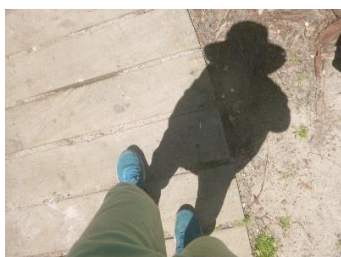


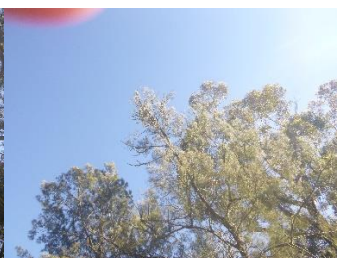
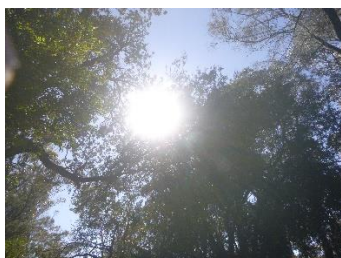
Being, Belonging, Becoming together as Weelam group in many ways.

Dear Weelam group, it is exciting to not only be able to share moments from our learning times with you in this newsletter, but also to be able to tell you about the events and gathering we are planning as we move towards the end of this year. This term we have been asking the children to be responsible for the camera, and to take the images for the learning diary each day and for this newsletter. At the end of the session it is always interesting to see what has been taken, how they view their learning environments and what interests them Here are just some of their reflections.

Being on Country: *Exploring how the children see themselves and their learning environments*



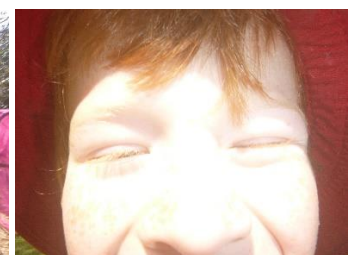
The children are recording themselves and their peers as they move...



Connecting: *They are looking up, looking down and all around, looking wide and focusing on details up close.*



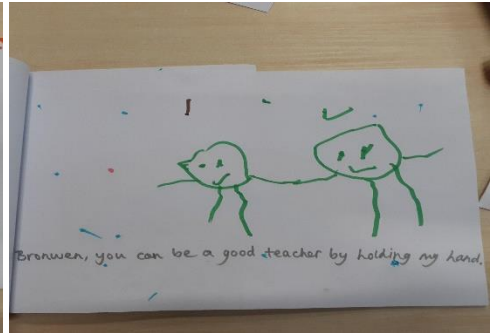
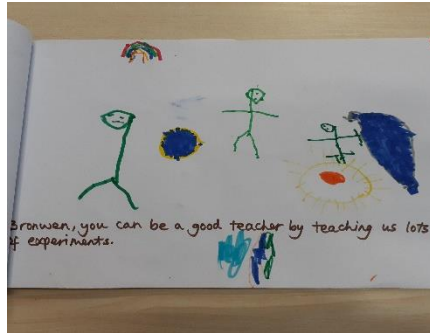
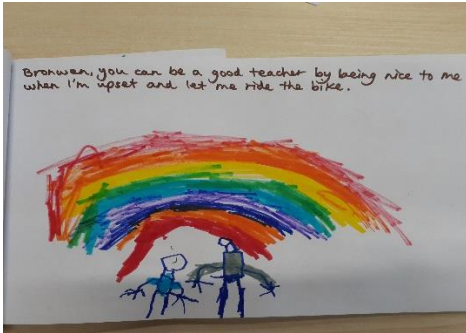
Engaging: *The camera is supporting many children to engage with their friends and record what is happening around them. It is interesting to view the program from their perspectives and viewpoints.*



Developing a sense of wonder and exploration: *Many children are experimenting with the camera, exploring what they see and what happens if they take a photo in many ways. There are some interesting discoveries and angles!!*

Farewell to Bronwen our Preservice Teacher:

After three weeks with us in Weelam group we said goodbye, and thank you to Bronwen. We made her a special book titled 'How to be a good teacher'. Each Weelam group friend made a page for Bronwen's book and offered her their advice about what qualities a teacher should have. We tell the children that when we have student teachers they have the job of helping them learn what to do be a teacher. The children presented Bronwen with her book and a special 'sand cake' that they had suggested she might like too.



We received this lovely letter from Bronwen reflecting on her time with us.

To all my friends at Weelam Group,

A whole week has gone by since I was last able to play and learn and read stories with you all and I miss you! I have looked often at the lovely book of pictures that you all made for me, and it makes me smile. Thank you again for that – it will remind me of every one of you and your special ways of being.

