



REDDAM EARLY LEARNING SCHOOL LINDFIELD NEWSLETTER



REDDAM
ELS

17TH FEBRUARY 2017

Debbie's Message

By Debbie Zerbst, Principal

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our new friends Yi and Josh (and their families), who have joined Stage 2 this week. Leonie and Tracy have been lovingly supportive, introducing them to the other children. I feel confident that they will soon settle in and thrive in our special school.

As the transition into an early childhood setting is a milestone for both children *and* parents, parents, like children, may experience some anxieties during this period. As parents you may have concerns about your child's ability to cope with the demands of their new environment — learning where things are, what is expected of them, and asking for help when needed.

We understand this is a delicate time and so we extend our hands to you to form a partnership between our staff of early childhood educators and your children and yourselves. We hope this will ameliorate some of these potential concerns.

Our partnership will help to establish an understanding between us about expectations and attitudes. It is our wish to create an environment that is welcoming of children, parents, and teachers alike.

To assist you in this process, here are a few tips to prepare your child the night before school.

Organising practical things the night before can save you from a last-minute rush in the morning. This can help take the stress out of the first few days and weeks at school.

- Try to ensure your child eats a healthy dinner.
- Get your child into bed in enough time to make sure he/she gets a good night's sleep. If your child doesn't sleep well, this might affect his/her experience the next day, so let us know if he/she had a bad night
- Make sure all items that your child is bringing to school are labelled with your child's name – for example, bottles, comfort items, socks and shoes, and clothing.
- Pack all the things your child needs, including bottles, hat and spare clothes.
- Pack special comfort items if the setting allows them – like cuddly toys, blankets or books, or a family picture.

Last week I imagined a school where children are filled with wonder. This week I would like to add that I imagine a school where children are curious. I believe children are natural-born explorers. As babies, they mainly use their hands to make sense of the world around them. But as soon as they start talking, asking questions is their way of fuelling their never-ending curiosity. Curious children become curious people. They are more alive, somehow; their eyes are lit from behind. They know more about more, which makes them more interesting. Their interest in the world around them is wonderful to behold.

Because of this, the ELS provides a rich and varied environment for our children that awakens their innate curiosity and stimulates their minds. Please share with us what you and your family are curious about let us find out what excites you.

Stage 1

By Lauren & Rujuta

This week we are focusing on flowers. Olivia and her mum Berry have been out in their garden searching for beautiful flowers so that they can bring in to show the class.

On Tuesday, the children participated in a science experiment called colour-changing flowers. With this experiment, the children discovered how essential stems are to plant growth. We dipped the flowers in different coloured water. As the coloured water was absorbed over the next few days, we observed how the colours gradually moved into the flower we were so amazed when the petals of the white carnations changed colour.

Flowers and Valentines Day seem to go together and it was a wonderful way to have celebrated Valentines Day too. Our children created beautiful cards to show their mums and dads how much they love them. Leonie from Stage 2 found an enormous sunflower in her garden, she let us look and observe the flower in detail. The children were very curious about the large flower bud, as its petals fell off so it didn't look like a flower at all. Lauren also brought in some frangipanis she found in her garden. Using these flowers as inspiration the children drew their own interpretation of them, using yellow and green texts.

This experience allows the children to use their imagination and freely express themselves through art. On Wednesday the children had their first yoga class with Kelly. The children enjoyed practising several yoga positions like the downward dog, and loved dancing around with coloured ribbons. She will be coming every Wednesday during this term and we can't wait to experience more fun with her.



Stage 1: Happy Valentine's Day



Stage 1



Stage 2

By Leonie & Tracy

As we continue to look at our Provocation "Music makes us Happy" we learn that music ignites all areas of child development: intellectual, social and emotional, motor, language and overall literacy. It also helps the body and the mind work together. As we expose the children to music we are helping them develop the ability to learn the sounds and meaning of words. This week we added picture cards to our songs so the children could make a connection with the two. They were using such beautiful language as they called out what was on the cards and also as they sang. We are all enjoy singing just to be singing.

We also love to dance and that is just what we have been doing lots of. Dancing to music helps the children to build motor skills while allowing them to practice self-expression. The wonderful thing is that they are not self-conscious about their ability and most are eager to join in and move their bodies.

