

***Being, Belonging, Becoming together as Weelam group in many ways.***

*Dear Weelam group, I began this newsletter down at Bush camp sitting in my van listening to Waang and waiting for families to arrive with a feeling of gratitude that we would be able to gather as a group and be together in this special place. As I now complete this, I find myself reflecting on the beautiful Celebration gathering we had at the Preschool yesterday. Your kind words, your thoughtfulness, the joy of the children and the many stories and connections between us. After what has been another challenging year globally it was terrific that as our time together came to an end, we have been able to share these times together in what have been important learning spaces for us all. Enjoy reading this final newsletter for 2021. There are so many stories within each photo. Thankyou for supporting us to create all these stories with your children. We all take many wonderful memories with us from this past year together.*



*Learning new skills*



*Finding possibilities within nature*



*Going on many adventures*

**Look what has been happening in our Murnong garden:**



*We used our digging stick to discover what was happening under the ground and how the yams are growing. The seeds are now forming and ready to collect.*



*We captured our learning in our artwork.*







**Gathering at Willum Warrain, Hastings:** *Throughout this year many First Peoples have been our teachers. The opportunity to be at Willum Warrain this month enable us to build and reflect on this learning and on this day learn with Peter, Nola and Bree. We worked in both small and large groups learning about the native plants, bush foods, listened to stories and further understood the importance of all responsibility and care within relationships, these include with each other, the Land and all entities. Together we danced and participated in both water blessing and smoking ceremonies.*

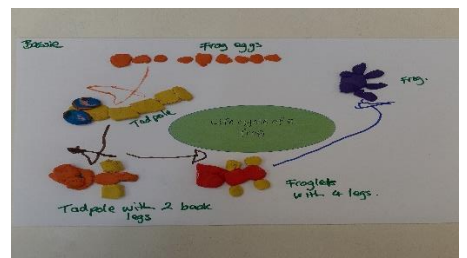
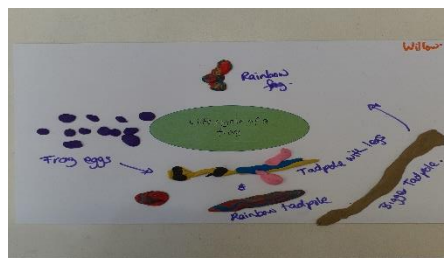


*\*Please ask your children the stories within these photos*



We ended our day buying a plant from Bree from the plant nursey with our \$3's. The children took care choosing their plant and asked for the plants they had learnt about during the visit. Back at preschool the next day we reflected on our learning by making a special book for our teachers at Willum Warrain. Each child made a page, when I delivered the book to Willum Warrain they reflected with me about our visit, the depth of learning of the children and their understanding and engagement with all the experiences. Reciprocity is an important quality within First Peoples Cultures and after such a wonderful day at Willum Warrain it was important that we acknowledged this time, making our book and gifting it to them was our way of giving back and saying we were very grateful for this time together. Remember you can visit Willum Warrain as a family, just check their website for open days and community events, including visiting their nursery.

**Life cycles: Exploring the life cycle of frogs:** As part of our learning to understand the habitats of all creatures we studied the life cycle of frogs. After observing the children and their interests Kim initiated these experiences as part of her studies. In small groups books were studied, art work reflected learning and included creating a frog habitat (including the welcome signs) with pipes, gravel, lights to attach bugs for them to eat and plants for shade. Now we wait to see if the frogs like what has been created and start to move in. We will keep listening for them.





**Our Pizza Restaurant:** *The children asked to make a pizza shop, there was much preparation with what to order, creating the signs, pamphlets, organizing the food and the cooking spaces. Some children made their own while others waited at the table for their orders to be prepared. We had moved the oven (it is portable) to under the verandah. The smell was delicious and everyone gave the pizzas a thumbs up- you may have also received pizza home in lunch boxes.*



**PMP:** *Throughout this year we have supported each child to develop their skills to jump higher, to balance, increase our awareness of our bodies in space, set personal challenges, manage times that didn't quite work out and take pride in achievements that had previously been 'too hard'.*



We celebrated everyone's participation and achievements in the PMP program with a medal presentation. Everyone received their 'Awesome PMP Award'.



**Being an Artist with Lynton:** *We met Lynton and his friend 'Grumbles' the Koala*



We learnt how to create our own pictures of Grumbles.



*Lynton taught the children that you can work with many colours and there are many ways to see the world.*

**Photos for our memories:**



Making a digging stick



Damper on the campfire



Making gifts for families



Preparing for the end of the year





*Our end of year preparations offered the children the opportunity to work with new materials and think about what they could create as gifts for others, even Ocean joined in.*



Huge  
thankyou to  
all our  
families for  
joining in  
our end of  
year events  
in so many  
ways.



*\*Our end of year gifts were so heavy that we needed a special delivery from Santa!!!*

**Thank you...Thank you...Thank you...Thank you...Thank you...Thank you....**

**To all the children** who will always be Weelam group 2021

**To all their Families** for their trust, kindness and support, that includes their extended families

**To all our teachers**, First Peoples, the Land, the Birds, the Animals, the Creatures and all entities within this world and who we have learnt with on Boon Wurrung Country.

*And most importantly I acknowledge and thank enormously **my teaching team Sarah, Beth, Kim and Suzy**. You are all such special teachers who have not just brought your strengths and knowledge to the program, you have continued your learning and supported me in so many ways with your enthusiasm, commitment and active engagement in our times teaching together and within our daily reflections. Thank you for always greeting my requests with your smiles and positive attitudes and all you have brought to the program. It has been an absolute honour to work with all of you. Enjoy the holiday break and I look forward to working with you again in the future.*

To those families leaving us, please know you are always welcome within our community, we look forward to hearing from you and seeing you in the future. Please stay in touch and my plan is to visit all the schools early February to meet all the children's teachers and spend time with them in class. I look forward to seeing many of you in the future back around the preschool.

*Our times of learning being, belonging and Becoming with Country have been captured in the little storybook that the children received as a gift from our special Santa. Enjoy reflecting with your children on the many stories within the pages of this book. They have been captured as wonderful memories of our times together. So many terrific stories of friendship, achievements, independence and interdependence. It really has been a fabulous year as Weelam group 2021, thank you for joining us on this journey. Enjoy the holiday break, relax and always remember to listen fr Waang and look ofr Bundjil.*

*Kind Regards, Sarah, Kim, Beth, Suzy and Ann, Weelam group teaching team 2021*