Little Ducks Childcare Birkdale

March/April 2017 Newsletter

A note from your Centre Manager



Hello families! Thanks for joining me for the next edition of our newsletter. We hope you have settled into the year well and are reaching the goals you have set out to achieve! January and February are always a busy time for children, staff and families as we welcome new, farewell old, and reconnect with our current families and community.

February saw us hold our annual Open Day, where current and new families had the chance to come into the service on a Saturday morning and meet our staff, see the environments and enjoy a lovely morning participating in some fun experiences. We thank all of those who were able to attend for making this morning the fun, community event that it was.

Recently we have been reviewing Quality Area 1: Educational Program and practice, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank the families who have been using our stone in the jar feedback system! It is great to know that you feel that we are meeting your expectations. If you have any further feedback on how we can exceed these, please let us know!

As you know, professional development is a big part of our role as educators, and we are always furthering our knowledge by attending PD sessions in (and out of) the local area. Have you ever felt that there is an area of parenting or early childhood development where you would like to further your knowledge? Triple P (positive parenting program) is an excellent, free resource where families can log on to different webinars, or attend seminars about a vast array of parenting topics. Here is a little snippet of who they are from their website;

Triple P is an internationally-acclaimed parenting program which is offered free to all Queensland parents and carers of children up to 16 years of age. Triple P is considered one of the world's best because it has been scientifically shown to work and because it's already helped more than four million children and their families in 25 countries. The Queensland Government is now offering Triple P free as part of its commitment to supporting families across the state.



Look out for posters or information in the foyer for upcoming sessions. Registering online is easy so check out the Triple P website for more information!
http://www.triplep-parenting.net.au

My office hours are from 8.00-4.30 Monday-Thursday and 6.30-3.00 on Friday so feel free to stop by, call or email for a chat anytime. I look forward to sharing our adventure again in May.

Cassie...

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Recipe of the Month!

Some easy, new breakfast ideas!



Raspberry Quinoa Smoothie

www.superhealthykids.com



Ingredients;

- 1 cup – milk
- 1 cup – Greek yogurt, plain
- 1/2 cup – quinoa, uncooked
- 2 cup – raspberries
- 2 cube – ice

Method;

Cook and cool quinoa.
Add all the ingredients to a blender and blitz until smooth.
Pour into two glasses and serve immediately.

Ingredients;

- 1/2 cup – oats, dry
- 1/2 cup – quinoa flakes
- 2 tablespoon – chia seeds
- 2 teaspoon – cinnamon
- 1 1/4 cup – milk of choice
- 1/2 cup – applesauce, unsweetened
- 1/8 cup – pure maple syrup (optional)

Filling;

- 2 medium – apple
- 2 teaspoon – cinnamon
- 1/8 cup – pure maple syrup
- 2 tablespoon – water
- 1 tablespoon – chia seeds

Method;

- Add oats, quinoa flakes, chia seeds, and cinnamon to a large bowl. Stir to combine.
- Whisk together milk and applesauce (maple syrup optional here!). Stir into oat mixture and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate mixture overnight.
- For the apple pie filling: peel and dice apples. Add apples to a small sauce pan along with the cinnamon, syrup, and water; bring to a boil.
- Reduce to a simmer and cook until mixture begins to thicken, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in chia seeds. Allow the mixture to cool for 5 - 10 minutes before assembling the oats.
- Layer oats and filling into cups for a parfait, or simply spoon the oats into bowls and top with filling. Enjoy!



Have you made any of our recipes? Send in your photos and we will include them in the next newsletter!

Centre Events!

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

...March...

Thursday 2nd – **Holi show!**
Roushini (a cultural collaborator & professional artist) will be teaching us about a Hindu spring festival which is also known as the festival of colours or the festival of sharing love.

Friday 3rd – **Schools clean-up day** We will hold a 'Little Ducks Clean Up Day' In the lead up to 'Clean up Australia Day' on Sunday 5th of March. Talk to your educator to find out how you can help!

