



Little Ducks Childcare

January/February 2021

A note from your Centre Manager

Welcome to another year at Little Ducks Childcare Wilston. Needless to say 2020 was a year full of surprises and challenges a many. It impacted everyone in various ways and even today we are left with many uncertainties about what the future will hold. With that said, I am proud to announce that our Little Ducks family worked endlessly to ensure we maintained the high level of care and education you have all become accustomed to even through the most trialling of times. As always our aim continues to be to extend and enrich children's learning from birth to five. Adversities aside, we look forward to providing exceeding education and care to the families in Wilston, Windsor, Grange and surrounding community in 2021.

In the last couple of months it has been wonderful getting to know so many new and existing families. Myself and Alex, our Assistant Centre Manager, have felt so very welcome in our new roles and know these relationships will only strengthen with time.

For the start of term one we are happy to announce a visit from the Teddy Bear Hospital as well as continuing our annual partnership with the Queensland Museum, Library visits, French lessons via Play Frog and the introduction of Indigenous Games.

2021, we stand stronger together

Desiree Cornejo - Centre Manager

Educational Excellence through the Power of Play
Based Learning
Purposeful, Playful, Positive



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Upcoming Events!

January

Friday 1st - **New Year's Day**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY

Monday 4th - **First day at Little Ducks for 2020**

Welcome back everyone!



Tuesday 26th - **Australia Day**
PUBLIC HOLIDAY

All of January—Veganuary Month



February

Saturday 6th - **Waitangi Day**

A New Zealand holiday that commemorates the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (Tiriti o Waitangi). Our classes use this occasion to develop our own treaties for the year setting expectations of how we will work with each other.

Wednesday 10th - **Welcome Networking Night and Kindergarten Program Curriculum Evening.**

Come along for our wine and cheese networking night to meet your new room teachers and learn about the programs for 2021 from 5:30pm. Kindergarten Program Curriculum evening to follow at 6:30pm.

Friday 12th - **Chinese New Years**

Celebrate the Year of the Rat with us by learning about Chinese culture.



Policy Reviews

We value your input and feedback

The policies/procedures in review are:

Physical Environment (workplace safety, learning and administration) Policy
Transitioning Children between Environments
Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs
Staffing & Supervision



Ways that you can provide feedback are:

Our policies are available to read in the foyer and you can give feedback in 2 ways, by email or anonymously via the suggestion box.

Supporting Separation

Separation anxiety

Separation anxiety is normal during early childhood. It usually starts at about six to eight months of age and lasts until about two and a half to four years of age. Sometimes it can last longer if the child has had any painful separations in the early years. Separation anxiety reflects the child's attempts to hold on to what is safe in a very scary world, and it will settle down as the child grows older and more confident. For more information on separation anxiety, including strategies to support young children through this normal stage of child development click [here](#) to view information from the Women's and Children's Health Network.

Settling into new environments

Attending an early-learning program is an important and exciting stage in a child's development. They will have opportunities to interact with other children and educators, and benefit from a stimulating learning environment. Some children embrace this change with an enthusiasm that can leave parents feeling confident and comfortable, and perhaps even a little left out. Other children may feel afraid, upset or anxious. It may be the first time they have been in the care of adults who are not part of their family, or the environment could be noisy and crowded compared to being at home, making it all feel a bit too much. It is actually quite common for children to show some signs of discomfort when they first start in a new program. From about six months old, most children begin to show distress when they are away from their parents or carers, as they don't yet have a separate sense of self, so can feel a part of them is missing. While this can be worrying for parents and carers, it is normal for children to find the transition to childcare upsetting and it is important to remember the distress is often short-lived.

For suggestions about you can do to help your child settle into the new environment you can use the following link <http://www.webchild.com.au/read/how-to/how-to-deal-with-separation-anxiety-at-childcare>

Easing separation anxiety

It can be difficult to know what is normal, and what's not for young children and separation anxiety. In early childhood, crying, tantrums, or clinginess are healthy reactions to separation, but anxiety can greatly vary from child to child.

Information for parents and caregivers on managing separation anxiety can be found by using this link

<https://www.helpguide.org/>

Parents page

Just Breathe: The Importance of Meditation Breaks for Kids

Our kids' brains are tired, and children of all ages really need opportunities where they can take time out each day "unplugged" to relax and focus. Meditation offers this break and helps kids function more effectively and clearly.

