Little Ducks Childcare Annerley

November/ December

A note from your Centre Manager

Welcome to the last newsletter for 2016!
Wow what a year we have had, I actually can't believe that I have been here nearly a year already, that just goes to show how much fun we are having!
Over the last few months the Educators have been actively engaging in professional training both in-house and externally to ensure they are continually building on their professional knowledge in different areas. This has been very beneficial for everyone. The Educators have learnt a great deal from these sessions which they then implement and share with the team.
Our main focus over the last two month has been based around responsiveness to children and ongoing learning and reflective practice, which are areas that the Educators draw upon on a daily basis. Responsive learning relationships are strengthened as Educators and children learn together and share decisions, respect and trust which in turn enriches relationships and a sense of belonging for all involved and in the long run that's what's most important. This year has been all about growth for both the children and the Educators and allowing time to explore, make connections between prior experiences and new learning, assist children to develop relationships and concepts and stimulate a sense of wellbeing and independence.
2017 is shaping up to be a busy one with lots of rooms filling up fast. I have now entered in all existing children into the new rooms and now just working through the wait list to fill any empty places. Once I have completed this process I will place the room lists up on the wall outside the reception area for you. I will have these sorted by no later than Friday 11th November at the very latest. If you have any questions at all regarding this process please let me know. Room changes will occur in the first week on January, but prior to that we will use December to start to transition children to allow them time to get to know their new rooms. The Educators will also be notified in the next few weeks as to which room they will be working in next year.



Don't forget the family picnic afternoon which is on Saturday 12th November from 2pm at the Ken Fletcher park in Tennyson, cant wait to see you all there!

I would like to thank you all for your support and kind words throughout the year. I look forward to 2017!

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Kindergarten Approved Program — Queensland Government

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Upcoming Events!

November Events

Tuesday 1st - **Melbourne Cup Day** The day that stops the Nation!

7th -13th – **National Recycling Week**
We will focus on the environmental benefits of recycling.

Friday 11th - **Remembrance Day**
We will be making poppies in remembrance of the diggers that gave their lives for our country and paying our respects on this day.



Wednesday 16th – **Teddy Bears Picnic**
Let's all bring along our favourite teddy and have a Teddy Bears Picnic.

Tuesday 15th – **Dr. Joe Science Show**
Science show starts at 10.30am - the theme this year is SUPER SPACE! Explore with universe! Learn what you need to live in outer space, dress up like an astronaut, discover the history of the solar system, and explore the night sky in the starhouse!



Thursday 24th – **Preschool Graduation**
Celebrating our children that are transitioning to school next year.



Upcoming Events!

December Events!

Saturday 3rd – **International Day of People with Disabilities**
We will be promoting an understanding of people with disability and encourage support for their dignity, rights and well-being.

Friday 2nd – **Children's Christmas Party**
Come along for some Christmas fun from 4pm onwards



Sunday 25th - **Christmas Day**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Monday 26th - **Boxing Day**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Monday 26th—Friday 30th—**Centre is closed**

Reminders

General reminders

- Please ensure that the children have a couple of sets of spare clothes in their bags especially over the warmer months as they will be getting wet and dirty!
- It is extremely important that you sign all missing signature in a timely manner as without those signature we have to charge full fees, so please make it a priority if you do get a slip to see one of the staff to get them signed.
- Don't forget we have the parent & children's library which you can borrow from at anytime, just remember to sign them out and back in after you are finished.
- If you haven't done so already please make sure that you return your enrolment booklet as soon as possible so that I can make sure that all the details I have on our system is up to date.
- In 2017 we will be looking at introducing a parent hub so if you are interested please let me know so I can make a decision whether it will work or not.

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

November/ December are:

AUTHORISED PERSONS WHO ARRIVE IN AN UNFIT STATE TO COLLECT CHILDREN POLICY

CODE OF ETHICS

TOILET TRAINING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

FIRST AID POLICY
INCLUSION POLICY
MEDICATION POLICY
NUTRITION POLICY
REST TIME POLICY

Centre Birthdays!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO:

Mya, Pippa, Sadie, Mia. Q, Emma, Gyanada, Madelyn, Michael, Sophie, Arkie, Abigail, Dominc. B, Noah, Sidney, Leyla, Ellie, Eric, Hazel, Jack, Abigail, Andrew. Z, Hugh, Thomas, Maximilian, Phoenix, Shaurya and Evie.



