

Little Ducks Childcare Wilston

March/April 2016

A note from your Centre Manager

Talofa (Hello in Samoan) and welcome to our March/April newsletter edition!

Firstly I would like to thank you all for taking the time to read through our newsletter. So, what have been doing here at Little Ducks in Wilston? A few weeks ago we held our first open day for 2016! It was lovely to have the time to meet a few different families from our community! It was also lovely for the staff to have the opportunity to catch up and chat with our current families who came in to see Jazzy J the magician and the Barnyard babies!

This month we will be supporting the worlds greatest shave on Friday the 11th of March by hosting our own CRAZY HAIR DAY! We will be giving out prizes to the children and staff who have the 'craziest' hair so don't forget to go 'all out'! Miss Vicki has placed a triangular donation box in the foyer for any coin donations—all donations will be given to the Leukemia Foundation which goes towards research to discover kinder and more effective treatments for blood cancer. In the lead up to our long Easter weekend we be celebrating Easter throughout our centre and hosting our annual Easter bonnet parade with Mr. Duck on Thursday 24th of March. Don't forget to please let the educators know if you are able to attend so we can ensure there is enough space for everyone who will be attending. Once we return from our Easter break we will have Henny Penny Hatching visiting us! Chicks hatching is always something to look forward to for the children and staff...we love watching all the baby chicks hatch and explore! Don't forget to read through our upcoming events and take note of the delicious apricot bliss balls recipe on page 3! Just a friendly about our carpark...please make sure you are parking within the lines to avoid taking up two car spaces. It can get quite crazy in the afternoons during the pick up times.



Last but definitely not least, we would like to send a very special congratulations to Miss Vicki and her Husband Blair who will be expecting their first child in August!!! Woohoo!!

Ata

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National Quality Standard

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Upcoming Events!

...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**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY
Leading up to this day, we will pay our respect to the diggers.



New Year Reminders...

- **We endeavour to be a nut and egg free centre**. This is standard across all rooms due to various allergies. Please be aware of this when packing your child's lunches.
- **Security swipes**— if you do not have a security swipe to get into our centre please see Ata or Vicki.
- **Sunscreen**—it is moving into the Autumn but we are still having very warm days! if your child does not have sunscreen on in the morning please let the educators know so we can apply sunscreen on for you.
- **Please label all of your child's belongings** - we find it very difficult to track them down or realise a mix up if they are not labelled. Items to label include the clothing your child wears and rest time sheets.

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

Centre Birthdays!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:



- *Freya. H*
- *Posie. H*
- *Theodore .K*
- *Lachlan. P*
- *Henry.P*
- *Camilla .R*
- *Colton .B*
- *Spencer.G*
- *Archie. B*
- *Thomas. H*
- *Oscar. R*
- *Jhana.C*
- *Noah.C*
- *Anja.F*
- *Toma.H*
- *Joshua.P*
- *Patrick .T*

APRICOT BLISS BALLS

A healthy little snack that the kids will love!

Ingredients:

- 2 cups toasted muesli
- 1 cup dried apricots
- ¼ cup honey
- 60g butter, melted
- ½ cup desiccated coconut

Method:

Prep time—2 minutes
Cook time—15 minutes

1. Place muesli, apricots, honey and warm, melted butter in a food processor. Process for 2 to 3 minutes or until well combined.
2. Place coconut in a shallow dish. Roll tablespoons of muesli mixture into balls. Coat balls in coconut.
3. Set aside to cool for 15 minutes before serving.



Nursery Natter!



Welcome to the second edition of Nursery Natter for 2016! We understand that transitioning your baby into care for the first time can be very hard but we hope that you have found the support you need in the room educators as well as the staff at Little Ducks.

All of the new babies have started now and are settling in really well. Over the last two months we ensured that all of the children were developing a sense of belonging in their new learning environment as well as ensuring that they felt safe and secure. We did this by planning activities and experiences based around the children's interests, likes and strengths. Some of the children have worked towards achieving their next milestones over the past two months and we have seen some great development in all of the children.





