



# PUMPKIN LONG DAY CARE CENTRE

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## Newsletter – September 2015

### Centre News

Now that the weather is getting warmer, we ask that you please remember to apply sunscreen to your child's face and body prior to coming to Pumpkin. Due to the warm weather, we have started our summer routine which means we go outside earlier and come back in earlier also.

We water our gardens every day and look how beautiful our lavenders look as a result of our diligent gardening!!☺



#### Excursion to Heffron Park:



The children went for their very first excursion this year. => They were very excited to go on this trip and before we left, we made sure we went through some of the rules we had been practising for the weeks prior to going.

On their way to Heffron Park, they saw beautiful flowers around our neighbourhood – the purple wisteria. They also saw a cat from our neighbour playing in the garden next door. They found lots of yellow wildflowers and the children commented, “Can we pick them up when we go back to Pumpkin later?” Miss Cory said, “Sure. We can do that on our way back and we can decorate our room with those beautiful wildflowers.”

We would like to thank the parents and families that helped us on our excursion day.☺

## Parent Reminder

Please bring in a summer hat for your child and not a beanie. Please make sure your child has a bucket hat and not a cap (for wider protection).

Please don't bring in bobby pins or metal clips with your child as they can be a hazard for the children.

## School Photos 2015

Our school photo days will be held on the week of 12<sup>th</sup> of October 2015. The photo days will be on the Monday, 12/10/15, Wednesday, 14/10/15 and Thursday, 15/10/15. The booking list will be available on top of the sign in/out sheet.

## October Calendar of Events

**All Month** – Energy Awareness Month

**05<sup>th</sup> - Monday** – Labour Day – Centre Closed.

**13<sup>th</sup> – 22/10/15** – Navaratri – Hindu – Worship of Durga.

**16<sup>th</sup> - Friday** – National Ride to Work Day.

**16<sup>th</sup> - Friday** – World Food Day.

**16<sup>th</sup> - Friday** - Loud Shirt Day – Wear a loud shirt and help deaf children.

**22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>** – Eid Al Adha – Islamic tradition, the feast of sacrifice commemorates the ordeal of Abraham who was asked to sacrifice his only son to prove his faith to Allah (God).

**30<sup>th</sup> – Friday** – Halloween Party – Come dressed up!



# Clownfish News



Welcome Spring season to the Clownfish room! The Clownfish children this month have been loving the outdoors. Having the new environment for the children has benefitted so much. We have noticed that some of our plants have started to grow flowers and change shape. The clownfish

children have taken a large interest to this. Helping the educators water the plants and flowers and taking responsibility for our environment. We have been talking about how to respect the tree; admiring the flowers and leaves on the branches and not picking them off. When some of the leaves fell onto the floor, we picked them up and used them for pressing leaf prints in the play dough. When we were finished some of the children were shown the greens waste bin and that's where we threw them.



Having the weather on our side we took outside as much as possible. Acting like monkeys jumping on the beams, climbing on the frames, cruising on the bikes, cooking at the cooking area, home corner play with babies and even observing the garbage trucks doing their thing and shouting bye as they drove off. The Clownfish children and educators are excited for summer to arrive. We have started taking our drawing stand outside towards the end of the month and will follow this for next month. This board has a chalk side and a white board side with the ability to add a roll of paper, which we will try next month for the Clownfish children to draw outside.



Our Clownfish family has really grown the last couple of months. Welcome Brooklyn and his family to the Clownfish room at Pumpkin LDC! He has really begun to settle in with us and explore his learning environment. We can't wait to see him grow and develop. On a sadder note a farewell is needed for Theo, who has his last day on 24.09.15. A big thank you to Suzi and Ian who spoil the educators with beautiful flowers, a card and our favorite, chocolates! All the educators send their best of luck and hope to see them in the future.



In the Clownfish room have a designated family tree area with family photos stuck to it. We have been trying to keep it as update as possible although having some families moving rooms the last couple months and newbies taking their place our tree is looking a bit like autumn; no leaves (photos). We ask all families to please supply us a family photo of your child in the Clownfish room and hand it to one of the educators so we can add them to our tree. Thanks to Isaiah, Penelope, Harry, Sunny, Daisy, Connor, Mia and Nadal's family who have already got their family photo for our display. We want our tree filled asap so please print us a colour photo and give it to Corina or any staff member in our room, or send us one through email so we can print it for you (black and white though). We hope to see them all soon and big thank you in advanced.