Recipe of the month!

SUMMER FRUIT BRUSCHETTA

Ingredients

- 1 loaf French bread, cut into thin slices
- 10 strawberries, diced into small pieces
- 3 peaches, diced into small pieces
- 2 tablespoons raspberry white balsamic vinegar (or regular balsamic vinegar)
- 1 cup fresh basil leaves, cut into small pieces
- 1 log cranberry goat cheese

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 350F. Place French bread on a baking sheet and bake for 8-10 minutes until fully toasted.
2. In a medium sized bowl, combine strawberries, peaches, and balsamic. Spread Cranberry Goat cheese onto each slice of French bread.
3. With a slotted spoon, place fruit mixture on each piece of French bread.
4. Enjoy!



Nursery Natter!



Well the year is soon coming to a close and what a year it has been in the nursery room! We have had a fantastic a year with each and every one of our nursery children! It has been great to watch each of the children grow and learn new and exciting things throughout their time in the nursery room, such as major milestones, exploring different sensory experiences, growing into their own personalities and also being able to go into the different rooms of the centre to have social time with the older children and explore the different aged rooms!



Over the past few weeks we have encouraged most of our families to help their children transition into the toddler one routine smoothly by getting the children to not only have one sleep during the day but to also sleep on mats, our nursery friends have really surprised us with how well they are handling the change in routine and they are actually really liking it! Everyone now knows where their beds are out in the main area of our room after lunch time, where most days everyone is able to self-settle on their beds and go off to sleep! With the new routine, we have found that the children sleep really well and are getting used to noise around them, but are also waking up really happy where they are able to slowly wake up and get off their beds to play when they choose too! Our nursery friends have also grown in their independence lately where they want to wipe their face and hands after eating, washing their hands after nappy changes, taking food bowls to the kitchen and also helping to get the beds out of the cot room at sleep time! It is great to see each of the children's independence grow where they are now turning into such helpful Toddlers! We have a couple of our friends that aren't far off their major milestone of walking! It has been great to watch their confidence grow and help them to feel comforted during their exciting new milestone!



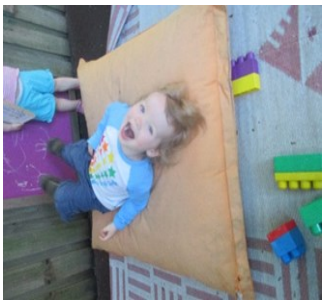
One of the major learning experience that benefits our younger children has been sensory play! Over the year it has been great to see how much they have grown and learnt through these experiences and how much more confidence they have with engaging in these sensory experiences! Lately we have made this a focus where our friends were able to engage in experiences such as play dough, cloud dough, jelly, slime, natural materials, painting and water play! The children all had great fun engaging in these experience where they used their hands to explore the different textures of the material! One of the main favourites with the nursery children is water play! This has been a great hit over the past few weeks where our friends love running around in their nappies and splashing around in the containers of water!

The past few months we have created time during the mornings of each day to encourage all the children of the centre to explore the different rooms and have social time with each other! Our nursery friends love this! They now know when it is getting close to 10:30am for open doors, where once the doors are open, they are off! All of the nursery children really enjoy this time where some play with siblings while others have fun playing in the surrounding rooms in the centre and also outside in the big yard! This has been great for the children's independence and confidence by being around older children and engaging in play experience in other rooms!



It has been a great year in the nursery room and has been so enjoyable with our group of nursery children! ……Until Next time, Miss Alana and Miss Maddison

Toddler 1!



Can you believe that this is the last edition of Toddler Tales?! This year has absolutely flown by, and so much has happened throughout the year. Over the last few months we noticed the children's communication skills have really flourished, with most of the children chatting away and enjoying interacting with one another through communication.



At the end of last month, we really explored the children's senses with lots of messy goopy fun! Each day there was a different sensory experience for the children to explore, as it is getting warmer we have indulged in this and have been having some water play. Out in the shade we filled up the paddling pools with some water and bubbles, and the children were quick to jump in, as well as help with the hose, which seemed to be the best part for them! Throughout these experiences there was so much laughter and joy radiating from the children's faces, it was such a joy to watch. Shaving foam, cloud dough, material squares, play dough, mud play, jelly play, and lots more! To bring our sensory exploration to a close, we created a mind map on our wall, detailing all of our wonderful experiences that we had exploring our senses!

