

# YEAR 1 BULLETIN

## TERM 2 - Week 6

### EDUCATION WEEK

The theme for this week has been 'health and wellbeing' and our children have been totally immersed in the week's events. A huge part of the 'health and wellbeing' comes under the 'health and physical education' and the 'personal and social capability' umbrella of the curriculum. Our design and planning of the how we will provide valuable learning experiences for the children is carefully crafted. A major part of this process is asking the children what it is they want to learn about. Meshing their interests with what we are mandated to cover is crucial if learning is to be real and meaningful. As teachers, we aspire to make this happen and we are constantly collaborating with our children and each other so that we can achieve great things.

Education Week provided you with a forum to view what we do all the time. '*Investigations*' is a program that we have designed that aims to promote learning in a real, natural environment. The design and planning is anchored in current research whereby children's interests provide inspiration for the setting up of 'provocations' for learning. As educators, we are constantly learning and making changes to the ways in which we promote learning in our children. Research into the Reggio Emilia Approach, Walker Learning Approach and International Baccalaureate Curriculum has enabled us to analyse and evaluate what we believe our Investigations should look like.

Developing creative and critical skills, taking ownership and responsibility for learning is a major part of our Investigations and the children are constantly challenged with cognitive, social and emotional hurdles. However these challenges are presented in the same way that they would be in the real world. We strongly promote children to 'BE' when in a particular area. They can choose to be a scientist, a mathematician, a writer, a reader, a designer, a botanist, an architect, a choreographer and so on. Areas including the gym, the kitchen, the city, the dance studio and the nature garden were inspired and created by the children. As teachers, we constantly review and measure the learning of our children at all times and make changes accordingly.

Thanks to all those parents and grandparents who came to be a part of Investigations during our open morning on Tuesday. It was surprisingly calm despite so many extra bodies floating about. The children loved having you there and were thrilled to have you involved in their learning. Your feedback was invaluable and is crucial in strengthening our partnership.

If you would like to be a part of Investigations, please let your classroom teacher know. Reading stories to children and promoting comprehension, helping in the design studio, planting in the nature garden, recording and editing using digital technologies are just some suggestions.

## **READING**

We continue to emphasise the importance of promoting a balanced approach to reading where the environment at home is one where reading becomes 'real'. Learning to read does not simply happen by memorising words nor does it happen by 'sounding out'. Learning to read does not simply happen when children become efficient in decoding print. A huge component of becoming an efficient reader is to develop creative and critical skills.

The following extract is from a credible source, *PRIMARY ENGLISH TEACHING ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA 'PETA - Parent's Guide to helping children at home with reading and writing)* and supports the message we were trying to deliver to you:

*Reading time, whether at home or in the classroom must be fun. Learning occurs best when what is being learned is relevant, interesting and has a purpose. Spending quality time with your child reading books, newspapers, magazines, comics, music lyrics, poetry, junk mail, and accessing information on the Internet is what brings your child back to reading night after night — tomorrow night and the night after. The value is in creating readers who want to read rather than creating readers who see it as a chore and hard work. Practising meaningless tasks and reading drills does little to entice the reader to engage with real books.*

## **We have been learning about...**

Recognising differences and identifying purposes of texts has been a focus for us this week as we prepare for the Lemonade Stall. Exploring the layout of a recipe and how this helps us to read it was emphasised when we used our lemonade recipe books to make some lemonade. Slowing down and making a connection with what we are reading and what we are doing proved challenging for many but a huge degree of satisfaction when felt when their efforts were rewarded with the tasting of the lemonade.

As mathematicians, the children have continued to be challenged with the task of identifying and articulating how to START a problem that has been posed. These experiences have led children to collaborate and developing their ability to reason. It has also highlighted the importance of being organised. This has offered them the opportunity to solve real life problems with a real purpose. Calculating the amount of lemons we squeezed required children to use their ability to articulate what they know (what information do they have) and what do they need to find out. The term 'the most effective way' was used extensively as children worked toward a solution. We continue to promote the children's ability to share their thinking behind an answer.

**What you can do at home:**

Count collections and discuss the most effective way of counting. Talk about how these collections can be organised to make the counting more effective. For example some collections are effectively counted by 2's as they are grouped in pairs, whilst other collections might need to be organised in groups of 10 and then counted. This experience is the basis of addition and multiplication.

**THANK YOU**

Your support in making this Lemonade Stall REAL has been amazing. We have all enjoyed the process and have been amazed at the learning opportunities that have been created.

Thanks to Fiona (Willoughby's mum) and Gail (Gemma's mum) for their handy work in the garden and their painting skills. We now have large blackboards outside our classrooms that are regularly used by the children.

Thanks to those parents who walked with us to Lauriston Girls' School. The children's enjoyment of the production, 'The Little Mermaid', was visible in the expressions on their faces while we were watching.

Thanks to those parents who have responded to our call out for packaging and boxes. These are key materials for creating in our Investigation sessions. However we still need more. Any donations would be appreciated.

Have a great week!

The year 1 Team