When my friends here ask me about my time at Balnarring Preschool, I tell them about the amazing children I met there who were so good at looking after each other and caring for the land. I tell them about the wonderful tree you have outside, where you can sit and watch Waang

come and go while you have your lunch and where kookaburras laugh at some of Ann's stories. I tell them too about Bush Kinder and how much fun I watched you have, climbing trees, digging holes and making drip castles on the beach, exploring rockpools and learning about nature. My friends said that I was lucky to visit such a very special place, and I agreed. Since I left Balnarring, I have been working hard, writing down all the things that I learnt about teaching from all of you. I've written pages and pages of words so I must have learnt a lot! Thank you all for sharing time and space with me and for making me feel so welcome. Sending you lots of fluffy clouds and colourful rainbows, Bronwen



Bird Count week: The children participated in Bird Count week at home, at Kinder and at Bush camp.



At Bush camp we searched for birds and their nests as we went exploring, At the end of the session we all sat quietly in small groups to look, to count and draw the birds that we saw. Barrawan, the magpie stopped by to model for our drawings and be counted.



We continued our time learning about birds with learning their names, many names in Boon Wurrung language, by exploring our resource books to find out about their habitats and nesting places. We watched Kookaburra go in/out our nesting box. Our learning experiences were recorded within our artwork.

Learning with Lionel from Living Culture: <https://www.livingculture.org.au>

Lionel is a Gunditjmarra Kirrae Wurrung-Bundjalung man who has been granted permission to teach First Peoples Cultures and knowledges on Boon Wurrung Country. Lionel joined us for the morning at Bush Camp to be our Teacher. Lionel supported us to deepen our learning, understandings, and connections with Country. First we went walking to discover the Bush foods that are all around us.



Lionel taught us about the many uses for the plants we saw. Some were for eating, some for medicines, he showed us the grasses which you can make rope with and told us about how the bark from the paperbark was used as nappies for the bubups. We were reminded to take only what we needed and to be respectful towards the plant.



Lionel taught the children about how to throw a spear and why First Peoples needed spears for hunting. The children were invited to take their turn to throw the spear just like Lionel. Some children had many turns.



After our spear throwing lesson, we return to the rotunda (it was raining again) for snack time and to listen to Lionel play his Yidaki. The children tried to guess the animal sounds Lionel created as he played. Next, we gathered in a circle for an opportunity to each experience Yidaki sound meditation. If you wanted Lionel played the Yidaki on your back.



Lionel showed the children how to make smoke and create a fire using sticks. Many tried as well. We discovered this was difficult.



Lionel ended our session together showing the children some very old tools, Boomerangs and shields that he has. The children were allowed to hold each one and explore the patterns and markings on them. Lionel also showed us the digging sticks, clap sticks, spears, and tools he is making and burning his own patterns on. Lionel told us how each tool was used. We also learnt about the way First Peoples made a ball with possum skins and had 100 people on each Marngrook (original football) team.

Rockpool discoveries: *With the beautiful weather and the tide out, we headed to the rockpools*



The children have been working as a team to push and pull the trolley to ensure it arrives safely as well as each friend at our destinations. On this day we discovered and watched sea stars moving on the rocks. Back at preschool we researched sea stars further and were able to find answers for many of our questions and wonderings.

Time just Being: *we are creating experiences that offer the children time to relax, be calm and enjoy quiet times.*



We are balancing active play with quiet times just being with friends, listening to told stories and quietly watching the fire as the flames move and the potatoes are slowly cooking.



Fruit Face Fun: *The children have been trying many of the current seasonal fruits, making faces to eat.*



Dates for your Diaries: *There will be more information to follow about each of these*

Wed. 17th Nov: Excursion to Willum Warrain, Hastings

Mon. 22nd Nov: Art class with Lynton during Kinder session

Mon. 6th Dec: Kinder photographs both individual and group photos

Sat. 11th Dec: Bush camp family camp night

Mon. 13th Dec: End of Year celebration session. This will be our last day of preschool sessions. The children attend from 9am (we have a surprise for them) Families join us from 12noon for picnic lunch and some end of year songs, stories and more surprises.

Transition to school: I have begun sending out my draft transition to school statements for parents to read and for parents to complete their sections. Once these are completed, we will meet to discuss what we have written before sending them onto the school. Please do not hesitate to make a time to talk with me if you have any questions or just want to speak further about your child's transition to school.

Please enjoy the next few weeks with us and we look forward to the upcoming opportunities to gather as Weelam group and for you to share in your child's learning experiences.

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