

Little Ducks Childcare Birkdale

November/December 2021

A note from your Centre Manager

Hi Families,

Can you believe we are here—the last edition of the newsletter for 2021 and only 9 Friday's away from Christmas! This year has seen some wonderful progression for the educators knowledge and the children's growth towards their developmental milestones has called for some big celebrations.

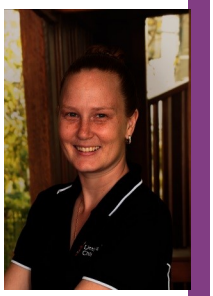
Over the past few months we have placed a focus on our outdoor environments and the purposeful learning occurring for children. The educators have evaluated the provocations they create for children and the ways in which their interests and autonomy over curriculum can be included. This has resulted in the children mentoring the younger age groups on how to manipulate resources, how to interact with those around them to form friendships and the younger children increasing their own competence and skill.

Quality Area 1 references our educational program and practice and as we near the end of the year, we have begun evaluating our strengths in this area and how we incorporate all the elements into our service. There are 3 standards in quality area 1 which are;

- ◊ Educational program enhances each child's learning and development,
- ◊ Educators facilitate and extend each child's learning and development,
- ◊ Educators and coordinators take a planned and reflective approach to implementing the program for each child.

After implementing our monthly program, we have begun deciding if this meets these elements and the approach moving forward. We look forward to seeing how this will pan out in the new year and the exciting ways we can record children's learning and educators planning.

The end of the year is my favourite time of year as we celebrate end of year events like graduation, Christmas parties, welcoming new families to the service and aiding in the transitions of rooms for children. We look forward to what 2022 brings for our Birkdale service and we would appreciate if you have any positive feedback to share, please visit our google or Facebook page and leave us a review! This helps other families in the community hear about our great centre too.



Tara Davies

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Kindergarten Approved Program — Queensland Government

littleducks.com.au

Upcoming Events!

November	December
Tuesday 2nd—Melbourne Cup Thursday 4th—Diwali Monday 8th-Sunday 14th—Recycling week Thursday 11th—Remembrance day  Tuesday 16th-Sunday 21st—Road Safety week Saturday 20th—Universal Children's day 	Tuesday 7th—Kindergarten Graduation  Friday 17th—Children's Christmas party Friday 24th—Christmas Eve Saturday 25th—Christmas day  Monday 27th-Friday 31st—Centre closed

Community events

4th, 11th, 18th November– Transition to Pre morning Vienna Woods SS
6th November– Lions Community Market Macleay Island Community Hall
6th November– Native Community Nursery Open Day, Indigiscapes
3rd December– Transition to Prep morning Birkdale South SS
4th December– Local Indigiscapes Eco Market
11th December– Candlelight Carols, Ormiston house

Policy Reviews

We value your input and feedback! The policies/procedures in review during November/December are:

- ◊ Medication
- ◊ Medical conditions
- ◊ Food, nutrition and beverage
- ◊ Sleep, rest, relaxation and clothing
- ◊ Code of ethics
- ◊ Discrimination, harassment, bullying and occupational violence
- ◊ Social media
- ◊ Additional needs

Ways that you can provide feedback are:

- ◊ In person, or over the phone
- ◊ As a reply to an email
- ◊ On Storypark



Educator Spotlight ...

Miss Paige

Miss Paige joined our team at Birkdale in February this year as a casual educator. Within a few weeks of Paige being with us she was soon promoted to full time educator in the Toddler room. Paige is a ray of sunshine and lightens up the room when she walks in, you can see this reflecting on the faces of the children. Paige's strengths are her strong connections with children and her creative ideas and experiences. Always on the ball, Paige is always willing to go that one step further to ensure the children have the best experience when in care. Paige is currently studying her Diploma and working towards becoming a lead educator of her own room.



Healthy Recipes

Ingredients

- 2 cup oats, dry
- 2 2/3 cup water
- 1 1/3 cup yogurt, vanilla, low-fat
- 1 1/3 tablespoon flaxseed, ground
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup blueberries, frozen

Serve With

- 1/2 cup, chopped pecans
- 4 tablespoon honey

Instructions

Divide ingredients evenly among 4 sealable containers (mason jars work well); stir. Cover and store in the refrigerator overnight.

Top each with pecans and honey before serving.



News from the Educational Leader

As we move into the end of the year, I wanted to share some information and provide a little more insight about our curriculum and a part of the educators' roles here at the service.