Friday17th - **St Patrick's Day**
Dress in green and come along to learn some fun facts about our Irish friends and families.

Monday 20th – **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.

Tuesday 21st - **Harmony Day**
This is a day for all Australians to embrace cultural diversity and to share what we have in common. It's about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. Dress in orange to support this wonderful day.



...April...

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

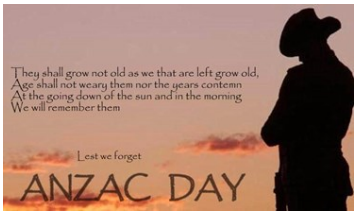
Thursday 14th - **Easter Bonnet** The children will be making their very own special Easter bonnets throughout the week. Come along to watch our Easter bonnet Parade @ 3.30pm.

April 14th - **Good Friday**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY



April 16th - **Easter Monday**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Tuesday 25th - **ANZAC Day**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY
Leading up to this day, we will pay our respect to the diggers.



Birthdays!

A very happy birthday to ...

...March...

Makayla
Quinn
Miss Kristy



...April...

Dane
Eryn
Isaac
Ben
Hamish
Warner
Miss Tara

Junior Nursery Natter!

Welcome back to all of our beautiful families. Are off to a great start to 2017 and know it is going to be an amazing and exciting year as we watch your children grow, develop and learn new skills!

Firstly, just something from my heart A big thank you for allowing me to be a part of your child's journey here at Little Ducks! Welcome to the new bubs who have just joined us, we are so glad you are all settling in so happily!

As most of you are aware we are concentrating on your child's individual goals, either set by yourselves, ourselves or the children. These have been created through observations and communicating with families. Thank you so much for all the parent input recently! It is really helping us create a strong bond between home and kindy life, making your child feel more safe and secure and ready to explore and learn! Please take a look at the trees that are by the door in the room and feel free to discuss any goals, concerns or suggestions on these. Your feedback is most valued!



Over the next couple of weeks we will be focusing on self help skills, getting some of the children ready for the big move up to senior nursery. The skills being developed may be as simple as holding and drinking from their own bottle to putting their hats on their heads and for the older kids we will focus on self feeding, sitting on a chair and washing their hands after nappy change at the little basin in their bathroom. These skills are encouraged through a wide variety of activities throughout the day.

We will also be focusing on developing our gross motor skills. We will practice these by including soft climbing obstacles inside and outside, balancing games and large ball games amongst other fun activities.



A few weeks ago we had a reptile and amphibians show and the babies were very intrigued by all of the creatures we got to see, we even got to feel some of them!

In the junior nursery we are always discovering and exploring new skills. We have been doing a bit of art work lately which also helps with fine motor development, keep an eye out around the room and in the children's books to see what we have been up to. Art isn't just paintings and drawing though, we have been using play dough! Pinching, squeezing, rolling, poking, moulding and stacking are some of the skills we learn through this play! (as well as a sneaky taste here and there! Oops!)

That's all for now, if you have any ideas, stories, suggestions or concerns feel free to come have a chat about them. There are other methods you can use to share as well such as sending pictures via email, writing about it on one of our parent input forms in the room or give us a call.



Thanks for reading! Miss Julie



Senior Nursery News!

Welcome to the second newsletter of the year!! What a busy couple of months the Senior Nursery children have already had in the room this year.
As some of the children were new to the room at the start of the year, Debbie and myself (Emma) worked on creating a sense of belonging for the children as well as developing and building strong relationships with the children and families. We aimed to get to know the children and their interests, firstly, through the all about me sheets, which were sent home at the start of the year, then spending quality one on one time. The children's interests were extended on from these. We are also creating a sense of belonging through each child having their own space on the way. Feel free to have a flip through the various paperwork on your child's board, to read about their learning, imagination and development and any special snippets that have been documented throughout the month. The children have gained some great knowledge and demonstrated some wonderful developing skills since the start of the year!