Gabrielle, John and Hawaiki are all sitting up unassisted now. Lucas, Henry, Posie, Jack, Freya, Spencer, Theo and Camilla are all confident crawlers and are starting to show interest in being on their feet and developing confidence in their balance and co-ordination. It won't be long before the children are starting to take their first steps at home. Buckley loves walking around the room and displays a great sense of belonging when doing so.

During the last two months at Little Ducks we have explored out senses as well as discovered creatures that live under the sea. We were lucky enough to have the Ocean Life Educational experience show come to the centre. Unfortunately, we weren't able to take any of the children to the pre-school room to have a look due to routines so we thought we would bring the ocean life to the children. We bought in our large ocean animals and used the creative arts to make our own jelly fish and rainbow fish.

Coming up over the next few months we will continue to ensure that the children are being supported when reaching their next milestones. We also have some exciting centre events and cultural celebration days coming up which we will be taken part in. With Easter just around the corner the children will be using recycled materials to create their first Easter bonnet at Little Ducks. We also have Harmony Day, St Patricks Day, World Health Day, the Henny Penny Hatching Program and ANZAC Day. If you have any ideas or anything to contribute to the program, please feel free to speak with one of the Nursery Educators. One last thing, we would like to create a family wall in the room! If you have a family photo to bring in, or email through, that would be greatly appreciated! Thanks for taking the time to read our newsletter! If you have anything you would like to chat about, please feel free to speak with Kerri-Anne or myself!



Until next time,

Kristin and Kerri-Anne :)

Toddler Tales!



Hello and welcome to the next edition of the Toddler tales!

Firstly, I would like to introduce Miss Jasmine to all of our readers. Miss Jasmine has joined our team and we are very lucky to have her as our third educator in the room along with Miss Nabia and myself. We hope you have had a great February and are as excited as we are to find out what March and April will bring! We ca already progress that your children have been making with settling into their new room and developing many new skills. It is always very rewarding for our team to contribute to your child's learning journey and watch them enjoy the many experiences we offer.

Let's move onto the interesting stuff… In the beginning of the month, we developed our knowledge and understanding of colours, naming and recognition of the different colours. We explored this through the use of paint, crayons, coloured paper and coloured rice. The children have picked this up quite quickly and most of them can now recognise or mimic the names of a couple of colours.

This month, we also celebrated a few cultural days within our room. In the lead up to Waitangi Day, we created different colour props with the Maori language on them to help educate the children of another culture and their language. On Brazil's Carnival Day the children created fancy headwear and wore these throughout the day to celebrate and dance along to music with. In the lead up to Lunar New Year, we introduced the Chinese Flag to the children and they then had the opportunity to recreate it using paint and collage stars. We also introduced the monkey from the Chinese zodiac and the children then had the opportunity use their creative skills to craft their own monkey. From these experiences the children also built confidence in their own language and communication skills.

Our big interest this month was our Ocean Life, where the children have created their own little learning environment where we have added their artwork to the environment. The children used various art and craft mediums to recreate sea stars, turtles, crabs and rainbow fish to add to the environment. We learned about the different animals that live in the ocean and surrounds. We used pictures and stories to show the children what lives in the Ocean. Our favourite story is one about an amazing aquarium which displays different animals and explains what they look like, what they eat and where they live, from this, we decided to create our own aquarium where the children added seaweed and various rainbow fish.

Toddler Tales!



We were also lucky to have this coincide with The Ocean Life Show which the children loved exploring, touching different sea stars, sea urchins, having a look at a baby shark and lastly being able to touch a real life turtle. Don't forget to check out our awesome 'Ocean life' display wall that we have created in our room!

Over the coming month, we are again planning to continue to develop the children's language and communication skills. We are developing an interest in texture and the sense of touch, so we will explore where this takes us. We will explore activities such as goop and finger painting, create a sensory wall with items that are not usually within our reach. We endeavor to encourage families to provide an example of our favourite touch or taste experience and expand this across the group. We will try to expand this across all our senses as we have noticed the children like to explore touch with their feet so we will explore activities using our feet.



