

Little Ducks Childcare Birkdale

January/February 2016 Newsletter

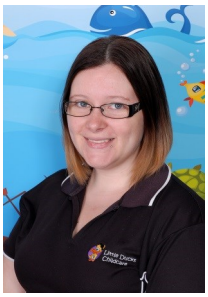
A note from your Centre Manager

Welcome to our second newsletter of the year. Firstly, I would like to thank all of the families who have made my return to work after maternity such a smooth and easy transition. It is so nice to see all of the little grown up faces, and the new ones too! I would also like to thank Natasha who has done an amazing job in my absence.

Over the coming months you will notice some changes around the service and we see two more of our educators, Kerri and Renee, go onto their maternity leave during the month of April. Our little ducks family is ever-expanding and we would like to wish them the best of luck on their journeys into (and for Renee, further into) motherhood. We are currently recruiting for their maternity leave contracts. Csilla will take over the Preschool room full time and a job share contract will be available in with our Junior Kindy children.

Vacancies are filling fast and we have quite a few days now that are completely booked out. If you are looking for adding a day to your bookings, please see me ASAP so I can secure these for you.

We have appointed some new officers around the centre! Our health and safety and food safety officer is Natasha, our sustainability officer is Andrea and our first aid officer is Holly. We have created these roles to ensure that we have someone keeping us up to date with the latest information and the highest standards alike.



COMING SOON—We will be doing a healthy kids cookbook fundraiser! Cook books will be available for purchase through me at the office. I have emailed all families the details so check your emails for more information!

Currently, I am also working on a new parent feedback area for our foyer. As you know, feedback is always welcome and encouraged so hopefully this new area being created can help to not only stimulate this, but make it easier for families who would like to give feedback but may be time poor. Hopefully we will see this area up and running before the end of the month. A reminder that our No Jab, No Play policy is in effect so it is vital that all current immunisation information is up to date with the service at all times.

My office hours are 8:00am-4:30pm and I am available to be contacted by phone or email, or feel free to come and have a chat during these times.

Cassie...

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Recipe of the Month!

Vegetable and Spaghetti Frittata

Ingredients

- 125g gluten-free spaghetti, broken
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large (200g) brown onion, grated
- 2 large carrots, peeled, grated
- 2 cups frozen peas, corn and capsicum
- 1/2 cup potato flour
- 1 teaspoon gluten-free baking powder
- 6 eggs, lightly beaten

Method

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan-forced. Grease a 6cm-deep, 22cm (base) round Spring form pan. Line base and side with baking paper.

2. Cook pasta in a large saucepan of boiling, salted water following packet directions until tender. Drain. Place in a large heatproof bowl. Cool for 5 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, heat oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat. Add onion and carrot. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 5 minutes or until softened. Add frozen vegetables. Stir.

4. Add vegetable mixture to spaghetti. Add flour, baking powder and eggs. Stir until well combined. Pour into prepared pan. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until browned and set. Cool completely in pan. Cut into 12 wedges. Store in an airtight container in the fridge.



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Centre Events!

(Let us know if you would like to help out or be involved)

...March...

Sunday 6th – **Clean Up Australia Day**
We will hold a 'Little Ducks Clean Up Day' on Friday 4th March – each taking part in keeping our environment clean and beautiful.
Friday 11th – **Crazy Hair Day**
Help support the Leukaemia Foundation and the World's Greatest Shave by coming along with your craziest hair-do and a gold coin donation.
Thursday 17th - **St Patrick's Day**
Dress in green and come along to learn some fun facts about our Irish friends and families.
Monday 21st - **Harmony Day**
This is a day for all Australians to embrace cultural diversity and to share what we have in common. Dress in orange to support this wonderful day.
Thursday 24th – **Easter Bonnet Parade**
The children will be making special Easter hats throughout the week. Come along at 3:30pm to watch our fun parade.
Friday 25th – **Good Friday** - **PUBLIC HOLIDAY**
Monday 28th – **Easter Monday** - **PUBLIC HOLIDAY**



...April...

Monday 4th – Friday 15th - **Henny Penny Chicken Hatching**
Bringing the joy of watching eggs hatching, and chicks emerging from their shells, right in front of our eyes!

Thursday 7th – **World Health Day**
Celebrate your healthy mind, body and spirit and learn all about how to keep ourselves healthy.

Wednesday 13th - **Grange Library Storytime & Singalong**
Listen to some lovely stories and sing some of our favourite songs as our friends from the Grange Library visit Little Ducks. 9:30am.

Monday 25th - **ANZAC Day**



Birthdays!

A very happy birthday to ...

March
Indi
Rayna
Olivia
Stella
Indie
Lily



April
Hunter
Isaac
Benjamin
Hamish
Warner
Justin
Dane
Eryn
Miss Tara

Nursery Natter!