Did you know? The framework in which we use to inform our documentation and the outcomes in which the children work towards achieving forms part of the Early Years Learning Framework. This is a part of our rating and assessment process, and we are assessed against these 7 quality areas and given an overall rating.
The National Quality Standard; Quality Area 1 places a focus on program and practice. Educators utilise this tool to develop an understanding of what distinguishes a quality service and how to create a high-quality program.
As part of quality area 1 we implement what's known as a 'planning cycle'. This entails gaining knowledge of your child by observing them at play, interpreting and analysing their knowledge and learning by linking it back to one of the five learning outcomes or theorists. We then plan further learning opportunities to extend their skill or knowledge and evaluate the effectiveness of those extensions.

Below I have included two links for you to reference, should you wish to learn more; the first is a link to more information on the planning cycle and the second is a link to quality area 1.

https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-07/18012019%20Planning%20Cycle%20infographic%20v2_EDIT.pdf

https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard/quality-area-1-educational-program-and-practice

As part of the framework, we must also reflect on ourselves and our practices. Each term the educators have been busy constructing critical reflections. The process of a critical reflection involves identifying, questioning, and assessing our deeply-held assumptions – about our knowledge, the way we perceive events and issues, our beliefs, feelings, biases, and actions. Each classroom has a critical reflection every term that they un-pack, plan from and evaluate effective strategies and bias. This is achieved through professional conversations, research articles, seeking theorists relevant to the topic and is based on their own professional knowledge or opinions. This helps the educators to identify moments in time in which they may let their previous assumptions affect their way of thinking and provide solutions to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

We appreciate your feedback- your feedback guides our curriculum and provides us with invaluable information. You can provide feedback on the 'weekly review' which is sent weekly from your classroom, through having conversations with your child's educators, commenting on your child's documentation that you receive or via email.



If you have further questions or comments around our documentation process, please feel free to send a conversation to me through Storypark or ideally have a chat to your child's teachers.

Yours in learning, Michelle

Nursery



Welcome to the last addition of the Nursery Newsletter for 2021! First off, I would like to send out a big THANKYOU to all our Nursery families this year. It has been an absolute pleasure to care for your little ones and support them through their development.
As many of you are aware, ducks have been the centre of our program for quite some time. The children have displayed a great deal of interest in ducks and as child development theorist Maria Montessori once said "Children learn best when they explore their interests." Kylie and I have utilised this interest and planned to incorporate the children's goals around this theme. We have seen the children replicate activities from home such as visiting a duck pond, using the creative arts to make their own ducks as well as engaging with text; the 5 Little Ducks floor book which we have the joy of reading with the children several times a day.



Dramatic play has played a big part in the children's learning over the past weeks. We have seen the children engaging with the creative arts and using this as a gateway to engage in verbal communication and broaden their vocabulary. We have seen baby dolls being fed, nursed and cared for as well as the dress ups being utilised.
The services Centre Events have also aided in the children's learning over the past few months. We have learnt all about the sun and stars during space week as we engaged with stories, conversations and art. October also brought RETT Syndrome awareness month where we learnt all about our friend Kora in the Junior kindy room and how she needs a little extra support with her learning and abilities.
As the year comes to an end, we aim to support your children as they begin their transitions into their new rooms for 2022. Kylie and I plan to spend time with your children, settling them into their new rooms to ensure they begin to feel a sense of security as we move into 2022. We will do this through one of us moving to Senior Nursery with our children, offering short visits to the Senior Nursery and fostering new relationships with other educators.
Once again, it has been an absolute delight to work alongside all our 2021 nursery children and families. We have enjoyed observing the progress all the children have made over the course of their time in the nursery room. We wish you all a very merry Christmas and a safe holiday break.



See you in 2022 for a whole new chapter of adventure!

Love always
Miss Chloe and Miss Kylie





Senior Nursery

Hi Families, Can you believe this is our last newsletter for the year! How time is flying by.

This terms learning changed as we introduced a monthly program to support children's learning and goals as they work towards stages of development. With change, we reflected on what does meaningful learning mean to us by collaborating with educators and families in which developmental achievements will best support their child's learning. This led to educators gaining more meaningful documentation around children's progression towards the outcomes and spending quality time interacting and fostering relationships.



Following the children's class interest of Sustainability, we changed our indoor environment with natural resources for STEM play and open-ended resources, reusable glass jars for storage, play and propagation of plants and recycling cardboard from stock deliveries for artwork. The outdoors is where the children suggested a lot of their play to take place. They would state "outside" or a tap on the door communicating with educators. As the weather started heating up our knowledge grew about sun safety where intentional teaching strategies involved demonstrating, instruction and collaboration on wearing our hats, sunscreen, shoes and appropriate clothing whilst playing in the shade when necessary. Living it up outdoors provided learning about nurturing the environment with new plants, grown from seedlings, reusing the leaves from the trees for compost and doing safety checks with the children talking about the importance of safety and risks within our indoor and outdoor environments.