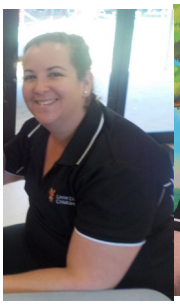
Debbie and myself have observed many of the children developing lots of wonderful new skills especially in the gross and fine motor area of development. At this age group there will be lots of mile stones achieved as the children develop and enhance this area of development. Over the last few weeks we have observed the children using their little fingers to do many new things. We have extended on this interest to further develop these skills by introducing little pairs of tongs. These were firstly introduced to get the children to move their hands to attempt to open and close the tongs! The children have surprised us and exceeded our expectations of them using tongs. The children were so good at using tongs we extended on this by incorporating them at morning tea time. The children were given plates of fruit in front of them and encouraged to use the tongs to pick up the fruit they wanted to eat. This was very successful and we have aimed to make this a regular occurrence at morning and afternoon tea time. Have you tried tongs at home with your child? Give it a go!! We would love to see photos of you engaging in this activity at home.



The fine motor development has also been extended into the art and craft area. The children have enjoyed getting themselves immersed in the painting experiences, literally!! And developing new skills as they learn to hold lots of different tools to paint with and create masterpieces. Debbie and myself will continue to extend on this interest and incorporate lots of different art tools for the children to create with, so keep an eye out for your child's artwork on display, or in their bags as a nice surprise to take home.



The Senior Nursery children have enjoyed some great centre events this year already. In January Australia day was celebrated, with the children using the traditional Australian colours to create some great artwork, we listened to the national anthem and we spoke about the traditional lad owners. In February we had our centre open day. Thank you to the families that came along to support us! Waitangi Day was also celebrated, the children tasted some tradition New Zealand cookies and learnt a fun Maori rhyme!! A few of the children were lucky to attend on the day of the reptile show, the children learnt about many reptiles and even got to touch some!! Valentine's Day, Love your pet day and Shrove Tuesday were also events celebrated in February.





Some exciting events coming up in March and April, to keep an eye out for include; the Hindu spring festival show, St Patricks Day, Crazy hair day, Harmony day and Easter celebrations!!!
Miss Emma, Miss Debbie and the Senior Nursery children!!!

Toddler Tales!



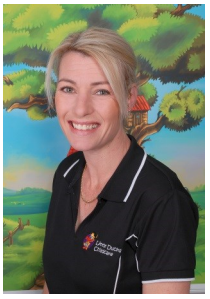
Welcome back to another exciting year in our Toddler room!
Don't you just love how welcoming our Toddler Room is looking?
I wanted our environment to have a fresh feel for a fresh new year and to create an atmosphere that is welcoming, inviting and engaging. It is important for the children to have an atmosphere where they can develop their skills and interests and become independent and confident learners.
So, what did we change?
Programming Display Wall - I have included a new Toddler Routine, a new Parent Information book for families to view both my own and our centre philosophy, our menu, a what to bring list, copies of newsletter etc. programming information, 3 x parent feedback options.
Art Work Display - Instead of hanging art work all over the room we are using one wall and creating a gallery of the children's art. Not an “arty” child? Check out their photos of the things they love to do!
Self Help Station - This consists of wipes, tissues, gloves and sunscreen all at the children's level to help them develop their self help skills. This is a fantastic way to help our children feel capable, and increase their self esteem. It helps create a great sense of autonomy, and provides an opportunity for children to feel in charge of their body taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
Interest Areas - Our interest areas will offer an environment for the children to explore and discover, an opportunity for the children to grow. Each area will support children's emerging interests and allow them to demonstrate their creativity and curiosity. These spaces will eventually reflect children's different cultures, interests and abilities and learning styles.



