

# Little Ducks Childcare New Farm

Jan/Feb 2022

## A note from your Centre Manager

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2022 It is always exciting to begin a new year and to see the children, many of whom are excited to move into a new environment. The children have had many transition visits to their new environment and are very familiar with their new teacher and mostly have a familiar teacher who has moved with them—our aim being to create consistency for the children.

Our service is intentionally set up with different environments on each level to meet the differing needs of the children's developmental stages. This means the children are always excited to move to a new environment which has challenging and inviting resources and purposeful environments that meet their current needs.

During January we will invite parents to attend parent information sessions to allow them also to meet and greet their child's teachers and also build strong connections with the teachers. This is also a wonderful opportunity for the teachers to understand the needs of each child and understand how the links form home to Early Childhood can be formed to create positive connections for the children.

We welcome our many new families who are joining the Little Ducks community for the first time. These children and families have been offered numerous stay and play visits making the transition to Little Ducks easy and enjoyable.

One of our big focus's for 2022 is to build on our community connections. In 2021 we supported many community charities, in particular Valley Hearts. We have invited many community organisations into the service such as the New Farm Library, Dental2You and Kids Heart Pilates and RawArt. Connections with the local community create meaningful learning opportunities for Children .

If you would like your child to be part of these wonderful opportunities you are welcome to contact the service on 3252184 or newfarm@littleducks.com.au

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Queensland Government

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# Educator Spotlight

## Miss Michele

Centre Manager



Michele has been working in the Early Childhood Sector for the past 26 years, working in all parts of the sector, Family Day Care, Outside School Hours Care but mostly where her passion lies in Early Childhood. The last 6 years Michele has managed a service for Little Ducks Childcare, this being the 4th year at New Farm.

Michele's philosophy is closely aligned with Emmi Pickler, believing that respectful care is essential and that children including very young babies are far more capable than many people realise. Creating a calm, positive, respectful environment where the cues of children are recognised and followed means that children will thrive as their needs are met in an intentional respectful and unhurried way. If you watch even the youngest child carefully, they will be able to communicate their needs and through this you will build strong neural pathways and remove much of the frustration for the child and carer.

Michele is also a strong believer in training for educators. Knowledge is the key to great outcomes for children but not only that it allows educators to feel valued respected and successful.

Early Childhood is such in important part of a child's development, did you know that in the first few years of a child's life more than 1 million new neural connections are formed every seconds in a child's brain. (www.developingchild.harvard.edu)

Miss Michele is a Mum to 3 grown up children and Baba (Russian for Grandma) to one gorgeous little boy.

# Book of the Month

In each newsletter this year, we will be including our book recommendation for families along with a link of where you can purchase this book and an explanation of why we think this book would be a great read for you.

**Reading to babies and young children**
Babies and young children are sponges that soak in practically everything in their environments. It's true! Even during story time, their minds are at work, taking in all the language they hear and lessons the characters learn. Reading to your child — at any age — will boost their brain development, your bond, and so much more. And all it takes is a few books, motivation, and a little time. Experts from the National Centre on Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning also explain that reading books to kids helps expand the number and variety of words they use. Think about it: The books you read often contain words you might not otherwise use in your everyday communications. While reading a book, you might end up using more specific names for different plants or animals or use more adjectives (descriptive words) altogether. And this adds up. One 2019 study Trusted Source estimated that children who are regularly read to in the 5 years leading up to kindergarten are exposed to 1.4 million more words than children who aren't read to during those years.

**Our first book recommendation!**
The invisible string – Patrice Karst
Specifically written to address children's fear of being apart from the ones they love, The Invisible String delivers a particularly compelling message in today's uncertain times that though we may be separated from the ones we care for, whether through anger, or distance or even death, love is the unending connection that binds us all, and, by extension, ultimately binds every person on the planet to everyone else. Parents and children everywhere who are looking for reassurance and reaffirmation of the transcendent power of love, to bind, connect and comfort us through those inevitable times when life challenges us! Let's tell the whole world that we are ALL connected by Invisible Strings!

**About the Author**
Patrice and her books have been widely featured in print and broadcast media and she is a well-loved public speaker. Her work touches children and adults alike. Love and the needs of the heart are something Patrice understands well. She has made a literary career out of addressing in warm and humorous prose the issues that tickle or trouble our souls, both spiritually and practically. Patrice's books are the perfect fit for the time in which we live, offering comfort, support and wisdom in her down-to-earth way.




