



# PUMPKIN LONG DAY CARE CENTRE

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## Newsletter – February 2016

### Centre News

We want to thank all the parents and families who joined us on our first parent evening this year. We were lucky to have the Principle of Matraville Public School, Mrs Sue Orlovich and Deputy Principle, Mrs Judy Lennords joining us. They came and talked about preparation for “Big School” next year, they also brought in some information for the families about “Countdown to school 2016 for 2017”.



Our curriculum, EYLF (Early Years Learning Framework) provides a reference point for educators to support them to develop programs that are in line with current ideas about best practice in early childhood. A central idea in EYLF is that whilst early childhood educators will share a common commitment to achieving the national of working towards them. This is to endure that programs are meaningful and relevant to the particular children, families and communities in which they are operating.

The educators engaged in a workshop about observations last year, called “Meaningful observation”. This year all educators at Pumpkin will describe their observations as a process to build up a picture of children’s learning to support curriculum planning and early learning. Our observation will also provide valuable insights for educator to evaluate their pedagogy and support reflection on the effectiveness of teaching strategies and the learning environment.

Our observations will involve gathering information that provides a window for understanding what children know, understand and can do.

The principles and pedagogical practices identified in EYLF guide us by emphasizing that our approaches and systems should:

- Include parents' and children's perspectives and goals.
- Depict the unique strengths, interests, knowledge and learning journey of each child.
- Capture the richness and holistic nature of children's learning.
- Use a variety of different ways to record and interpret assessment information to honour high expectations, diversity and growing cultural competence.

In this Newsletter we attached another parent survey for our Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy, we want to make sure that our learning program includes activities that reflect children's interests, culture and daily lives.

## Staff News

- Important notice from **Ms Alessandra** (or Ms Alex): Sadly, my last day at Pumpkin will be on the 11th of March. I have recently graduated from university with a psychology degree and am now starting my career in child protection. **Ms Criselda** (from the nursery room) will be the new room leader for the Jellyfish/Sunfish rooms. I wish to thank all the children, families and educators for the amazing five years I enjoyed at Pumpkin! All the best and I will certainly come for visits whenever possible!
- **Miss Elly** will be away from the 29<sup>th</sup> of March and she will be back on the Monday, 11<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.
- **Miss Cory** will be away from the 16<sup>th</sup> of March and she will be back on the Monday, 04<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.
- **Miss Criselda** will be away from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March and she will be back on the Wednesday, 06<sup>th</sup> of April 2016.

# Calendar of Events

**27<sup>th</sup> – 06<sup>th</sup> - Seaweek** - 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

**06<sup>th</sup> - Sunday – Clean up Australia Day.**

**08<sup>th</sup>- Tuesday – Maha Shivaratri**– Hindu Tradition,

**17<sup>th</sup> - Thursday – St Patrick's Day, come and dress in green.**

**18<sup>th</sup> - Friday – Grandparents Afternoon Tea** – Bring along your grandparents for tea and cakes (03.15 pm).

**20<sup>th</sup> – Sunday – Palm Sunday - Christian.**

**21<sup>st</sup> – Monday – Harmony Day.**

**23<sup>rd</sup> – Wednesday - Magha Puja Day** – Buddhist tradition – Full Moon Day.

**23<sup>rd</sup> - Wednesday – Holi – Hindu Tradition.**

**24<sup>th</sup> – Thursday – Purim, Jewish Holiday.**

**25<sup>th</sup> – Friday – Good Friday – Centre Closed.**

**26<sup>th</sup> – Saturday – Holy Saturday.**

**27<sup>th</sup> – Sunday – Easter Day.**

**28<sup>th</sup> – Friday – Easter Monday – Centre Closed.**



# Clownfish News

A big welcome to Aliyah who started this month in the Clownfish room at Pumpkin LDC. As it is a happy time to welcome our new friend it's also a sad time to say good bye to Mia who had her last day on the 19<sup>th</sup> and Nadal that leaves the beginning of March. Mia and her family will be returning overseas; and Nadal is moving to Canberra with his family. A big and exciting farewell to them from all of us here at Pumpkin LDC.

