



# Little Ducks Childcare Birkdale



March/April 2021

## A note from your Centre Manager

Welcome back to our newsletter for March/April.

For those of you who are here with us already, you would have noticed some new educators here within the centre. We have hired some new casual educators who are new to the industry and we are excited to welcome them, train them and mould them into passionate, high-quality professionals in our industry! These casuals are currently in training so if you have a question, query or concern, it is best to find one of our permanent educators whilst they are learning the ropes. This week we made some big updates to our Quality Improvement Plan to include the training of new high quality educators in the areas of supervision, ratios of educators to children and interactions.

In February we held our first parent engagement session for 2021! We hold these evening events throughout the year so educators can keep you informed about your child and their progress, without having eyes in the back of their head. If you aren't able to make the parent sessions and would like another opportunity to meet with the educators to discuss your child's progress and development, you can request a meeting at a time that suits you and we will accommodate that within our rostering.

Recently we have been overwhelmed with the amount of enquiries we have been receiving due to word of mouth. We would like to say thanks for sharing us with your community by offering our families the opportunity to share your small business with us and our community! In the next issue of our newsletter, we are inviting families who own small business the opportunity to place a small advertisement on the last page of our newsletter. If you are interested in this, please email a small image to [birkdale@littleducks.com.au](mailto:birkdale@littleducks.com.au) so we can return the favour.

My office hours are 8:00am-4:30pm, Monday to Friday, so stop by, email or call anytime to have a yarn.



*Cassie Windt*

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[littleducks.com.au](http://littleducks.com.au)

# Upcoming Events!

March	April
<p>Sunday 7th — Clean up Australia Day (celebrated Monday 8th) The children will engage in learning about how to keep our planet clean.</p>  <p>Saturday 27th—Earth hour (celebrated Friday 26th) The children will continue their sustainability learning as we participate in turning off the electricity for one hour</p> <p>Wednesday 31st—Easter egg hunt. The children will share the excitement of Easter as they find hidden eggs around the service.</p> 	<p>Friday 2nd—Good Friday—Centre Closed</p> <p>Mon 5th—Easter Monday—Centre Closed</p> <p>Monday 12th—Friday 23rd—Henny Penny Hatching Program—The children engage with the Henny Penny hatching program as they learn about the lifecycle of chickens.</p> <p>Sunday 25th—Anzac Day (celebrated Monday 26th). The children will give thanks to the soldiers for their service to our country.</p>  <p>Thurs 29th—International dance day— Celebrating the various style of dance from around the globe and encourage physical activity.</p>

## Community events

Tuesday 2nd March—Mobile Library Shop—Beth Boyd park—1:30pm-4:30pm  
 Wednesday 3rd March—Victoria Point Library—Baby time 9:30am-10am  
 Saturday 6th March—Bayside Blues Festival—Capalaba regional Park 11am  
 Sunday 7th March—Redland Bay community Hall—Birdlife Australia, owl workshop— Learn about to help these animals in the wild  
 Thursday 25th—March 7th—The great Moscow circus—Redland Bay

# Policy Reviews

**We value your input and feedback! The policies/procedures in review during March/April are:**

- ◇ Aids/HIV
- ◇ Health, Hygiene and Safe food
- ◇ Excursion
- ◇ Sandpit
- ◇ Toileting
- ◇ Educator and Management
- ◇ Grievance
- ◇ Centre Philosophy

**Ways that you can provide feedback are:**

- ◇ In person, or over the phone
- ◇ As a reply to an email



## Educator Spotlight ...

### Miss Kylie

Miss Kylie joined our Little Ducks Family last October where she began her journey in the childcare industry. This year she has accepted a permanent role in our Nursery room as the educator. Miss Kylie has a strong passion for creating lasting relationships and connections with both the children and families. She feels lucky to be a part of the children's journey and gets a sense of fulfilment in the rewarding work we do for the early years of a child's life.



## Our Philosophy—Now in review!

Please provide your feedback to [birkdale@littleducks.com.au](mailto:birkdale@littleducks.com.au)

Welcome to Little Ducks Birkdale, a service built with a strong foundation of the community in which we live. It is a place where educators, families and children can work, learn and play in harmony.