Where next?
I would like our environment to provide a sense of Belonging, and have familiar surrounding for our toddlers eventually we would like to display framed photos of our toddlers and have available to the children some photo albums of themselves, their families, their pets and their interests. Also we will be displaying the children's portfolios in an area that they and their families have access to at all times. I cant wait to be able to sit with a child and look at what they have engaged in throughout the year.
So far, this year we have been enjoying getting to know one another and finding out how everything works, adapting to routines, exploring the new room, building friendships and connections and further developing our skills and abilities in our new and bigger environment. (toddlers are loving the big yard!)
Receiving Parent Input has been wonderful, we shared Jack’s zoo trip with his family by recreating a zoo in our room, we shared Maddie's camping trip with her family by having a camping day with a tent and picnic!



Please feel free to add your input no matter how big or small, I would like to bring more of what the children are doing at home into our program so we can work together to enhance your child’s learning.
We have been celebrating holidays and special days, the children have been learning more about Australia and China through the celebrations of Australia Day and Chinese New Year. We celebrated love through Valentines Day experiences, we learnt what the New Zealand Silver Fern is through Waitangi Day, and we had so much fun with our hands on Snakes and Dragons incursion.
In the upcoming weeks we will be exploring emotions together, all children experience emotions and feelings, however children need to learn how to express and deal with them. Children need assistance from adults to recognise their emotions and what they mean. We will explore our emotions with fun interactive activities e.g.; emotion flash cards, songs, pulling funny faces in the mirror, create “feelings” posters that show different emotions e.g.; happy, sad, angry, excited, stories and face collage.
I am looking forward to helping your children reach their milestones this year!
If you have anything you would like to discuss, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. :-)
Stay tuned!! Amanda and Holly



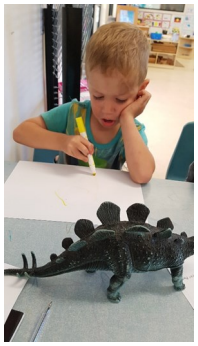


Junior Kindy Jabber!



Welcome to the Junior Kindy room for 2017. We are so excited to be able to share this years' learning and experiences with you all. To help the children settle into their new room and get to know each other and their likes and interests, we began our year with an all about me project in which we looked at the similarities and differences between ourselves and our peers. We used a mirror to study our facial features before using our interpretation and creativity to transfer our knowledge onto paper and draw a portrait or ourselves. These are displayed on the wall for you to see and will go into their portfolios as part of their development and milestones.

We then moved forward with the children's interest in dinosaurs and built on their ideas and knowledge. We started off with paintings and drawings of the dinosaurs which the children did by looking at a picture of a dinosaur and drawing their own interpretation of the dinosaur. This was such a great experience as the children were able to discover the different characteristics of their favourite creatures such as spikes and teeth. We then moved onto creating fact sheets that displayed these characteristics and also some information about what the dinosaurs ate, their size and weight as well as where they lived. These were added to our book shelf along with the matching photos of these dinosaurs. Next we decided to measure the height of the children and compared their height to the dinosaurs! Miss Tara and Miss Shannon created an area of interest with a dinosaur table. We added things like rocks, trees, leaves, fake grass, bark pieces, water and of course dinosaurs. The children loved exploring this area and it gave them an opportunity to use their imagination and knowledge that they had learnt over the last few weeks. We also used long strips of butchers paper to do some dinosaur stomping painting. The children stomped angrily like the dinosaurs with heavy feet.



We also used music and movement to dance to some dinosaur songs and lastly we watched some dinosaur bone videos. This got the children inquisitive about their own bones in their bodies which is where we are at at the moment. We have begun learning some of the funny names of the bones in our bodies as well as dancing to the 'dancing bones' song which has quickly become a favourite.



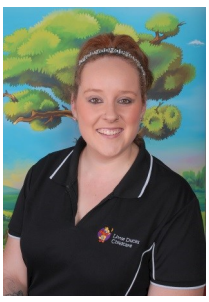
Moving forward we have created some individual goals for the children by looking at their "all about me" forms as well as some things we have observed during the first few months. Please feel free to come and have a chat if there is a certain goal you would like your child to achieve or begin working on over the next few months. Some of the goals we will be working on in the coming months are turn taking and developing the ability to share, learning shapes, colours and beginning to recognise patterns as well as helping children feel safe, secure and supported in their environment.