**Why we recommended this book.**
Your child starting childcare marks a new stage of family life, and it will take some getting used to. You may worry about how your child will cope without you, and whether a carer will see to her needs as well as you do. Your child may take some time to adjust and it's only natural if she misses you a bit at first. This book will help you explain to your child that while you wont be together during the day anymore, you will always be connected by your invisible sting of love.

# Upcoming Events




## January

Saturday 1st – New Years Day
1st – 31st – Walk Your Dog Month
Tuesday 4th – First Day back at Little Ducks for 2022
Wednesday 26th – Invasion Day/Survival Day/Australia Day
Saturday 29th – World Puzzle Day

## February

Saturday 12th – Chinese New Year/Lunar New Year
Sunday 13th – Apology Anniversary
Monday 14th – Valentine's Day
Thursday 17th – Random Acts of Kindness Day
Sunday 20th – National Love Your Pet Day
Monday 21st – International Mother Language Day
Monday 21st – World Harmony Day
Monday 28th – Summer's Day KidSafe
Monday 28th – Last Day of Summer



# Policy Review's

Our policies in review in Jan/Feb are:

- Death of a Child
- Health & Hygiene for Enclosed Outdoor Spaces - Policy & Procedure
- Transitioning Children between Environments
- Centre Presentation
- Physical Environment (Workplace Safety, Learning and Administration)
- Smoking, Alcohol & Drugs
- Staffing & Supervision
- Privacy & Confidentiality
- Transitioning Children between Environments
- Access to the Ground Floor Procedure




If you would like to provide feedback you can do so via email to arm@littleducks.com.au or through the suggestion box located in the level 1 foyer

# Move and Groove

Move and Groove is a Physical Development Program embedded in all of our Little Ducks Childcare services. At Little Ducks Childcare New Farm Miss Megan Is our dedicated Move and Groove Officer. Miss Megan will facilitates a 30 min physical development class for each age group each week.

Move and Groove Program is based on the 7 Fundamental Movement Skills.

- Running.
- Jumping.
- Coordination.
- Throwing.
- Catching.
- Kicking.
- Striking.

The Program is also influenced by Kids Heart Pilates. Kids Heart Pilates have trained our Move and Groove Officers int heir Pilates program. Many aspects of this program are included in the weekly movement classes.

As well as these Classes Miss Megan provide a physical development focus that all educators include in the planning for children's learning each week. In this way a focused intentional positive impact is made on children's physical development. Did you know that a focus on Gross Motor skills has important positive impacts on children's fine motor skills and cognitive development as well as the important improvements on general health of regular exercise.

Move and Groove is also a favourite time of the week for most of the children.





# Sustainability Program

At Little Ducks New Farm we put great importance of teaching the children about sustainable practises. The children are the future of our world so what we teach them and their understanding of the world will have a great impact on the future of the natural world.

To this end we have created a Sustainability Strategy through reflection and consultation with the community. This Sustainability Strategy is embedded throughout the learning programs across all age groups.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY**

The service promotes the importance of building positive attitudes towards sustainable values and nature within the children's educational program. The centre is committed to promote environmental education and embedding sustainable practises by encouraging children, parents and staff to:

- Actively participate gardening projects such as herb and vegetable planting
- Maintain compost bins and use fruit & vegetable waste from the centre
- Use energy saving practices such as turning off lights and air conditioners when rooms are not in use, using air conditioners and clothes dryers only when necessary
- Reduce water use by thoughtful use of water in children's play
- Using water from children's play for watering grass, plants and gardens
- Where possible, use recycled materials and paper for children's art and craft activities reducing waste
- Where possible using natural resources for teaching materials
- Office to reduce paper by using email or centre web page to post newsletters or notices to parents
- Reduce the use of plastics goods within the centre where ever possible
- Reduce the use of chemicals within the centre
- Continue the education of children, families, staff and the community of our sustainable values
- Provide recycling stations throughout the service and encourage families to recycle useful items

Embedding learning about sustainability into children's learning documentation.

The service will appoint a Sustainability Officer to lead and guide the implementation and continual improvement of our sustainable program to educators, children and families.

***Policy Source Acknowledgements:***
*Consultation with Management, Educators and Families*
*National Quality Framework*



# Snr Nursery—Ground Floor

Welcome to all our families in the Senior Nursery. We look forward to a fun-filled year, with lots of memories to share with you. My name is Siji and I will be the Lead Educator for Senior nursery 2022. I have completed a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care and have been working in the childcare sector for the past 2.5 years. Throughout my time in childcare, I have worked across all the age groups in various positions. These journeys have helped me develop and grow as a passionate educator.