Firstly, it is great to have Natasha back in the room. She has done such an amazing job in the nursery over the past 6 months but we are so glad to have her back, looking after the babies. We have lots of new learning experiences to explore over the coming weeks so keep an eye out around the room to see your child participating!

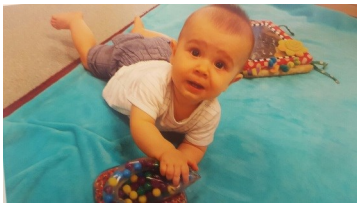


So far, we have been focusing on building secure and trusting relationships with our new children and families alike which is really evident by how settle, calm and relaxed the nursery room is. I have heard many comments about it being the quietest nursery at the start of a year to date! The children are so settled and happy in their new environment and have been forming great bonds with not only Natasha and I, but also with each other. We have been getting very creative and will continue to do so as this is a very important part of learning, exploring through sensory skills. We have created a hands-on sensory table as an extension of from our sea life education show, and we have made an octopus from all of our handprints. We have also used fine brushes to create sea stars. Stay tuned around the room to see where this takes us next!





Upon observation, some of the children are really beginning to use their physical skills during play. Jonathan and Jackson are beginning to show interest in getting up onto their feet and taking steps so to help them along in their journey so far, we have incorporated so me walkers into the room. We are also introducing soft obstacles in the room for children to explore and climb on and over. This has been really successful in supporting the children as they explore their different levels of development.



Self help skills are being encouraged at meal times which is another important skill to learn on the children's way to independence. Some of the older children are beginning to feed (and assist to feed) themselves and sitting on chairs at a table for their meals, where some of the younger children (like Taylor and Hallie) are beginning to show signs that they are ready to hold their own bottles whilst feeding. There is so many new things being learnt, and milestones being reached in our room, the fun is never ending! We cant wait to update you all on what we have learnt over the next two months in May. Until then, remember that your input and feedback is always welcome and we will see you again for our next newsletter edition in May. Julie and Natasha



Toddler Tales!



Welcome to the second edition of the Toddler Tales! There has been so much happening over the past two months, I don't even know where to start!
We have welcomed so many new faces to the Little Ducks Toddler family with open arms which has helped our new friends transition into the room smooth and successful. We have spent lots of time working on building those relationships with children and families alike and it has been a wonderful start to the year.
Recently we have had some great incursions, one of our favourites being our visit from the Birkdale vet! We were very excited to see a dog, some cats and even a spiky bearded dragon! The wonderful vets taught us all about their job. We learnt that they help sick animals to feel much better and they also help to prevent healthy animals from getting sick with regular visits and check ups, just like when our mummies or daddies take us to the doctor!



Our next favourite interest was under the sea. This interest sparked when the ocean life sea creatures came to visit! We saw (and were able to touch) sea stars, sea cucumbers and even a baby shark egg! Since then we have learnt all about colours, shapes and animal education through many craft and art experiences. We have made our own sea stars, pufferfish, stingrays and even some jellyfish! It has been so much fun transforming our room into an aquatic paradise.



As we are a big toddler room now, we have been focusing on building and developing our self help skills through experiences like feeding ourselves, washing our hands with soap and water before and after meals and even helping to pack away our toys when we are all finished. Some of the bigger toddlers have even begun toilet training! We will keep our eyes out as your toddlers get older and if we think that they are ready to make the transition, we will let you know and see if you are ready too!
Lastly, we would like to welcome your input and feedback wherever you like, whether it be on a program, an experience or if you would like to come and volunteer some of your time to help with an activity. We love to make all of our families feel included and their opinions heard.
We will see you all again in May!

Chris and Amanda

Junior Kindy Jabber!

Hello everyone! Boy this year sure is going fast! Welcome to our new families, we are excited to build a strong friendship and relationship with you all! The children have really opened up and become confident in the new room environment with lots of communicating and sharing together. This month we also welcomed our new friend Locky Bear! He is the classes take home bear and we are very, very excited to all have adventures with him!

We have had a busy few weeks with a lot of exciting visitors to the centre. Junior Kindy really enjoyed the Ocean Life show that visited late February with all the Sea animals you could think of. There were lots of fun animals to learn about and touch! The children were excited about touching the shark egg and the Sea Cucumbers "SQUISHY!" said Brodie as he touched the Sea Cucumber! To extend on this we made our own Under the Sea area in our room! We quickly got to work making our own sea creatures and turning our room into an underwater paradise! We extended our learning of all things shapes, colours and counting through making sea stars, sea cucumbers, baby sharks and eggs, jellyfish and crabs. There is even a giant shadow of a sea creature in our bathroom and we have to guess what it is! Maybe you might know?



