



TERM 1, 2026



From Your Centre Director, Jess

YURA AND WELCOME TO OUR TERM 1 NEWSLETTER!

2026 is well underway and we are gearing up for a fantastic year here at Little Ducks Birkdale. As the children have now moved into their 2026 classrooms each of our educators are establishing the routines and programs to support each child as they settle and become familiar with their environment and primary educator team.

Please remember to bring EVERYDAY

Named hat, clean water bottle, spare clothes (weather appropriate)

Story Park is our main form of written communication between the room educators and our families. If you are not connected on Story Park, please come and see one of the team to help you to get this organised. Please email, call or stop by the office for all other communication and to speak to myself.

This year we are looking forward to continuing to connect with the community through our indigenous network and our Prep/School network, and we look forward to sharing this with the children and yourselves over the year.



TRANSITIONING INTO NEW SPACES

As children settle into their new rooms for the year, they are supported to build trusting relationships with their educators and form connections with their peers, creating a strong sense of belonging. Time, patience, and consistency help children feel safe and confident as they become familiar with new routines, spaces, and expectations. Educators have thoughtfully prepared the learning environments with inviting, purposeful experiences that spark curiosity, engagement, and wonder, allowing children to explore, discover, and make meaning in their own time. These carefully designed spaces support children to feel confident in their new surroundings and excited about the play and learning possibilities each day brings.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE CENTRE

- 1st March** Clean Up Australia Day
- 21st March** Harmony Day
- 2nd April** International Children's Book Day
- 2nd-13th April** Nature Play Week
- 3rd-6th April** Easter
- 25th April** Anzac Day

"If we are to have real peace in the world, we shall have to begin with the children" -
Mahatma Gandhi

Parenting Information

Staying Healthy in Childcare

At Little Ducks, we follow the Staying Healthy in Child Care guidelines from the National Health and Medical Research Council to reduce illness and keep everyone safe. These evidence-based practices guide our hygiene, cleaning, and illness-exclusion procedures.

You can read the full document by scanning the QR code below. Working together helps protect all children, families, and staff.



Family and Child Connect

Family and Child Connect can help with a range of family and parenting challenges. If your family is going through tough times, contact Family and Child Connect for free, unlimited and confidential advice.

You can call on **13 FAMILY (13 32 64)** or fill out an online referral form

<https://familysupportreferral.org.au/>

Brain Development in the Early Years

The first years of life are a critical time for brain development. During this period, a child's brain is shaped by everyday experiences, with research showing that the most important influences are secure relationships and rich language interactions. When babies feel safe, loved, and responded to, strong neural connections are formed that support emotional wellbeing, learning, and communication.

Language is equally powerful. Talking with babies, responding to their sounds, and sharing books all help build the foundations for thinking, literacy, and social skills. These "serve and return" interactions play a key role in healthy brain development.

In the nursery room, this understanding guides our practice. Our work is not only about meeting physical needs, but about nurturing warm relationships and creating language-rich environments. Every cuddle, conversation, and moment of connection is meaningful. We recognise that these interactions are central to our role and are fundamental in shaping children's brains and supporting their lifelong development.

Families play a vital role in supporting brain development at home. Simple everyday moments such as talking with your child, responding to their sounds and expressions, sharing books, singing, and spending time together help build strong relationships and support language growth. When children feel loved, listened to, and engaged in warm interactions, their brains are being strengthened in powerful ways that support learning and wellbeing.



A Message from your Educational Leader, Tara

Building relationships in our service is our top priority and with the new year kicking off, our curriculums strongly focus on embedding opportunities for bonds to be formed. Building relationships is foundational for healthy development, with theorists highlighting that warm, responsive, and secure connections enable emotional regulation, cognitive growth, and a sense of safety. Some things included in our curriculum and educators interactions and practice are;

- creating physical environments, and routines that allow children the time and resources needed for positive interactions with their peers
- consider the pace and flow of the day that allows a balance of play experiences such as individual and group, quiet and noisy, active and passive experiences
- implementing flexible arrangements centred around children's routines, interests and offering extended periods of uninterrupted play
- inviting children to collaborate with educators on decision making



Supporting Young Children to Be Safe Online

In today's world, many young children are introduced to technology early in life. While digital devices can offer opportunities for learning and connection, it is important that children are supported to use them safely and appropriately. Families play a key role in guiding positive online habits from the very beginning.

Simple strategies such as supervising screen time, choosing age-appropriate content, setting clear limits, and talking with children about what they see online help create a safe digital environment. Watching and engaging together, rather than children using devices alone, supports understanding and strengthens relationships. It also allows families to model healthy and balanced technology use. The Australian eSafety Commissioner provides trusted, practical advice for families about online safety, screen time, apps, games, and social media. We encourage families to explore the eSafety website for resources, tips, and tools to support children's safety and wellbeing in the digital world.

Rainbow Yoghurt Parfaits

A fun, healthy, and easy recipe children can help make!

You will need:

- Natural or Greek yoghurt
- A mix of chopped fruit (banana, strawberries, blueberries, kiwi, mango, apple)
- Optional: a sprinkle of oats or crushed wholegrain cereal

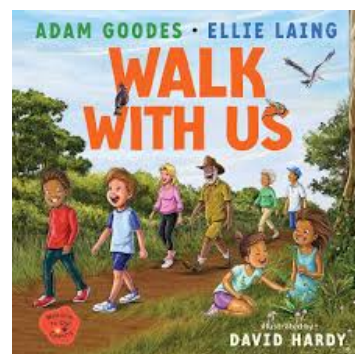
What to do:

- Wash your hands together.
- Let children help wash and choose the fruit.
- Spoon some yoghurt into a small cup or bowl.
- Add a layer of colourful fruit.
- Repeat the layers until the cup is full.
- Sprinkle a little oats or cereal on top if you like.
- Enjoy together!

This recipe supports healthy eating, encourages independence, and helps children learn about colours, textures, and making nutritious food choices in a fun and hands-on way.



Book of the Month



Walk With Us - Adam Goodes and Ellie Laing

Walk With Us by Adam Goodes is a powerful and child-friendly book that celebrates culture, respect, and walking together in kindness and understanding. Through simple language and beautiful illustrations, it invites children to learn about Aboriginal culture, connection to Country, and the importance of inclusion. The story encourages empathy, respect for diversity, and reminds us that we are stronger when we walk together, making it a meaningful book to share with children and families.