Little Ducks Childcare Wilston

May/June 2016

A note from your Centre Manager



Welcome to our May/June Newsletter!
Wow this year is definitely flying by quickly, before you know it we will be half way through 2016! Thank you for the great feedback about our Wilston news emails that are sent out every Friday, its great to hear that our families enjoy reading our 'summary' of the week!
I have shared a photo of our cool new Little Ducks shirts for the children! I have even had staff ask whether there are adult sizes...if you would like to purchase one or more please see me.
Thank you to all the parents who came to our annual Easter parade! The children did an amazing job at creating such unique Easter bonnets this year and it was great to see our younger age groups join us in the parade too...keeping their bonnets on! We had Henny Penny visit us after Easter which was exciting for us all—it was great to see parents get excited about visiting our chicks too!
We are also very grateful for one of our Toddler dads, Major Matt who made the time to stop by and read us an ANZAC story and let our younger children explore his awesome Army uniform! Check out our Anzac photos on the back page. We look forward to holding our Mothers day afternoon tea on Friday the 6th of May at 3.30pm - please let your room educator know if you are able to attend to ensure we have enough yummy treats. Don't forget to read the next page to find out what events we will be celebrating in the months of May and June!



Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter.
Ciao for now!
Ata

Exceeding
National Quality Standard

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Upcoming Events!

...May...



Monday 2nd May – **Labour Day**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Friday 6th – **Mother's Day Afternoon Tea**
We will be celebrating our special mums with an afternoon tea starting 3:30pm.

Sunday 8th – **Mother's Day**

Sunday 15th – **International Day of Families**
Leading up to this day we will be talking about what makes our families special.

Thursday 26th – **National Sorry Day**
We will remember and commemorate the mistreatment of the country's indigenous population.

Thursday 26th - **Red Nose Day Disco**
Let's raise money by bringing along a gold coin for SIDS awareness and have some fun dancing the day away.

...June....

Friday 3rd - **Mabo Day**
Commemorates Torres Strait Islander and Indigenous land rights.

Sunday 5th - **World Environment Day**
On the lead up to this day we will learn about why it is so important to be inspired to care for and nurture our environment. We will be having a special visitor come to Little Ducks and help us get closer to nature.



Monday 6th - **Matariki**
Celebrate the Maori New Year, Happy new year!

Monday 6th – **Ramadan begins**
This is a period of prayer, fasting, charity-giving and self-accountability for Muslims in Australia.

Wednesday 8th – **Drum Beats Australia**
Join us in learning how to tap into rich universal traditions of using music and rhythm as a tool of communication and develop the ability to express ourselves rhythmically in a positive way!

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.
- **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.
- **Child Portfolios**—We will be sending all learning portfolios home at the end of June. You will receive the another portfolio at the end of the year. Your child's learning stories are kept in a folder in the parent area in each room. Please feel free to look through these at any time. These contain learning stories and teacher observations on your child and will be added to throughout the year. There are also parent comment sheets that you can fill in and add to the portfolios if you wish to add to these.

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 May/June are:

- Access, equity and enrolment policy
- Accident/Incident policy—Severe
- Duty of care
- Handwashing policy
- Infection control
- Infectious illness procedure
- Infectious illness policy
- SIDS policy and guidelines for safe sleeping
- Orientation policy—Families
- Orientation policy—Educators and families
- Annual leave policy—Staff
- Fee Policy
- Students, volunteers and visitors policy
- First aid action plan on dangerous products
- Holiday discount policy
- Environmental and sustainability strategy.

Centre Birthdays!



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- *Lucas*
- *John*
- *Billy*
- *Amy*
- *Stephanie*
- *Alex*
- *Maisie*
- *Alfie*
- *Amber*
- *Charlotte.D*
- *Emily. F*
- *Imogen*
- *Lucinda*
- *Rhys*

Sweet Potato Fries

Get some extra veggies into your children without even trying!

