wait for mine to bake." In the ice cream shop, Oliver said, "I'm making ice cream, I need a cone." Isabelle decided to feed the teddy and said, "I have delicious ice cream for him." Myka asked, "Can have an ice cream please" to which Oliver replied, "Do you want the purple ice cream?"

We have enjoyed observing just how the children are engaging and evolving in their social and dramatic play.

EYLF OUTCOME 1: Children have a strong sense of identity  
Explores different identities and points of view in dramatic play.

# Stage 2

## Photo Gallery





# Stage 3

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

## The mindfulness of Breathing

Stage 3R's mindfulness journey has continued throughout the term as the children focus on being in the moment and calming their minds and bodies.

This week the children focused on their breathing. Breathing is a big part of the mindfulness practice and a very important one. Every day we breathe. It is what keeps us alive and operating, but when children discover that they can be in control of their bodies through their breath they develop self-awareness, improve focus, release anxiety and stretch their imaginations.

The children were introduced to an amazing book written by Kira Willey called 'Breathe Like a Bear'. It is a beautifully illustrated collection of mindfulness exercises designed to teach children techniques for managing their bodies, breath, and emotions. Best of all, these 30 simple, short breathing practices and movements can be performed anytime and anywhere. The children learned 5 different breaths this week, one for each day. They were Bear Breath, Snake Breath, Kitty Cat Stretch Breath, Be a Bumblebee Breathing and Bunny Breath. Each of these breathing exercises helped the children achieve a feeling, such as calm, focused, relaxed and energised.

The children transferred their knowledge of breathing to the art table. Each child joined Christina where they could choose any colour of food colouring they wanted. They helped drop their chosen colour into a tall water glass. Christina then filled the glass with water and gave each child their own individual straw. Now instead of breathing in the straw, the children were going to breathe out. They practised this first with their individual straw in their mouth. Once they were confident in this practice, the straw went into the glass for the children to blow bubbles. Some children used a big breath and made really big bubbles, whilst others used a small breath and made smaller bubbles. When the bubbles had been blown

the children got a piece of paper and pressed it on top of the bubbles, making a print on their page. This was a great experience because even though the children can feel their breath, they cannot see it. This made their breath visible to them on the page.

"When you breathe you are alive... And because you are alive, anything is possible."  
Christopher Willard



# Stage 3

## Photo Gallery



# Stage 4

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

## Observational Drawings

Our weekly visits to Cooper Park, as a part of our Stage Four Nature programme, have really encouraged us to be stop and be mindful of all the beauty around us. The still and tranquil environment has allowed us to really observe features in more detail.

A favourite recall from the children in Cassandra's class each week, is listening to the birds that greet with their great big laughs, singing and tweets. We excitedly anticipate if the "bush kookaburra" will drop in for a visit, surprising us on occasion by landing on a tree branch and delighting us with a great big belly laugh.

To extend on this wonderful learning, the children were set a creative invitation of a Kookaburra picture, with accompanying oil pastels. Here children were required to use their observational skills to represent their own drawing expression of what they saw.

### **Observational drawing is a great exercise in seeing.**

When we look at something with the intention of drawing it, we tend to look more carefully than usual. We see, truly see, the shapes, the patterns, the perspective, the colours, the shadows, the contours, and how all of the details interact.

### **Observational drawing is a great way to improve drawing skills.**

In translating 3D objects to 2D drawings on paper, we practise getting shapes and proportion right, we learn how to show depth with shading, and we try different techniques for showing texture and detail.

### **What is directed drawing?**

Directed drawings are a step-by-step approach to drawing something. Children were wanting to draw pictures that

correspond to their learning, and some just do not feel like they do it well. "But I can't draw" or "I don't know how to draw!" were recent observations made.

To empower the children, directed drawings helped with reframing this language, as I began to notice their confidence level grow. Directed drawings provide children with lots of practise in following directions and paying attention to detail. Children need to listen and follow instructions closely while paying close attention to details or they might miss a step. Every child's artwork is unique and special to them. Not only do they produce great results, but children feel confident and identify themselves as **ARTISTS**.