Halloween dress up is coming up at the end of October; in relations to this event we are having a dress up day in our room. We have put the date as Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2015 (the day before the calendar event). All children and educators

will be encouraged to dress up for this fun filled day. If any families/ parents would like to dress up it will be more than amazing and Miss Corina would love some selfies with you all. The children in the clownfish room can wear witches, monsters, fairies, turtle's suit or anything we can say isn't their everyday outfit. We will have some costumes and fun craft to help celebrate this crazy, fun and adventurous day.



In the month of September some of the clownfish children have really been interested in transport. The clownfish children have been watching the garbage truck picking up the centers rubbish ones a week on Beauchamp Road, and our Clownfish children have been really interested in observing this. Looking at the mechanics of the vehicle and what it does to the bin the clownfish children shouted and waved Bye to the truck and drive. Extending this interest we have been providing the children with different transport items and encouraged them to use their imagination. "Broom, Broom" a child said as they rolled the cars forwards and backwards. Setting the larger bikes and pushing cars outside was another way.



# Jellyfish News

A big welcome to Mason, Ruby, Elina, Muhid and Sienna and happy birthday to Sueann, Archer and Christopher this month!



One morning, Archer could hear a truck coming and stood at the gate, watching it approaching. Amelia, London, Christopher, Ariella, Leo, Sueann, Francisca, Dru, Max, Eli, Mason, William Nadia

and Hart soon stopped what they were doing and ran to watch as the rubbish truck came to collect our rubbish. The driver was friendly and waved to the children and they excitedly waved back. Ms Alessandra explained that he was collecting our recycle rubbish - all the paper, cardboard, glass and plastic we threw in the pumpkin's bins. Ariella was surprised when the truck came back the other way, "Look, it's coming back". The children



were asked to notice how it was now collecting the rubbish on the other side of the road and that is why it was coming back the other way. It was great to see our community in action!

We have been celebrating the start of spring by learning what our friends like to do in spring time, by looking after our plants and



garden (outside and inside) and by drawing things that remind us of spring on our outside chalkboard. After finding out that a lot of us enjoy gardening in spring, we decided to add another plant to our indoor natural resources table. We planted a small palm plant. Looking after it



by watering it was discussed, as well as being patient as growing flowers take time. We look forward to seeing the flowers bloom and to smell them! After Ethan showed us the flower artwork he made at the library, the children made their own flowers, choosing their own colours and sizes for their flowers made out of cupcake holders (like Ethan's). The flowers look so pretty! The days have been so nice that we



have been enjoying outdoor group and painting times, such as when we engaged in fruit and vegetable painting.



Further extending our spring learning we discussed the development of a seed into a flower and learnt great plant words: seed, soil, roots, shoot, bud and petals. Ms Alessandra showed the children pictures of each step of seed planting: planting in the soil, watering it, the roots growing underground, a tiny shoot growing as it got water, sun and air, a bud appearing, then a flower appearing with petals and even growing taller. The children enjoyed the learning and were keen to talk about their own flowers. Even further extending on the spring learning, the children learnt that beekeeping is the maintenance of lots of bees, which is done to collect their honey and other products that the hive produces, such as beeswax, and that Francisca's dad is a beekeeper! Finally, Aiden shared about his time at the Eco-fair. He excitedly talked about a snake, "I touched the snake's tail and it has a blue tongue". He taught his peers what he learnt there: "The snakes sleep in winter time. They are waking up now in spring". That's right, now they are enjoying sunning! He also learnt about recycling and gardening worms. Ms Alessandra reminded the children which items need recycling and about our recent experience with the recycling rubbish truck outside. They were also reminded of the importance of worms for gardening, such as we do with our worm farm here!