Ingredients:

- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Herbs / spices to taste

Try these delicious flavours…

rosemary, paprika, mixed herbs, salt/pepper



Method:

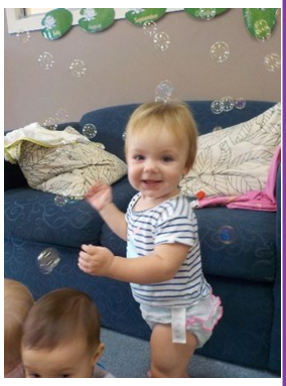
1. Heat oven to 180 degrees.
2. Cut the potatoes into 1/4" thin strips, or to your desired thickness and length. Mix all other ingredients together in a large bowl and toss with the potatoes until they are evenly coated.
3. Transfer the potatoes to a large oven tray. Spread the potatoes in a single layer. Try not to overcrowd or have multiple layers of fries — you want them to be roasted, not steamed. (use baking paper to make cleaning up a breeze!
4. Place in the oven and cook for 30-340 minutes, turning the fries once or twice during that time to cook evenly. May take more or less time, depending on the size and thickness you cut the fries.
5. Remove once the edges slightly begin to brown and fries begin to crisp. Sprinkle a small amount of course salt or more herbs on top when they are hot out of the oven.

Nursery Natter!

Hallo (Hello in German) and welcome to our third Nursery Newsletter for the year! Can you believe that we are fast approaching the middle of the year already? The children have really settled well over the past two months and we can feel the strong bonds that we are building with them is helping the children feel safe and secure each day when they come to Little Ducks. We welcomed our new educator Natalie to the room last month! I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the families for your patience during this time and helping make Natalie feel welcome in our centre.



Every day we continue to engage with the children and focus on working towards milestones as well as learning through play and participating in experiences that are based on the children's interests. James. D is now sitting up on his own unassisted and displays great balance. He also loves lay on the ground rolling around and playing with the musical instruments. Recently, we have seen Gabrielle and Hawaiki starting to crawl which is allowing them to move around the room ore freely and begin to initiate their own learning. Henry, Lucas, Camilla, Freya, Spencer and Theo are all very confident on their feet and are now using items such as walkers and furniture to stand and walk around the room. Jack and Posie are both walking all on their own now and have really enjoyed exploring the room at their own pace and level which allows them to challenge their own learning.





One of our other focuses over the last couple of months has been using words. James. C, Jack and Henry have all used certain words to show that they are able to communicate effectively. We have been reading lots of books and using flash cards to encourage as many words as possible.

We had a wonderful time with the Henny Penny Chicken hatching program that we had a Little Ducks! We were able to bring a couple of chickens down to the room for the children to explore and learn about being gentle. Most of the children were very open to patting the chickens of having them sit on their laps. Some children were more than happy to just watch, and that is ok! From this we began to learn about different farm animals and the sounds that they make. We introduced some farm animal puzzles and books to our environment to promote this new learning.



Over the next couple of months, we have some really exciting centre events happening. This includes our Annual Mother's Day afternoon tea, National Sorry Day, Matariki and Drum Beats Australia.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter and contributing to our room. If there is anything you would like to contribute to the room or to our program as always, please feel free to come and chat to Natalie or myself.

Thanks! Kristin and Nat

Toddler Tales!



Hello and welcome to the next edition of the Toddler tales.
Firstly, I would like to thank you all for making Miss Jasmine feel welcome and she has loved getting to know all of the children and their families. We hope you have had a great April and are excited to see what the rest of the term brings us. Again, it has been great to see the progress of the children in the room, learning and developing self-help skills such as hand washing, packing away after ourselves and learning our manners. We hope you can see the progress that your children have been making as well.
Let's move onto the interesting stuff… Throughout the past months we have been exploring colours and have started investigating numbers. We have used everyday activities such as texta drawing, (which the children love) to continue learning knowledge and recognition of colours. We have also started with numbers, learning to count to ten using books, flash cards and just our voices. A few of the children are really developing an understanding of this and it is great to see. We will continue to develop this concept with our current interest of transport.
Since the last tales, we have celebrated a few cultural days within our room. In the lead up to St Patrick's Day, we explored the colours of the Irish Flag and made little collages of these. We also learned about the Shamrock and used our handprints to make some. We celebrated Easter, using many different art and craft experiences, one being a collage of an Easter egg to coincide with the Pagan beliefs and we also made an Easter tree. The children all made Easter Bonnets as well and wore them beautifully at our parade. In the lead up to ANZAC Day, the children had a visit from Major Matt – one of our dads who came in with his uniform on to help teach the children about the Australian Army uniform. From these experiences the children also built confidence in their own language and communication skills as well as exploring their relationship with the world around them.

Our big interest this month has been our Life Cycle of a Chicken. The children have created their own little learning environment where we have added their artwork and learning to the environment. The children used various art and craft mediums to demonstrate developing knowledge of the life cycle of a chicken. The children learned about each section of the cycle from being an egg in the nest, hatching and becoming a chick. Then as the mother hen, they lay another egg. Some of the children were even curious about the daddy chickens so we explored the rooster and its crowing. This experience was developed from the introduction of the Henny Penny Hatching Program that the children were able to experience when the baby chicks came to visit our centre...