Another area of interest to the children, that we have noticed is our home corner and caring for babies. We will develop this further by adding blankets and clothes for the children to learn to dress and care for the babies. We will add baby baths and soap for the children to transfer knowledge of bath time to the babies here. We will add baby bottles, baby food packets, bowls, spoons and high chairs so the children can explore feeding the babies in home corner. Then lastly to extend on this we will endeavor to explore our own identity by looking at photos of ourselves as babies and identifying body parts and what we were like as babies.

Thanks, Miss Savannah, Miss Nabia and Miss Jasmine.

Junior Kindy Jumble!

Wow this year is already going so fast; we can't believe it is March already. We have some exciting things planned for the coming months, but first the Junior Kindy would like to say a big welcome to Maisie, Lucia and Maggie who have recently joined our room!

We have spent the last 2 months concentrating on building relationships with you and your families and are so proud to see the children slowly settling into the room and routines...we still have our 'off' days but we will get there! We are seeing the children's self-help skills coming along amazingly, the children have taken an interest in helping to set up their own beds which has shows us that they are developing an understanding of how to care for themselves and their belongings! We will continue to build on these skills by focussing on dressing and putting our shoes on. Extending the children's self-help and life skills will promote the children's confidence and help them to make informed choices about themselves.



During the beginning of the year we had focussed on our room cultures which was reflected through our wall displays. When the children explored the cultures and backgrounds of each other they were exposed to diversity and were given the opportunities to develop their own understanding that everyone is different and learn how to embrace it through singing and games. This is an ongoing focus for us and welcome any input about your family's cultural heritage!

At the end of February we were lucky to see an amazing Ocean Life show! From there we explored the ocean life and created our very own ocean life wall! We learnt about fish and jellyfish swimming which was reflect through our beautiful ocean background in our room. The children loved learning about all the different sea creatures from our Ocean Life visit. The children were able to use their senses to discover the different textures of the sea creatures using their gentle hands as not to hurt the animals. As the children created their own ocean world within the room they involved themselves in learning about other sea creatures and their environment with creativity and enthusiasm displaying confident and involved learning.



Junior Kindy Jumble!



As we move further down the room you come to our office, the children's dramatic play blooms in this area, with phone calls, email writing and calculator operating. Archie had been displaying interest in the keyboards, to explore this further we created the office space. All the children have displayed great interest in the area. We have used this environment to help the children transition smoothly into the room on drop offs and have watched in wonder as the children have expressed humour with each other, worked alongside their friends and explored their imagination.

Talking about environments, recently we have made many changes to our environment which now reflect the current interests of our children! We have created many new exciting areas such as art gallery and transportation area which has been such a great change for our Junior Kindy family...thank you for the lovely feedback that has been given about our changes.

As the season changes and we come into Autumn, we will be furthering our knowledge on the environment. By exploring the growth of beans from seeds into plants on our window and then transferring them into our vegetable patch to finally having a taste of our home-grown beans. As we explore growing our own food we will also be learning how to dispose of it as well, adding a food scrap bin to the self-help area and at the end of everyday the children can take it out to the worm farm. This will help the children learn how the worms digest our food as well as exploring the other interesting bugs in our environment. Building respectful, responsive relationships gives children the opportunity to be confident in their environment; helping them recognise they are active contributors to their world.

We are excited for all the further learning opportunities to be discovered throughout the rest of the year and can't wait to show you the voyage we take on our learning.