From here, we moved onto our next interest "We're going on a bear hunt". Since the interest occurred after reading one of our stories, we have been really interested in exploring all of the things that the bear explored. This opened up our world of sensory exploration and we have been setting up sensory stations with thick gooey mud, long green grass and the big dark caves. We have also welcomed our very own bear friend to the Junior Kindy family, Locky Bear! He is our brand new classroom friend and we want him to go and explore new stops on his bear hunt journey by going home with you! Each weekend, Locky bear will be sent home with a different families to explore new adventures and we want you to tell us all about it! He comes with a travel journal for you to add photos to and stories about where he has been and what he has been up to! We cant wait to hear all about his new adventures.



Moving forward, we have some great events coming up, Easter being the event on all of the children's minds. We will be celebrating our Easter bonnet parade (see events page for details), doing a range of experiences that are Easter themed and exploring the meaning behind the holiday.



We are also beginning to toilet train some of the children so if you are interested in your child joining in, please let us know so we can include them in this transition.

Finally, we are beginning to teach our Junior Kindy children about the environment by turning off lights, fans and air conditioners when they are not needed, recycling what we can, when we can and caring for our grass and garden outside. If you have any other ideas we would love to hear them, and we would also love to hear all about what you are doing at home!



We have so much to look forward to, we can not wait to share with you our journey through learning next time. Dianne, Csilla and Tahlia

Kindy Kapers!



Can you believe it is March already! Not long and it will be Easter! We have had an awesome start to the year and we are looking forward to the adventures we are going to have through out the rest of the year.

As you may have noticed, we have been learning all about the ocean! This learning pod came from the ocean life experience in February. We had all kinds of sea animals come and visit… we even saw a real baby shark and got to pat a turtle! To extend on this we have learnt all about all different kinds of sea creatures and set up an area for the children to explore. From this ongoing interest and also as an extension of clean up Australia day, we are going to begin learning about how to keep our waterways rubbish free and safe for the animals. We are also going to start learning about water safety, which is already an interest because a lot of us have been going to swimming lessons!



Have you seen our new pets? We would like to say a big thank you to Isabel and her family for bringing in some guppies and cray fish for our fish tank! This has been a huge hit with the children and we have been learning about how to care for them and showing a lot of respect towards our new little (quickly growing) buddies!



Another big interest in the room lately has been gardening! Since we have had new grass laid in the yard, we have been teaching the children how to care for it and they have been wonderful help in watering it and helping put down grass seeds in the dirt patches and have been reminding each other not to walk over the new grass patches until the grass grows a bit bigger. To extend on this we have started planting herbs and flowers in the veggie patch, giving it a healthy kick start! We tasted some of the herbs before we put them into the garden and the children really enjoyed the parsley… and so did something else because the next day after it was planted, it had been chewed down to just the base of the stalks!! We are still undecided if someone had a very healthy green snack or if a possum got to it ;) Keep an eye out for our growing passions in this are!



Have you had some little rockets going off in your house? We have been learning to count back wards from 10, starting in a squatting position we start at 10 and once we get to 0 we shout BLAST OFF! and shoot up into the sky like rockets! We have been learning all about counting, recognizing numbers and developing our basic math skills, we are even getting really clever at counting to 20. These skills will be very useful as we get older and move up into the pre-school room as well as all of the color recognition and alphabet learning that we have been doing.

If you have any ideas and suggestions for our room we would love to hear them! We are very excited to have such an amazing group of families who are so willing to give so much input into their childrens learning and wellbeing in Kindy. Our family wall looks great! Don't worry, its not too late to send in a photo if you have forgotten.

We have enjoyed having Miss Andrea join our team, the children have taken to her so quickly and she has brought so much to the centre already and we are so happy that she will be there once Miss Kerri goes on maternity leave at the end of April! Miss Kerri is looking forward to bringing her little man in to meet everyone!

Thanks for helping make the start of the year so much fun! 'til next time,

Miss Kerri and Miss Andrea

Preschool Press!



Hello families and welcome to another addition of the Preschool Press! What a busy time it has been in our room since our last newsletter. As you would have been reading about in our daily power point presentation, is our focus and project has been the letter of the week. We really felt that this was a priority at the beginning of the year to help all of our children develop their letter and sound knowledge. Each week Miss Csilla will introduce a new letter, following the jolly phonics order and I will continue teaching this letter on my days in the room. Each week we discuss all things that start with that particular letter then follow it up with various activities that start with that letter. These activities are often teacher initiated but also discussion are had with the children about what we could do that starts with that letter allowing them to be involved in the decision making process and activities.



The experiences that are planned for the children help them learn about science, maths and literacy also. This has allowed the children to not only engage in creative experiences through art but to also spend time learning how to write each of the letters, preparing them fully for school next year.