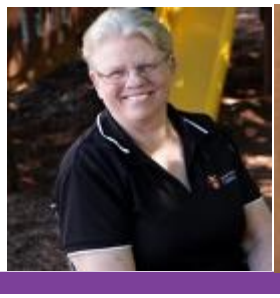
Belonging in our environment was also important for us educators where embedded learning hit close to home for some of our children learning about symbols, stories and songs supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Our welcome to country pays respect to the Quandamooka land we play on, where we sit and normally eat morning tea. "Here is the land, here is the sky, here are your friends and here are mine. We stand together, hand in hand to thank the traditional owners of this land. Thank you, Land." We then proceed to sing inanay during meal times using our loud singing voices and beating to a drum.

Providing principles, practices and outcomes into our program underpin the Early Years Learning Framework of pedagogy and decision making as apart of the curriculum. Listening to the children's voice informed interest, routine and transitions as we learnt a wide variety of ways in supporting children to learn, develop and understand their world. Outcome 5: children are effective communicators was also a highlight for all our friends developing language saying 1-2 words to communicate or use nonverbal to gain meaning.

We watched friendships evolve, heaps of laughter and meaningful moments in the Senior Nursery as the children grow and independently challenge themselves each day.

Let's create more meaningful learning…

From Miss Ashleigh and Miss Debbie





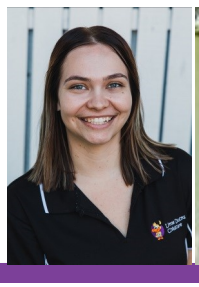
Toddler



Hello Families, Welcome to the Toddler newsletter! In this edition we are reflecting on the past few months and our year so far. Throughout the last couple of months, we have been very busy achieving our term 3 goals through play and incorporating our current interests into these goals. We have found increasing confidence within the children imitating play through role play in home corner and throughout planned small and large group play experiences and interacting through associate and parallel play. The children's interests in animals has continued and grown throughout the months, to continue to incorporate this strong interest through their learning we added animal books, animal toys and objects, animal puzzles and found animal songs and rhymes for the children's development across all aspects of their development. Through imitation of sounds and labeling animals the children fostered their vocabulary and pronunciation, through reading books and exploring toys the children are able to foster their relationships and connection with each other and throughout the exploration of puzzles, they have increased their problem solving and reflective thinking skills. We have been focusing our learning through small group play as we have been setting up various activities around the room during play such as building and stacking different size blocks, shapes, 6-9 piece puzzles, threading, painting with different textured paint brushes or stamps, play dough, chalk and role play set up in home corner. We have noticed there has been lots of communication and support happening between peers as they engage in activities like this and show inclusion of those around them, seeking their involvement in their learning. Recently we have been providing both indoor and outdoor environments for the children and this has been a big success for the children's learning as it creates a big curiosity for planned experiences from our monthly program. The children have a keen interest in throwing and aiming so we have set up indoor hockey sacks and hula hoop game for children to engage with. Outside, we have been doing lots of jumping and climbing, including jumping off obstacles that we set out together, developing their gross motor skills and heavy work muscles. Most recently we have noticed the children showing signs of readiness for toileting and this is a sign for us in the toddler room to start building the children's self-help skills. To build on this through our room routines we have been providing morning tea fruit and vegetables on plates in the middle of the table with tongs, this increases the children's fine motor skills and turn taking. Another room routine we are incorporating self-help learning in is our nappy changes. By encouraging the children to pull down and pull up their own pants before and after changes. Self- help skills have become a goal focus for the children in our room as they prepare to transition to Junior Kindy next year. We will be continuing this focus in more routine times in the next coming months. We continue to focus on regulating and understanding emotions of ourselves and others. To explore our understanding of emotions we have been learning about the zones of regulation. The children have been learning about identifying their emotions, self- regulation, identifying triggers, coping strategies, size of the problem and how to revert back to their happy place. To help incorporate the zones of regulation, we have made an area on the Velcro walls for all the children to have access to and complete little exercises. Moving forward, we will be working towards our fine and gross motor skills. As part of this we will build the children's persistence and building resilience to build further in their self-help skills through role modelling, supporting their self-regulation, maintaining a stress-free environment, acknowledging emotions and helping the children to understand change and creating risky play activities. Love from Miss Bree and Miss Paige