We had one of our lovely families donate some planter boxes to our room, as it was the start of spring, we wanted to build a herb garden. This would also tie into our senses exploration, as the children would be able to taste, smell and touch the herbs in the garden. We purchases some, mint, basil and parsley to plant. Before planting the basil, we used some of it to cook a basil and spinach pesto pasta. We used a blender to mix all of the ingredients together to create the paste. Each child helped to measure and pour the ingredients in the blender, before pressing the button to mix it all together. While cooking the peso, the children each tried a basil leaf, surprisingly they all seemed to like it! After making the pesto sauce, it was time to cook the pasta. Whilst waiting for the water to boil, we were talking about the pasta that we were cooking, all of the children recognised the pasta and called out "Pasta!" they must eat it lots at home. Once the pasta was made, we mixed the sauce in and sat down to eat it for lunch. Well, this was a massive success! Majority of the children ate it, some even having third helpings! Even though some of the children did not eat all of the pasta, they at least tried it. We have heard that some of the children in the Toddler room are very picky eaters at home, so we had some very surprised parents at the end of the day, hearing that they had tried a new meal!

This brings our last Toddler Tales for the year to an end! We have absolutely loved the opportunity to learn and grow with the children in the Toddler 1 room this year. We feel very privileged to have been a part of some very important and exciting milestones this year, and can't wait to see what next year brings for us all.



Take care Miss Erin, Miss Brooke and Miss Loretta



Toddler 2!

Hello to Our Families from Toddler Two Room,
Our room is reflecting the needs and interest of the children, activities and learning experiences for individual children are being integrated into our room.
The children have been very interested in role playing in a variety of areas in which we have extended on these with offering different learning experience.
Cooking has been popular with the children as they are keen to participate in each process, we have made biscuits, cupcakes, stir fry and scrambled eggs.




The children have had a wonderful time exploring the different roles as they use the dress ups in their play, our nursery area has had a great response with the children as they integrate their real life skills into play with feeding, cuddling, changing and bathing the baby dolls. We have been focusing on colour recognition with many different learning experiences, explored a variety of sensory painting experiences, started a garden with discussing the process from seeds to plants, the children participated with great interest, we have focused on being friends by doing an art experience of collaging our friends, self-help skills and toilet training.
We would like to say a big thank you to all the parents for their input into our program across the year and it's been a wonderful pleasure to have spent the past year with your children, wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. From Miss Janelle and Miss Vicky





Junior Kindy!

Wow!!! We can not believe our year in the Junior Kindy room is almost coming to an end – but what a fantastic year we all have had – and with this being the last newsletter for the year – we would like to take the opportunity to say a big "THANK YOU" to all our wonderful Junior Kindy friends and families – we know this year has had some challenges (as most years do) – but we are thankful that with the support of our families, and through our working together – it has been an amazing year.

I am sure you have all noticed just how independent our young friends are and how much they have achieved over the year. We are so excited to see that a vast majority of our friends are now toilet trained and those that are not – are getting very close – and that in itself is a major achievement for all of the children and we are all so very proud of them.

Their independence and self help skills do not stop there – we are proud of how the children are now taking so much more responsibility for their own belongings , many are putting on their own shoes, making and packing up their own bedding, putting their own meal containers away and so much more – and it is so rewarding to see that the children feel such a sense of belonging here at Little Ducks that they are confident in trying challenging tasks and feel a sense of support when they need an additional help.

We have recently had National Nutrition week – and the theme for this year was "TRY FOR 5" and throughout this week – we learnt that food and vegetables fall into five different colour categories – red, purple/blue, orange, green and white/brown – and through this week we learn that each colour carries its own set of unique disease fighting chemicals. Through the week we provided the children a variety of different fruits and vegetables for them to try – and we were very impressed at how the children all tried these new foods – even if they did not like it – it was great to see that they were confident to at least try. Through this week we enhanced the children's understanding of how they can be responsible for their own health and wellbeing and the importance of healthy foods and a healthy lifestyle.

Over the past few months I am sure you would have noticed our "News" posters on the wall for each of the children and it has been amazing to watch the excitement of the children as they see their own pictures and those of their friends on the wall – and for them to want to share information to go on their special wall posters – these will be going home with them at the end of the year for you to keep – we will continue to add to these for the rest of the year – so make sure you look for any updates that we may add!!