After finding out that Mason wears a hat and sunscreen whenever he goes outside to get fresh air, go running, go for family walks to explore flowers and to help dad in the garden to grow vegetables, we learnt that the reason why we go outside with a hat and sunscreen on is to protect our faces and bodies from being burnt by the sun. Further, we learnt that Mason still wears his hat and sunscreen even if it's not sunny, just like we do at Pumpkin for every outdoor time. As the weather got warmer, we could see that we are not all wearing long pants and jumpers anymore. We found friends wearing shorts and t-shirts. As we got ready to go out each day, we remembered that we learnt about wearing sunscreen and made sure we also applied it to our legs and arms as we as we starting to wear shorts and t-shirts for the warmer weather.

The children loved engaging in Father's day art and craft, exploring books about fathers and having a special Father's day afternoon tea to celebrate their dads' special day this month.

At the end of last month, Ms Julieta (a work placement student) and the children talked about rockets ships during group time. She showed them a video of a rocket ship taking off. Ariella said "Rocket ships only fly at night time". Ms Julieta explained that perhaps Ariella thinks that because it looks dark in space, just like night time. Outside, the children engaged in a rocket ship experiment by making balloons take off on a long line. They blew up the balloons and counted to 10, then let go and watched the balloon take off very quickly. The children loved the experiment, laughing each time a balloon took off.



Another fun experiment this month was provided by Ms Yuki – a sand experiment! The children used their fingers to write their names in the sand, like Xavi did at the beach (parent input discussed previously). The children especially liked the green sand, it sure looks different! And they described the other sand as “brown”.

We discussed a very important topic this month: teeth are not biting, after a biting incident. Through our discussion and the ‘Teeth are not for biting’ book, we learnt what we use our teeth for and different ways to deal with our frustrations. It was great to see the children interacting during the discussion. We discussed that teeth are sharp and strong, helping us to chew our food, that we all have many teeth and someday will have 20 and that biting others hurts makes us and others feel very sad. And when we feel cranky, mad or sad, we will use our words, tell our educators, get a hug, have a drink or take a little rest instead of biting because teeth are not for biting!

We continued learning about each other’s siblings through our Siblings learning story. It was exciting to learn yet another word for sibling in a different language as we learnt that ‘GeGe’ is older brother in Chinese. Through the topic, we also discussed missing others, a way we can feel about our siblings and loved ones but had not discussed yet. The children could relate to missing others as they agreed that they miss their parents when they are at Pumpkin. When learning about Skye’s siblings, the children found it very interesting to the fact that her sister was holding a crab in a photo. Ms Alessandra explained to the children that the type of crab she is holding is called a soldier crab and asked them to notice its light-blue colour, to count the legs, notice the claws and the two eyes on top of the its head. Searching online, we found that the soldier crab is one species of crab that lives on sandy beaches and we could see in Skye’s photos that her sister is indeed at a beach. After our soldier crab learning, the children were asked if they would like to make a crab painting and the answer was a big yes! So using a blue-purple colour, we made our own soldier crabs. The children loved the activity and Skye was so happy to be extending her sibling input as she kept saying “Look, crab”! On another day, Amelia brought in a book to share, which she was very excited about as she told Ms Alessandra, “I have the book Looking for crabs”. It was fun to learn more about crabs. We learnt that they like to hide in the sand, under rocks and shells as they get scared of people and that they live in beaches and like rock pools. And after learning about soldier crabs last week, it was great to see different coloured crabs in the book. Thanks for sharing, Amelia! We loved your book!

One afternoon, Ariella enjoyed collecting leaves around the playground. She collected so many that she had a big pile. Miss Sabina asked the children what they would like to do with it and the

majority wanted to make a tree with it. What a good idea! Using recycle paper rolls, the children made a beautiful tree with all the leaves!

Towards the end of the month, we learnt more about tulips and sakura trees after learning that Sueann visited Bowral one weekend to see tulips. We discovered that tulip flowers come in a wide variety of colours, except for blue, and saw pictures of different coloured tulips noticing that Sueann saw orange ones. About sakura trees, we learnt that they are also called cherry blossoms and that in Japan, they symbolize clouds because they bloom together in a big way sometimes looking like clouds. When looking at the pictures of the tree and colourful tulips, the children were very excited and interacted about the images.

