



Little Ducks Childcare New Farm January / February 2021

A note from your Centre Manager

When starting out to write this newsletter, for inspiration I looked back on the newsletter from Jan/feb 2020 . Our vision of the year as we stood in January 2020 was certainly very different from the year that we have experienced in reality!! Pivot and change were the most common actions for the year and in many ways this continues but I think we have begun to build resilience and understanding.

In that newsletter I did quote the saying—It takes a village to raise a child—as we focused on building a strong community. This strong community has been tested and proven just how important it is to build a support network around children and how this in turn helps children to feel loved, supported and confident to grow in to the best they can be!

As it turned out creating opportunities to come together that we were wanting to continue and were a big part of in 2019 —Yarning sessions, Women in Business groups, Biggest Morning Tea fundraisers, Hosting Parent Information Sessions and Training Sessions turned out to be difficult and who would have guessed dangerous! In 2020.

What in 2020 turned out to bring a community together was online learning, emails, social media, supporting each other and working together for the same outcomes but especially being flexible , understanding and considerate of each other.

I have a feeling these actions may actually have contributed more to building a support network around our children and helping them to feel loved supported and confident than any training course, information evening or fundraising event could have.

As we move into 2021 we find we have less lofty goals and more a sense of striving to do and make decisions and put in place actions based on doing the best we can in the circumstances we find ourselves with a common goal of what is best for the future of the children in our care. We no longer predict what will happen but are flexible and continually striving to put the children first and what better goal could we have!

Michele Kovchenko

Excellence in education through the power of play based learning.



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Educator Spotlight

Brydee Witt
Trainee



Over the past few months Little Ducks has been recruiting for the position of a Traineeship. Over the past 12 months, we have found the recruitment of quality Early Childhood Educators quite challenging and therefore we made a decision to make a long term commitment to ensuring we are contributing to the high quality training and mentoring of people who are very new to the industry but are seeking a long term career in Early Childhood Education. Our Trainees are employed above ratio requirements as our aim is to focus on formal training and on the job coaching and mentoring.

The interest in this position was extremely high and we have undertaken a thorough recruitment process to ensure we have found our next amazing Educator.

We are excited to announce that Brydee is our new Trainee!

Hi All,

My name is Brydee Witt. I am 18 years old and I am commencing my traineeship in childcare here at Little Ducks this year. I graduated high school in 2019, just over in Coorparoo. I spent most of 2020 searching for a career path I enjoyed and am constantly motivated to do well in. At the end of September, I was lucky enough to meet Michele and began working here at Little Ducks New Farm. Growing up with two younger siblings, it wasn't at all hard to **adapt** to the early childhood setting. I am thrilled to meet you all through the year and spend time with your wonderful children .

Brydee

Healthy Habits

Mental Health and Well being

Mental health has become very important to us all over the last 12 months and managing your own wellbeing by effectively responding and managing your emotions can greatly influence our to general outlook on life. Having a healthy sense of mental wellbeing has many benefits. It lifts your mood, promotes resilience in difficult situations and helps you get the most out of life. It doesn't matter who you are, where you live or how you're feeling – taking a few moments for yourself each day will help you be a happier and more resilient you.

Making some 'me time' is important. And it also helps strengthen your mental wellbeing.

Strong mental wellbeing gives you resilience in the face of life's challenges and is something we can all benefit from. Fortunately, you can improve your mental wellbeing by making small changes to your daily routine.

Activities for a stronger mental well being

- ◇ Play your favourite music
- ◇ Create a consistent bedtime routine
- ◇ Start a gratitude jar
- ◇ Just dance
- ◇ Say thank you
- ◇ Try something new each week
- ◇ Explore art galleries or museums
- ◇ Try composting
- ◇ Ask 'how are you'?
- ◇ Go for a walk
- ◇ Work in the garden
- ◇ Help a neighbour
- ◇ Take up a new hobby
- ◇ Help a neighbour
- ◇ Ask for help



Practising mental wellbeing activities regularly can help build your resilience so you bounce back faster when you're feeling sad or down. But sometimes, you might need some professional help to feel better again. There are a range of services and organisations available to support you.

Upcoming Events

January

Monday 4th - First day at Little Ducks for 2021. Welcome back everyone!

Wednesday 16th – Little Ducks New Farm 5th birthday – join us to celebrate our 5th birthday with cake and lots of fun.

Saturday 23rd—Little Ducks New Farm Birthday Party—we will be hosting a personal showing of The Croods at New Farm Cinema for our 5th birthday celebration.

Monday 25th – Centre Celebration for Australia Day

Come along in your best Aussie outfit of green & gold and your favourite Aussie dish to share!!

bring

Tuesday 26th - Australia Day

PUBLIC HOLIDAY – Centre closed



February

Thursday 6th – Waitangi Day

A New Zealand holiday that commemorates the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi).