The month of February the Clownfish began with the Chinese New Year celebrations; the Year of the Monkey. The Clownfish children all participated in painting and creating some monkey's that we have hung up in the room that will be sent home through the last week of February for you to admire at home. We have also used the monkey themes in books that we have read in the room, the Clownfish children looked at the traditional words and artwork for the New Year. We also did monkey dance song from the wiggles. The children and educators were able to jump arounds and impersonate the monkey's actions with the educator's assistance the children followed and copied them and have now begun to mimic the actions throughout the how month. We will continue this with the children.



Following the New Year's celebration, we worked on our valentine's day craft for our families. The children were given the opportunity to make a card for you to take home. The children were given paint brushes but we noticed that most of them were explored the paint with their hands and paint the red coloured paint all over the paper. When it had dried the educators cut them into shape for you all. With their interest of sensory exploration with their hands we then moved to looking at different textures. We used some uncooked pasta and rice to explore to and from different containers. The Clownfish children seemed to really enjoy the sensory experience that we continued this through the month.





We went from the sensory experiences with the rice and pasta to something as simple but resourceful as water. The educators began the experience with a small box of water that the children were able to explore the water in, then we went and took the big trough from the preschool room. We fill that up with water that the children seemed to enjoy much more. Filling the trough with water then changed to water with boats, water with bubbles, to sea animals, to dinosaurs to the colour blue water. The children seemed to love the water play.



We used the colour blue to paint our own water. We did the painting in the afternoon outside and the children seem to respond to it so much more. They normally have painting in the morning but that day we changed it up. Using trestle to clip the paper too, we painted our papers with a paint brush. The children's faces lit up with so much excitement to have painting in the afternoon.



We have continued to use water through the last week of February. The Clownfish have begun to water the garden with their educators in the morning and in the afternoon, using the hose. The children have really begun to explore the concepts of the plants. How they grow, the water they need and how to care for them. We will begin to plant some beans in the early days of March. At the end of February, we started filling cups with cotton wool that we have been watering. We then will add some beans to watch the process.

Our news topic at the beginning of February was about the children's families. We have been working with the children using the family tree to identify themselves and their family members. We thank all who sent us in your photo for us to add to our tree. Reminder to all other parents that we would really like to have your families photo on the wall, to continue identification with the children; please send it through email or bring us a copy. We then moved to milestones and what milestones the children have been reaching and the goals that you as the child's carers would like us to work on here at Pumpkin. We love to read the families input as we do extend it in the room through our curriculum; reminder to all families to please fill out your fortnightly inputs for us and your child too.

Until next month!:) Clownfish Educators.

# Jellyfish/Sunfish News

Important notice from Ms Alessandra (or Ms Alex): Sadly, my last day at Pumpkin will be on the 11<sup>th</sup> of March. I have recently graduated from university with a psychology degree and am now starting my career in child protection. Ms Criselda (from the nursery room) will be the new room leader for the Jellyfish/Sunfish rooms. I wish to thank all the children, families and educators for the amazing five years I enjoyed at Pumpkin! All the best and I will certainly come for visits whenever possible!

A big welcome to Sofia and Daisy!

We finished last month and started February by getting to know each other through our 'All about me' learning story. The children learnt about the similarities and differences between themselves and their peers. The children enjoyed drawing representations of themselves on paper, white and chalk boards during the learning. On the



4<sup>th</sup>, we engaged in some fun dancing and made a music circle, where we played instruments (after learning that those are things Mason enjoys doing). On the 17<sup>th</sup>, the music interest was



seen again so Ms Maylene extended it with an outdoor musical instruments circle.

**February is Children's Dental Health Month** – The centre's calendar states that February is dental health month and since we could see on our calendar that it was the 1<sup>st</sup> of February, we decided to discuss this important topic. The children were

encouraged to talk about their toothbrushes and teeth brushing routine after Ms Alessandra showed them a toothbrush. Next, we read a book called 'First experience: Going to the dentist',



learning about check-ups at the dentist, the chair that goes up and down and about the tickling drill and other instruments used by a dentist.