Teagan & Mandy

Under 3's Cool Kindy Catch Up



What a busy month it has been not only in our room but across the whole centre. Where to begin? This month we have celebrated Waitangi day which is New Zealand's national day—we are quite lucky to have a few 'Kiwi' educators in our centre! We celebrated the Maori culture throughout the week through Maori music, making Poi's, explored a 3D map of New Zealand and created a variety of Maori art as well as making Maori headdresses. We also celebrated Chinese New year, we did this by making Chinese clay monkeys as it is the year of the monkey! It has been a very busy cultural month as we also celebrated Brazil's Carnival day where the children were offered the opportunity to create their own brightly coloured head pieces and join in the Pre schoolers parade!

Another main event for our Kindy room was the Ocean life show! The children were very excited as they got to explore some ocean creatures including a baby bamboo shark, sea cucumber, sea star, sea urchins and even a baby turtle. Jason from the show explained to the children how everyone needs to clean up their rubbish as if it doesn't go into a bin and it ends up in the ocean it makes our ocean animals very sick. It was such a fantastic experience for the children and educators!



From there the children showed a strong interest in exploring gross motor skills! This made us turn our group times into active play sessions! We set up mini balancing obstacles for the children and extended on this by turning the middle of our class room into a large obstacle course, which proved to be a favourite with many of the children. The children proved how much their gross motor skills and their confidence had developed over this time as they were conquering the obstacle courses that were being set up with ease!

Cool Kindy Catch Up!



Hello to all our lovely families in the Kindy room, Boy has been a gigantic month here in the Kindy room for the over 3's. Due to the amount of specialty days on the calendar this month we have learnt so much about the world, All the different countries and the different animals they hold. Our first country was Africa were the children learnt all they could about Lions, Zebra's, Giraffes and of course Elephants. The animals were especially fun to learn about in this country with all the children getting involved with painting things like our handprint elephants, finger print monkeys and our 3D monkeys. Then we travelled to Australia for Australia day were the children learnt about Emu's, Koala's, Dingo's and of cause the Kangaroo's, this is where our friend Jack the emus was made. We also learnt about the Sydney Harbor Bridge and the Opera House.

Then we took our adventure to New Zealand for Waitangi day —we are quite lucky to have a few 'Kiwi' educators in our centre! We celebrated the Maori culture throughout the week through Maori music, making Poi's, explored a 3D map of New Zealand and created a variety of Maori art as well as making Maori headdresses and after New Zealand it was on to China! With the children learning about the Great Wall of China, Panda Bears and we celebrated Chinese New Year. We had fun making our Chinese dragon and being able to use all things that were colourful and shiny, while making the dragon we found out that in China the colour red is seen as good luck which is why on Chinese New Year they give out red envelopes which usually contain money to bring good luck to the family who receives it. Since travelling to China we have since changed our topic due to incredible interest from the children on transport...

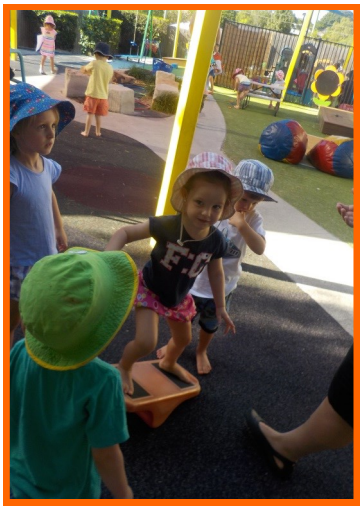


Cool Kindy Catch Up!



Transport has made a big appearance in the last couple of weeks with the children wanting to learn how a plane can fly, why a truck makes noises and why does a train have to travel on tracks? So over the next couple of weeks you will be seeing a lot more art work and information that the children have learnt about the different forms of transport.

You may have also noticed a big change in the layout of the room itself with the lockers in the classroom being moved and little areas called learning pods being created. The learning pods have been created to benefit the children during the morning session and throughout the day too. The book corner has become a lot smaller allowing the amount of children in there at one time to be smaller in numbers, we have also made the art area smaller for this reason as well. The back areas transformed from home corner to our interactive learning area were we currently set up a specific topic in the area and allow the children to explore the area fully, such as Animals/bugs and now transport.