To sign off, Shannon and I are so thankful to have this opportunity to be able to grow with and help educate your little darlings. We love them dearly and it is such a pleasure for us to be such a big part of their lives and yours!

Tara and Shannon.





Kindergarten Kapers!



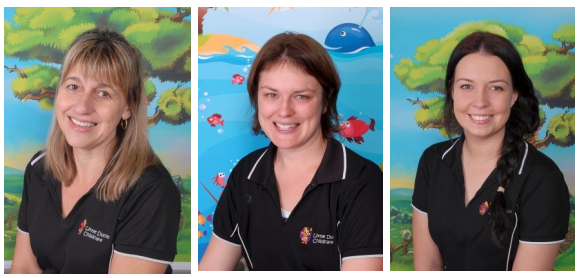
Wow! It is hard to believe that it's already the start of March! All of the Kindergarten children are growing and developing quickly; they have learned so much already!
Well, as you know we have been busy learning our letters and numbers through all sorts of various games to help make learning fun. We have started doing letter of the week activities. The first letter was "S" continued by "A" and "T", as we follow the Jolly phonics programme. Jolly Phonics was designed to teach children how to read, write, and spell using a systematic multisensory phonics program. The letter of the week is not just about learning each letter but also about finding fun, meaningful ways to do fine motor activities, sensory play, art and so much more. Sensory writing is so popular in the classroom as we "write" with our fingers in different textures such as shaving foam, paint between contact papers, gloop or just a simple salt/sugar tray. We will continue to work on letters and numbers by providing exciting activities on a daily basis.
Our aim is to provide a play based learning settings for the Kindergarten children. They will have the opportunity to follow their own interests. They are encouraged to initiate activities independently with support from their teachers. The children also learn to take ownership of their own work. They will be gently moulded into independent children with initiative and the confidence to take risks, knowing that there is no right or wrong way when it comes to trying.



We have been focusing on Sea creatures, fishing and fishing boats recently as we follow many children's interests in these topics. We set up an ocean theme on a table with sea creatures and shells adding two beach chairs to the scene. We are sparking the children's imagination by providing new and exciting activities to extend their knowledge and interests in different learning activities including math, letter recognition, art, and science.



We have been enjoying the tennis game outside lately, we can play in large groups with all of our friends. This sport also develops turn taking/social skills, promotes hand-eye coordination, balance and steadiness. We are going to support the children's love for tennis by providing similar activities in fun ways such as balloon badminton and real badminton games. Playing board games and other outdoor games fairly, cooperating, negotiating to one another strengthening the children's social skills which are related to all aspects of school behaviour.
Our family tree is so important for the children. They often sit next to it looking at the photos. When the children see the photos, they can feel connected to their families during the day. Unfortunately, our tree is missing some families' photos. We would love to ask our families to share some of their own family photos to complete our very special family tree! Feel free to bring one in, or email to Cassie and she will print for you!
Thanks for reading,
Csilla, Renee and Tahlia



The Schoolies Scoop!



Hi families – it's that time again! As we enter a new year, so far we've been focusing on getting to know each other and gaining strong, trusting friendships. You'll have noticed we've done a lot of science experiments in the last few weeks. After school one day, Gemma told us that she learnt about science so we began doing experiments of our own. The schoolies have had lots of fun experimenting with balloons, hypothesising ideas, testing gravity and we even made our own ice cream from scratch!

There has been lots of diversity among the schoolies children so far too as we've discussed and celebrated special days such as Australia Day, Chinese New Year and New Zealand's Waitangi Day. Gemma and Euan even tried to learn the traditional dance of "The Hakka" from New Zealand after watching videos. It was great to see and hear everyone's input to these days as they were asked what they know about it and as we talked about what they mean.



Following on with the children's interests and ideas, we've also been playing lots of board games and spontaneous games in the yard together like Twister, Who is it?, Simon Says, Follow the Leader and Connect 4. It's been great to watch the schoolies share their knowledge of these games and discuss their favourite games together. Gemma even helped teach Sophie and Cooper how to play "who is it?" Great teamwork!!



