



Weelam Group Newsletter

February 2020



These images were created at our Parent Information evening by the Weelam group Parents. They will now become our symbol for Weelam group this year, made with natural materials discovered in our preschool garden.

Dear Weelam group, Womin djeka to my first newsletter for this year. I would like to begin with a huge thankyou to everyone, the parents, their families, my teaching team and all the happy, enthusiastic, creative and caring children who have come together over the past four weeks as Weelam group 2020. Our year at preschool begun quietly as we started to get to know each other, learn about each other's interests, begin friendships, extend established friendships and develop our program at preschool and at Bush camp. The smaller groups supported us with the opportunities and time to be together in little groups, with time to engage in conversations, learn routines and find out more about what it means to be a preschool friend. Gradually our time has increased and now everyone is actively joining in, working with their friends and have already made many exciting discoveries. This newsletter is an opportunity for me to reflect on and share with you some of this learning with you for your child and family about Being at preschool, Belonging to our community and Becoming friends, problem solvers, helpers, active learners and carers for each other, the Land and all our creatures. Please ask if you have any questions about the program and remember to always take time to look at our group learning diary to see our daily reflections and stories.

Caring for All friends:



The children were excited to discover we had new baby chicks to care for. We encouraged the children to take time to watch them, talk to them, feed them treats from our vegi garden and hold/ pat them gently.



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Have you meet Jimbo? The group were also introduced to Jimbo the Seeing Eye puppy that is growing up with Mrs. Karen. Jimbo will be with us for the year, the children have begun learning about when they may pat him, and that at times he will wear his special harness which means he is working, and you cannot touch him again until you have asked Mrs. Karen and his harness is off. We just heard that Theo the Seeing Eye dog from last year has just passed all his schooling and will now become a Seeing Eye working dog. Congratulations to Mrs. Karen on achieving this with Theo. We look forward to watching Jimbo grow along with us learning more about the work of Seeing Eye dogs.

Making Moments matter: "We saw Bundjil":



Last week there was great excitement when Bundjil was seen flying above us in the playground. We all stood together watching as Bundjil soared above us. When we started to sing our Bundjil song, Bundjil slowly came closer, before flying off high over the pine trees. This was a very special moment for the children as they have been playing with 'Bundjil' with the puppets and story symbols. To see Bundjil in the sky offered them a

deeper understanding of the size of Bundjil and how Bundjil flies. Over the years I have been taught by the Boon Wurrung Elders that Bundjil as their Creator Spirit teaches the importance of caring for the Land and caring for the children. These First Peoples messages of care are important values in our programs.



Story making:

Giving meaning to Symbols and sharing thoughts



Our Learning Diary: Each day we add a page (or two) to our learning diary as part of our reflections and program planning. You are welcome to look at our work during the session, the diary will be on the tall table for everyone to see. The children have now begun to help with the diary, they are being encouraged to cut out the photos, to glue the pictures together and to add their own drawings and reflections. You are very welcome to add your thoughts too. When you are helping within the program please feel free to help create the diary pages too. Please let us know if you have any skills that could further support our learning times and extend our current interests- we appreciate your involvement.



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We have begun working in our I'm Wondering about ...? Book. The children began with being curious about bugs and beetles. We initially looked at the specimen bugs with the magnifying glasses and then went looking in the garden to discover more about who lives under the rocks and logs. The children were encouraged to draw their discoveries as a collaborative drawing in the book. This week we wondered about whose feather we had found and which part of the bird it had come from?

Learning with Country experiences:



Our Bush camp and Beach experiences have offered us many opportunities to explore, to wonder and experience new learning and challenges within these natural settings. Already we have begun to walk along the many tracks to and from the beach. On the way we have discovered the Walert nests, watched walert sleeping and found lots of red ripe salt bush berries- they make great paint! Last week with the change of weather we put on the waterproof gear and discovered the fun of puddle jumping with friends. Down on the beach we noticed the change in the waves to being loud, then as the wind blew, we tried to fly with the wind back to home. Everyone is doing a great job carrying their back packs and walking along too.



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Restaurant Day: Cooking with the Vegetables from our garden each Thursday

Our recipes so far have included Zucchini roll ups and Zucchini muffins - we have lots of Zucchini's in our garden!! We have been noticing how big some of them are growing and how heavy they become. Watch out for our next Zucchini recipes. We shared our Zucchini muffins with our families at our family lunch and everyone smiled as they discovered how delicious they were.



The Zucchini's became an excellent measuring experience. We had found many different sizes in the garden. The children drew around them and ordered them smallest to largest.



We have now established *Toast Tuesday* as an important part of the rhythms and routines throughout our week together as Weelam group. The children have embraced this opportunity to share a meal together and to engage in conversations with each other and the adult helping to make the toast.



Toast Tuesday: Learning new skills. Once the toast is cooked the children are encouraged to butter and spread their toast with their chosen spread. This requires them to calculate the amount of each they need and to use a knife with safety. Once their toast is eaten it is time to wash and dry your dishes.



Thank you to everyone who joined in our Parent information and Family night gatherings. These were both very special times sharing information and social times with our families. We will be organizing many more throughout the year. Please join in when you can- everyone is welcome.

Reminders and Dates for Diaries: *Please return your child's white folder we have many new stories to add.*

1. **Come and Play Roster:** Please put your family name down on our **Come and Play Roster**. The roster sits beside the sign in book. We look forward to you joining us in the program.
2. **Working bee:** Join us **Sunday 1st March 10am to 1pm** (we will have a BBQ lunch too)
3. **Long weekend, No Kinder Monday 9th March**
4. **Harmony Day Lunch together: Thursday 19th March.** Please save the date and families are invited to join us from 12:30 for Lunch. More information to follow.
5. **End of term: Thursday 26th March** (we will let you know how we will celebrate this day).

I look forward to sharing many more stories and times of learning with everyone in the future. Ann



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