On the 29<sup>th</sup>, we had a visit from a firetruck and firemen! Before the big arrival, the children explored a book about firefighters. As the children looked at pictures in the book of firetrucks and of a fireman's uniform, they started to hear a truck outside – the firetruck had arrived! The children watched as the truck pulled up and Ms Alessandra encouraged them to notice the same things on the truck as they had seen in the book, such as the ladder and hoses. A fireman put his uniform on and it was great to see it all in person after seeing it in the book. The firemen showed the children a smoke alarm and demonstrated how it sounds in case of fire. Next, they demonstrated how to get down low and go, go, go in case of fire and the children crawled after them. The children looked at hazard posters, learning not to touch hot appliances such as barbecues and to be careful around birthday candles. When the truck left, the children watched the blue lights going off and waved goodbye. What a fun day!

The next day, we had another exciting visit today, a visit from a policeman! The children sat quietly as they listened to the important things the policeman had to say. He explained that the police's job is to help people and taught the children to call 000 if they need help from the police. He explained that when you call, they are able to find where you live to go and help you quickly. He then explained his uniform and let the children take turns trying on his police hat. The children are now aware that they should look for someone wearing a uniform if they ever get lost. He showed the children the many things he carries with him: a baton, pepper spray, gun and handcuffs. Max was brave enough to volunteer to have his arms handcuffed to see what it felt like but did not like it. Fair enough! The policeman explained to the children the importance of riding safely in cars. The children also learnt about the different ways police get around, such as by horse, boat, car, helicopters and motorbikes. Finally, the children got to see the police car up close. They really liked the flashing lights!

Until next month,  
Jellyfish Educators

# Lionfish News

## Lionfish September Newsletter



As we moved into spring this month, the children got very excited to change our calendar and discuss the different changes that happen in spring. As we were coming up in the lift on the 1st, Olivia said, "It's the first day of spring!"; "The flowers come out!" And Siena said, "There's baby animals!"

One day this month, Peyton had two lots of news. Her first news was about spring and how she loves helping in the garden! Her mum had sent in some pictures of her garden and about the gardening set she got from her Nan. Peyton told her friends, "I love gardening!"

The children decided they would like to make a spring collage to start off the new season. Chayce, Olivia, London, Kayla and Abigail helped paint a large piece of recycled paper green. After that had dried, the Lionfish started making flowers, using patty pans, yellow circles and different coloured sticks for the stems. The children chose what colour patty pan and stick they wanted to use. Stacia enjoyed making the flowers so much that she made four! Vibha, Isabella, Kayla, Siena and Xavier all made



flowers too! We are going to be making different animals and other flowers over the next few weeks to make our collage.



The children loved getting very hands-on this month. For example, in early September, playing outside with the nature table, using the pebbles, shells, pine cones and sticks to cook with. Kayla filled a small jug with pebbles, she said, "I'm making a potion!" Olivia filled a bowl with pebbles, "I'm making cupcakes!" Abigail and Siena had shells and sticks in their containers. Siena said, "We're making dinner!" The Lionfish children really enjoy using things from nature in their day to day play. They especially like collecting things from nature, when we are outside or on the weekend, and bringing them in to put on our nature table!

They are also always excited to get crafty. For example, when the educators set up a drawing/ writing activity with the chalk boards and the chalk, the children got very excited. In particular, the past few months the Lionfish children have shown a great interest in writing letters, especially their names, so we have provided name stencils and writing materials to extend on this interest! Xavier sat at the table and using a piece of chalk, drew a cross on his paper. He said, "Look X for Xavier!" Great job Xavier! Olivia, who was sitting next to him, did a drawing on her chalkboard. She said, "I'm drawing a person.....her name is Olivia!" She wrote the letters 'Olivia' on the board, as she wrote she spelled her name. Great work Olivia!



The children worked on their letters P, Q, and R this month. We would read the stories together, practice



making the sound of the letter, look for higs starting with the letter in the picture and around the room, and practiced writing both upper and lower case letters on the whiteboard. The children were all eager to have a go. They also engaged in some arts 'n' crafts for each letter, for 'P' we made penguins, for 'O' the Lionfish made an ocean, and for 'Q' we made queens and quilts.