Miss Swati will join me in Senior Nursery. Swati completed the Diploma in Early childhood education and care and is excited to continue to build her connections with the children from Nursery .She is quite familiar and confident with routines of each of your child and will be happy to support them settle well in this room as well.

As part of our Planning, we offer an indoor/outdoor experience which allows freedom of choice where children can explore both indoor and outdoor environments. We also encourage and promote self-help skills in our room. At this age children begin to respond, and then enjoy the feeling of independence and conquering their newfound skills. Building confidence and self-esteem is an important part of our program. We are lucky to have an easy access to outdoor environment and blend with nature quite often to embed more sustainable practices on our daily basis.

We aim to provide a safe, healthy and relaxed environment where the children can enjoy sensory activities, explore materials in their environment and support their natural curiosity. Playing is the way in which young children learn and develop new concepts. It is from this approach that we will organise the room, interact and bond with the children.

As part of our programming, we encourage all parents to give us feedback throughout the year, sharing with us any new interest. Photos from weekends, any cultural holidays celebrated at home. All these things we can add as an input in our program and provide children with more exciting experiences linked to their current interests.

Daily Requirements:

- Hat
- Drink bottles - place in labelled basket near kitchen door
- Bag with 2 to 3 spare clothes
- Shoes
- Daily Communication Information will be near the sign in/out sheets with details on all the meals and sleeping times.





We look forward in caring and educating your child by working together with you to ensure your child's time in the Senior nursery room is a fun, playful and exciting experience for us all.
Miss Siji and Miss Swati

# Nursery—Level One

Dear Parents and Carers,
Welcome to Nursery for the year 2022. Miss Isobel and Miss Suchi will be working together 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 up a trustful 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.
Families/Parents are requested to place their child's bags in the locker as per their choice and the to sign in their child/children. We also request our families to complete the bottle receipt form placed near to sign in/out sheet. This helps the educators in the room to keep a track of bottles through the day for individual children. Individual daily information sheets are available on the walls in the Nursery room 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. We would also request all the nursery parents/families to provide a pre-measured bottle for the formula for their child to be fed during 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. We would be looking forward towards getting inputs from our families about their child's interest, skills and any special moment at home which could be beneficial in terms of working together towards supporting our children's growth and development. Our daily routine information chart in the room is also completed as we progress through the day providing individualized information about each child and their day.



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 2022 with all our amazing babies.

Miss Isobel & Miss Suchi



# Toddlers—Level Two

Welcome to Toddlers, my name is Nick and I will be your Lead Educator for Toddlers 2022. I have a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care and worked at the Little Ducks in Birkdale for over five years before joining the team here at New Farm in January 2021. Throughout my time in childcare I have worked across all age groups, This year I am excited to be stepping into the role of Lead Educator. I am passionate and dedicated to making sure each child's needs are being met and that a safe, caring, fun, and educational environment is provided for them.

With me in the room this year will be Lainey, who is new to the childcare industry having started with us hallway through 2021. She is studying her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and has already learned and accomplished so much. She has been working in the Toddler room during the past few months and is familiar with the age group and room environment.

The environment we have created for the Toddler room this year is designed to be open and spacious, with multiple areas where the children can explore learning resources and play. This includes the home corner, filled with child-sized furniture, play food and cooking sets; the play mat, filled with various toys and learning resources to be rotated and changed based on children's interests; the art corner, where children can make beautiful art creations including drawing, painting and collage; and the welcome/quiet mat where the children can read books and engage in group time songs and readings as part of our welcome each morning.

Each week, a program will be shared with families that will offer information about planned activities and experiences each day of the week. These will be categorised into the five learning outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework. Throughout the week we will be updating the program with pictures of experiences, as well as adding any spontaneous learning. We love to hear parent input too.

A few things to be aware of:

Lockers: At the start of the year each child will select a locker and we will label it with their name, on top of the lockers you will find our Sign in and out sheets as well as our Daily sheet for Toddlers.





What to Bring:

Hat and shoes

Drink Bottle

Bag

Sheets

Spare Clothes – Clothing with sleeves as require by our sun safety policy.

Lainey and I can't wait to see what the children create, build, and learn in their new environment. Mr Nick

# Junior Kindy—Level Two

Welcome to Junior Kindy, my name is Jamie and I'll be the lead educator for Junior Kindy 2020. I've been working in the childcare industry for just over five years now, with three 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 Diploma in Early Childhood Education and care.