This week we introduced bells to our instruments., creating curiosity among the children. We also listened to the audio of lovely meditation bells a beautiful deep tone. If we have any families that would like to share any of their own musical ability we would love to welcome you into our class. We have a dad that plays in a Rock and Roll band who is going to come in and play for us.

Stage 2 keeps on getting bigger this week we welcome Yi to our class it's lovely to have you with us and we look forward to learning more about you as the term continues.

Thanks for a great week, enjoy your weekend.



Stage 2: Music to Our Ears!



Stage 3

By Rochelle

As we continue to look at our body and many of its features, this last week has been full of discovery and excitement for our stage 3 children. The children have been given many opportunities to explore their bodies and what they can do through a number of experiences.

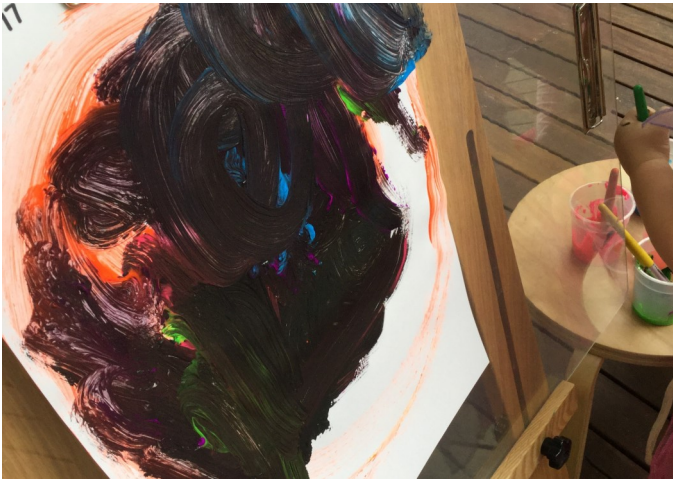
We begun our week exploring clay and it's therapeutic nature. The simple act of moulding clay in one's hand is very calming and soothing for the children. This has been displayed amongst all the children in stage 3 as they have explored this wonderful sensory activity. The play-based activity has allowed the children to refine their hand-eye coordination along with their ability to create and mould the clay in different ways. As our children engaged in this activity, the educators encouraged them to make a hand with their fingers. Much to our surprise, the children did an amazing job participating in this task and were able to create these images with little assistance. As you can see in the images below, the children were so proud of their efforts. Some children even decided to make individual faces too.

Along with exploring this sensory activity, the children have also enjoyed learning all about their eyes. We have discussed on numerous occasions the important part our eyesight plays and that it enables us to see everything around us. We have experimented this with the children by shutting our eyes and walking around our classroom, helping emphasise just how much we rely on our eye-sight and how tricky it is to move around without being able to see. The children have also had the opportunity to distinguish the colour of their own eyes as well as comparing their eyes with their peers. We set up an activity on our provocation board. Many of our children have been seen identifying one's own set of eyes whilst also trying to discover whose eyes belong to who. This has stimulated lots of discussion amongst the children and it has been wonderful seeing them so curious. It has also enabled the children to identify the colours of their eyes and the differences between each one of us.

The children have also participated in an art and craft experience where they have been encouraged to paint their own eyes. On our art easels, each of the children have created their own interpretation of their eyes, adding colour with all different shapes and sizes. What we loved most about watching the children participate in this task is that each child individually created their own image, showing how vastly different our children's little minds are.



