

Blue Stars

Wow can you believe we are heading towards the end of another year and what a great year it has been. Our program has run on a Tuesday and Thursday morning 9:00am – 12:00pm.

This year we ran a program where the children generally had outside time in the first half of our session and then after snack we had inside time. This has worked really well and it has allowed the children to get to know each other and engage in group experiences, encouraging social interactions and begin to negotiate roles in different play episodes.

We have started to share the yard with the older rainbow children and this has worked wonderfully with the bigger children assisting the smaller ones by pushing them on the swings, giving the smaller children turns on the bikes and scooter and sharing resources and spaces within the yard.

At this age all children learn through play so throughout the year we have offered a wide variety of play opportunities for the children to use to learn about themselves and their world. Some children, however, lack the confidence or skills needed to engage in this play so we then assist by guiding, demonstrating, directing and role playing until the children have the skills and confidence to tackle it themselves unassisted.

During the year we have had some fun experiences. This year's group have loved sensory play, painting and the playdoh table. We have had sand, shaving cream, finger painting, water, rice and gelli baffle just to name a few. The children love getting their hands dirty and in the process have learnt lots of new skills and been very creative. We are always looking for and trying new ideas with art. The children have created some amazing artwork with the different methods we have used such as marble painting, splatter painting, spray bottle painting, splodging, roller, string painting, golf ball painting, magic painting, ice painting, shaving cream painting and much more. Our playdoh table is forever changing with many different topics and themes and there are resource tubs at hand so that the children can add to their own creations and follow their own interests.

Our dramatic play areas have included home corner, florist shop, grocery store, pirate ship, palace, mechanics workshop, construction site, fairy garden, space station, ice cream shop, puppet theatre, Hair Salon, Chinese and Italian restaurant, camping, bbq and picnic area. Here the children have been able to explore and engage in role play and social interactions. We want to be able to ultimately give the children many different areas where they can explore and learn at their own pace but above all it's about fun and enjoying their time at kinder.

Cooking is always a highlight as the children get to make many different things and get to take them home or sometimes we eat what we have made at snack time. The children have made cookies, muffins, scones, muesli bars and chocolate balls just to name a few. The recipes we have done with the children are easy for the children to follow and allow the children to learn about measurement, ingredients and how it all comes together to create something that they can eat.

Some of the special events at kinder this year was our Mother's Day morning tea, which was very special as the children made lovely presents and cooked all the food for our mums.

We also had PJ day at kinder where the children wore their pajamas to kinder and made a gold coin donation to Melbourne City Mission, we raised \$43.00 this year - what a great effort. We had our special visitor's week and what a great turn out we had. I think many of our visitors were taken back to their own childhood as they were having lots of fun and happy to explore and participate in the activities we had at kinder.

During fourth term we will have two incursions and one excursion. In October we had music with Heather which was awesome. The children did lots of movement, dancing and listening to the beat. They used musical instruments and a parachute to keep in time. We had a great morning. On the 7th of November we had a water safety incursion which came at a good time of year leading into summer.

In early December we will be going on an excursion to picnic in the park. The children will meet us at the park and sign in there and we will have a play at the park, play games, have snack and then head back to kinder, Sylvie and I are really looking forward to it.

As most of you know, your child has a reflection folder filled with special and ongoing progress of your child at kinder. The camera plays a big part in our everyday life at kinder and the children are so used to getting their photo taken now that they often ask me to take a photo of them or the activity they may have been doing. This method allows us to capture experiences and record conversation that go along with a photo that can tell a story. We are able to have pictures of special events represented in your child's reflection folder that is yours to keep at the end of your child's journey at kinder. I love the reflection folder and I enjoy adding new and exciting things your child is experiencing at kinder.

This year we have had the children collect plastic bottle caps and bread tags and boy have we collected a lot for such a good cause. Bottle caps are used to make prosthetic limbs for children and the tags make plant holders, the sale of which finances wheel chairs for those families less fortunate. We were very lucky to have one of our 4 year old parents bring in a 3D printer and show the children how once the bottle caps are made into filament, the 3D printer can make many different things. He brought in a prosthetic hand that he had made so the children could see what it looked like which gave them a better understanding of the importance of collecting the caps and tags.

This year we also introduced acknowledgement to country which we do every morning after circle time. The children can tell you we do this to thank the Wurundjeri people for sharing their land and we want to help look after the land, animals and the people too. It's a very simple little verse. Hello Land (Hands on the land) Hello Sky (Hands reach for the sky) Hello me (Give yourself a hug) Hello friends (Arm around the person next to you.) The children enjoy doing it and it's a great way for the children in a small way to become aware of the aboriginal culture and begin to be concerned about our land, animals and people.

Throughout the year we have seen great changes in all the children. Those little quiet children who were only interested in themselves now keenly come to kinder and look for their friends ready to play together. They look forward to the challenge of something new and different and now keenly listen to a story eager to hear what is going to happen next. The children are now busily trying to organise play dates with their friends and party invites are a plenty.

This group of children is certainly going to enjoy the challenges that “Big Kinder” has to offer and I look forward to watching them all grow and develop into even more independent little people in 2020. To those who are staying, how lucky we are to have you for another year. To those moving on to other centers in 2020 we wish them all good luck for next year. We are sure you will have a lot of fun.

Thank you
Shar Henderson & Sylvie Szabo

Special Thanks

As another year ends it is time to remember all those who have helped this year run smoothly. As always, the ever-reliable Belinda has done a great job coordinating everyone and making sure that everyone knew what was happening and when. Thank you, Belinda, for keeping everyone informed and coordinated so that everything happened when it should. I would personally like to thank you Belinda for all your support and belief in me and answering my constant questions. Our debriefs in the mornings are much looked forward to and the laughs are always a plenty. Thanks for your amazing friendship.

To Jo who is always willing to help and do extra things to make our lives a little easier, thanks for the laughs and friendship throughout the year.

To Genevieve it's been fun being able to spend some time with you this year, thanks for the laughs and support.

To Sylvie my partner in crime, well what an amazing lady and educator, we have lots of fun and we have had a ball with the children this year. Thanks so much for the support, ideas, staying back and helping with the program and all the extra things you do to help the room run smoothly. Thanks for the friendship and support.

What an amazing bunch of people I work with; they make it a pleasure to come to work and looking forward to doing it again with all of you next year.

No kinder can run smoothly without a dedicated team of committee members and this centre certainly has that. Thank you to all the committee for all their hard work and dedication throughout the year. It has been a pleasure working with such a professional group of people. Thank you for your constant support. I'm sure that as many of you leave the committee this year that the new-found skills you now have will be very useful in the years to come. You have all done a fantastic job.

Last but not least thank you to all the parents that have helped in so many ways. Without your constant support and assistance, we could not run our program. Thank you for assisting with kinder duty and a special thank you for all the extra things that you have shared with us to enhance our program. Your contributions are greatly appreciated. Most importantly thank you for allowing us to be part of your child's education, it is a great honor. Your children are what make it an absolute pleasure for me to come to work and be a part of their lives in a small way. I know I have certainly made some great new friends who I look forward to keeping in touch with in the future.

Thank you

Shar Henderson