Children today also have reportedly high stress levels. To help them take a break, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) [encourages](#) parents to share meditation with their children—and teachers to incorporate mindfulness training into their lesson plans.

The simple act of teaching children how to stop, focus, and just breathe could be one of the greatest gifts you give them.

Meditation Options for Children

Meditative practices have been used since ancient times to improve health and well-being. But, just as an athlete may do different exercises, people who practice meditation often use different types.

The most common types of meditation practice are concentration, mindfulness, movement based, cultivating positive emotions, and emptying. There are specific examples and ways to practice each type.

Types of Meditation Practice

Types of Meditation Practice	Examples
Concentration on a word, thought, sensation, or image	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transcendental meditation• Relaxation response• Breath-focused meditation• Mantra repetition• Meditation on a prayer, mandala, or other image
Mindfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mindfulness-based stress reduction• Vipassana
Movement-based meditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yoga• Tai chi• Qi gong• Sufi dancing
Cultivating positive emotions (such as compassion, forgiveness, gratitude, or loving-kindness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buddhist metta or tonglen practices (cultivating compassion and loving-kindness)• Institute of HeartMath training (cultivating gratitude or compassion)
Emptying	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Centering prayer• Waiting on the inner voice or inner light
Note: Some practices include more than one type of meditation. For example, yoga practices may include meditation on the breath, a word phrase, or sensation as well as movement and postures. All of these practices involve mental training that enhances the ability to focus or sustain attention.	

Parents page

Many meditation practices use breathing techniques to promote a state of calm. Mindfulness meditation on breath, perhaps the most well-known type, involves sitting quietly, resting or closing your eyes and bringing your attention to your breath. When your attention drifts away, which it is likely to do, simply usher your attention back to your breath without judgment. You don't need years of meditative practice to benefit from this technique, nor do your children.

There's no doubt, however, that sitting still for any length of time can be difficult for some kids. For this reason, a movement-based meditation, such as yoga, may serve as a good introduction.

Research on the Benefits of Meditation in Children

Meditation is used to rest the mind, body and spirit. This, in turn, has many mental, physical, and spiritual benefits. Mindfulness meditation, specifically, is gaining a foothold in disease prevention and treatment.

MEDITATION DOES NOT HAVE A SET OF RULES, BUT THERE ARE SOME TIPS THAT CAN HELP.

- The length of time and frequency of meditating can vary for different people and different practices. But, pediatricians typically recommend the following time frames:

- **Preschool children:** A few minutes per day.
- **Gradeschool children:** 3-10 minutes twice a day.
- **Teens and adults:** 5-45 minutes per day or more based on preference.
- Try incorporating deep breathing into your children's daily bedtime routine—it can help them wind down for the night and make meditation easier to do when other situations arise.
- As young children learn to manage strong emotions, deep breathing can be part of the process—especially before and after time outs.
- While meditation can be done on your own, it can also be done with the help of a trained professional. Some counselors and individuals with training in meditation can help others practice learn and meditation.



Nursery Natter!

Welcome to the Nursery 2021.

Throughout this year you will be seeing your children build reciprocal, respectful and satisfying social interactions and relationships with their peers and educators. Where they can share a sense of belonging, wellbeing, identity and connection to others. This will happen by an emphasis on their level, interactions, we'll sing songs, read stories, have many cuddles and extra love during those care moments we provide multiple times daily (bottle feeding, nappy change, rest time and feeding times). Observing their circles of security and knowing when they need me to fill their bucket and when they need me to just be a presence they can circle back to, to recharge.

As I build bonds with the children and we develop a relationship, I'll be able to confidently provide activities based of their skill level, interests and capabilities. Through observation and documenting I'll be able to adjust the program

to challenge them and build their resilience and confidence. All the while still engaging with a program that stems off their interests and passions.

I love watching children specifically birth to 2, experience the world of sensory play.

Getting messy with experimentation, fine motor, cause and effect. Babies are unique individuals, rich in ideas, theories, experiences and knowledge.