Recently, Sophie had a trip with her family to Stradbroke Island so we've began discussing our experiences at beaches and in the ocean. "My favourite thing to do is fish with my Dad." Cooper said. "I like looking for shells." Gemma said. "I found lots of shells. Beautiful shells. And I went lots of swimming in the swimming pool and the ocean." Sophie said. Extending on these ideas, we will move further into a new project of beach theme— stay tuned and check out your children's portfolios for activities and experiences in this project. If you have photos or any recent trips to beaches, please feel free to send in some photos as we will be making a display for our experiences with this theme.



I hope all my wonderful schoolies children and families have been enjoying their time with me so far as much as I've been enjoying it. I am looking forward to many more adventures, fun and learning. Until then, stay tuned for the next installment! Miss Bree



Do you know?

Why we ask for family feedback

Something that is very important to us here at Little Ducks Birkdale, is the respectful and reciprocal relationships that we build with children and families. The structured areas of our program, whilst minimal, recognise the expertise of the children and families alike, which is then scaffolded into some wonderful play based experiences where children can build a love of learning. This is just one of the reasons why your input and feedback is so important. We want to make sure that your children's early years journey through education is collaborative. We also value your feedback on our policies and centre philosophy as you are one of the key stakeholders in our centre, and we want to ensure that all of our beliefs are reflected in a respectful way.

What to do if you need an extra day

Have you ever gotten that early morning call into work for an extra day, but you just aren't quite sure if there is anyone to look after your child? Simply give us a call anytime from 6.30am and we will be able to check our system and see if there is a place available. If there is, all you will need to do in addition to a regular day of care is bring along meals for the day :)

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:

* Anaphylaxis
* Collection and delivery of children
* Custody and access to children
* Food safety supervisor
* Fatigue
* Grievance procedure—Educators and staff
* Grievance Procedure—Families
* Grievance Procedure—Children
* Immunisation—Families
* Immunisation—Educators and staff
* Late collection of children
* Educators and staff sickness
* Safety precautions
* Sandpit procedure
* Sun protection and clothing
* Toilet training
* Transition

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

Extra Curricular

Looking for something more?
We have a variety of great extracurricular programs available!

Happy Feet Fitness—Wednesday afternoons at 3pm
SuperKidz—Thursday mornings at 10am
Billie's Buddies—Thursday afternoons at 2.30pm
DanceAlong—Friday mornings at 11am

We have also received an offer for a French class, however I would like to gain interest for any families who may be interested in this before we commence a class. Please let me know if you are interested in giving this a try (children over 3 years only at this stage) and we will arrange a trial.

Supporting the community that supports us!

Rhino Personal Training

My name is Ryan and my son Dylan is in Junior Kindy. I am a fully qualified personal trainer with over 20 years experience in health and fitness. I am approachable and will work alongside you, supporting and motivating you to achieve your fitness goals. I specialise in one on one training, small group fitness and nutrition and meal planning. I personalise all programs to the individual...finding out about you and the type of exercise you enjoy and design a program that will give you the most effective workout to target the areas you want!
I also work with kids and adolescents giving them support and encouragement to get fit and be healthy...making exercise fun and enjoyable from an early age to make it part of their everyday lifestyle. Don't forget that kids mirror their parents.. a recent study found that if they see Mum and Dad being healthy and keeping fit they are 85% more likely to want to do it too.
Are you in need of regular motivation to get fit and healthy?
Want to boost your activity levels?
Looking to increase your strength, stamina and energy to keep up with your kids?
Don't have time or dislike going to the gym?
Have kids at home and struggle for time to get away?
Wish you could work out in the comfort of your own home or in a local park?
Do you have teenage kids that want to get fit and need some encouragement?
If you answer yes to any of the above then please contact me to discuss how I can help you and your family start or work on your health and fitness goals for 2017. Quote 'Little Ducks' and get 2x 45 min sessions for $50.



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