Stage 3: Colour



Stage 3: Outside Play



Stage 3: Colour



Stage 3: Identifying Shapes



Stage 4

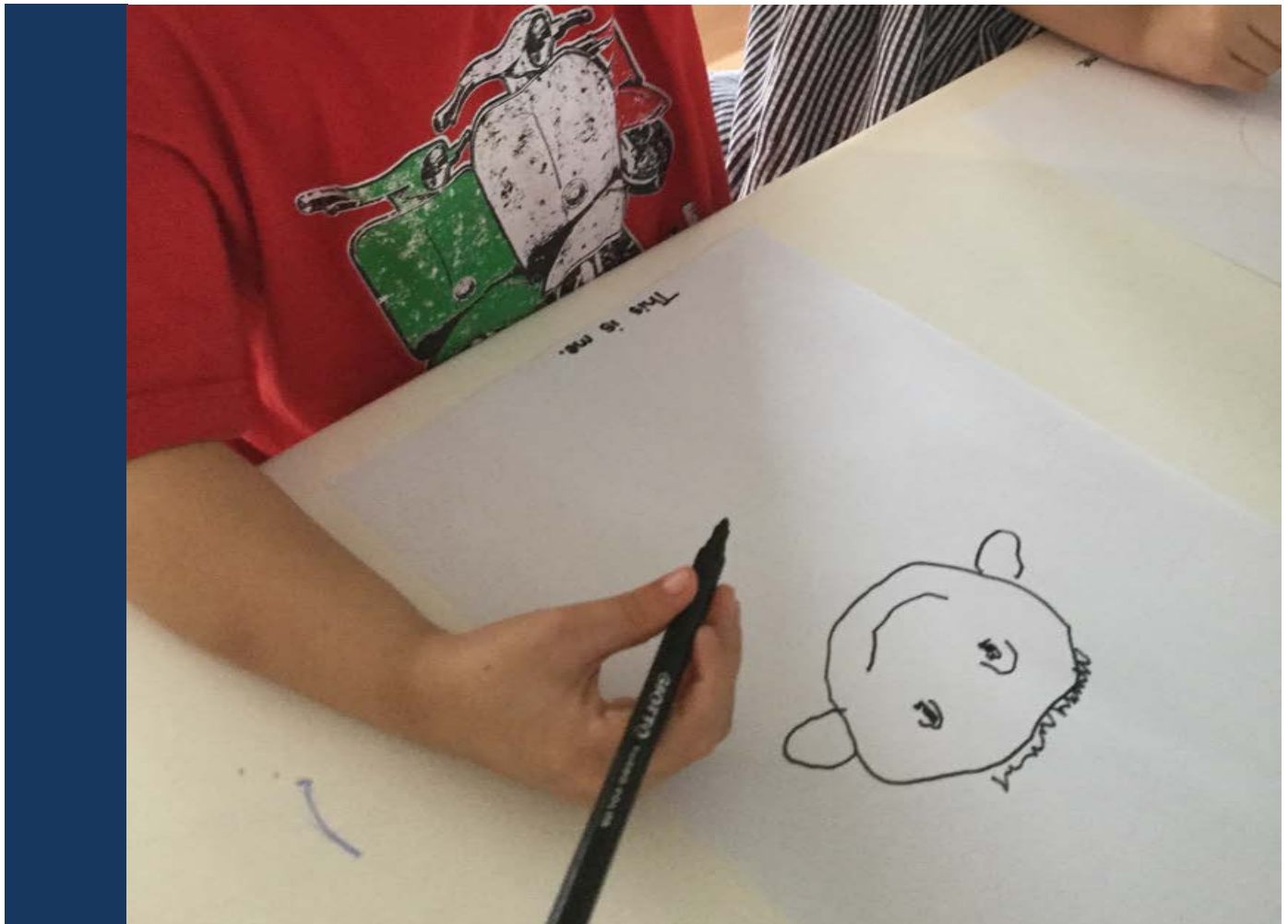
By Pauline

As children draw, paint, and make collages, they are learning about their world - colour, shape and size of objects. When they use paints, glue and markers, children are planning, experimenting, and problem solving. As children mix paint, they learn to understand cause and effect. Art encourages children to make decisions and to learn from the experience of making choices about their art work.

Who am I?

The children have been looking at themselves in the mirror as they continue to draw pictures of themselves. They have been adding details such as eyebrows, eye lashes and teeth to their drawings. Whilst painting, the children have been experimenting with the different colours, creating 'new' colours.

We have introduced daily yoga in the class. Children derive enormous benefits from yoga. Physically, it enhances their flexibility, strength, coordination, and body awareness. In addition, their concentration and senses of calmness and relaxation. The children have been doing some yoga after lunch every day. They have been choosing which poses to do and are starting to recognise the songs and sing with the yoga songs. The yoga has been helping them relax their bodies during rest time. This prepared them well for our enrichment yoga class with the exceptional Kelly which started on Wednesday.