So what can you expect these next two months from the Kindy room? Where do we start… we will be continuing our work with number recognition to help the children become more familiar with numbers while also adding in letters as well. We will also be continuing the road into transport as long as the children show an interest in the subject at hand.
I know we say this every newsletter but just a few friendly reminders…

- Please ensure you are packing enough nappies/ undies and pants to cater for any accidents your child may have over the course of the day.

- All sheet bags need to be taken home on the last day of your child's week with us to be cleaned.- As it is starting to get into the cooler months please bring along a sheet or a small blanket for your child at rest time.

If you ever have any questions, ideas, or just want to chat about the Kindy room or your child please feel free to come in and have a chat to us. Until the next newsletter we hope that you enjoy watching the classroom change as the children learn and create more during their time in the Kindy room… **Desirae, Emma and Sawsan**

Preschool Pride!

Since our last newsletter we have been super busy in the preschool room! We have seen so much confidence and independence develop already with the children beginning to take more responsibility for their belongings and doing things for themselves. Applying sunscreen, putting on their own shoes, looking after their lunch boxes and making healthy food choices at meal times have all been part of this confidence and independence building. We will continue to encourage the children to organise themselves, with the most important part of this, a willingness to keep trying!



In January the children began to show an interest in snakes which led us onto learning about Australian animals. When we first began to discuss Australian animals, the pre-schoolers didn't know which animals were special to Australia. After lots of discussions and fun activities, the children now know all about koalas, kangaroos, snakes, echidnas, crocodiles, kookaburras and many other Australian animals. What a great way to investigate and explore the world around us, especially our very own country!



With some wonderful family input of photos and discussions of family experiences with sea animals and creatures, the pre-schoolers were all excited and ready to learn when the Ocean Life Discovery Show came to visit. How exciting to have a hands on experience of seeing some of the amazing creatures close up and even getting to touch them! This sparked a big interest in all sea animals and we began learning about many different animals and what makes them special. We have also used this opportunity to discuss how we can look after to ocean and our sea animals, as we all play a part in caring for and showing respect for the environment, especially the amazing ocean.



Preschool Pride!



The pre-schoolers welcomed three very special new additions to the room in February… Hermit Crabs! Quickly realising that our adventurous crabs needed a bit more space than their little tank, we designed a special adventure park for them. The children can often be seen sitting around the enclosure observing these interesting creatures as they crawl, climb, swim and dig into the sand. We have also been teaching the children about caring for others, as they learn to ensure the crabs have enough water and food, as well as respecting them by being gentle and careful around the crabs.

There have been some celebrations that we have shared with different countries from around the world so far this year; Australia Day, Chinese New Year, Brazil's Carnival, New Zealand's Waitangi Day and there are still many more to come! We feel that it is important for the children to learn about and explore their own and others cultures.
Throughout the year we would like to be able to include family cultures in our environment and program. If you have words you speak in another language or cultural celebrations that we can share with your family, we would love to share these special things with your families.

Housekeeping…
Parent pockets are now up in the room. Any parent information, book clubs, notes etc. will be put in these. Please check them daily for new information.

Communication book. On top of the lockers there is a parent communication book if you don't have a chance to chat to Vicki or Mel in the mornings. Also, on top of the lockers are weekend information sheets and feedback sheets if you would like to have your say about the room or program, please feel free to leave a note.

Portfolios are on top of the children's lockers. Each child has their own portfolio of learning, please feel free to look through these with your child. Throughout the year we will be adding to these each month with new learning or experiences. There are also parent feedback forms that you can fill in. Please take the time to comment on your child's experiences in the room. This will be an amazing keepsake to look back on at the end of the year and in the future.

Vicki & Mel

Brazil's Carnival Day!
Preschool parade with Miss Regina!







We had so much fun celebrating Brazils Carnival Day with Miss Regina! The Preschool room danced around the whole centre with Miss Regina, Miss Vicki and Miss Mel...Miss Regina even showed us some of her awesome Brazilian dance moves!