Toddler Tales!



The children visited the chicks in small groups, they were able to explore what the chick sounded like, the colours of the chicks and were very gentle when touching the chicks. We also had the chicks visit the toddler room, which was very exciting.

As I said earlier, our current interest is transport and we are also wanting to begin exploring healthy food options. So over the coming months, we are planning to explore our interest in these and see what comes from it. We will learn about the different types of vehicles and what they are used for. We are already looking at tow trucks, cars and trains but will explore some more unusual ones. With this interest, we will endeavour to develop social skills to encourage the children to share and play together. We will also try to incorporate numbers and colours into this interest and further develop the children's knowledge and understanding of these. With our healthy food, we will explore what our favourite foods are and how much of them we should be eating, looking at always and sometimes foods. We are wanting to have a couple of picnics and sharing of our fruits to encourage children to try new and different foods. And we will also set up some food activities in home corner for the children to explore and cook with. We might even try to do some cooking activities with the children.

Another area of interest to the children seems to be drawing, we will endevour to expand this interest further again by introducing different mediums for the children to draw with. Oil pastels, textas, wax drawings and we will expand this interest into the outdoor environment so that the children have some inspirations to draw from.

We hope you have enjoyed reading what we have been up to and are looking forward on what's to come. Just a reminder that now it is getting cooler in the early mornings and afternoons that a jumper or long sleeve t-shirt is packed in the bag just in case.

Thanks, Miss Savannah, Miss Nabia and Miss Jasmine.



Junior Kindy Jumble!



May is upon us already, and wow this year is going past fast. We would like to begin by saying a big welcome to Colton, Harrison, Fletcher and Felix to the Junior Kindy room. We have been busy in the last two months exploring lots of different things to do with space, gardening, Anzac's, baking, and gross motor skills.

In March we were very busy learning about Space! From Archie's interest in space and rockets we created our own Space Theme! There has been lots of counting down from 10 to 0 and blasting off into space and imaginative role play which incorporated early maths skill, helping the children to become familiar with numeracy! The children developed knowledge about rocket ships as they used the space console in order to control the rockets movement which was such a great learning journey for the where they able to share their imaginations with one another, role playing and developing the skill of turn taking. This was extended onto learning about the planets, sun and moon are all round and come in all different sizes! Once again, this lead us to discuss sizes and shapes which extended on early maths/science introduction. Through intentional teaching and the dramatic play in the space area, the children connect with the world around them, broadening their understanding of space. To continue on from our space exploration, this month we are starting to look a little closer to home, beginning in Australia and where it belongs in the world around us. We have begun this by creating a map of Australia to look at where we live, and at some of the natural wonders in our country.

With a donation from the Council of some native plants to plant in the big yard, which the Junior Kindy children took part in, the children showed an interest in seeds and planting. This was a great opportunity to plant snow peas. You may have noticed our snow peas have been growing fast, so fast we have had to take them out of the bags and transfer them into plastic pots that are located around the side of the kindy room. The children enjoy going out to look at them each day and watering them. In the upcoming weeks of May we will hopefully see some yummy snow peas and to be able to taste. As the children learnt to care for their snow peas they gain a better understanding of their social responsibility and how to show respect for their environment. The children enjoyed exploring their relationships with other living and non-living things. Observe, notice and respond to change, develop an awareness of the impact of human activity on environments and the interdependence of living things. We also plan to continue our environmental experiences throughout the year by allowing the children to grow their choice of plants in the gardens, as well as having an understanding of where our food comes from.



Junior Kindy Jumble!



Throughout these final weeks of April we have been very busy learning about The ANZACs. The children thoroughly enjoyed listening to the story 'Anzac Ted', written by 'Belinda Landsberry'. This story was great because it taught us about the Anzac Spirit and how, through courage, loyalty and love, a child's teddy bear helped to bring our soldiers home. Building up to Anzac Day we have shown many condolences and respect as we made Anzac biscuits and poppies. We were al so very lucky to have the opportunity to meet Major Matt who came in for a visit to read stories. The children were very interested in his uniform commenting on the colours and the Velcro patches worn on his shoulder.

As we explore our home corner the children have shown great interest in two areas of play, making food and helping Miss Mandy and I clean the room using their broom and mop. One way we have explored making food is by making our own Anzac Biscuits. The children loved tasting their finished products and we will continue to explore cooking through preparing different foods using plastic knives and making afternoon teas together. This will allow the children to develop on their table self-help skills as they become more aware of using utensils, and what hand they most feel comfortable in using. We will extend on the children's interest in cleaning the room, by encouraging them to assist in the cleaning, wiping the tables, putting away toys, looking after their own belongings etc.