As the children get older and the year moves forward we will focus on building their self help skills, identifying their emotions and guiding them through how to deal with them. We hope to have the children be able to identify their bottles, sheets, dummies, hats and comforters. Our job as educators is to help guide them and build resilience, independence, regulation and most of all fulfilment in their daily lives.

We ask that at the beginning of each day you make sure your child has what they need to have the most beneficial experience. Extra pairs of clothes (at minimum two), nappies, water bottle and hat (also any other necessary things they need, bottles, comforters, dummies). Please make sure to fill out their day forms you can find at the parent counter with how their previous day and night went and any other relevant information we need to know to make sure their schedule and mood is suited to their needs for that specific day. Thank you.

We encourage parent feedback as this informs our practice and currently we would love to have some photos of your family, we can place in our room to provide an element of belonging and home within this space. I look forward to taking care of your children and developing friendships with them that I will cherish, forever.

Regards, Miss Jessica.



Senior Nursery News!

Hello families and welcome to the first edition to the senior Nursery times for 2021!

Firstly, we would like to welcome back all the beautiful families, our Little Ducks family has missed your smiling faces. We are excited to have you here with us this year.

Myself (Miss Emma), Miss Mel and Mr Kim will be focusing a lot on welcoming new children to our room, helping make them feel safe, secure, supported and most of all have fun in their new environment. Our children who have returned to Senior Nursery we will be focusing on helping them grow new relationships with their new friends and build up from their last years skillset. We invite all parents to advise us how your child is best soothed, sleep preferences, interests and any other activities or advancement they would like us to add to the curriculum for your child. You can let us Senior Nursery Educators know verbally or via Story Park anytime needed.



For those who don't know me, my name is Emma, I am a Maori/Fijian born in New Zealand. I am currently Studying my Diploma in Early Education. Though I may be quite new to the industry I have a wide range of experience and a childlike heart to engage your child through a lot of Art, Music and Dancing. I am a strong believer in letting creative vices speak when you can't and communicate your feelings when you are learning them yourself. I am an incredibly caring educator and happy to share the love and support your kids through adventures and new experiences to make their souls smile.

Following on from last year language is a focus for us, which we will be begin to explore and challenge children's communication and oral language engaging in song, books and story time and pictures from home to help the children express themselves and build their own identities. In celebrating children are beginning to recognise their names and those of their friends



Senior Nursery News!

A large part of our learning curriculum is evolving in play that explores all senses of the child. We love to resource a wide range of materials into games that help the children investigate and discover nature and the world around us. This will help develop a greater understanding of feel (Texture, shape, size) and also play with classmates to see how each and every child will play their own personal way.



Building relationships with the Educators throughout their first month in Senior Nursery is very important to us as we understand change is a new concept. Lucky for the children moving up from Nursery have been interacting with us during outside play together in the small yard, so we will be building that to a higher level to support their needs. Miss Mel (Our Lead Educator) comes with years of personal and professional experience and has a beautiful way with the children. Miss Mel enjoys sharing her knowledge to support children's sense of belonging and confidence to explore. The children naturally gravitate to her ever-changing amazing ideas of interactive play and spark children's imagination and creativity through basic materials found in our environment and reinvent ways to investigate and explore ideas through play. Miss Mel is that familiar face the children know and love and will continue to ensure children are nurtured and care for with the upmost respect and care they need. Mr Kim is such a caring educator with fun on the mind, he guides the children so effortlessly and increases their smiles immensely. With the amazing original skillsets and experience Miss Mel, Mr Kim and myself have combined your children have a very wide variety of opportunities for an incredible successful year for all.

Together, we look forward to spending time with the children and nurturing them as they grow. We can't to capture the emerging skills they acquire while exploring along the way, please look to story park where you will find your child's portfolio and shared weekly progress for an update on your child's learning.

Thank you for entrusting us in your child's early years development, we look forward to sharing all.

Regards,

Miss Mel, Miss Emma

and Mr Kim



Toddler Time!

Hello and a warm welcome to the **Toddlers of 2021 and their families!** It's been a week into transitions and the pictures evidence a seamless and happy transition for our new friends from Senior Nursery so far. For those who are still on holidays we look forward to having you back.