Junior Kindy



Hello families!
Welcome to our latest edition of the Junior Kindy newsletter! As we near the end of the year, we are seeing so much change and progress being made across all areas of development!
In physical development, we have been focusing on growing fine motor muscles as we explore with the barrel of monkeys, balancing and dangling them together, manipulating playdough, cutting and pasting in the art area and even in routine times as we wash our hands and use tongs to serve our fruit. Lately, we have noticed that the children have a big interest in throwing and aiming so we have set up an indoor ball pit/ game for children to engage with. Outside, we have been doing lots of jumping, including jumping over obstacles that we set out together which in itself is a big task as we engage big muscles to move equipment around to do so. As we continue to develop our social skills, we are seeing that children are showing more interest in interacting in small groups and that team work is on the rise, especially as children work together to complete the various puzzles that have been on rotation, at the moment a favourite is the big t-rex floor puzzles, it is tricky but it is always exciting to see it once it is complete. There has been lots of communication and support happening between peers as they engage in activities like this. When looking at our health and wellbeing, this month in particular has been special as we learn about and show support for rett awareness month. This is a foundation close to our hearts here and the children have been learning about how scientists are working really hard to make medicine for people who have this condition and many others! Our bodies are very important and we have been talking about how we can use the foods we eat to support them and how we can stay active and how we can support others to be active if they need some support.



Our interests are forever changing and we learn so much through planned and spontaneous activities that surround these. Over the last couple of weeks we have been learning about community heroes like the scientists and police etc and we have also been doing a lot of role play surrounding super heroes. We also have been rescuing our own super heroes that have been trapped in sticky tape, al foil, pipe cleaners and string. This month we have introduced show and tell to support the development of confidence, language and friendships as the children share their interests and home culture together.
This is our last newsletter for the year so we wanted to say a big thank you for a wonderful year! We have had so much fun learning together and can't wait to see all the wonderful things the children get up to over Christmas and into the new year!
Miss Teesh, Miss Kerri, Miss Rylee and Miss Jade.







Kindergarten



Hello families from the kindergarten room. We hope you are all doing well. Time sure is flying right on by that we are now well into our fourth and last term of the year before our precious children begin the next important chapter of their lives.
A few months ago, we got to attend a 4-day long conference hosted by Early Childhood Australia filled with passionate, expert advocate speakers involved in the Early years sector. After some reflections upon this invaluable knowledge gained, it directed us to base our Term 4 goals around the following key learnings building strategies that will help build 1.) EXCUTIVE FUNCTION, 2.) METACOGNITION, 3.) PERSISTENCES.

1.WHAT IS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION? “It refers to set of skills. These skills underlie the capacity to plan and meet goals, display self-control, follow multiple step directions even when interrupted, and stay focused despite distractions among others. (no one is born with Executive function skills but nearly everyone can learn them).” (Harvard University)

2. WHAT IS METACOGNITION? Is the act of thinking about thinking, it is a self-regulatory process centered on managing one’s own thinking. Metacognitive process is used to select, monitor, and evaluate their approach to a task

3. PERSISTENCES: “Children need to learn resilience’s to face challenges, so they actually believe they can cope when faced with something tricky. Children of all ages also need to learn self-regulation, the ability to focus on long term goal and not just seeking immediate pleasure.” (Dr Judith Locke).

The last few weeks the kindergarten room have been able to implement the above 3 key learnings through our range of weekly and one-off incursions such as Lego Class, African drumming, wildlife rangers and mad about sciences workshops. These experiences have provided new opportunities for our children to engage, plan towards and achieve a goal, independently follow instructions by breaking these into smaller task using images or verbal instructions and later reflect on challenges they face individually, small, and large group collaboration.



The last few months saw the children explore body safety and child protection. Through the Bravehearts incursion the children learnt how to identify areas of their body that were for just themselves, how to tell someone they trust if they are feeling uncomfortable and consent. The children used the traffic light system as a means for identifying their body areas. Red meaning no, green meaning okay and yellow meaning be careful. The kindergarten children furthered this learning by discovering who was a safe stranger and who would be an unsafe person to trust. They learnt about consent meaning gaining permission to do something that you want to and having the right to say no. The children were educated around if someone makes you agree to what they want to do, then that’s not asking consent and the strategies they can implement to overcome this challenge.