### Our Educators

Our educators are a strong and passionate team of professionals who are skilled, knowledgeable, reflective and collaborative. We are on an ongoing journey of continuous improvement, committed to lifelong learning and believe best practice is expected. We value critical reflection as a tool to ensure quality outcomes for children, and use current research and theories to underpin practice, program and policies. We are committed to supporting children to lead a healthy lifestyle and sustainable future and embed these practices throughout our educational curriculum. We believe in creating play spaces that provoke interest and wonder, where nature is respected, and children are free to learn, create and explore in their own, unique way.

### Our children and families

We respect each child's family as their first educator, and work in partnership to build trusting, supportive relationships that are reciprocal and collaborative. The dignity and rights of the child are of paramount importance, and we pride ourselves on creating a place for children to feel safe, secure and protected regardless of background, culture, ability, beliefs and values. We share the vision of working towards what is best for each child and create comfortable, welcoming environments for every family and child to feel supported and included. Each child's health, safety and wellbeing are respected without discrimination or bias. Every child has a voice, and we believe that education develops each child's personality through a play-based learning curriculum that promotes all children as successful, competent and capable learners.

### Our community

We believe that by being active participants in the community, this strengthens relationships between educators, families, local schools and local community services. By creating strong community links, we help bridge the gap between the community, our service and families and facilitates relationships to be developed and maintained. We respect and value the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and acknowledge the Quandamooka Land on which we work, learn and play. Our families' value educators who are professional, knowledgeable, passionate, happy and kind, whilst our children value educators who listen, take care of them and play blocks, read to them and play with them outside. Our families expect environments that are fun, inspirational, clean, safe and engaging whilst our children love having a place to take care of the gardens, see birds flying, where they can run, climb and learn to play with friends.

Our overall philosophy underpins a provision of high quality care and reflects our belief that early education is significant to children;

- **Being** in the moment
- **Belonging** in our environment
- **Becoming** themselves

# Healthy Recipes

## Tuna, pumpkin and broccoli pasta bake

### Ingredients

- 250g spiral pasta (uncooked)
- 3 + 1/4 cups water
- 400g butternut pumpkin (cut into 2cm cubes)
- 1/2 brown onion (grated)
- 2 cups broccoli florets (chopped)
- 200g can creamed corn
- 250g smooth ricotta cheese
- 1 teaspoon (metric) ground chilli
- 2 tablespoons (metric) fresh basil (chopped)
- 400g can corn kernels (drained and rinsed)
- 425g tinned tuna in oil (drained and flaked)
- 1/2 cup parmesan cheese (grated)

**1/4 cup breadcrumbs**



### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius.
2. Place pasta in the Decor Microsafe® Pasta Cooker and cover with 3 cups of water. Cook with the lid off according to the Pasta Cooker instructions for about 17 minutes, or until cooked to your liking. Replace Pasta Cooker lid and drain the pasta, set aside.
3. Place the pumpkin, onion, broccoli and ¼ cup of water in the Decor Microsafe® Rice Cooker & Vegetable Steamer and cook in the microwave with lid on and steam release lid vent button open for about 5 minutes, or until al dente then drain away excess water and allow contents to cool.
4. Add the creamed corn, ricotta cheese, chilli, basil, corn and tuna to the Rice Cooker and combine well with the steamed vegetables.
5. Add the cooked pasta to the mixture and combine well.
6. Pour mixture into a Decor 3L Thermoglass® dish and top with the parmesan cheese and breadcrumbs. Bake uncovered in the oven for 35 minutes or until cheese is crisp and golden.

Divide the pasta into 4 bowls, serve hot.

### Each serve of this recipe provides:

- 2.5 serves of **vegetables**
- 1.25 serves of **milk/yoghurt/cheese**
- 1 serve of **lean meat/alternative**
- 2.5 serves of **grain foods**

# Nursery

To begin the year, we have been focusing on building secure relationships with our children to aid them in feeling a sense of security and belonging in our environments. We have also been focusing on the circle of security and embedding it into our room. Kylie and I have been spending our time being on the floor, engaging with the babies and forming these bonds to set a secure base for the year. We are finding our babies settling in quickly and venturing off from their educators to engage in play. Through the circle of security, our babies have been finding their way back to us, their secure base, for a cuddle in their times of need.