# Stage 4

## Photo Gallery



# Dance & Drama

By Laura Hudson

This week in the Nest and the Fledglings the children had lots of fun participating in a number of teacher-led adventures using props and music involving dinosaurs, animals and a safari hunt. Activities included using props to create shapes and patterns. We moved our bodies to the rhythm of the music and also listened to African animal sounds and dinosaur sounds.

I became an explorer and guided the children on an adventure through the jungle. I used a call and response activity to make sure all the children were following direction. Well done to Marlow and Annie who responded to the elephant noise I made. Next, we used different parts of our body to balance when we went on our adventure, standing on one leg when going over the stepping-stones and placing one foot in front of the other when crossing the bridge.

Along the way, the children met different characters from Nursery Rhymes (teacher in role and images) who needed help from everyone. A problem was given to the children and they had to solve it. This is a method used by Dorothy Heathcote, a wonderful drama practitioner who used drama as a tool to promote holistic learning in schools. More of her methods will be used in the coming weeks.

In Stages 2, 3 and 4 this week the children used their imaginations to go through the magical wardrobe, discovering a fantasy world behind it. They all took on the role of being a fantasy character, developing a whole class improvisation.

The lesson began by discussing what a wardrobe is and what you usually find inside as well as what the wardrobe looks like.

We revisited mime and used music to mime going through the wardrobe. Next, we used our imaginations to go through a Magical Wardrobe (like Narnia). I was in role as a witch from the fantasy world. The children gave the witch character a name, they then thought of their own fantasy names too

before going on an adventure with the witch. We had some wonderful ideas.

We travelled on our broomsticks to the first destination: "Rise rise, really high, just as high as a butterfly". The aim was to get something from each place we visited so we could go back home (as they couldn't go back through the wardrobe): a pearl from the sea; breath of a dragon; hair of a unicorn, sugar drop from the fairy and a golden egg from the giant.

The children used their bodies and worked together to make the shape of the cauldron. We received a message from the Lion about how to save Narnia. We put all of the objects we had found into the cauldron to create a spell, the spell melted the Ice Queen and transported us back home. Stage 4 loved the Bubble, Bubble toil and trouble spell!

Well done everyone!



# Music

By Nick Summerfeld

*"Music gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything. – Plato*

This could never be truer than when watching children dance or sing/lip sync to their favourite song, or even when music comes on it takes over their body.

In Stage 4 and 3 this week we opened the lesson with 'Match The Sound' with our sound boxes. Some of the sounds in the boxes actually sound quite similar when shaken vigorously – like the wooden balls and metal beads. To find two matching sounds can prove quite difficult if the children don't take their time and rush through the warm-up.

After we matched our sounds, we stood around the piano for our vocal warm-ups of 'BAH' and 'LAH' before moving into the 'Good Morning Song' and our numbers sequence. Stage 4 worked on a few random sequences before trying to glue the exercise together and Stage 3 are still working on getting down to 4.

Once we were through our vocal warm-ups, Stage 4 continued refining 'Colours of the Wind'. Lyrically this is quite a tricky song as there isn't too much repetition in the verse or chorus – even in the last chorus the words differ slightly. In Stage 3 we sang through 'Open Shut Them' and 'The Sunflower Song' to get our bodies and voices moving – this term I've kept it easier for Stage 3 as the numbers are tricky enough as is, and we do have a few younger kids so I haven't been wanting to overwhelm them.

After our singing we played 'Imagination Freeze' using our maracas. We picked a well-known nursery rhyme the children could sing along to while marching and shaking around the room – usually 'Incy Wincy Spider'. In 'Imagination Freeze', all the children freeze in unison while picking anything in the world to freeze as – this week we had animals; superheroes; mermaids and dinosaurs. Not everyone has the confidence to pretend or become something else, so it's important to me that the children feel safe and are encouraged to get involved whenever we are invoking our imaginations.

Looking at music and dance from across the world, this week we looked at 'Western Music' and started learning the 'Dosey Doe' which is a part of 'Square Dancing'. Square Dancing is the official state dance across 19 American states, but was actually found to have originated in England in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. I played 'Cotton Eyed Joe' for the kids which instantly caused them to burst into laughter and dance because of the catchy beat and variety of sounds within the song.