Friday 14th - Valentine's Day

Throughout the week leading up to Valentine's Day we will be talking about and celebrating the people that we love.

Saturday 25th – Lunar New Years

Celebrate the Year of the rat with us by learning about Chinese culture

Policy Review's

We value your input and feedback....The policies in review are:

- Health & Hygiene for Enclosed Outdoor Spaces - Policy & Procedure
- Transitioning Children between Environments - FV
- Centre Presentation
- Physical Environment (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration)
- Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs
- Staffing & Supervision

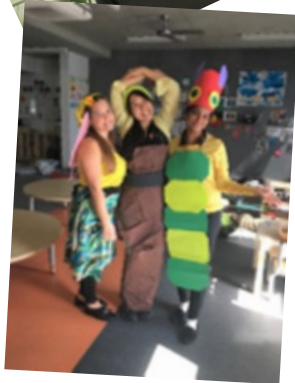
Ways to provide feed back are:

Policies are available in the office and by the Level 1 lifts you can give feedback by conversation with Centre Manager, email or via suggestion box located on aby the Level 1 lifts.

Happy 5th Birthday!!

In January 2021 Little Ducks Childcare New Farm turns 5!! We are celebrating with a Cinema Birthday Party at New Farm Cinema— current, past and future families are all invited to be part of the celebrations!! What a journey this 5 years has been—many challenges and many goals achieved but lots of fun and learning along the way.

Many of our 2020 graduation class were our foundation Nursery class and it has been a privilege to see them complete their early learning journey with Little Ducks. Five of our educators have achieved or are close to achieving their 5 years of service with Little Ducks Four of these at New Farm!! Michele (2015 Bardon, 2019 New Farm) Suder, Suchi, Megan and Jamie. That is quite an achievement!! Suder and Suchi began their Little Ducks journey both as casuals then as Nursery Educators. Suder is now our Early Childhood Teacher and Suchi is our Educational Leader—an amazing journey for them both and we appreciate all the passion and commitment of these 5 educators!! Thank you!



Nursery—Level One

Welcome to Nursery for the year 2021. I will be your Lead Educator for this year. Ms Charmel and Ms Shivani will be working alongside with me towards nurturing and supporting our beautiful children in the Nursery this year.

I strongly believe and value Dr Pikler's approach which is based on a kind and respectful relationship between an adult and infant, through tender care moments, a naturally paced motor development, free movement and uninterrupted play. And hence in the coming year, we will be looking forward to building a trusting relationship with our all babies in the nursery and support them towards their self-paced growth and development. We are going to have a great time together.

In the Nursery we have two rooms, "Nursery One and Nursery Two". Nursery one is designed to be an active environment with free play area and mealtime area while Nursery two is designed to be more of rest and quite planned activity area. Both the rooms have been planned and designed to meet the needs, requirements and interests of our children through the day.

Individual daily information sheets are available on the walls in the Nursery two rooms for the parents to provide any special instruction for the educators during the start of the day and an access to daily information about how the day went for their child/children at the end of the day.

Our classroom is all set up with exciting things to do through the day and we are all ready to get started our wonderful year of exploration, learning and developing with fun. Our focus will support each of our babies' interest and agency which enables us to incorporate RIE's philosophy into our planning and curriculum which to RESPECT and TRUST in our babies to be the initiator, explorer and self-learner. We will sing songs, read stories, make projects and learn so many new things. And through the journey, we will be welcoming new friends who will be learning and play with us too.

We have wonderful way to be connected with all our families through "Story park", which is an online portal and a medium to keep all our families updated about what is planned for our children learning and what learning happened day. We also be recording/documenting their emerging new interest and the developmental milestones achieved. Lastly, we value diversity and hence it would be a wonderful part of our learning through the year too through different centre events and celebrations.

I am really looking forward to the journey in coming year of 2021 with all our amazing babies along with Ms. Charmel and Ms. Shivani.

Ms.
and



Suchi,
Ms.



Ms.
Shiva-



Charmel
ni.

Snr Nursery

Happy New Year! And welcome to a 2021!

I hope everyone had a lovely break over Christmas.

We would like to take this opportunity to share information about The Senior Nursery Room. We are so excited to have you and your child/ren with us in this year. Senior Nursery has been reopened in 2021 to meet the demands of families with children under two years. It is exciting to create an learning environment specifically for those children between 15 months and two years as they are still babies but really discovering the joys of the world, exploring everything and developing so fast!

Many of you I already know from the Nursery, how exciting for us to all transition to ground level into the new Senior Nursery Room together! For my new families, I can't wait to get to know you and your child/ren better and for us all to embark on your child's learning journey together. Our main focuses in the Senior Nursery Room, will be to ensure a smooth transition for everyone moving into the New Year and then continuing on your children's incredible learning journey as well as developing their own self-help skills and interactions with their peers.