Over the past month, there has been quite an interest in music and nursery rhymes in our room. It all began with Luca's family sharing with us that Luca has been having lots of fun at home with tambourines. We were then able to use this information to create a music area in our room and add in lots of musical instruments. We would like to thank our families that donated their formula tins to us as well, our babies have been having lots of fun exploring using them as drums. As we ventured more into nursery rhymes, our friend Elle brought in a CD for us from rhyme time at the library. We found the babies showing curiosity and excitement as we explored nursery rhymes through different texts.



Nursery rhymes provide bite-sized learning opportunities for young children to develop key developmental skills and can often be the trigger for hours of creative and open-ended play. They are a powerful learning source in early literacy and enable children to become interested in the rhyme and pattern of language. Interventionists such as Jerome Bruner suggest that the language behaviour of adults when talking to children is specifically adapted to support the acquisition process. This support is often referred to as scaffolding for the children's language and learning.



In the Nursery, we value the input from our families. We believe that collaborative relationships with families are fundamental to achieving quality outcomes for children. This leads us to our white board. In our meals area, you will find a large white board attached to the wall. It is here that we have a photo of each child and a themed question for the month. Our current question is What is your child's favourite activity, toy or experience? We would appreciate your input around these topics so that moving forward we can include your suggestions into our planning, programming and environments.

See you next time!

Love Miss Chloe and Miss Kylie



# Senior Nursery

How unbelievable that January is gone and we are now into February. January has seen the return of many friends, and in February we have welcomed Archer, Ezekiel, Sianna, Robert and Freddie. It is so joyous to have you as we begin to form bonds with you, starting our journey of learning and having fun.

The children have rapidly advanced in their physical development, which we have encouraged by challenging them with more difficult obstacle courses. Jack, Brielle, Adelynn and Rhys are displaying confidence in their balance and equilibrium, with Poppy becoming steadier in her walking and climbing, and Dakota standing, and so close to walking. The Move and Groove for February was jumping, so we created cushion obstacle courses and have also encouraged the children to jump on these into the sandpit.

The year has started with celebrating Australia Day with the children painting in the colours of the Wide Brown Land.



In February the children celebrated Waitangi Day, New Zealand's national day with a treaty which everyone signed in paint with their unique handprint. The Sustainability focus for January was conserving power, so we have shared "earth hour" with the children, turning off our lights and air-conditioner when they are not necessary. In February, we will celebrate Chinese New Year – the year of the "Ox", for which we will create a wall display featuring the children's painting of a dragon in vivid red and yellow, and will create a Chinese area where we will intentionally teach the children, as we interact with them around these articles.

As the year progresses, we see the children beginning to meet their goals, becoming more settled and appearing to embrace a sense of belonging. We have started a "Family Wall" where family's photos will be placed, including extended family and family pets, to create a feeling of ownership for the children in the room. Expressing our importance with mental health this year, we are aiming to achieve a comfortable, safe, and secure environment for our children, including the family wall and providing as much family input as we can with our whiteboard question to keep learning more about you.



As always, we continue to interact with the children, encouraging speech and language, intentionally teaching them the names of items on our display wall, reading books, reciting rhymes, and of course, singing songs. We would love to include some Nursery Rhymes that you sing at home with your children so please let us know what they are.



The year so far has been awe-inspiring, as the children surprise and delight us every day with their development, their individuality, their curiosity, and their humour. Thanks for allowing us to play and learn so phenomenally with your children.

