



PUMPKIN LONG DAY CARE CENTRE

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Newsletter – February 2018

Centre News

We had a visit from the Principal and Assistant Principal from Soldier's Settlement Public School, Matraville. They came to our Parent Information Night last Thursday, the 22nd of Feb to talk about how to prepare your child and what to expect from big school next year. The Starfish room is going to start their school transition from the month of September/October, the children will bring their own lunch boxes, so they can practice opening the packages or lunch boxes. One thing that the Assistant Principal mentioned was the recess and lunch break only for 15 minutes in big school, so we are going to put a timer to practice this in the Starfish room.

We also talked about our excursion toward the end of this year to big school and Soldier's Settlement is happy for us to come and visit their school 😊

They left some enrolment form and information for school readiness, if you are interested, please contact Miss Elly. I also attached the school readiness in this Newsletter.

From Miss Alessandra in the Starfish room:

In the Starfish room (as per all other early childhood settings in Australia), the educators are guided to make curriculum decisions by the national Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF). This means that child interests and families' collaborations form our room curriculum and the educators intentionally teach in the context of play. This is because the Framework emphasises play-based learning.

Our curriculum decision-making is an ongoing cycle of documenting what learning through play is occurring, planning and implementing what is to occur next. In order for these curriculum decisions to be made, the educators are responsive to children's ideas and play. More specifically, our curriculum includes the interactions, experiences, routines and events that occur in our environments. These occur spontaneously or in an intentional aspect.

Our curriculum decision-making also includes other important EYLF aspects such as building and nurturing relationships, teaching and learning. Importantly, our curriculum contributes to each child's learning and development outcomes in relation to their identity, connection with community, wellbeing, confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators.

Finally, as you are probably aware by now, our curriculum is not limited to the educators and children but also includes our families. Our curriculum decisions are also made due to input and collaboration from families, which in turn, ensures that learning experiences are meaningful for children.

More information about play-based learning: Play-based learning is defined as a way children learn as they actively engage with people, objects and representations, as well as organise and make sense of their social worlds. Early childhood educators are guided by the Framework in their daily curriculum practice, which includes promoting children's learning through play. Another important aspect of the educators' daily practice is to reinforce the United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child, which recognises children's right to play.

The educators' take on many roles in children learning through play. One important role includes being responsive to children's play, which forms the important basis for making curriculum decisions. Responsiveness also enables educators to respectfully enter children's play and extend and enrich their learning. To support children's learning through play, educators use a range of strategies, such as providing a balance between child led, child initiated and educator supported learning. Additionally, they actively support the inclusion of all children in play and offer constructive ways to build an inclusive learning community.

Learning through play can be directly linked to the Framework's five Learning Outcomes. Play is a context of learning that allows for the expression of personality and uniqueness (Learning Outcome 1 - Children have a strong sense of identity), enables children to make connections between prior experiences and learning (Learning Outcome 2 - Children are connected with and contribute to their world), stimulates a sense of wellbeing (Learning Outcome 3 - Children have a strong sense of wellbeing), enhances dispositions such as creativity and curiosity (Learning Outcome 4 - Children are confident and involved learners) and assists children to develop relationships and concepts (Learning Outcome 5 - Children are effective communicators). A play base approach is used to support young children to achieve these five Learning Outcomes.

Through this approach, the educators design experiences that encourage curiosity, experimentation, exploration, problem solving, creating and constructing. The educators follow children's play lead and work alongside them, interacting with them to extend thinking and invite new ideas. In this way, children have the opportunity to experience a variety of learning opportunities. When planning for learning, educators then build on children's prior knowledge and experience. This helps to create a picture of children's strengths, interests and knowledge to support curriculum planning.

March Calender of Events

03rd – 11th - Seaweeek - It's about exciting and inspiring all New Zealanders to renew their connections with the sea! It's a time for all of us to get to know our ocean, its habitats, characteristics and inhabitants better.

02nd - Friday – Holi/Dhulandi – Hindu Tradition.

02nd - Friday - Lantern Festival - Chinese Tradition.

04th - Sunday – Clean up Australia Day.

17th - Saturday – St Patrick's Day, come and dress in green.

21st – Wednesday – Harmony Day.

25th – Sunday – Palm Sunday, Christian.

25th – Sunday - Ram Navami – Hindu tradition, celebrate the birth of Lord Rama. The day involves visiting temples and telling stories.

29th – Thursday – Mahavir Jayanti – Jain, celebrates the birth of Mahavira.

30th - Friday – Good Friday, Centre closed.

31st - Saturday – Holy Saturday.

31st - Saturday – Hanuman Jayanti – Hindu tradition, this day celebrates Hanuman, who was an embodiment of Lord Rama. Devotion and selfless work are encouraged.

31st - Saturday - Magha Puja Day – Buddhist tradition – Full Moon Day.



Clownfish News



CELEBRATION!

The children celebrated **Valentine's Day** by discussing about the importance of expressing our love to people in our lives and to show them how much we love them by actions. We also continued the celebration with making craft with



a range of media (glitters, crayons, and papers).