I have been at Little Ducks, New Farm, since June 2019, having worked in Early Childhood since 2010. I have been fortunate enough to have had a few different roles in the early childhood industry, beginning my career in childcare, then moving on to nannying for the next seven years, also working in OSHC services and sessional kindergartens. As well as working in early childhood, I have a face painting business, art is one of my greatest loves! I also love history and learning about unfamiliar cultures and their countries or traditions.

I hope to create an environment within the Senorr Nursery, that is inviting for you and your child. Where they feel at home and heard, participating in many fun activities that encourage them to imagine and explore their own ideas, as well as investigating and persevering in new ideas and experiences. Miss Siji will join me in Senior Nursery. Miss Siji is currently completing her Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care and is mum of a gorgeous little girl, keeping her busy when not at Little Ducks.

I look forward to many happy days and celebrating your child's achievements with them and you, throughout this year.

Miss Joey



and Miss Siji



Toddlers—Level Two

My name is Maria Ketan and I have completed a Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood from Auckland University of technology. I have worked with children for around 5 years, both in Auckland and in London. I love teaching and using my knowledge on different methods and techniques to help shape our children of tomorrow.

I am known to create friendly and welcoming environments for both parents and their children, incorporating diverse materials, and helping children learn to thrive in new settings. I have worked with children aged from 0-7 year old, children who come from different diversities and cultural backgrounds. I am confident in developing and facilitating creative activities leading to memorable learning experiences for the children. This underlines my firm belief in promoting the ongoing development of physical, social and emotional components with an emphasis on language development and emergent literacy skills.

I believe that children's learning is scaffolded by their interactions with parents, teachers and peers, through both one on one interactions and group settings. I am looking forward to working with you to encourage your child's growth and development, fostering opportunities to gain your input and feedback into the program. This will be done by setting goals for your child's development with you and extending their interests at home here at the centre. I am a vibrant, friendly, and nurturing person and I am always happy to have a chat to you at drop off or pick up times. Please feel free to leave comments in Storypark or a quick note in the communication book next to the sign in sheet.

On arrival, encourage your child to choose a locker, sign your child in and ensure your child is settled in with an educator. (Please remember to sign in for any absences) You are welcome to grab a book from the bookshelf, (now located near the lockers and sign in sheet) and read to your child to settle them in.

I believe children should be involved in the day to day routine of life, which can be done through meal preparation, cleaning, preparing beds and setting up their space. This develops a sense of independence, giving them the opportunity to absorb learning from different experiences. Therefore, it is important that your child brings their own labelled hat, water bottle, and sheets from home. This will help the children develop on their self-help skills by recognising their own belongings and utilising them with support if needed.

Our day is filled with fun planned and spontaneous learning experiences. You may keep track of these by accessing our toddler program on Storypark. Please let me know if you are having any trouble locating it. You will also receive regular individual learning stories about your child's journey through Storypark.

I am looking forward to working with you and your child this year ☐

Maria Ketan



Junior Kindy—Level Two

Welcome to Junior Kindy, my name is Jamie and I'll be the Lead Educator for Junior Kindy 2021. I've been working in the childcare industry for just over seven years now, with four of those years being here as part of the Little Ducks team. Throughout my time in childcare I've worked across all the age groups as a float and educator, I also spent time as an inclusion support educator all these have helped me develop and grow into the educator I am today. I hold my Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care, having finished my studies in 2020.

This year we look forward to creating a positive environment for all the children joining Junior Kindy, an environment where the children can express themselves, their ideas and their voice and feel safe and secure to explore and learn. An environment where together we can explore the diverse array of cultures that come together here in Junior Kindy, as will build a foundation based on a sense of belonging from which each child can move forward on their learning journey.

As part of our programming and planning we encourage all parents to give us feedback throughout the year, sharing with us any new interests that have developed at home or sharing stories and photos from your weekends, sharing with us any cultural holidays that you celebrate at home. All these things we can use to inform our program and provide the children with new and exciting learning opportunities. As part of our ongoing sustainability program we also welcome donations of recycled materials, these materials we use within our exploration of art and as we learn explore sustainable practices and how together as a community we can care for our environment and planet. All these aspects are opportunities for the children here in Junior Kindy to further their own learning, we always welcome your feedback and input which you can provide through story part or just catching Mr Jamie for chat in the morning or afternoons.

Jamie and Nicole



Kindergarten—Level Three

Hello My name is Suder and I am the Early Childhood Teacher at Little Ducks. I have been in the childcare industry since 2011 and joined Little Ducks in the year 2016. Before working in Childcare, I worked as a teacher aide in Hamilton State School for 3 years. I reside in South Brisbane along with my husband and two children.