**Frangipanis from Skye** – Skye enjoys bringing flowers to share with



her peers. On the 2<sup>nd</sup>, she brought many frangipanis and shared them with her educators and friends. Ms Alessandra explained that Skye took them from her garden at home! The children explored their flower, learning its name, noticing the yellow and white colours and of course, smelling them! Thank you for sharing, Skye! Later on that day, we enjoyed strawberries from our garden.



**Chinese New Year** – The children celebrated the Chinese New Year by exploring the Chinese items on a table that was set up outside with items we had in the centre, items donated by Chinese families and items brought in by the educators. Ms Elly explained the red pockets, the different Chinese food, the Fish cakes, the monkey and China shadow play pictures. The children were mostly excited by the Fish cakes!



Ms Elly explained that they are rice cakes. Inside, we watched a video of a dragon dance as we continued celebrating.



**Group time with Ms Stella about the Chinese New Year** – The children had an exciting discussion regarding the Chinese New year celebration and the year of monkey. Ms Stella demonstrated what the Chinese children do with their hands – put them together on



top of each other – as a gesture to get a red pocket from the elders while saying “gong xi gong xi”. The children put their hands together and repeated after Ms Stella. They also repeated “xin nian kuai le”, which



means “Happy Chinese New Year” in Mandarin. And sang the “gong xi gong xi” song together. At the end of celebration, we made our own red pocket with a monkey symbol and gold glitter. The next day, the children continued celebrating by eating fortune cookies.



**My Family** – As an extension of our last learning story (All about me), we got to know our peers’ families this month and discussed different ways of showing love and care



to others. It was also great to learn words in different languages, as we learnt to say grandmother and grandfather in Japanese, Lebanese and Spanish and dad in Bengali!

**Valentine’s Day** – Looking at our calendar, the children were shown the 14<sup>th</sup> of February and told about the upcoming Valentine’s Day. It was discussed that it is a nice day to tell the ones we love (such as our families, as we have been



discussing) how much we love them, to spend time together and to give lots of hugs and kisses (something we have also been talking about)! We decided to engage in Valentine’s Day artwork on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>.



The children are becoming more and more observant and curious about their environment. On the 15<sup>th</sup>, the children found some snails from one of our garden beds. The following day, Archer, Sofia and William tried to look for snails again. As soon as they found some, they quickly caught Ms. Criselda’s attention. On other days, the children noticed beetles in the garden and butterflies flying. While playing outside this month, the children also noticed the cleaning truck passing by, helicopters and aeroplanes flying and the postman delivering the mail. They enjoyed outside discussions with their peers and educators about what they were seeing and hearing. On the 26<sup>th</sup>, the children learned more planes with Ms Criselda after finding out that Elodie was off on a trip to Melbourne that afternoon.



This month, the children spontaneously started a new outside activity, which they have been taking part in daily! They stand on the climbing frame and start singing the



song 'Five cheeky monkeys', falling to the ground at the end of it. On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, Muhid came up with a twist for the activity, he collected all the plastic stools and lined them up. Upon seeing what Muhid was doing, the children excitedly helped him and after lining up the stools, each one climbed on top and William started to sing five little monkey song and they all had fun singing and jumping. On the 19<sup>th</sup>, the children engaged in monkey artwork and explored different kinds of monkeys online.



On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, we started with our news topic '**Celebrations**'. Through this, we were able to learn more about each family's way of celebrating any important events based on their cultures and would take this opportunity to incorporate children's culture into our program. We learned about Waitangi day, different Muslim celebrations and about Bastille Day.



On the 22<sup>nd</sup>, we found out about Mason's day trip to the Jenolan caves in the Blue Mountains. We learned that Mason found lots of lizards, had to watch out for snakes, climbed lots of stairs and used a map to see where to go. Miss Yuki took out the iPod to further explore the scenic views that can be found in the Blue Mountains. The children enjoyed looking at the pictures of mountains full of trees and decided to engage in a painting activity of mountains.