As the year comes to an end we will start doing our Christmas crafts and activities – and we would love it if you would like to contribute any ideas that you think the children would like to do, or if you would like to come in and join us – we would love that also – families are always welcome. Also we would love input from families about any special traditions, songs, recipes, etc, that are important to your family/heritage/culture that we would incorporate into our preparations and festivities .

Once again we thank you so much for the honour of allowing us to be a part of the life of your most precious gift – your child – and for the opportunity to share all of the experiences this year with you all – it has been truly precious and memorable year – so once again THANK YOU!!!!

Miss Leighanne, Miss Bree, Miss Anna

Senior Kindy!

Hi Everyone

Well here we are almost finished for another year.

The Sr. Kindy children have matured and absorbed a lot this year and truly ready to move on to new adventures in 2017.

As the year is coming to a close...we have been going over a few of the basic learning skills again just refreshing their memories helping prepare them for next year.



The children have been extending on their writing skills practicing with dotted line designs and shapes as well as writing their names. This is also strengthening their pen/pencil grips.

As most of the children are very good at rote counting we have introduced number cards for the children to help recognise the numbers as they count. They have been using the cards really well on the wall and getting very good at number recognition.

The children are engaged in more art activities lately, which is good to see as we have had a bit of a drought here. The art centre was always available to them but not used much as there was more interest in role play in other interest areas. I'm sure the Halloween and Christmas art coming up will certainly hold their interest.

The vet/pet shop interest area will finish soon being replaced with a week or two of Halloween fun. Nothing scary...just fun activities for the children. This area will be followed up with our Santa's work shop. The children are very excited and keen to role play busy little elves.

If some of the children are coming home with stories about Charlie the grumpy elf.....it's because Charlie has been peeking through our windows lately and reporting back to Santa. The children have been on their best behaviour most days Ha!



We are looking forward to finishing off our year with more fun learning experiences with Christmas activities being the main feature so if there is anything special you would like us to work on with your child please let us know.

We are really going to miss or Sr. kindy children as they have been a wonderful group of children to work with.

We have watched them learn and grow share and care and respect each other. Our fun conversations and special moments watching them discover and accomplish their challenges really made our year. Good-Bye & Good Luck

Merry Christmas and All the very best for 2017.

Love Ms. Nancy, Ms.Savita & Ms.Bec

P.S. Thanks for being such lovely parents supportive throughout the year spoiling us with gifts, yummy treats and lots of other crafts and materials to help us with our teaching . We also cherished the fun conversations we had with you and you will be missed as well.

Kindergarten Program!



As per usual, a lot has happened in Kindergarten over the past two months…
We have been working on our sun safety policy 'Slip, Slop, Slap, Seek and Slide' now that winter is over and the weather is warming up. That is: Slip on a shirt, Slop on some sunscreen, Slap on a hat, Seek out some shade to play in and Slide on some sunglasses. We did an ice melting experiment in the playground for children to understand how powerful the sun is and will continue to build on this knowledge as summer quickly approaches.



We completed an Identity project during September called 'The Best Part of Me'. Inspired by Wendy Ewald's book, each child identified what their favourite part of their body was and why. We took photos of these and added their documented thoughts. Too much emphasis is placed on superficial characteristics these days it was lovely to instead celebrate how truly amazing our bodies and minds are. We displayed these in a corner of our classroom and it is great to see children continually go to them to share their ideas with friends and family.



Another big focus of ours over the past few months has been loose parts play. An idea proposed by Architect Simon Nicholson in the 1970's, loose parts are thought to empower creativity. They are materials with no specific set of directions and can be used and combined with different elements in a learning environment. We gathered together elements from our store rooms including material rolls, carpet squares, blocks, ceramic tiles, pipes and bottle tops. It has been beautiful to watch our group create both individually and in groups, and we have been astounded watching masterpieces come together.



National Nutrition Week ran from the 11th to the 17th of October and we took the opportunity to learn about the food groups. We created a group poster sorting foods into two categories, 'sometimes foods' and 'always foods'. We found pictures in magazines and discussed different items in our lunchbox. We discussed the benefits of eating healthily and introduced the concept of 'Eating the Rainbow'.