Most recently we have noticed that the children are becoming eager to climb upon the monkey bars using their smaller and larger muscle movements, and explore the obstacle course! To encourage the children's understanding of movement we will be bringing the obstacles course inside, spending more time outside with just our class to develop our fine and gross motor skills. Playing games such as Roll & Play, action songs, and hide and seek to develop good control over their bodies and coordination. These encourage the children's colours, numbers and language skills, creativity, active play and gross motor skills.



Before we say goodbye we just wanted to share something that we are really proud of! Through a lot of planned group times and learning experiences where the children have been encouraged to greet each other as they arrive in the morning, working alongside as they play and helping each other with task, we are so proud to see each of your children demonstrating such strong bonds and positive relationships with one another! We can't wait to see what new and exciting things they will teach us in the coming months!

Miss Teagan and Miss Mandy

Kindy Catch Up



Hello to all of our Kindy families, what an incredibly busy month April has been for us in the Kindy room!

Our had a huge focus this month on everything to do with the ocean, which started from 'The little mermaid' story that Willow had brought in to share with her friends. This started conversations during our group time about all of the different animals that live in the ocean and Miss Emma got out a speaker and the children were fascinated as they listened to the different sounds that whales make.

To begin us on our Ocean Discovery, Miss Emma found all of the ocean animals in the centre and made an ocean discovery table that had different sea creatures, coral and shells. The children investigated all of the objects on the table, their favourite mainly being the sea shells which the children held the shells up to their ears and listened carefully as they heard sounds echoing in the shell. Through these We extended with an environmental oil spill activity where Miss Emma had filled up a water trough with water and placed the sea animals into the water. After a while of the children playing with the sea creatures in the water, Emma filled the trough with baby oil. As the children were putting their hands into the water they were quickly pulling them back out and rubbing their hands together as they said "Ew." The children leant that the oil is very hard to get off of the sea creatures which led us to talk about how oil and other chemicals can harm our ocean life, and how careful we need to be to look after the environment!



Another big focus in our Kindy room was Anzac Day! In the lead up to Anzac Day we planned a variety of learning experiences to teach the children about the importance of celebrating Anzac Day. Through many group times we shared photos and facts with the children about what ANZAC stood for which lead to the children learning about Australia and New Zealand and where they both are on our world map! Another great fact that the children discovered was the reason behind the kaki colour of the uniform, we found out that it is to help the soldiers to camouflage better in the bush! This led us to fun game of hide and seek which helped the children understand that bright colours are easily seen when hiding. After spending a few days researching camouflage we decided as a group to create our own soldier for our room, this got the children asking more questions and wanting more answers about soldiers and why we call our serving and fallen soldiers Australian Diggers/ Anzacs. While we constructed our Digger, we dug into the reason we remember the Anzacs and what the special song is that is played on Anzac day while we stand for 1 minutes silence.



Most recently we have added our 'home corner' back into the room which is being used by all of our Kindy children everyday! They love it! We have added different types of food in our 'kitchen area' which prompted the children to point out 'good food' and 'bad foods'. Moving forward in the month of May we have decided to focus on 'food choices' with the children through our newly added family corner, through a variety of learning experiences such as dramatic play, table activities, cooking/baking and so much more to help the children develop a better understanding about 'healthy and unhealthy options'.

You will have to keep up to date by reading our room learning journal to see where our 'food journey' takes us! Before we say goodbye, we just wanted to go over a few reminders:

As it is getting colder, please remember to pack a light blanket for rest time if you don't already, closed in shoes for outside play and a jacket to help keep warm.

Every child must have sunscreen applied as they arrive each morning. Each room has a bottle of sunscreen and there is a bottle also kept outside. Even though the weather is cooling down, it is still important to use our sun safety!

Thank you reading our Kindy catch up! Desirae, Emma and Sawsan

Preschool Pride!



Wow, how quickly this year is flying by; May already!

We left our last newsletter with talk about our Under The Sea topic. The children loved learning all about the different creatures that live in the sea, and how we can help to take care of the precious sea environment.