On the 18<sup>th</sup>, William shared that his dad was away for work in Korea, then going China. To help us understand where Korea and China are, we looked up on the internet the map of Asia. We noticed that China is very big compared to Korea and also noticed that they are close to each other. We saw other Asian countries around China and Korea, it was very interesting to learn about other countries too! Sofia then asked if we can draw, so we traced the map of China and Korea from the computer screen on big white paper and the children added colours to it.

Until next month,  
Jellyfish Educators

# Lionfish News

The Lionfish have really enjoyed exploring their outdoors this month. We started off the month with a lot of children finding things outside, and then bringing them inside to talk about for news. For example, on the 2nd, Sueann brought in a feather she found while playing outside today. "I found on the playground", she told us, "Its come from a birdie and it fell on the floor and I picked it up!" She said, "its very soft.. See" and she touched Miss Charlotte with it to show her, "it can tickle", she said.



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Raffi also found something interesting outside and wanted to show us. It was a small green piece of vine, "its from a tree", he told us. Thanks Raffi!

Even when playing outside, the Lionfish are constantly searching for new bugs or nice-looking leaves. On the 2nd, some of the Lionfish found a ladybug and got very excited. When Peyton and Jayden saw them getting

excited they came over to have a look. "I had ladybug on my playset at home once.. But I flew away", Peyton said, "this ladybug is red and black".

On the 9th, Hart and London were very excited in the morning to show the Educators a snail that they'd found in the garden! London said, "It's not moving!" Hart suggested, "Maybe it's asleep?" They watched as it gradually came out of its shell and started moving around the garden.

London yelled, "It's awake now!" Hart saw another snail nearby and said, "There's another one...it's crawling too!"



The Lionfish continue their interest in books by reading some of Pumpkins books in their own time, and bringing in new books from home to show their friends. For example, on the 17th, Hart brought in her book to share with her friends. She said, "My fairy book from Alexander and Auntie

Trudy!" She pointed out the Princesses in the book to her friends. Miss Catherine read one of the stories after morning tea.

We celebrated Chinese New Year this month. In doing so, we had a talk about Chinese New Year, and what happens. Then we watched a video of a Dragon Dance. "They look funny", said Hart laughing at the dragons.

"They breathe fire", said Aiden. We listened and we could hear some drumming music, and decided later we would make our own Dragon Dance music with the instruments.



To extend on this interest in Chinese New Year, we also provided a learning activity with shapes and colours, we decided to make our own Chinese fans. The Educators provided the children with half a paper plate to decorate using lots of different coloured shapes. As the children chose the different shapes, they were encouraged to name the shape as well as its colour. They all did a great job with their shapes and colours and showed great concentration as they decorated their plates. When they are dry we are going to add paddle pop sticks to make them into fans.



The Lionfish have also shown a great interest in constructing and building this month, for which we have strived to extend on as much as possible. On the 3rd, Max was nearby building with the blocks. He joined several together and said, "I'm making a triangle!" Hart, Ariella and London worked together constructing with the blocks. "We're making boxes!" said London.

When Miss Tracey asked, "What are they for?" Hart replied, "We are not sure yet?" Later on Ariella moved over to the mat where Hailey and Max were still building. She said, "I'm looking for the triangles to make a triangle!" Sueann and Safirah also came over to the block mat. They worked together to join several blocks together. Sueann said, "We're making squares!" Miss Tracey explained that when you join the squares together it makes a cube! When George arrived, he joined Sueann on the mat and helped her make her 'squares!' Leo also joined Aiden on the mat. He joined several triangle blocks together while Aiden watched on. He said, "I'm going to make a rocket ship..a big one! We have continued to try and provide appropriate materials and toys, throughout the month, to foster this interest in construction.

This month for Letterland, we have been learning about the letters 'A' and 'B'. We have enjoyed reading about Annie Apple and Bouncing Ben, as well as, learning about new words starting with these letters by practicing making their sound. The children have also engaged in arts 'n' crafts for Letterland, including a 'animals' collage for 'A', and making birdies for 'B'.