Ms Lauren attended a professional development session on nature play in classrooms and brought some great ideas back with her. We have established a nature play area in our classroom for children to engage with and it is wonderful to see how much they are enjoying it. Research shows that children improve their health and levels of physical activity when they are connected to nature and it is definitely the direction we are passionately moving in.



We are looking forward to getting silkworms in our classroom at the beginning of November and will tie this in to learning about metamorphosis and life cycles. We're busy getting together Transition Statements for children to take to school next year and will be supporting parents as much as possible as they take this important step as a family. Most of all we are looking forward to having fun with our children in their last two months of Kindergarten, and Christmas will no doubt provide us with wonderful opportunities to do so!

Lauren, Di & Jenny

Tips for nurturing your child's curiosity

The more curious a child is, the more he or she learns. Nurturing your child's curiosity is one of the most important ways you can help them become a lifelong learner.

Babies are born learners, with a natural curiosity to figure out how the world works. Curiosity is the desire to learn. It is an eagerness to explore, discover and figure things out.

Parents and caregivers don't have to "make" their children curious or "push" their children to learn. In fact, research shows that it is a child's internal desire to learn (their curiosity), not external pressure, that motivates him to seek out new experiences and leads to greater success in school over the long term.

Curiosity is something all babies are born with. They come into the world with a drive to understand how the world works:

- A newborn follows sounds, faces and interesting objects with her eyes
- An 8-month-old shakes a rattle and then puts it into his mouth to see what this object can do.
- A toddler takes a stool to reach the countertop where the phone is—a "toy" she loves to play with.
- A 2-year-old pretends she is the garbage collector and puts all her stuffed animals into the laundry basket "garbage truck" to figure out what it feels like to be in the other person's shoes.

Model interest in the world around you.

Take a walk outside and wonder aloud about the trees, the sky, the stars. Also let your child see you pursuing interests of your own.

Answer questions simply and clearly and according to your child's development.

You will answer a question about where babies come from much differently if your child is three or thirteen. And, no matter the child's age, always ask them first what their thoughts are before answering. A five-year old asked her mother, "Where did I come from?" Mother proceeded to talk in depth (anxiously stumbling on every other word) about the reproductive process. Her child looked at her quizzically throughout, and at the end responded, "I mean, did you come from New York like Daddy or some where else?" And, if you don't have the answer, say so. Let them know it's okay not to have all the answers. This also provides an opportunity to model how to find answers. Go with her to the library or call someone else who might know.

Tips for nurturing your child's curiosity

Use the library

Take this trip together often. Find out when your local branch has its storytime. Books are windows into all kinds of worlds to delight the curious mind. Young children who are exposed to books become better readers. Let your child choose his own books. Studies show that it doesn't matter whether children are reading books about rockets or comic books, the key is that their interest is captured and that they like to read.

Stimulate your child with open-ended questions

These are questions that don't have a right or wrong response, and can't be answered with only one word like "yes" or "no". "How do you feel about…..", "What was (such and such experience) like for you….", "Tell me about what happened in school today." These kinds of questions encourage your child to develop his thoughts and ideas, shows love and interest, and will give you a window into his inner life.

Create an interesting environment

Babies spend one-fifth of their waking hours in focused gazing. They're curious about what's in their surroundings. Pictures on the wall and normal family activity are naturally fascinating. Give baby safe toys and objects to explore. Rotate your supply to keep it "fresh."

Redirect, don't discourage

Try to figure out what is capturing her interest, or what skill she is trying to master and create a safe and acceptable way for her to explore. For example, if your toddler is exploring the houseplants, put them out of reach but offer a close alternative. Put some dirt in a plastic container for your child to play with and inspect. If she likes to pour the water from her cup onto the high chair or floor, move her to the kitchen floor, bathtub or backyard after the meal so she can explore and experiment with water without driving you crazy. This will also teach children problem-solving skills, creative and acceptable ways to do and get what they want.

Allow time for open-ended activities

Unlike some toys that are designed to be used a certain way, materials like boxes, blocks, water, sand, pots and pans, and any art material, can be used imaginatively. Do not tell your child what to do with the material, how to do it or what it should look like in the end. Let your child's curiosity be her guide.