My philosophy is that each child is unique, successful, capable and confident learning. I aim to bring an open mind, positive attitude and high expectations to the Kindergarten room each day.

It is my desire to create a stimulating environment where children can grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially to their full potential. I will provide a safe environment where children are invited to share their ideas, have access to hands on activities and let their curiosity direct their learning. I will create a learning environment where children are comfortable and confident to engage in learning relationships with their educators and peers. I also provide a comfortable space for parent to approach me and lines of communication are always open and confidentiality is held in the upmost respect. I strongly believe that play nourishes every aspect of children's development.

“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning but for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.” Fred Rogers.

“Children learn as they play. Most importantly, in play children learn how to learn”—Fred Donaldson

In relation to children, I aim to implement a program and environment that reflects both individual and group needs and on that promotes each child's interest, culture, learning development and individuality through PLAY. I incorporate hands on learning, cooperative learning, projects and individual work that is engaging and activates children's love to learn. Children deserve to be part of a learning environment that includes STEAM learning experiences which encourages them to wonder, explore, investigate, solve problems, think critically, create, collaborate and most of all learn through play.

Within my Role of Early Childhood Teacher at Little Ducks. I aim to be forever passionate, patient, caring, fair, fun and educated. I believe that children benefit from practices that are grounded in research. I passionately believe that if the teacher is excited and interested the children will be too!

Miss Suder



Govt Approved Kindy

At Little Ducks Childcare New Farm we proudly are approved to offer the Government Approved Kindergarten Program.

What is Kindy Program? The Queensland Government—The Early Years Count website says:

Kindergarten (kindy) is a part-time educational program available to children in the year before school.

At kindy, your child will:

- *make friends, share and play with others*
- *express themselves through art, dance and dramatic play*
- *learn through new experiences*
- *become more confident and feel strong*
- *communicate ideas and feelings*
- *build on their knowledge and explore new ideas, helping their confident transition to school.*

Part of the requirements to offer this program is to employ a Bachelor Trained teacher—our Miss Suder holds a Masters of Teaching and has years of experience with this age group. Miss Suder also takes the time to make connections with the schools our children will be attending, she meets with these teachers at our area's Early Years Network meetings each term working with the schools to support the children's transition from Kindy to School

Miss Suder uses the QKLG—Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines as they Curriculum to guide the children's learning linking easily to the Early Years Learning Framework and the Education Queensland Curriculum. Supporting the children to work towards 5 Learning and Development Areas—Identity, Connectedness, Wellbeing, Active Learning and Communication.

At Little Ducks our Kindy Program is housed on Level 3 an area dedicated just to this age group. The children have a dedicated classroom environment to encourage STEM, social and emotional and literacy. The children have continued access to a beautiful "outdoor space" including bike track, pirate ship sandpit, grassed areas, climbing equipment etc. Additionally on this level is an art studio and a dining room. A short trip down the stairs or lift and the children can access the outdoor playground where they can tend to their gardens, use the mud kitchen, sandpit, bike tracks, water play etc. We aim to provide a fun atmosphere that will challenge children to grow and learn, encourage their love of learning along with confidence and independence.



Enrichment Programs

Little Ducks New Farm includes a variety of Enrichment Programs in the learning programs for children of all ages.

- Move and Groove—Physical Development,
- Wellbeing—Emotional development and Health and Safety,
- Sustainability—encouraging knowledge of sustainable practises to improve the world we live in ,
- STEAM program—encouraging curiosity and becoming involved learners and
- Art immersion—encouraging creativity.

Move and Groove

Our Physical development program Move and Groove is designed to foster children's Gross Motor Skills. A focus core skill is set for each month. Our Move and Groove Officer will plan a weekly Move and Groove class that includes movements that develop the focus core skill then room educators will revisit this skill through other experiences through the month

Wellbeing

Our Wellbeing program ensures we include important learning such as Personal Safety, risk management, Fire Safety, Water Safety, Sun safety the importance of mental wellbeing and health.

Sustainability

We believe it is important for children to learn about sustainable practises—the children are our future and their actions and knowledge will impact the health of our environmental world

STEAM program

Little Ducks New Farm is an accredited Little Scientists Service. Miss Suder and Mr Jamie have trained in enquiry teaching through Little Scientists. Science Technology engineering Art and Maths when introduced to children through play encourage children to be curious, to think critically and encourage a sense of wonder and awe - and to become life long learners.

Art Immersion

Creativity is an important skill to learn, being creative encourages children to think critically, to be flexible, to get to know their own likes dislikes and interests. These skills are all so important in building resilience! Our Art immersion Officer will research a creative focus for each month for Room Educators to include in the program. Popular topics have been sustainable art, Natural Art, Discovering famous artists, amongst many others.

