Centre Update from Catrina

Well here we are in week 7 of the term and the next few weeks are going to be very busy. So you don’t miss out on any of the activities please read the newsletter and check the Diary Dates. Kindy photos will be returned in the coming weeks and staff will give them directly to you. Our final photo day is this coming Tuesday 15th March.

Kindergarten Student Free Day

Wednesday 16th March is a student free day to enable all staff to participate in a full day conference being attended by all kindergarten staff in our partnership. Our day will be focussing on Numeracy. This means there is no kindergarten on Wednesday. As with school student free days there is no “catch up” day available.

Breakfast at Kindy

On Tuesday 29th and Wednesday 30th of March we are having breakfast at kindy for the children. In brainstorming groups we will be planning our menu, the children will be making their own placemats and of course everyone comes to kindy in their pyjamas and then gets dressed after breakfast. These breakfast mornings will start at 8.30am. Kindy will supply all the foods. If your child has special dietary requirements please send these to kindy on the breakfast mornings. The purpose of this experience is to enable children to plan and manage their own breakfast routine in the morning increasing their independence and confidence which leads to a great self esteem. Parents will be encouraged not to help their child during these experiences.

Family Excursion to Cleland Wild Life Park

We have booked our Family Excursion for all kindy children and their families on Thursday 7th April. The entry cost for adults is $15.00 which is being subsidized by the kindy. Please let me know if you have a membership which gives you free entry as you will need to bring this on the day. Younger children are most welcome at attend this excursion and all children under 4 years of age are free. The walking paths are pram friendly. Our day will start meeting all families at 9.30am at the front gates before we enter the park. Parents need to transport their own child/ren to the park. We will then have our morning snack and a drink before breaking into two groups. We will be doing a lot of walking so please make sure all children have suitable footwear—no thongs or crocs. Our Education Sessions are booked for 10.15am. The day will finish at 2.30pm as everyone will be very tired by then giving you enough time to get back to Stirling for school pick-ups. If parents are unable to attend, grand parents or other adult family members may be able to. Please come and talk with me if an adult can not attend with your child as they will then be allocated to a teacher during the excursion. If you are having difficulty transporting your child please also come and see me as we may have other options. This excursion is a great way to meet others and enjoy the learning of the children. Please complete the attached consent form and return it as soon as possible.

This excursion is for everyone regardless of what days they attend kindy normally.
**Cable Drums**

Last year we introduced cable drums to our outdoor area. During the school holidays I was able to get one coat of paint on them but they really do need another so they last through our wet autumn and winter. If you have an hour spare and are able to do some painting please let me know.

**People’s Choice Credit Union Lottery.**

This year we are selling tickets in the People’s Choice Credit Union Lottery. All families will receive a book to sell later this term however you can also buy tickets on line and it is a great way you can ask family and friends interstate and overseas to support the kindergarten and possibly win a great prize. A few years ago Vonny won $20,000.00 of travel!!!

Stirling East Kindergarten could be raising hundreds of extra dollars by selling online tickets in the 2016 People’s Choice Community Lottery.

Online tickets for the Community Lottery are now on sale and are an easy way to kick start our Community Lottery fundraising. There’s no limit to the number of tickets which we can sell online and the funds raised are over and above what we will sell in paper tickets. We are raising funds to further develop our Nature Play learning environment.

All tickets purchased online by 31 March will go into the early bird prize draw to win a Hyundai Accent Auto valued at $18,296.

We could also win $1,000 worth of Harvey Norman Vouchers which will go to the Community Lottery group that sells the most tickets online between 3 and 31 March!

Please go to:  
To purchase tickets today.

**Hermit Crabs**

We are looking for a family like to care for the Hermit Crabs this coming weekend. They are very busy and entertaining to watch. It would involve taking them home on Thursday 17th March and returning them to kindy on Monday 21st March. Please let Catriona know if you can help.

**TERM DATES 2016**

- 1 Feb — 15 Apr
- 2 May — 8 Jul
- 25 July — 30 Sept
- 17 Oct — 16 Dec

**Playgroup**

Playgroup is now on Friday 9.00am to 11.00am. All families are welcome and the cost is $5.00 per week. Please bring a piece of fruit for sharing. Vonny is facilitating the Playgroup this year.