To start with this year, Miss Sunakshi and I will work at ensuring that each of the Toddlers feels safe, secure and supported during their day in the Toddler Room. As each of them builds on their sense of identity (Early Years Learning Framework Outcome 1), we will engage them in role play and small group interactions. This will facilitate their transition from parallel play to associative play with their friends and will help them show interest in being part of a group.

For the Toddlers who are transitioning from the small yard to the big yard we will assist this transition by often watching the trains pass Oh so close by!, we might set up indoor obstacle courses which they can negotiate independently before attempting the obstacle courses outside and this will help increase their sense of wellbeing (Early Years Learning Framework Outcome 3). Further we will also talk about the importance of waiting for a teacher at some outdoor structures such as the monkey bars, while later in the year we will talk about healthy eating and wellbeing concepts such as understanding, self-regulating and managing their emotions.

One of the memorable aspects of my being the Lead Educator in the Toddler Room in 2020 was having the opportunity of being the Educator the second time around of some of the babies I looked after in the Nursery in 2019. Back then the babies needed a lot of cuddles and care. Last year in the Toddler Room, they were all grown up and telling me what to do. I really appreciated that as it resulted in child-led learning and I tried to build on the confidence of the Whole Group by encouraging them to extend their vocabulary. We read a lot of books and had a lot of conversations during the day. Miss Sunakshi and I intend to do the same this year and in the process they will continue to be effective communicators (Early Years Learning Framework Outcome 5).



Toddler Time!



While our curriculum will cover fine motor skills, art and craft activities and cognitive learning, we will also focus on social and emotional development and encouraging the Toddlers to become confident little people. To encourage each of the Toddlers to broaden their understanding of this big wide world in which they live we will read dreamtime stories and listen to Indigenous songs thus creating in them an appreciation of Aboriginal literature (Early Years Learning Framework Outcome 2).

A theory I adopt often in being an Educator is 'Zone of Proximal Development' theory of Lev Vygotsky which describes the extension of skills a child is capable of with adult help. Vygotsky saw an important role for adults in extending children's learning beyond what they were capable of independently. I believe that the Toddlers are at an impressionable age and if their learning is 'scaffolded' by a familiar educator they tend to learn faster and better. We will follow this theory in the Toddler room to introduce some scientific concepts to the children during which they can experiment and hypothesize and thus fulfill the Early Years Learning Framework Outcome 4 and continue being confident and involved learners.

In a few days time, a plan called Toddler Information Pack will be shared with you. It contains all the information you might need about the Toddler room and us educators. Please come and have a chat if you need any additional information.

Last but not the least we educators believe in a collaborative approach to learning. To this effect we would appreciate if you could provide us with valuable input about our curriculum and activities. You may do this by posting a comment directly in the plan, writing a note in our Parent Communication Book, sending us a note on Storypark or having a chat with us.

All our dedication,
Miss Belmira and Miss Sunakshi



Junior Kindy Column!

Happy New Year and welcome families new and old. We are very excited for the year ahead, and look forward to building relationships with you and your children. Every child is unique and we believe they are competent decision-makers, hence allowing us to be guided by their sense of agency and interest.

This year we have three educators in the Junior Kindy room, and we would like to introduce ourselves.

I am one of the Lead Educators, and my name is Francelis, I am also known as Miss Fran. I was previously working at Little Ducks Bardon for over a year and I had the wonderful opportunity to come to Wilston and be part of this amazing community.

I hold a Bachelor Degree in Education back in my country Venezuela and I have 9 years of experience working with children. I am currently studying my Diploma in Early childhood Education. I would like to assure you that your children are going to be cared for and loved. I love to make them smile and laugh while they are enjoying the educational environment.

I am one of your Lead Educators, and my name is Shona. I was previously working at Little Ducks Bardon and then I moved to Sydney for over a year, and I am now back in this beautiful community at Wilston.

I have a both a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and a Diploma in Montessori. I am from Singapore and now a proud Australian Citizen! I have 19 years of experience in Early Childhood and I have three lovely children. I am passionate about what I do and a strong advocate that children learn best through holistic environments that allow for discovery through play.



Junior Kindy Column!

Our goal for your child is to feel settled, safe and secure and we aim to help establish that bond and relationship with them. After getting to know them, we will set individual goals and provide them with the support, encouragement and experiences to foster this. We would like you to know that you can communicate with us through Story Park or through our communication



book that is located on the top of the lockers. We value relationships with parents and recognise you are your child's primary caregivers, and we are always here to support you.