Miss Debbie and Miss Ashleigh



# Toddler

Welcome to an early 2021 newsletter edition for the Toddler Room! So far this is the scoop for the early part of the year and where we will be heading for the next part of the year as a Toddler Family! This year for educators we have Miss Jelissa as lead educator. Miss Shannon who returned from maternity leave, as a lead educator and a new and friendly face has joined our Toddler Room family, Miss Paige who has settled in nicely! As a team, we are getting to know the children and create and form bonds with the children as well as getting to know you, the families! As we create bonds, we are doing this by offering cuddles or holding hands at drop off and implementing the circle of security within the room. This theory bases engagement around children and their secure base being accessible at all times, with the notion that when they are ready to explore the environment they will do so once feeling supported and comfortable. It's demonstrated in our one on one time when we change nappies by being completely present in the moment to engage



in in-depth conversations or by following their passion in a certain activity while the secure base is on the floor at the child's level. We have been focusing on including the children's voices in the program, which is letting the children decide what they want to do! We have implemented this by creating art cards in the room which have different pictures on them such as drawing, messy play, painting and so on. The children are able to select these cards and assist educators in preparing the experience chosen by them.



Thank you for all the beautiful family photos, we have begun putting them up on the walls and they are great discussion starters which may help a child feel settled for the day, encourage language as they chat about the people they love and also brings a sense of belonging as they see their family in the room, next

too all the other families. The toddler children LOVE water play! During water play, children find it easier to self-regulate, they begin developing maths and science concepts through play such as measuring, spatial awareness and volume e.g. will this bucket of water fit into the small cup? How many small cups does it take to fill up the bucket? We are focusing on water conservation at the moment so the love of water play has been a great point to start on, trying not to spill the water everywhere on the floor and putting it on the plants when we are finished with it, thus embedding sustainability in our daily learning. Move



and groove this month is jumping! We have been setting up various activities that encourage jumping in different ways eg how high, how far and how to land! Our favourite is jumping off the obstacle course equipment and landing safely onto the soft fall mats. We have seen progress in how the children use their bodies when preparing for a jump or for the landing. Last month was ball games and we used balls for our transition periods by passing the ball around the circle and singing a naming song - bee bee bumble bee to promote vocabulary, turn taking and name recognition. Moving forward, we will be focusing on other ways to incorporate

the children's voices into the curriculum and their decision making. We are using the photos from our daily experiences to display around the room as a means for reflection on past learning. Until next time, Shannon, Jelissa and Paige.





# Junior Kindy

Hi Families! Wow our year has certainly started with a bang in the Junior Kindy room! We have so enjoyed getting to know all the children in our room this year, this has enabled us to set learning goals and plan experiences based around their interests! It has been so lovely to build relationships with the children and families in our room and we are looking forward to growing these throughout the year.

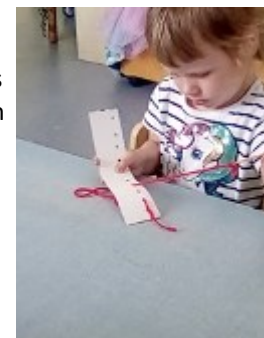


A big interest that we have discovered in our room has been around wildlife! We are so lucky to have an abundance of wildlife in our play-



ground and have already discovered and researched various types of spiders, insects, a water dragon and even a snake! This has definitely been a highlight for many of the children as we often hear them speaking about these experiences and an excellent teaching opportunity for us to discuss different species and how to keep ourselves safe while enjoying nature! Our Junior Kindy friends have shown us that they are enthusiastic learners and have shown a strong interest in learning the skill of cutting with scissors! We have responded to this by providing lots of experiences for them to develop this skill including cutting card, paper and clay, with the focus of using a correct scissor grip and safety while cutting.

We have seen such great progress from these experiences and it's wonderful to see the children reaching their own learning goals. We have also supporting this with other learning experiences involving fine motor and hand-eye coordination such as threading and sewing!



A highlight of our month would have to be the science show that visited us! We all really enjoyed watching the awesome experiments while learning about germs and how to keep our bodies healthy and safe! We are also looking forward to participating in more science experiments in the coming weeks to investigate another current interest of ours – colour mixing!



Our move and groove focus has been around increasing our jumping capabilities. We have done this through implementing the "jump over a candlestick" game during our transition routines, jumping from planks to the soft fall mats and jumping like animals.