We kept up with our gardening this month by replanting some plants in some pots for our room. Before we planted them Chayce wet the soil in the pots, using the watering can. Chayce helped plant one succulent plant, then Olivia and Abigail had a turn too! We are trying to add more natural elements to our room and the children really enjoy helping to do this!



The children had a lot of fun with our new ten-pin bowling set this month! During outdoor play on day, the Lionfish helped to set up the ten pin bowling. They all gathered around as Miss Tracey showed them how to set it up. Miss Tracey set the pins up with some of the children's help. Abigail said, "It's a triangle!" Miss Tracey explained that you have to take it in turns and



that the object of the game is to knock all the pins down. Marco had the first turn and the other children lined up behind him. After he knocked the pins over, all the children helped set them up again. Chayce was next up and he rolled the ball into the pins, knocking a few down.

The Lionfish also had fun playing with the musical instruments outside this month. London, Chayce, Abigail and Olivia took it in turns playing the different instruments, discussing amongst themselves of what to do next, they decided to try each instrument and listen to the sound it makes. They had shakers, xylophones, tambourines and bells . When all played together, they made beautiful music!

Until next month,

The Lionfish Educators :)

# Starfish September 2015 Newsletter

Welcome to Starfish September Newsletter!

We hope you are enjoying the warmer weather with spring just around the corner as much as we are here at Pumpkin. We have all sorts of exciting things planned for the new season with lots of experiences and learning opportunities based around the new life that spring brings.

The Educators and children in Starfish are very excited welcoming the spring season! To make the most out of the warmer weather, we organized our first excursion to Heffron Park on the 14th September. The children were super excited going to the park with their friends. The swings and climbing net were very popular with the children – they showed each other how high and far they can climb and swing.

The children showed positive behaviour as they played sensibly and stayed in the group the whole time. They took turn exploring the play equipment and wondered around the park discovering lots of natural materials such as wildflowers, gumnuts, barks and acorns.

As Starfish were exploring their local community park environment, they were very observant and were noted picking an array of wild flowers, daisies, as well as collecting large and smaller acorns and pea-pods from the neighbouring trees and plants growing in our park. All of us had a wonderful time exploring Heffron Park on a beautiful sunny day!



## Experimenting with Still Life painting experience...

As the season has just changed to Spring this month, Educators in Starfish had planned various learning experiences to further explore the season of Spring.

On one of the Friday, Tamas brought in a beautiful **Golden Wattle flower** and Cory came up with an idea to **introduce Still Life painting to the children**. Cory explained, "Guess what, this Golden Wattle is Australian native flower, which means it is originally from Australia. We can find them in open forest and is a popular garden plant because of the bright beautiful yellow flowers. And the flowering time is normally late winter and spring, which is right now. For those of you who went to the excursion to Heffron Park, we saw a big golden wattle tree and the bright yellow flowers."

The children were curious in experimenting Still Life painting. They show great concentration skill in painting golden wattle flower through close observation of the flower. Throughout the week, the children were given opportunity to explore more Still Life painting as we put more flowers on painting table.

Rebecca arranged a vase filled with various flower such as cherry blossom, onion flower and other wildflowers. Some children brought in wildflowers they picked on the way to school and showed them to their peers. We decided to put them in our vase to make it more colourful. The children commented, "I like the pink cherry blossom. I'm going to paint the cherry blossom in a big vase." Jaedyn said, "I saw that cherry blossom when I went to the park with my mom, brother and cousins."





### More planets on the way... Pluto, Saturn and Uranus!

The children still show their interest in exploring Space topic as we continued what we left off last month. **So far we have created planet Earth, Jupiter, and Pluto.**

We continued with **planet Saturn** next as they children were interested in the **ring around Saturn**. We looked at Space book to find out what colour shall we paint on our planet Saturn and Mack said, "I can see some orange." Safwana said, "And blue!" Bronte added, "Is that pink on top?" Cory said, "I think it is... Well done guys, so let's paint the same colour as what's in the book for our Saturn. When the paint is dry, what else do you think we need to add? Planet Saturn is very special because it looks a bit different than other planets." Tamas, Magda, Lucas, Harley and Laura said, **"We need to put ring around it because Saturn has ring around it like this picture here."** Cory said, "Excellent boys and girls. I can see most of you pay close attention to each of the planet. According to the book here, it says that Saturn is large planet, similar to Jupiter, and they are cold."