Throughout the year we will be focusing on a play-based environment of learning and we encourage children to express their interests. This helps children create a strong sense of identity and to feel they are loved and they belong.

"Receive the child with gratitude; Educate them with love; Let them go forth in freedom." Rudolf Steiner

Warm Regards,

Miss Fran, Miss Shona, Miss Carla and Miss Maddie



Kindy Catch Up!

Kindergarten Newsletter January 2021

We would like to welcome our families to the Kindergarten Room for 2021. This year we are joined by Miss Amanda, so please introduce yourself when you are at the centre.

When your child arrives, please encourage them to put away their bag, lunchbox and water bottle. Please ensure all belongings are labelled, as this makes it easier to get it back to you if it gets lost. Please bring sheets for your children when they attend Kindergarten, as we encourage them to rest on a bed by reading quietly or doing puzzles between 12:30 and 1pm. Please let us know if your child requires extra rest or a cuddle, either by jotting in the communication book on the locker, or speaking with a staff member.

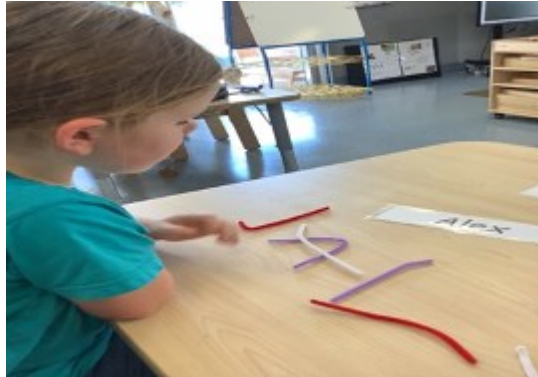
Our wellbeing chart is located near the whiteboard over the lockers. This will display the food eaten, rest taken and if there are any soiled clothes to be picked up. Please refer to this at pick up time or speak to a staff member. Our soiled clothes cupboard is above the bench on the Kindergarten side of the bathroom.

Our weekly programs are on Storypark, so please log on and read about what your children have been engaged with during the day. You are able to add comments and feedback via the conversation feature on Storypark. We love to see pictures from holidays or amazing things that happen at home.



Kindy Catch Up!

In the first few weeks, we will be focusing on getting to know each other, through Show and Tell, group discussions and activities. We have a belonging space on the rear purple wall and feel free to bring in more photos. The children have been interested in their names and we have been exploring different ways to write and form the letters.



During first term, we will be exploring water as a focus for our STEAM activities. Water play is a favourite of the children and we will do experiments and activities around how it moves, what can float on it, what dissolves in it and what lives in it. This week we investigated how to build boats that float on the water from various materials, including

Aluminum and Lego.

We look forward to getting to know all of our families and working together throughout the year.

Regards
Miss Natasha and Miss Amanda



A Healthy Meal!

Delicious Rice Paper Wraps

Ingredients

50g rice vermicelli noodles

1 carrot , peeled

1 avocado , peeled and destoned

¼ cucumber

8 rice paper wraps

8 king prawns , peeled and cooked

8 mint leaves

½ cooked chicken breast, shredded

sweet chilli sauce , to serve



Method

STEP 1

Put the noodles in a pan of water and bring to the boil, simmer for 3 mins, then cool under running water. Drain thoroughly.

STEP 2

Cut the carrot into matchsticks using a knife or a mandoline. Cut the avocado into strips and the cucumber into thin sticks. Soak 2 of the rice paper wraps in cold water for 1-2 mins until floppy.

STEP 3

Lift 1 sheet of rice paper out of the water, shake gently, then lay it carefully on a board. Place 2 prawns in the centre, with a mint leaf between them. Add a strip of avocado, pile some noodles on top, then add a layer of carrot and cucumber. Fold the bottom half of the rice paper over, then fold the sides in and tightly roll it up. Repeat using the second wrapper and soak 2 more to make 2 more rolls.

STEP 4

Make the rest of the rolls up using the remaining 4 wraps and the shredded chicken instead of prawns. Serve the rolls with the sweet chilli sauce for dipping.