We have some pre-schoolers who, from the start of the year, have shown an interest in Dinosaurs! We decided to tap into this interest and so our investigation on dinosaurs began. It is truly amazing at just how much some of the children knew about dinosaurs! We encourage the children to share their knowledge, teaching their peers and educators some facts. Some dinosaurs have hugely complex names, but this doesn't faze our amazing pre-schoolers… rattling off the names of all the different type of dinosaurs! We read interesting dinosaur facts, learnt about when dinosaurs lived, made our own craft dinosaurs, dug for dinosaurs in the sandpit, made our own dinosaur fossil footprints and talked about the work that palaeontologists do. With the dinosaur interest table set up throughout our topic, there wasn't a moment of the day without a group of children playing and learning around it!

With constant discussions round the meal tables during morning and afternoon teas, there is always lots of talk about what foods the children are eating. One particularly interesting conversation at one table was centred around where the children's fruit and food came from. This was a perfect opportunity to extend the children's knowledge on fruits and veggies and how they grow. We surrounded the children with photos and pictures of various fruits and vegetables and different ways that they grow. There was amazement from the children as they learnt about foods that grow below the ground, on top of the ground, on vines and on trees. There was also amazement from the educators that some children were unable to identify foods such as onions, beetroot and potatoes. With Tilly bringing in a home grown pumpkin, the children all took part in watching a vegetable get prepared for cooking, roasted and then a taste test. We also had a very interesting blind taste test where the children had the opportunity to try grapes, banana, watermelon and apple. There were amazing expressions on the children's faces and it was interesting to see how some children were keen to try all the fruit, while others chose not to. To bring this new knowledge into a more personal and meaningful situation, we have planted our very own veggie garden, with snap peas, corn, carrots and cauliflower in the veggie patch behind the preschool room. We look forward to learning more as we watch the plants grow and care for them. Hopefully in the not too distant future we will have some of our very own delicious veggies to pick and eat!





Preschool Pride!



The pre-schoolers had an amazing two week experience when the Henny Penny Chicken Hatching Program came into our classroom! There is no better way to learn about our world and the life cycle of a chicken then being able to witness first hand eggs hatching, baby chicks drying in the warmth, growing, eating and sleeping. Miss Mel took home six of the chicks, so we look forward to updates throughout the year on how they are progressing.

With the children's rising confidence in drawing and creating, we have been working on encouraging the children to get creative. It is so important for each child to express themselves individually, and we have been giving them lots of opportunities to get creative. With many painting opportunities, painting onto paper, canvas and wood, the pre-schoolers have experimented with brushes, sticks, cotton wool buds, feathers and fingers just to name a few; to help us explore textures, techniques and our inner artists. Continuing on from this, we will focus on other ways to get creative, including clay, art, singing, music and dance. Each child has a different preference of self expression and we look forward to helping the children discover theirs.



With ANZAC day on April 25, we took this opportunity to learn about the significance of this special day and educate the children on ways to show respect for our soldiers. Our pre-schoolers learnt about the significance of poppies, medals, the Last Post and commemorating our soldiers. We showed our respects on Friday 22nd with a minute silence.

We have been continuing with our fine motor skills and gaining strength in those little fingers. We have been doing a huge range of fun activities including a button tree, threading beads, cutting, drawing, painting, digging with our fingers in the sand, and many more activities based around gaining finger strength. When the children have finger strength they find many pencil and scissor based activities a lot easier, which leads on to more success when they are learning to write, draw and cut. These initial skills are important for the children to master so they can experience success with more complex tasks as they are ready to move on to writing their name etc. It is great to hear how some of the children are choosing to cut and draw independently at home too! We will continue to work on these skills throughout the year.

<u>Housekeeping…</u>

Weekend / family feedback sheets—Thank you to the families that has been filling these in for us recently. It is great to get a little more insight into the children's interests and what your families get up to in the weekends. It is a perfect way for us to be able to include the children's current interests and experiences into our program. Please feel free to fill in one of these at any time and either hand into Viki or Mel or leave on our desk. Blank forms are on top of the lockers.

Portfolios—Your child's learning stories are kept in a folder on top of the lockers. Please feel free to look through these at any time. These contain learning stories and teacher observations on your child and will be added to throughout the year. There are also parent comment sheets that you can fill in and add to the portfolios if you wish to add to these. Please note that children's art samples, activity sheets etc. are kept in another folder which we add to throughout the year.

Vicki & Mel

Remembering our Diggers…
Anzac Day @ Little Ducks

Leading up to this day, our educators in Little Ducks Wilston taught the children the importance of Anzac Day and it's traditions through a variety of learning experiences! We also carried out a minute of silence and were very lucky to have Major Matt visit us!

lest we forget