Stage 4: Who Am I?



Stage 4: Moving our Bodies



Stage 4: Creating Colour



Hello everyone!

Stage 1 & 2:

Our little ones had their names mentioned in a Calypso song as they bounced, clapped, swished, twisted, patted, stomped etc. As they imitate the actions, they were not only exercising, but were keeping the beat in a creative way and picking up new vocabulary to describe the various actions.

The other focus of the lesson was the concept of "high" and "low". For this we played with the bells and they jingled them high and low as indicated by the lyrics of the song(s). There were a few songs which contained this same idea. While the concept was repeatedly practiced, they were done through different songs so the little ones don't get bored!

We also tapped the beat to the famous rhyme, "Twinkle, Twinkle"... did you notice the concept of "up" there? When you say the rhyme with baby, can you please also include a rising inflection in your tone of voice? Such sensitivity would help your child become more expressive speakers in time to come!

The children in Stage 2 are learning to control their fingers independently as they recite a finger play activity. Their thumbs, pointers, tall-man were the fingers we practiced this week. This fine-motor skills are foundational to instrumental playing in the future.

Children were also encouraged to sing with a proper singing voice. Because the vocal chords of children are still developing, we do not expect them to sing with a big operatic voice. Their high-pitched, light (and often quiet sounding) voice is the right quality voice we are listening out for at this stage. We learned that this singing voice is very different from the speaking voice or the shouting voice!

Stage 3:

Stage 3 children went to the musical farm and listened to the rooster crowing. They imitated the sound (which instinctively brought out the "head voice"). Then they played with the scarves with matching actions for the different sections of a Jewish childhood song, "Koo-ku, ri-ku". After that, we learned a rhyme about a mother hen where they had to use their Mathematics skills. We always love such "number songs" in our lessons!

Next, we listened to a recording of a donkey. Once again, the focused listening activity helps children to listen attentively and interpret what they are hearing. This is what education philosophers refer to as a "higher order thinking" activity. We then went on a tractor around the farm and saw goats and donkeys and even kangaroos! We had so much fun and learned so much!

Stage 4:

Stage 4 children focused on **keeping the beat**. To do this, we used the rhythm sticks and had lots of creative ways to play them.

We then listened to sounds around us and discussed where these sounds may be heard. Then we pretended we were in a parade and "marched, hopped, tip-toed" around the room. Children learned that big marching bands use a large drum to keep the beat. In class, everyone took turns to keep the beat as we marched, walked, hopped around once again. It was fun and... they were keeping the beat!

We ended the Music lesson with a song that has 2 distinct sections. In the first part of the song, we walked around the room. In the second section, everyone held hands with a partner to dance around. Musically, the first section was in simple quadruple time and the second section was in compound duple. Children of course experienced the music at this stage and don't worry about the musical theory. Nonetheless, **cognitively**, they were learning to understand sequence and experiencing music in changing meter. Research shows that such activities also helps children in logical thinking and mathematics.

Music



Yoga



Mandarin

Usually our Mandarin lesson includes three parts, namely warming up, review and new words with games. Therefore, this week's lessons follows these three steps.

Firstly, many students are familiar with the cartoon of Peppa Pig. So I have chosen a book based upon this and retold the story to the students in Chinese, assisted by an English explanation. For young children in order to help them to remember the language and stories, it is necessary to use repetition and therefore the story is shared several times. After sharing the story they then learnt to sing a song, named two tigers. Before we learnt to sing the song, I translated the lyrics via a short play. I then taught them how to sing the song of two tigers in Chinese.

Secondly, to build on their vocabulary we reviewed what we have learnt in our last lesson: "hong se" (red), "lǜ se" (green) and "xie xie" (thank). In order to make the lesson interesting, the hide and seek game, passing ball game and opposite voice game is used at this point in time to engage the children's interest.

Finally, we learnt how to say father, mother and I in Chinese. As many of the students are familiar with Peppa Pig this is a good, fun way to introduce those words using the pictures of the Peppa family. After students learnt to say these three words, they played fun games using these three words.