After finished painting Saturn, we continued making the next planet. Cory asked, "Which planet shall we make next? Let's have a look at the book." Children, "Maybe this one next to Saturn." Cory said, "This one is called Uranus. It is also part of the big planets family. Okay, let's make Uranus. We are halfway through finishing up all the planets. What planets have we created so far?" Children: "Earth, Pluto, Jupiter and Saturn."

During group time, Cory introduced a song called **Five Little Men in a Flying Saucer**. The children role played as Little Men and Women flying around the world looked left and right and flew away in a flying saucer!



### Quiche cooking experience!!!

As we reached letter Q for our Letterland, Educators in Starfish decided to do cooking experience – making mini Quiche! We decided on vegetarian quiche and used the following ingredients; **Eggs, Milk, Salt and Pepper, Garlic, Mushrooms, Cherry-Tomatoes, Butter, Puff-Pastry, Parmesan and Tasty Cheese to brown on the top once it was cooked.** We spent a fair amount of time doing our cooking experience and when the smell of our Quiches was wafting through the room, it was a lovely indication that they were ready to serve up to the children. Most children enjoyed eating the quiche and commented, "This is delicious! It's very tasty. It's yummy! I can taste the egg...."

### Matraville Firemen visit Pumpkin!

We had special visitors coming to Pumpkin on Tuesday, 29th September 2015 – the Firefighters! What a great experience the children had with a visit from our local Firefighters. They discussed the importance of fire safety with the children, what to do in an emergency (**Get down low and go, go, go**). This experience not only helped the children to develop a better understanding of fire safety, it also helped to reinforce our efforts to achieve **Outcome 2** from the Early Years Learning Framework with the children which states **children develop a sense of belonging to groups and communities and an understanding of the reciprocal rights and responsibilities necessary for active community participation.**



## Painting with Fruits, Vegetables and Herbs....



Seeing as it is Spring, Miss Rebecca thought it'd be a good idea to further the children's knowledge and familiarity with the Seasonal fruits, vegetables and herbs available here at Pumpkin.

On the 10<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, Starfish were involved in some fun and sensory painting experiences with Miss Rebecca.

On the 10<sup>th</sup>, the children observed as Miss Rebecca cut the fruit/vegetable pieces (Apple, Orange, Cucumber and Pear) in half and then proceeded to apply paint using the brush to the flat half of the chosen pieces and apply it gently to a white piece of paper. As the children watched intently, Miss Rebecca demonstrated dabbing techniques and used 'repetition' to create a pattern using her chosen fruit to portray a flower with petals. Miss Rebecca spoke about manipulating the Fruit/Vegetable pieces to create a picture and as the children spoke about the smells of the Fruits/Vegetables in-front of them, we then had a discussion about the healthy foods we were using. Once the demonstration and discussion was finished, the children were eager to commence. Starfish experimented with various ways of applying the bright and colourful paints to the Fruit/Vegetables and then to their paper, to create their Spring artworks. By using fine motor skills, their imaginations and creativity, they were able to paint some lovely pictures by using and applying various techniques.



On the 18<sup>th</sup> September, the children were asked to investigate Pumpkin's gardens and collect interesting 'leafy' herbs for our Art lesson. Miss Rebecca joined the children as they ventured on their mission and the children were enjoying their time exploring their outdoor environment. Here at Pumpkin, we have many Herbs to choose from; *Rosemary, Coriander, various Mints including Vietnamese mint, Basil, Oregano and Chives*. Some of the children also wanted to add a few leaves from our Grapefruit tree and some Vines leaves growing near our sandpit. Once we had collected what we needed, they were placed in the middle of the table for all to share. The children observed as Miss Rebecca demonstrated how to create their very own 'Herb/Leaf Print' and explained to the children that each print will vary due to the amount of paint being added to the Herbs/Leaves. Using the same techniques learned from their Fruit/Vegetable printing and adhering to her instructions, Starfish were able to independently create their own 'Herb/Leaf Prints'.