In Stage 2 and The Fledglings we opened with 'Hokey Pokey' to get our bodies warmed up. This warm-up is great to help build on coordination and response

time between the lyrics, actions and the increasing tempo. We had a sing through the 'Good Morning Song', and now that we were standing, we wore our sleigh bells around our ankles and hopped across the lily pads for our movement exercise with 'Gahloomph Goes The Little Green Frog' – helping us work on our gross motor movements with jumping like frogs, and coordination through step-claps to the beat.

After 'Gahloomph', we found our way to the mat and sang through our scales – Stage 2 working on our ascending scale and The Fledglings working on single notes and counting on 'DA' this week. Scales are not only great for ear training and pitch memory, but they are much like resistance training for the vocal folds.

Once our voices were warm, we sang through 'Wheels on the Bus' and 'The Sunflower Song' using our maracas to shake along. This week Olivia joined in with the dancing and shaking and had a blast! It's always so heart-warming to see when they are able to feel safe and confident to get involved. Using our rhythm animals, we did some simple 'STOMP – SHAKE' work with 'DOG – CAT', encouraging the children to stomp and shake at the same time to the beat and then alternate their movements. To end the lesson The Fledglings had some free play with the xylophones and tried to work on colour recognition.

Stage 2 split into two groups while we worked on finding single letters and/or colours, before trying to play an ascending 'C Major Scale'. The challenge here is for each note to be hit only once – playing the scale is helpful to build on their visual motor integration. Some children find it difficult to control their mallet to play each note once, or some skip notes.

In The Nest the children made their way to the mat where we sang and clapped through our 'Good Morning Song' and 'Wheels on the Bus'. This week marked another milestone in The Nest as Freya confidently joined in the actions to 'Wheels on the Bus' and 'The Sunflower Song'! It brought us teachers so much joy to see her joining in and smiling, confidently packing away her own instruments as we used them.

Once we were through our warm-ups, we wore our bells on our arms for 'Mary Had A Little Lamb', shaking in time with the music, before trying to stepping and walking across the lily pads to 'Gahloomph'. The second half of the song we stop and try to clap and stomp in time with the beat of the music helping build our coordination and sense of timing.

To end the lesson, we had free time on our xylophones which we try to teach the children if they are going to take the blocks out, then they need to pack them away!

# SPORT

By Bella Kable

Physical Education was an absolute blast with Stage 3 this week. Unfortunately, Stage 4 missed their lesson due to the Queen's Birthday. I am sure that there were plenty of games and activities being played on this day by Stage 4 anyway!

To begin their lesson, Stage 3 played a warm-up activity that focused on personal space and then sharing. As the music played, students were asked to either walk, stomp, skip, hop or run around the hall. Once the music stopped, students had to find a hoop to balance in. As the rounds progressed the number of hoops began to decrease and students had to work together to share a hoop while balancing on one foot with their classmates. This game is always a great test of the students' communication skills and it was great to see them inviting their friends to share their hoop.

We then moved on to passing and catching in partners. Stage 3 have been working on their

throwing skills, both overarm and underarm, and it is important that we now work on our catching. Students were given challenges as to how many catches they could complete in a row from differing distances. The students began throwing and catching with beanbags and then moved on to tennis balls. The tennis balls were a great challenge for the students, and we will continue to work on this next week.

To finish off our session we played a new favourite which we named 'Crazy Crabs'. Students had to move from one end of the room without being 'nipped' by the 'crab'. This is a great game for students to practise their side shuffling without even noticing. As the game progresses, more and more students become 'crabs'. The students loved this game!

Thank you for a couple of great sessions, Stage 3. I am looking forward to working with both Stage 3 and 4 next week.



# Happy Birthday



## **Reddam Early Learning**

would like to wish a very happy birthday to

**Elliot Lim, Edwyn Nessick, Jaden Zhang  
& Annabel McMicking**

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

**We hope you have a fabulous day!**