The Lionfish are obsessed with playdough, and have kept this interest up since the start of February. Because of this, Miss Charlotte made some extra play dough to bring in to kindy for the children to play with. The children had some fun with this play dough when Miss Charlotte brought it in on the 4th. Conor said, "oh no, Percy is stuck", and he put his train in the playdough. Sueann said, "my dinosaur is having something to eat", as she pretended to make her dinosaur eat the playdough. Hart rolled out her



playdough, “I’m making a vegetable pizza”, she said. Ariella said, “I cut out a butterfly and fishy”, and she held them up to show. Leo asked for the lego to be brought down, which also helped to extend on their interest in constructing and building. “This is lego man and he’s going for drive with the purple octopus”, Leo said. “I’m making a racecar with Xavi”, said Nadia. They all played very nicely together with the lego.

We also celebrated Dental Health Awareness month. Many of the children brought in their toothbrushes from home to show their friends, and give a little demonstration on how they brush their teeth. On the 26th, Sueann brought in her toothbrush to show us.



“My toothbrush is pink and it has eyes and a mouth.. It’s a happy toothbrush.. Mummy bought it for me to brush my teeth!”, she told us. She also said, “I brush my teeth morning and night.. In the morning I do it by myself, and at night mummy helps”. Sueann even demonstrated for us how she brushes her teeth.. She makes sure to get around to all her little teeth, and did a very good job!

Until next time,

Lionfish Educators.

# Starfish News

Welcome to the wonderful month of February!

First of all, we would like to welcome all the new family to Pumpkin and to Starfish room! We can't believe how well everyone has settled in. WOW! We have enjoyed getting to know one another.. such lovely friendships have been formed and old flames still burn!



This month we have been focusing on **settling the children into their environment, making them feel safe, secure and supported as well as building new and existing relationships.** We will be supporting the children in their social and emotional wellbeing throughout the year with new challenges and discoveries and look forward to assisting your children in growing, exploring and celebrating their efforts and achievements.



## Chinese New Year Celebration...

We kick off this month by celebrating Chinese New Year which falls on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016. Cory explained that lion dance is very popular during Chinese New Year. After watching lion dance videos, the children asked if they can do one too. So after some group discussion, we decided to create a huge lion face to make lion dance costume. The children helped Rebecca decorated the lion face – painting, putting glitters and beards... How awesome does the lion look?

The children had a wonderful time role play as lion dancers and drummers!



Lots of art and craft, music and movement and stories have been implemented to celebrate the Chinese cultural heritage. The children enjoy singing Chinese New Year song and saying the word "Gong Xi Gong Xi" which means Happy Chinese New Year! =)



## **B for Banana Smoothie! Yummo!! =>**

As we have been learning and exploring letter 'Bb' for the past 2 weeks, 'banana' was one of the words that the children came up with. Cory suggested if the children would like to make banana smoothie. They all screamed, "Yes!!! I love banana smoothie....!"

We prepared all the ingredients to make banana smoothie:

- Banana      -milk      -honey
- Yoghurt      -Ice cube

The children helped putting the ingredients in to the blender, poured it in to the cups, had a sip and commented:

"This is really yummy!!"

"It's sweet!" "Yes, because we put honey in it."

"It tastes like banana."

"It's creamy..."



## **Who wants some ice cream??**

Earlier this month, Cory and Rebecca have noticed the children often role played selling ice cream in cubby house asking their friends "Who wants some ice cream?" and pretended to sell ice cream.

Cory brought up this topic during group discussion and said, "Me and Miss Rebecca have noticed lots of you role playing selling ice cream at the cubby house. I think we can do more of this role play. What can we make for our ice cream role play?"