Of recent times, we have begun to do some experiments around our letter of the week including seeing how long it takes ice to melt and working out where it would melt the slowest and fastest as well as experiments involving popcorn for letter P. This week we discussed planets, which the children were very interested in and led to us making a paper mache earth as well discussing the importance of why we need to take care of our planet. As a follow up to this excitement and interest over science, we have decided that we will start a science book to record all the things that we learn in science throughout the year. This will be displayed on our science table for the children to look through at the own time to review what they have learnt during the year.



To help the children understand topics we are learning within the preschool room we often utilise the smart board to help understand the concept being taught. When discussing how we use the dump to leave our rubbish Stella. L asked what a dump was. Using videos on the smart board as well as discussions, we were able to explain this concept to allow Stella and the rest of the children to learn about this topic. Another occasion the smart board was utilised recently was when we made paper planes. The children generally have a teacher make them for them but to encourage independence and provide them with the opportunity to do things for themselves we showed them a video of how to make a paper plane.

As Easter approaches, we will be getting ready to make our Easter bonnets for our parade and celebrate this holiday. Over the next few weeks, we will begin work on this and discussions around this topic. We will now take a short break from doing a letter each week as well with Easter upon us and instead review all of the letters we have learnt thus far.



That's it from the preschool room,

Renee, Csilla and Holly

The Schoolies Scoop!



Hi families! Well here we are in the middle of March already. This year is flying by! The schoolies and I have been having so much fun with our activities that have been decided on by the children. Each Monday I ask the children for their suggestions for activities they'd like to do throughout the week. This has allowed for them to be part of the decision making process and contribute their own ideas and interests as well as negotiating with peers. So far this year we have been very busy with our arts and crafts as the schoolies have decided this to be one of their favourite things. We have created bubble paintings, ice cube painting, puff paint, drawings, glitter and glue, letters to post, collages and finger painting. Through these the schoolies have put their imaginations and ideas onto paper and shared stories about their knowledge and interests as well as family life and home cultures. We have also done some cooking of cakes in the sand and the oven, played just dance, used milk for a science experiment and followed maps to a hidden treasure in our treasure hunt. These activities encouraged the children to develop their reading and interpret printed materials as well as hypothesize and predict what may occur. Most recently we have been playing some board and card games which seems to be quite popular and the children have asked to play them everyday. Some of the games we have been playing are old maid, memory, uno, mouse trap, ludo and twister. These play and leisure activities help develop number recognition, counting, patterns, memory, colour identification and turn taking. Events we have celebrated include Waitangi day in which the children drew their interpretations of the silver fern in chalk onto black paper and Chinese New Year which has us creating lanterns and practicing writing monkey in Chinese symbols (year of the monkey). For the next few months we will continue building on the children's interests and suggestions. I would like to introduce other games so if any families have any suggestions on games or would like to bring some in for us to play it would be greatly appreciated. Upcoming events we will celebrate are St Patricks Day, Harmony Day and of course an easter egg hunt! Harmony day is all about inclusion and respect for others and the colour to wear is orange. I would love to get some parent input on activities your children enjoy doing at home and things you would like us to celebrate here. Stay tuned for the next instalment. Tara.









Did you know?

Friendly reminders

James, James, are you here James?!

Did you know that it is a legal requirement for all children to be singed in and out of the centre by a responsible adult? A responsible adult is classed as someone over the age of 18 years who is a parent/guardian/relative of the child. A friend may also drop off or collect children as long as they are on our contact list. Signing in and out is very important as these documents are used as attendance records for not only our records, but also in the event that we have to evacuate the building due to emergency.

Naming Belongings!

In order to ensure we don't loose or mix up your child's belongings we ask that you name everything that comes to Kindy. This includes, sheets, hats, drink bottles, containers, clothes, shoes, nappies etc; We appreciate you taking the time to do so and hopefully this will help with things getting miss placed.

Hats, Hats, Hats!

Please ensure your child brings a hat everyday to Kindy so that we can protect them from the hot sun. We want to teach children sun safety and even the younger rooms can learn to wear their hats with time and patience. Wearing shirts with sleeves also helps to protect your children. Please helps us follow our policies.

Policy Reviews

We value your input and feedback so please refer to the Policy Review Folder in the foyer for more information or to provide any comments or suggestions. The policies/procedures in review during March and April are:

- FATIGUE POLICY
- POLICY FOR THE USE OF GLOVES
- GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE - EDUCATORS AND STAFF
- GRIEVANCE POLICY - FAMILIES
- GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE: CHILDREN
- HANDWASHING POLICY
- IMMUNISATION POLICY - FAMILIES
- IMMUNISATION POLICY – PREGNANCY
- IMMUNISATION POLICY - EDUCATORS AND STAFF
- CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

You can find copies of these policies available in the foyer in the policy review folder. We welcome any feedback you may have.