Our sustainability focus has been on water conservation with the children using a 10litre bottle as our daily limit for water use and placing buckets out in the rain to catch water for reuse.

Moving forward we are continuing to assist the children with their individual goals and meeting their milestone developments through play based learning and joint decision making.

Thanks for a great start to the year! We are looking forward to all the wonderful learning we will achieve in the next coming months, as well as being joined by Miss Bree who will joining us as a lead educator in Junior Kindy for the year!

Miss Teesh and Miss Rylee



# Kindergarten

Kia ora our wonderful families! What a great start it has been for our Kindy children thus far where our main priority at the start of the year is always first and foremost to ensure we are creating, building positive, trusting relationships and rapport with all our children and families.

KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMME: Our Kindergarten program is largely informed and guided by the Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guide (QKLG) (<https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/kindergarten/qklg>). This framework provides guideline advice on effective, efficient ways to implement a Kindergarten program that meets National and Quality standards and Regulations. Two of the five Learning and development areas that is derived from the QKLG that we have focused on in the last two months were the following:



1. IDENTITY- Allowing learners to develop a strong sense of Identity through establishing safe, secure, and meaningful connections with families, peers, teachers, and wider community. As their teachers we have been very intentional in observing, spending one on one time with our children, collaborating with our lovely families to ensure we are best catering to their whole (Holistic) being. With our overall purpose of beginning to build a strong foundation for our children to become “Competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society” (Te Whariki, 2019). One of the many ways we have incorporated this into our daily routine is through ‘Show and Tell’, where our families have been so wonderful and proactive in sending through pictures, updating, sharing what their child has been involved in. All our children have loved either sharing and or listening to our show and tell sessions. The sheer joy and pride they have on their face when they share photos of their families outing and relive these precious memories through story telling is one of the many benefits of this task. Show and tell has been a great medium for our children to build on their oral skills, sense of belonging, questioning skills, confidences, communication, active listening, and relationship. Our family and pet wall display has also been beneficial in developing our learners’ sense of Identity where they



often seen engaging with this wall by introducing their family members, pets talking and sharing stories. This has been great building relationships with their peers as they would find common ground through having the same pet or same number of siblings etc. 2. CONNECTNESS: allowing children to build sense of connectedness to their world. One of the key focus for this learning and development area is ‘Showing respect for diversity and environments. Our children have been very open and intrigued with the various activities we have been doing around learning of other cultures and our role to protect the earth. Where they observed taking this information, processing, and making sense of it through in their self-directed play these are often seen in the form of them including in their pretend role play, Example Chinese New Year learning “I will play the loud drums to scare away the dragon” ... “I draw the Chinese Dragon and I put lots of red around it because it will get scared”. For Te Tiriti o Waitangi Day learning our children embraced this wonderfully where our parents had reported back many of our children sharing aspects of Maori culture had covered. As children are naturally innate caring beings through our learning of conserving energy we touched on pollution and how this is making our earth sick our children showed a lot of concern and this had encouraged them to be more aware of not wasting water and turning of switches when not in use. For rest periods we do a verbal check list for lights off, air conditioner off, fans on, windows open if too hot, having sun smart clothes on. As a class we determined whether we get a thumbs up for saving energy if we complete our check list or thumbs down for not saving energy.

# Kindergarten

We have welcomed two new students to our class this month – William and now Nikolai. They have settled into our kindy and making new friends well. It has been lovely to see our kindy children embracing these new friends, welcoming them and showing them the way. We are looking forward to continuing to build a strong relationship with you both and watching you grow and develop throughout the year. Recently we had a science show at the centre. The kindy children LOVED this show and were all so interactive and involved in this learning. We have discovered some budding scientists amongst the group since then and have continued implementing science into our weekly program to aid this interest and provide the children with the opportunity to use their critical thinking skills, predict, observe, and engage in deep conversations while testing theories. Some of our science experiments have included making fireworks using oil, water and food dye, using balloons by filling them up with water, air and sand, predicting which one will be the heaviest and testing our theory and making volcanoes. During our morning sessions we have been discussing the weather and observing changes and appropriate actions for different types of weather such as drinking lots of water, wearing a hat and sunscreen when it is hot. The children really enjoy pretending to put on their goggles to look outside and view the day's weather.