**Olivia:** "Maybe we can have a pretend machine to make ice cream."

**Peyton:** "Maybe we can make ice cream truck!"

**Cory:** "I think that's a brilliant idea Peyton. What do you think we can use to **make our own ice cream truck?**"

**Marco:** "Maybe a very big cardboard?"

**Siena:** "Yes, just like when we make the lion's head for lion dance"

**Cory:** "Excellent Marco and Siena. We do have a very big piece of cardboard we can use to make an ice cream truck."

**Siena:** "And we can put windows on our ice cream truck."

**London:** "And we can paint the truck too!"

**Cory:** "Yes! We will cut out windows, paint and decorate the ice cream truck."



The children helped Rebecca putting the cardboard together to make the roof, cutting out two windows and making a door on the side.

After some discussion on what colour shall we paint on the truck, Rainbow colour was the most popular choice. Miss Stella suggested, “How about we use candy cane stripes for the top of the window?” Children, “Yes!! I love candy cane...”

Rebecca created four pastel colours of red, green, yellow and we used rollers to paint the top of the window.

The children commented, “Look at the colours!! It’s like candy cane...!” “I love the ice cream truck! I’m going to go in when it’s ready and make some rainbow Ice cream!”

Cory said, “It does look like candy cane! This is looking awesome guys. It looks like a real ice cream truck now!”

### Ice Cream Menu!!

We also created our very own menu for the ice cream truck. After some discussion about what flavours we are going to sell, we decided to put these flavours on our menu:

Abigail, Sally, Olivia, Siena, Gloria helped Cory write the heading “Ice Cream Menu” while Francisca, Lysia, Samantha and London helped drawing the fruits next to the flavour.



The children took turn going in and out of the truck – selling and Buying ice cream! During hot days, there was a long line in front of ice cream truck as the children said they are verwanted to buy some ice cream! =) The children are learning about the value of money during this role play as they pretended to pay money. The ice cream role play will be further extended next month through making real ice cream that children can enjoy! Yay!!

We will also dicsuss about the value of money and coins amd paper money will be provided in the truck for the children to use in their role play....



### A day at Heffron Park playground... Teddy Bear Picnic! Hooray!

It was an extraordinary day for Starfish children on Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> February as we had our very first excursion this year! The children were super excited walking to the park holding their teddy bear and favourite soft toy for our 'teddy bear picnic'. On the way to the park, we spotted some wildflowers, big trees, and a big boat on one of the neighbour's house along the way... the children commented, "Wow! Look at that big house..." "There's a dog in that house." "I can hear the dog's barking..."

The climbing rope was very popular with the boys trying to climb all the way to the top! **Tyler, Robert, Dakota, Jaedyn, Marco and Dru** worked their way up to the top! Excellent balancing skill boys! **Olivia, Lisa, London** had a go at climbing up and stopped half way. Olivia said, "Look at me! I'm on the top! Come this way London!" London replied, "I'm coming!"

The swings were also a very popular spot for Starfish children... **Dea, Stella, Samantha, Eve, Lisa Olivia, Hailey, Kayla, Siena, Abigail** and **Xavier** took turn to go on the swing as well as helping each other to give a little push from the back!



### **Going down the pole! Wheeee.....**

It was really good to see the children utilising various muscle groups, as they tried their best at climbing the knotted ropes, sliding down the pole and making their way up the ladder. **Abigail, Gloria, Jaedyn, Kayla, Dru, Robert, Samantha** and **Marco** faced their fears and were successful in making it to the bottom of the pole safely... Impressive effort boys and girls! =)

### **Exploring the nature!**

AS the children explored their environment, **Robert, Dakota, Malakai, Jaedyn, Siena, Eve, Francisca** decided to pick up gumnuts around the big tree in the corner and said, "Can we bring them back and put them on our nature table?" Cory said, "Sure! That's a great idea..."

### **Teddy bear picnic under the tree...**

After playing for over an hour at the playground, Cory gathered the children around for a little picnic under the tree. We sat in a big circle and the children were asked to share a little bit of information about their teddies and favourite soft toys with their friends... Lovely sharing and talking boys and girls! =)

A BIG thank you to all parents for your participation and assistance in the excursion! We had a wonderful day having teddy bear picnic at the park! =)

**Till next month! Cheers!**

**Starfish Educators.**