Chinese New Year celebration followed up as some educators and children celebrate it every year, the children had a chance to see a lion dance video and sang 'Gong Xi Gong Xi' (Chinese song) while the children were seen



mirroring Miss Stella's action in doing Chinese hand gestures. Miss Stella also told us that we're celebrating the year of dog this year by showing us a red envelope that has dog picture. We also decided to do some research about what Chinese people like to eat. We found out that dumplings and noodles are the most popular dishes in China. Afterwards, the children were offered to explore a sensory play using noodles and Chinese cooking set. At the end of the celebration, the children also got a chance to decorate a Chinese fan where they could choose their own paint colors, they were encouraged to use their finger to create a cherry blossom finger print.



Throughout the month, there have been 3 main projects that caught the children's attention. **Firstly**, The Clownfish and Jellyfish children have been enjoying **music and movement**, where the children had such an amazing time dancing and singing their favorite songs. If there are any songs in particular that your children like, be sure to mention it to educators so we can make sure that we play it during the group experience. Can't wait to see more new songs

and dance moves!



Secondly, the children also showed the ever-present interest of cooking role-play. This can be seen as the children have always been revisiting the home/kitchen corner during outdoor and indoor play. We then further extended the interest by adding some sensory resources such as sand, dried/cooked pasta, and water to their role-play experience.



Throughout the experience, the children and educators investigated shapes, textures, and colors.

Lastly, the interests of nature have also grabbed the children attention as they were seen revisiting the garden while investigating some



ripped fruits and plants. Every day, the children have been initiating to water the garden with, the garden is blooming and our tomatoes, strawberries, and carrots are just about ready to be harvested. As the interest grew slowly, the children and educators did more research around seeds and plants, also prepared a recycled pot plant and did some planting experience.

PARENT REMINDER:

- Please make sure that all belongings that are brought to the center are labeled to ensure the item is not miss-placed.
- Please don't forget to bring in your family photos if you haven't done it, so we can complete our family tree.
- Recycled materials are always useful in our room; feel free to donate it for our weekly project or art/craft activities.
- We are going to be doing many projects throughout the year based on your child's interests, so please feel free to come and share information about your child with Clownfish educators so we may get some insight on what your children like! Looking forward to extending more interests!

Until next month,
Clownfish educators

Jellyfish/Sunfish News



A warm welcome to our new children and families who joined us this month: Yumi, Sonnie and Ife. We also had Anastasia who just moved from Clownfish room.



This month, we celebrated Valentine's Day and Chinese New Year. Children's awareness to both significant events were supported by group discussions and some art activities.

For Valentine's Day, we read a book called, 'Understand and Care,' and we also had a discussion on how we could show our love to Mum and Dad and to the rest of the family. Some of the children's suggestions were to give them lots of cuddles and kisses.



After the discussion, the children spent time making heart artwork for Mum and Dad.

To learn about how Chinese celebrate New Year, we accessed the internet. We learned that the celebrations last for two weeks, and for this year, 16th of February was the start. We also learned that 'the global celebrations are an explosion of light and sound, involving bell ringing, lighting firecrackers and watching traditional lion dances. Chinese families gather together for a reunion dinner on New Year's Eve, and clean their houses to sweep away bad fortune on New Year's Day. Traditionally, kids would be given red envelopes stuffed with 'lucky money' and positive wishes on New Year's Day.'



Aside from making noises with buckets and spades for Chinese New Year, the children also enjoyed making Chinese New Year Fan. They used their fingers to make cherry blossom fingerprints to decorate the fan, with their favourite colours.

Children's Interests

This month, music and dance; scribbling; book reading; letters and shapes; and recently, gardening and ball games, were just some of the children's interests.



Interest in garden was followed up by learning more about fruits, veggies, planting seeds and giving

children opportunities to look after our garden. Each day, the children checked the seeds that they planted for any sprout and helped in watering the plants.

Our Family Tree

We are currently updating our family tree for 2018. We want to ensure that all families will be included. Please send us your recent family photo.

All About Me!

We want to know more about the children: their family, cultural background and interests.

If you haven't done so, please fill in the 'All About Me' form. Forms can be found in the sign in/out area.

Sun Protection

We are a Sun Smart service. All children should bring a hat to centre every day, and shoulders should also be covered. Please do not send your child in singlets or dresses with straps.

Cancer Council NSW suggested that children should wear sun-safe clothing that covers as much of the skin, especially the shoulders, back and stomach as possible. This includes wearing:

- loose fitting shirts and dresses with sleeves and collars or covered necklines
- longer styles skirts and shorts

Until next month,

Jellyfish Educators

Lionfish News

The Lionfish have been busy settling in this month. We started off with the news topic "All about me" to introduce ourselves and talk about the things we like, as well as provide some insight into our home life, and our family and friends. This eventually led on to discussing our cultural backgrounds in our next news topic. Some children brought in special objects, that related to their background. Other children brought in typed up information. We found out a lot about our Lionfish friends, and they had fun sharing, and finding out more about where they're from.