Lily is the Assistant Educator in Junior Kindy and has been a part of the little ducks' team since last year. Currently studying her Certificate 3 in Early childhood education and Care, Lily was the assistant Educator in our Senior Nursery classroom last year. This will be Lily's first time working with this age group and I am excited to welcome her into the room.

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 feed back through out the year, sharing with us any new interests that have developed at home or sharing stories and photos from your weekends. 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. Lockers: At the start of the year each child will get to select a locker and we will label it with their name, on top of the lockers you will find our Sign in and out sheets for Junior Kindy.

Fridge: There is a fridge located in the kitchen that can be used to store food if you don't use our provided food service, please make sure that that any lunchboxes, food containers or bottles are labelled with your child's name.

**What to Bring:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Bag | Hat |
| Drink bottle | Sheets |
| Spare clothes | Shoes |

Mr Jamie and Miss Lily





# Kindergarten—Level Three

Welcome to our Government Approved Kindergarten program, 2022! My name is Suder and I am The Early Childhood Teacher at Little Ducks Childcare New Farm.

I have been in this sector since 2011 and have worked with multiple age groups over those years. I joined Little Ducks Childcare, New Farm in 2016 as a Nursery room educator while studying a Masters of Learning and Development specialising in Early Childhood. Once complete I moved to the role of Early Childhood Teacher and have been in this role for the past four years. I am passionate about my career and love to watch the progress and development of the children as their love of learning, their curiosity and their confidence develops as they begin their formal learning journey.

This year, I aim to provide your children with a welcoming, warm, safe, secure, and comforting environment. I aim to provide more opportunities for your children to engage with one another to develop trust, friendship, acceptance, and a sense of belonging. Children's potential, interest, talents are encouraged and scaffolded by providing them a range of experiences according to their individual needs. Small group and large group experiences will be planned to encourage them to build friendships through interactions with their peers and teachers and to celebrate similarities and differences within our community.

The Curriculum – Education Queensland's, Queensland Kindergarten Learning Guidelines (QKLG) supports play-based learning that focus on children's development, and individuality. We incorporate hands-on learning, cooperative learning, projects, and individual work that engages and activates children's learning and helps them become independent and confident learners before they transition to school. We encourage all parents to collaborate with us throughout the year by contributing to our program, sharing via, email /Storypark conversations or in-person about your child's interests, traditional celebrations and family holidays or anything you think we can include in our program and could also help to connect children's learning between home and Kindy.



# Kindergarten—Level Three

**What to pack for kindergarten?**

- Backpack – I highly recommend a regular sized backpack that will be large enough for all your child's belongings.
- LEAK-PROOF water bottle that your child can open and close independently.
- Hat – your child will receive a Little Ducks hat in their Kindy pack.
- extra set of clothing – named please. Even if your child is fully toilet trained, accidents do happen at times. There are also water tables and other messy opportunities for your child in their classroom which may mean they require a change of clothes.
- Healthy snacks and a lunch box - if your child isn't having Centre food.

**What to do when you arrive with your child?**

- Encourage children to carry their own back packs to kindergarten.
- Help your children to find their names labelled in the locker and organise their belongings.
- Drink bottles to be placed in the water tray located in the playground or dining room.
- Remember to sign in your child on arrival and sign out when collecting them.
- Packed lunch boxes to be placed in the fridge located in the kitchen. This is only for children who won't be eating the Centre's food.

**Extra curricular Activities**
Kindy Program includes a range of additional extra curricular activities throughout the year. These include but are not limited to:

- Raw Art—weekly visiting art teacher providing creative focused experiences based on the Kindy Program
- Kids Heart Pilates—Pilates movement program
- Lab Science—weekly visiting science class
- Mr Paramedic—incursion
- Recycle man—incursion

We also focus on children's transition to school by building strong connections with the local school including a teacher exchange program where the Prep teachers from New Farm State School visit Little Ducks and I visit the Prep classrooms. This is a great opportunity to ensure our learning programs connect.



I am looking forward to a wonderful year ahead.
Miss Suder

# Recipe of the Month

There's been quite a buzz over this frozen treat, so we tried our hand at the one-ingredient wonder – homemade banana "ice cream."