Barefoot Play



Remember those carefree, barefoot days of summer? The soft grass beneath your feet? The warm sand between your toes? And, yes, even the occasional stone or twig pricking the underside of your feet uncomfortably! When was the last time your children went barefoot outside? When was the last time you did?
Recent research suggests going barefoot isn't just an essential childhood memory-to-be-made, but a potentially health-changing practice we should all be implementing regularly – kids and adults alike. It even has a name: *Earthing!*

So here are our top 5 reasons for casting aside your shoes and going barefoot – whatever the weather or season.

1. **Earthing: Tapping into the Earth's natural energy**

When we practice Earthing – connecting our skin directly with the Earth's natural surfaces – negative electrons from the Earth are absorbed into our bodies. This offsets the mass of positive electrons we absorb every day from simply living in a world surrounded by electrical devices, wi-fi and mobile phones. Earthing allows us to help restore our natural balance.

2. **Neutralise free radicals…and sleep better!**

Pain, fatigue, poor sleep, auto-immune disorders and chronic disease are all thought to be related to inflammation caused by free radicals. Boosting the number of negative electrons in our bodies is crucial to keeping free radicals under control, and the simplest way to do this is by Earthing. Walking barefoot for a half hour on the Earth's natural surfaces gives our bodies time to absorb those necessary negative electrons – encouraging children to do this with you may just improve everyone's quality of sleep!

3. **Stimulate pressure points & the nervous system**

When children wear shoes, they are missing out on the most basic sensory experience of them all – the feeling of dirt, rocks, leaves and twigs beneath their feet. Our feet are hard-wired with multiple pressure points and nerve endings to convey messages to other parts of our bodies. Wearing shoes dulls the effectiveness of these nerve endings, while going barefoot stimulates them and, in turn, our entire nervous system. It's perhaps the easiest and most cost-effective form of sensory play!

Barefoot play

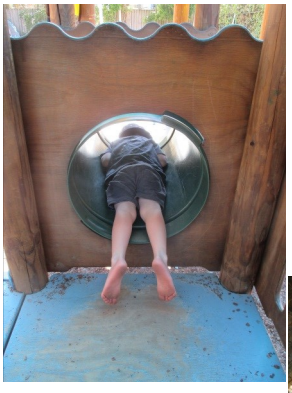
4. **Strengthen their joints & muscles**
Walking barefoot strengthens the muscles in children's feet and ankles, improving balance and posture. It engages the feet's arches, strengthening them, and improves the alignment of muscles throughout the legs. This, in turn, helps prevent stability problems in joints such as the hips, knees and ankles, reducing the risks of injury later in life.
5. **Foster a connection with nature**
Removing their shoes immediately requires children to become more aware of their surroundings – how does the ground feel? Is there a sharp rock ahead? What was that rustle in the bushes? Their senses are heightened – they're paying attention. From that attention comes an appreciation of the natural world they are walking through. They feel the papery leaves crunching underfoot. The softness of the grass. The sharpness of prickles. When all five senses are fully engaged, they completely connect with nature and, after all, what better time than childhood to develop a love of being in the natural world?
For more information and research regarding barefoot play, we highly recommend the book, **"Balanced and barefoot"** written by leading Paediatric Occupational therapist, Angela Hanscom.

And if you're still not sure whether to send your kids outside without shoes, just remember: kids are 100% washable. Guaranteed!













Staff Highlights for 2016

- *Miss Leighanne returned to Annerley!*
- *Miss Mel started as Director :-)*
- *We were very excited when our new pets joined us: Bambi, Snow white, Joey, Blue bell and Sugar and of cause the little nakes (worms)……as the kids called them!*
- *Introducing our open door sessions—children really love being able to have the freedom to move around the centre.*
- *Lots of Professional development training this year which we loved*
- *Great team environment with more of a homely feel*
- *Watching the siblings enjoy time together and introducing new siblings to all our friends…..lots of babies born this year!*
- *Our 10 year anniversary open day was a lot of fun and it was great to see so many people come and lend a hand—what a community we have!*
- *Miss Nancy and Miss Di reached 10 wonderful years with Little Ducks*
- *Wonderful parent involvement—thankyou!*
- *Lots of community networking this year which has been great!*
- *Watching the children grow*
- *Our special activities: drum beat show, Olympic games day, chicken hatching and loads more.*
- *The introduction of our new program, allowing more freedom and staff reflection and enjoying the change in the way we document.*
- *Incorporating more nature play into our programs and attending training on how to do this successfully.*
- *Watching children develop a sense of identity, learning who they are and taking pride in themselves.*