On the 22<sup>nd</sup> September, to add to our beautiful array of 'Spring Art' in our class room, the children were then provided with Cauliflower and Broccoli pieces. They had been cut in various shapes and sizes and as Miss Rebecca introduced the art activity, she showed the children how to use the vegetables effectively.



The children listened as she explained that the stalks on the Broccoli can be used to represent trees trunks with branches, the head can be used to create the tops of the trees or even dabbed to create bushes and that when cut in half, the Cauliflower looks very much like a flower called a rose. Before the children began this activity, they were also shown how to create a simple pattern using the Cauliflower. Some of the children were experimenting with 'shadowing', as they applied the paints over the top of the Herbs/Leaves. Starfish also used trial and error methods as they painted the rough sides as well as the smoother and flatter sides of the vegetables and dabbed them onto the paper, furthering their knowledge of texture.



## Making our own Crystals



At the beginning of September, Starfish were learning about the letter 'Q' via Letter-Land and one of the words that we researched beginning with the letter of the week was 'Quartz'. Miss Rebecca thought it'd be better for the children to have a hands on approach in learning about the precious stone and so brought in her personal collection of Citron, Amethyst, Onyx, Rose Quartz, Smokey Quartz, Agate and Milky Quartz. As the children observed the crystals, Miss Rebecca explained that these types of crystals are found in the Earth's crust, are quite common and vary in shape, size and colouration. Using the whiteboard, the children were shown a diagram of the proper formation of a Quartz crystal. The children furthered their knowledge of shapes as Miss Rebecca explained that for it to be a legitimate Quartz crystal, it must be shaped like a 'Hexagonal Prism' in the middle, with a 'Pyramid Prism' on each end. The children were given the opportunity to see the precious stone in its natural state as well as cut and sliced by man.

To further the children's interests in the Quartz lesson, they were provided with the chance to make their very own crystals. Miss Rebecca provided the children with two experiments to aid in their observations of the crystals formations.

**Making our Bi-Carb Soda Crystals involved using; Bi-Carb Soda, Boiling water, Food Dye, 2x Pencils, Clean jar, cotton wool (2x sizes), paperclip and a refrigerator.** The children used mathematical thinking to measure out the

amount of Bi-Carb Soda needed as well as the water and food colouring in each jar. The children were told that this experiment was going to be quick and that unlike other crystal growing attempts, within 3 hours we will have our very own Bi-Carb Soda crystals. The children chose the colours Red and Blue for their crystals and when it was mixed thoroughly, Miss Rebecca then tied the cotton string around the Pencil and then added the weight to the bottom of the string to prevent it from touching the bottom or sides of the jar. We wanted to experiment to see if the size of the string would determine the size of the crystal and the results were amazing. The thinner string created a lovely beaded effect whereas the larger thicker cotton wool created a much larger and jagged crystal. The children were really happy with their Bi-Carb crystals and were noted handling them throughout the rest of the day. The left over sediment was also quite a fun sensory experience for the children as they took turns playing with the unformed crystals.

Our 'Rock Candy' Crystal experiment commenced on the 28<sup>th</sup> September and the children were excited about this one. The ingredients needed for this experiment were; Cardboard strips, Skewers, Boiling Water, Sugar, Food dye, cups and Blue-tac. To prepare for making the crystals, we had to first poke small holes into the cut up strips of cardboard and secure them using the Blue-tac. The bottom end of the skewers will dip into the cup and sugar solution and we measured it to make sure that the skewers were not touching the bottom or sides of the cups. The children were able to choose their own colours as the Food dye will give the Rock Candy crystals some colouration rather than being transparent. As the colours were being added, the children were able to refer to one of their previous science lessons regarding liquid density, as they made an observation about it taking a long time for the dye to mix in with the sugar water.



It is really great to see the children transferring their knowledge and making connections within their experiences. **This experiment will have Starfish children hypothesising and observing for a little under a week** and we really look forward to seeing the end results so we cannot eat them but also compare them to our un-edible Bi-Carb Soda crystals.