## Go Bananas

Banana muffins and banana bread are classic go-to recipes for over-ripe bananas, but there are some cooler options. When you've got more bananas than you know what to do with, slice them into large pieces and place in freezer-safe bag in the freezer for at least 4 hours (overnight is better). These frozen fruit chunks make creamy and frothy smoothies and a surprisingly similar dairy-free alternative to ice cream.

*One medium banana totals about 105 calories, 27 grams of carbohydrate, 3 grams of fiber and 1 gram of protein. You'll also get healthy doses of vitamins C and B6 and potassium. Bananas are also free of fat and cholesterol.*

## Banana Ice Cream - One Step Prep

Place frozen banana pieces in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a steel blade. Turn on the machine and let 'er rip. Process bananas until they create a frosty, yet creamy puree. Serve immediately or place in a bowl covered with a piece of parchment paper to harden. The re-frozen concoction will have a less creamy texture but is still super refreshing and naturally sweet.

Each medium-sized banana will yield about a ½ cup of ice cream.

## Top It Off

*This low-cal goodie leaves room for some toppings. Each of the portions below will add 50 calories per serving:*

3 vanilla wafer cookies
1 sugar cone (whole or broken into pieces)
2 teaspoons semisweet chocolate chips
2 teaspoons natural peanut butter
1 ½ teaspoons chocolate-hazelnut spread (such as Nutella)
1 cup sliced strawberries
1 tablespoon chopped walnuts
½ cup diced mango
1 heaping tablespoon granola
1 ½ tablespoons shredded coconut
2 chocolate covered pretzels
2 teaspoons chocolate syrup

If you want to keep the calories as low as possible, try flavor boosters. They're virtually calorie-free:

Unsweetened cocoa powder
Vanilla extract

# Parent Tips

## *How can you help your child settle into an early childhood care service?*

*Starting an early childhood education and care service can be an emotional experience for both you and your child. Children especially can often experience some difficulty settling into a new environment, particularly if they find it hard to separate from family or familiar caregivers. This information sheet offers some suggestions that can help you support your child during the settling in period. You will of course need to be patient because they may cry, be grumpy or throw tantrums for an initial time as they get used to the new environment.*

(**This article has been taken from the website www.startingblocks.gov.au)**

### Plan an orientation Visit

*Plan orientation visit before your child starts will give them a chance to explore their new environment.*

*• They can begin to develop a relationship with the educators and meet other children at the service with the security that you are close by. Familiarising your child with their alternate carers and care setting will be a huge help to them.*
*• Discuss your child's interests, routines and rituals with the educators.*
*• The service may also be able to provide you with a family handbook at this time. This should include information about the service's operations and key policies and procedures which may help you to plan to settle your child into the service*

**At Little Ducks New Farm we encourage a minimum of two orientation sessions often called stay and plays . These session provide a wonderful opportunity for parent and child to "get to Know " the educators but also for the educators to see parents and children interacting so we can put in place as much consistency of care as possible**.



# Parent Tips cont'd

## *Prepare them for the separation*

*• Leave your child with their grandparents or your friends for a few hours every day so they get used to your absence.*
*• Talk about the early childhood care service with your child and let them know that you are happy and confident that they will have a good time and will be cared for.*
*• If possible, start with shorter or fewer days then gradually increase their time spent at the service. Once they develop a settling routine, they should be more comfortable.*
*• Don't let your emotions or anxieties affect your child. Try and hold back your tears when you drop them off.*
*• Say 'goodbye' confidently and reassure them when you leave that you (or someone else) will be back later to collect them.*
*• Give your child sufficient time to say their goodbyes in the morning. Reach the service early so you have time to prepare your child for a good day.*

**At Little Ducks Childcare New Farm we are always here to chat about your child's routine and advise the best ways to build your drop off routine. AT Little Ducks Childcare New Farm we offer full day sessions as well as short day sessions at a reduced cost. These sessions are very useful and very popular for the settling in period. Many families will book in for two weeks of short sessions before returning to work and needing the longer sessions. This helps the child gradually become familiar with the new environment and carers and give the parent some well earned time to themselves before starting back at work after maternity or paternity leave**.

*For your peace of mind it can be helpful to call the service later to see how your child settled. Children who become very upset when they are left often settle very quickly and happily once the actual separation is over. The service should enable you to contact them throughout the day. You may also want to speak to the educators at child care about how you can better support your child's transition.*

**At Little Ducks Childcare New Farm you are welcome to call anytime to speak to your child's educator. We also welcome communication through our Storypark App which allows you to send messages between yourself and your child's educator at times convenient to yourself.**