Kindergarten



We are well into our transition to school program with only a couple of visits left, during these visits to Birkdale South State School we have observed how our children are confidently and independently participating in the set activities, contributing to discussion, and taking turns to add and extend conversations. We have used these experiences to build our Executive Functioning and metacognition skills by constantly having chats and reading stories about what big school will be like , emphasizing the importance of responsibilities for themselves and belongings. Also practicing ways we can make friends by introducing our selves and inviting others to join in on a game.



The children utilized the technology in their room to engage with their peer who had taken a trip around Australia. The family shared photos of their adventures through our online platform which then resulted in educators sharing these images with the class. The children then all worked collaboratively to discuss questions they wanted to ask about the trip and through zoom meetings they continued their connection with their friend, learning about his travels and seeing different parts of Australia.



Throughout the last term of tis year the children have utilized their safety assessment skills and challenged their risk taking abilities as they have begun to climb trees, swing from the bars of the fort and more advanced obstacle courses. The children identified the safety measures needed for themselves and others as they completed their own risk assessment.



The next weeks we will be continuing to build on the above 3 key learning and making these last few weeks enjoyable and memorable as possible for our wonderfully awesome children. We hope you all enjoy your Christmas break and wish all the kindergarten children a happy first day at big school and are looking forward to seeing their first day photos.

Miss Renee, Miss Maryanne and Miss Kayla







Sustainability Corner!

Howdy families,

Our sustainability plan is changing! We have been reflecting on how we program for this in our daily lives and have decided as a group that rather than focus on one topic each month, we will have an environmental and sustainability strategy that will encourage educators to take a holistic approach to being green in all areas of our day whether it be in play or in routine times.

Our strategy will mainly focus on water conservation, energy conservation, creating and caring for our gardens and reducing, reusing and recycling which as they become every day practice, will branch off in to smaller subjects and branch out in to encouraging the children to take their learning out into the community.

We will be having meetings every now and then and asking for feedback so feel free to let us know your tips and tricks you use at home.

For now, our biggest focus is going to be on setting up our environments to have an abundance of plants to suit our local flora and fauna and we will begin to learn about these and the importance of these. In the afternoons, the children will become the responsible people in making sure we are turning our fans, aircons and lights off and we will continue to embed the rest of our strategy in our every day goings on in the centre.



Thanks for reading, we look forward to sharing our progress with you next time!

Enjoy this list of things you can do indoors with all these wet afternoons we have been having!

Miss Kerri



Reconciliation Action Plan!

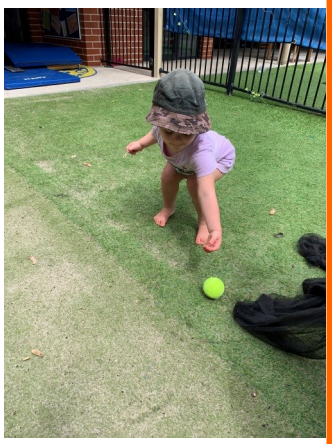
At Little Ducks we are committed to reflecting on the progress made in the growth of knowledge and pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions in our early learning service. We have celebrated success over the past few months as planning has become evident and embedded in or curriculum across all ages. This celebration has lead us to reflect on where we are headed next with our RAP. The educators have decided that over the coming months, they would like to now focus on embedding Indigenous resources and perspectives into our environments. Our teachers and educators are in a unique position to reflect on their environments and decide upon where they are headed individually in each care environments as we place our inventory orders for the end of year. Through engaging in these discussions, teachers and educators are able to support children's sense of identity and belonging as well as promote a culture of understanding and respect towards cultural diversity for all children.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
REFLECT

Move and Groove!

Hi everyone! Welcome to our last Move and Groove newsletter of the year! What a great year we have had developing our fundamental movement skills! I wanted to use this edition of the newsletter to highlight the importance of children developing and using these skills in early childhood!

Fundamental movement skills are the building blocks for more complex skills as they grow. These skills will help children take part in sports and games! Fundamental movement skills are not something that naturally develop in children without support, this is why move and groove forms an important part of our curriculum here at Little Ducks!



This month we are focusing on underarm rolling. Underarm rolling involves stepping forward with the hand opposite to the ball hand, and swinging the ball hand in underarm motion to roll the ball. We have opportunities to practice this when we bowl and roll balls! We can also use this motion to throw a bean bag while playing hopscotch! This might be something that you may like to try at home to further support this skill!

Once again, thanks for a great year of moving and grooving! It has been amazing to see how the children skills have grown over the past 12 months! We look forward to seeing the progress of these skills in 2022.

Miss Teesh