In literacy we have enjoyed reading and sharing books daily. The children enjoy picking a book to share with the class. This provides them with the opportunity to make choices and choose a book that interests them to help engage them in mat time. We are learning to recognise the days of the week each morning by looking at the day chart, located near our mat time area and noticing similarities in each word. Abbi. J noticed that all the days of the weekend in Y. Books provide us with rich learning from developing phonemic awareness to engaging our imagination as well as reflecting on our past experiences and learning new and exciting facts. We have also enjoyed practicing our mathematics skills by emptying and filling containers, practicing filling them up to the top without overflowing. We have practiced this skill by using water and sand into containers as well as in cup cake tins. The children have so much fun when provided with open ended materials and resources. Each child has been set a goal for term 1, as you will see on Storypark. The child's goal is based on an area of their development that we have observed and would like to help them further their skills in. Check out our program each week on Storypark where we include the children's goal's and plan activities that will help them grow in confidence and ability. Some of our goals may include developing fine motor skills, becoming more comfortable in the kindergarten environment, connecting with more peers or gross motor skills. By recognising children's strengths as well as their areas requiring further development, we are able to cater them as an individual and ensure they are being provided with as many opportunities to develop holistically throughout the year. The children have settled in well to kindergarten life. We are seeing them becoming more confident already and responsible, a word we talk about a lot in the kindy room. We can't wait to continue watching them and being a part of their success. As always if you have any concerns or would like to contribute to our program in any way please don't hesitate to talk to us and keep sending through photos to share with us what you have been getting up to on the weekend!

Till next time... Miss Maryanne, Miss Renee and Miss Kayla.



## Move and Groove!

Hi Everyone!

We have now completed our Jumping module for the year! This was such an exciting module with so many variations available to us: jumping on, jumping off and jumping between! We were able to play many games involving jumping including 'Jump Little Bunnies' and 'Jump Over the Candlestick' as well as setting up outdoor experiences such as a platform for the children to jump off, bouncy beams (which the children named trampolines) and long jump into our sand pit!



We have been focusing on the technique of jumping – taking and landing with both feet at the same time. This has been a bit tricky but with so many fun experiences and guidance from our educators we have been able to see some wonderful progress!

Moving forward to March our focus will be on galloping, we have lots of games planned such as pony races, gallop freeze and have even found a galloping song by Emma Wiggle that will surely be a hit across all age groups!

Thanks for another great month!



## Sustainability Corner!

Hello families! Last month saw us sparking up some great ideas about energy conservation! By the end of the month, as I walked through the rooms at Little Ducks I could see various ways the staff and children had made conscious efforts to be more energy efficient such as playing with the lights off, letting the sun do its thing, opening the windows for some fresh air rather than using the air con and by 3pm, the fans, aircons and lights were off for the afternoon while we played outside. The children have more of an understanding about it all to and why we are doing it. Also, if your children are anything like mine, then you may be getting told off at home too for leaving lights on in rooms when you aren't in them! In the older rooms, it is becoming common practice for the children to be responsible for remembering to turn it all off in the afternoons. It will be interesting to see if we have made an impact on the graph of our next bill! We will continue these practices through the year so we can track our progress! This month, we are diving in to water conservation. Which has been great because it has been raining so much! This week, Kindy collected water from the rain to use in our science experiments! We have asked for water containers with taps on them that we can fill up and use in water play that we love so much. Using these containers the children are beginning to grasp the concept that once it is empty, we can't fill them up again for the day, encouraging some more water wise practices is important as we learn about this very precious (And fun) resource! Coming up, we are going to focus on fostering a love of nature! If you have a great love for something, you are going to want to take care of it so keep an eye out for some natural play spaces popping up inside and outside. Got any sustainable practices at home that you would like to share? We would love to hear about them! And as always, we love recycled goods, let us know if you have anything at home that we may be able to use as spare parts! Thank you, Miss Kerri