The Lionfish got involved in a range of art and craft this month. We participated in a variety of art'n'craft for Valentine's Day, making cards, flowers and love hearts using recycled cardboard and a variety of collage materials. We also made large dog shapes to celebrate Chinese New Year and the year of the 'Dog' from a recycled cardboard box and used crepe paper and paint and glitter to decorate them. We also joined the Starfish children and made Chinese lucky envelopes using red paint and gold glitter. We also made our own representation of the red and yellow flags at the beach to extend on our interest in Water Safety.



The Lionfish children have also enjoyed participating in a variety of physical activities. They have enjoyed helping each other to build obstacle courses to practise their climbing and balancing skills as well as participating in a variety of ball games. They have practised their throwing, catching and bouncing skills as well as using the basketball hoop to practise their slam dunking skills. We even made our own bowling game using recycled bottles!



They have also shown a great interest in books especially 'Bath Monster' , 'Wash your face in Orange Juice' and Dr Suess Books. They have enjoyed the humour in these books as well as practising their rhyming skills and singing along to the songs on the accompanying CDs. They are

also enjoying learning about letters through a variety of books and learning to write the letters of their names by copying them or tracing them. We have also continued to reinforce our Room rules both in the Lionfish Room and when we are together with the Starfish children.



They have also continued their interest in construction and animals from last month, combining the two by making houses and enclosures to put the wild animals or dinosaurs in. While they are building they have also practised their mathematical skills, comparing their heights to the buildings that they make and talking about taller and shorter.



At the moment we are combined with the Starfish children. The Lionfish children have adapted to the new routine and are settling in really well to the new room with a lot of help from their Starfish friends!

Until next month,

Lionfish Educators

Starfish News



We started this month saying goodbye to our school peers and wishing them good luck in the new education stage of their lives! It has been great to see some of those peers coming back to visit in their uniforms and answering our curious questions about what 'big' school is all about! The interest in 'big' schools has continued as the children have enjoyed role-playing schools!

Animal interest continued – The children have continued to be interested in joining in animal related activities, discussions, experiences and readings. On the 2nd, they engaged in an Australian Dinosaurs reading where they explored fossils, footprints and some insects that we have today (beetles, flies and dragonflies). The children were

offered some books to continue exploring and have continued requesting them throughout the month. They have been negotiating and sharing the books between themselves so well! Midmonth, they started bringing in their own animal books from home and we got talking about lots of animal facts! Outside, the children spotted Indian Miner birds in the playground and were amazed to hear that they are related to dinosaurs! Also this month, the children have also been enjoying creating fossil/foot prints with our animals through art and craft experiences!



Maps – The interest in maps started last month and has continued! They have learned more about the importance of symbols as they were provided with two new maps to investigate from Miss Rebecca's holiday. They are showing a deeper understanding of symbols that represent

food stalls, picnic areas, animals, superheroes, transport and the paths leading to the different areas of theme parks.



Chinese New Year – Miss Tracey also showed the children a clipping from the local paper about Chinese New Year Celebrations in the local area. We talked about it being the Year of the Dog. The children were asked if

they wished to create their own artworks using 'Dog' shaped felts, coloured





texters and paper. They were excited to join the craft and were shown how to decorate the felts before being given the chance to use their own independence. The next day, they decided to make their own representation of a dog using crepe paper and recycled cardboard! Ms Tracey brought in another newspaper clipping the next day and the



children were asked "Would you like to see what animal represents you in the Zodiac and maybe we can have an animal race this afternoon?" The children were excited about this and called out "Yes!" We learned that the children fall under the Dragon: 2012, Horse: 2014 and Snake: 2013. Through a friend's 'All about Me sheet', we discovered that he has Chinese background and learnt the words for Grandma and Grandpa in mandarin as well and looked on our World

map at Australia and China and also at the flags of each country. And talking about China and extending on our Chinese New Year learning, Miss Tracey also showed the children some Fortune Cookies that Miss Elly had brought in for the children to have to celebrate Chinese New Year!

Valentine's Day – After a child brought in an egg carton from home for us to engage in craft with (and Valentine's Day was coming) we decided to make roses for Valentine's Day with the carton! The children also celebrated Valentine's Day by talking their feelings towards those they love, making craft with a range of media (such as with recycled materials) and reading books about love and feelings.



Games and puzzles - The children started showing an interest towards playing games this month. They have been exploring our games and puzzles shelf and discovering many new games! Our giant 'Snakes and ladders' and big floor puzzles have been favourites! It is great to see the children cooperating

and working collaboratively with peers and educators as they engage in games and put big puzzles together! They further extended their interest in the games and animals by making their own shark game after a child brought in



sea life pictures from his weekend. Towards the end of the month, the focus of interest became more about physical games as the children have been enjoying exploring hoops in their play and creating games with those, as well as with balls and recycled materials.



Name writing sheets – As mentioned last month, the children have been interested in tracing (and learning to write!) their own first and last names, as well as numbers 1-10. They often request their personalised name/numbers writing sheets, even during outdoor time!



Nature - The ever present interest in nature was seen again this month. The children continued to enjoy engaging in seed collecting during meal times, gardening maintenance and worm farm feeding.

Until next month,
Starfish Educators