Parental involvement is encouraged at kindy as you are your child’s first and most important educator. By sharing your skills with us and the children we are all learning together. Each week something new and exciting happens and we encourage your involvement. Please feel welcome to stay a while when dropping off your child or returning early to join in group time learning opportunities.
The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
Belonging, Being and Becoming

Play provides opportunities for children to learn as they discover, create, improvise and imagine.

When children play with other children they create social groups, test out ideas, challenge each other’s thinking and build new understandings. Play provides a supportive environment where children can ask questions, solve problems and engage in critical thinking.

The children have thoroughly enjoyed engaging in the many dramatic and imaginative play experiences at kindergarten. From our brainstorming session the children decided to have a hat shop and enjoyed discussing the various types of hats on sale, selling them and wearing them. The children even made their own hats like in the book “The Kinder Hat” and we made many comparisons. Annika made a magicians hat and turned into an amazing magician. She even did a trick for us at group time and pulled a rabbit out of her hat.

This week The Stirling East Hospital was set up in the small room. This idea transformed through the many body games, stories and songs we have been learning about. We have had many doctors and nurses looking after special patients with a variety of ailments. We even had a very, very sick cat on life support.

The children have been keen to experiment and further develop the water play following the interest of water and sand play in the sandpit. We set up a variety of trays and resources for the children to explore. We added measuring jugs, plastic bottles, measuring spoons, different sized containers, pipes, bamboo channels and coloured dye. Water play is an open ended experience providing many opportunities for extended learning.

Numeracy: Children experimented with concepts such as more/less, full/empty/overflowing, many/few, before/after, greater than/less than, counting, litres/millilitres. Children are noticing and comparing.

Science concepts: The exploration of force, cause and effect, gravity and questions such as where does water come from?
**Literacy:** Children are learning many new words to expand their vocabulary.

**Physical Development:** Water play encourages the development of hand/eye coordination, and gross motor skills.

**Social and Emotions:** Water play is very relaxing through the sensory opportunities it provides. Social skills expand as the children play cooperatively, negotiate, share equipment, space and materials. We plan to extend and develop the water play by adding sand! Let’s see what happens........

On Monday we had an exciting delivery at kindy... ten chicken eggs! These eggs, organised through the ‘Living Eggs’ program, were 20 days old when they arrived so were expected to start hatching the very next day. Sure enough, children at kindy on Tuesday were lucky to see the first two tiny chicks hatch out of their eggs. Six more waited until we had all gone home, so by Wednesday there were eight fluffy chicks huddled together in the incubator. A video recording was taken of the hatching so all children have been able to watch this incredible process. The chicks have provided yet another chance for children to observe animals at close range and to witness the life cycle unfolding. When they emerged from their shells, the chicks were wet and looked very tired after all their hard work. They soon dried off and became soft and fluffy. Sadly two of our eggs did not hatch. This provided an opportunity to talk about the fragility of life and the children accepted it all really well. “It’s sad, but we’re lucky to have 8 chicks,” was their response.

We have also enjoyed having our other feathered friends – the Zebra Finches - at kindy this fortnight. Their constant movement and chirping has been a delight to observe and the children have been able to take part in the process of caring for them; blowing the husks off their seeds each day, and topping up their seed and water.

With chickens and finches in our learning environment, there has been a strong focus on EGGS at kindy. We did some brainstorming and research about other animals that lay eggs and discovered that there are many animals beyond birds that reproduce this way.

Our focus on bodies has continued and this fortnight we have been tracing around the children’s bodies. The children have then used their knowledge about the human skeleton and important internal organs such as the heart, lungs and brain, to draw these features inside their body outlines. This week in brainstorming, Jacob asked if we could learn more about the brain. Stay tuned for some exciting happenings next week in this regard!

Thanks to the families who responded to our request and contributed large boxes to the kindy. The children have thoroughly enjoyed playing with them in a variety of ways over the past couple of weeks. A particular favourite has been the group time game “Someone is hiding in the box” - a variation on “Someone is hiding under the rug”, an activity that develops children’s observation skills and reinforces name knowledge.