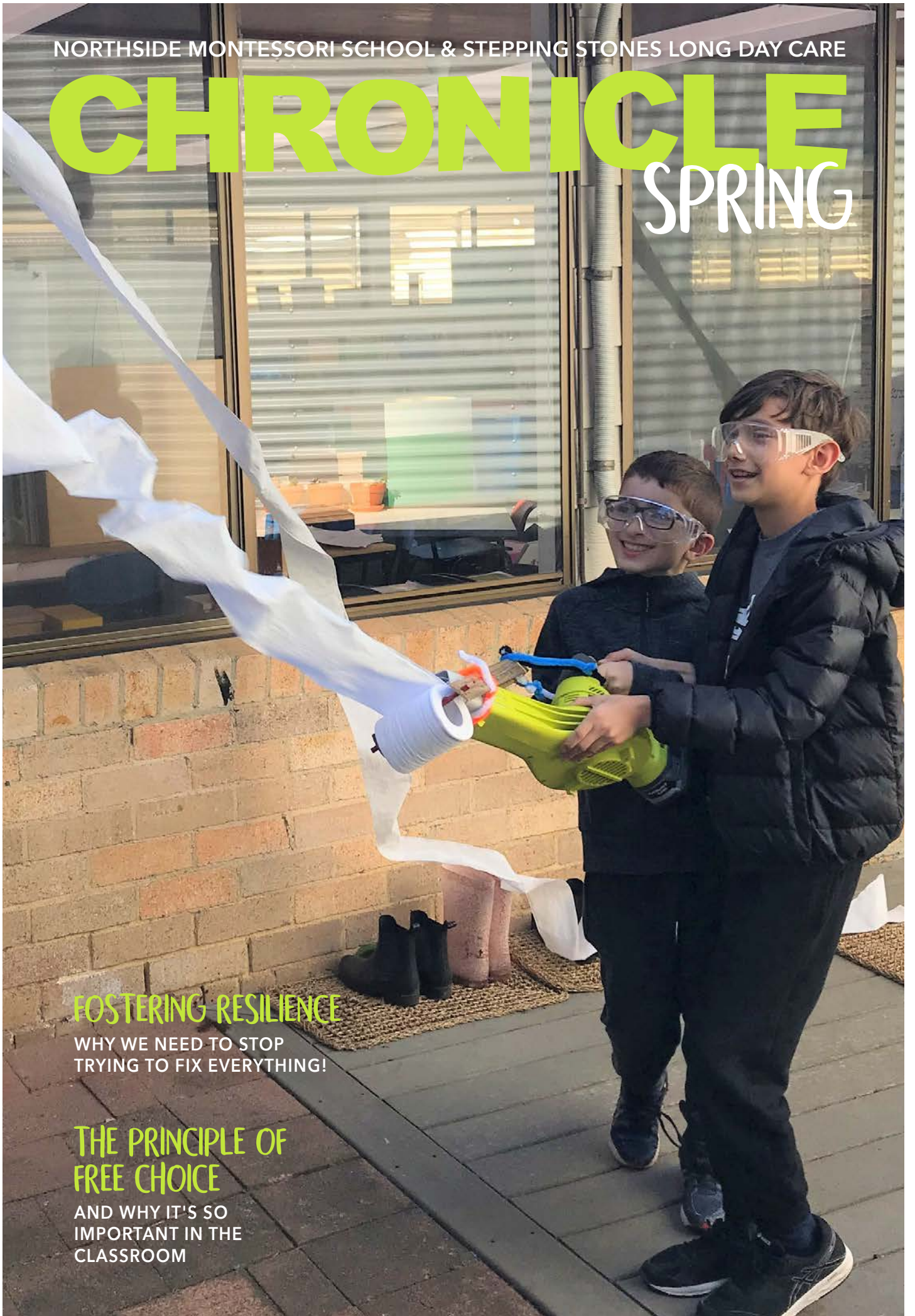


NORTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL & STEPPING STONES LONG DAY CARE

# CHRONICLE

## SPRING



### FOSTERING RESILIENCE

WHY WE NEED TO STOP TRYING TO FIX EVERYTHING!

### THE PRINCIPLE OF FREE CHOICE

AND WHY IT'S SO IMPORTANT IN THE CLASSROOM

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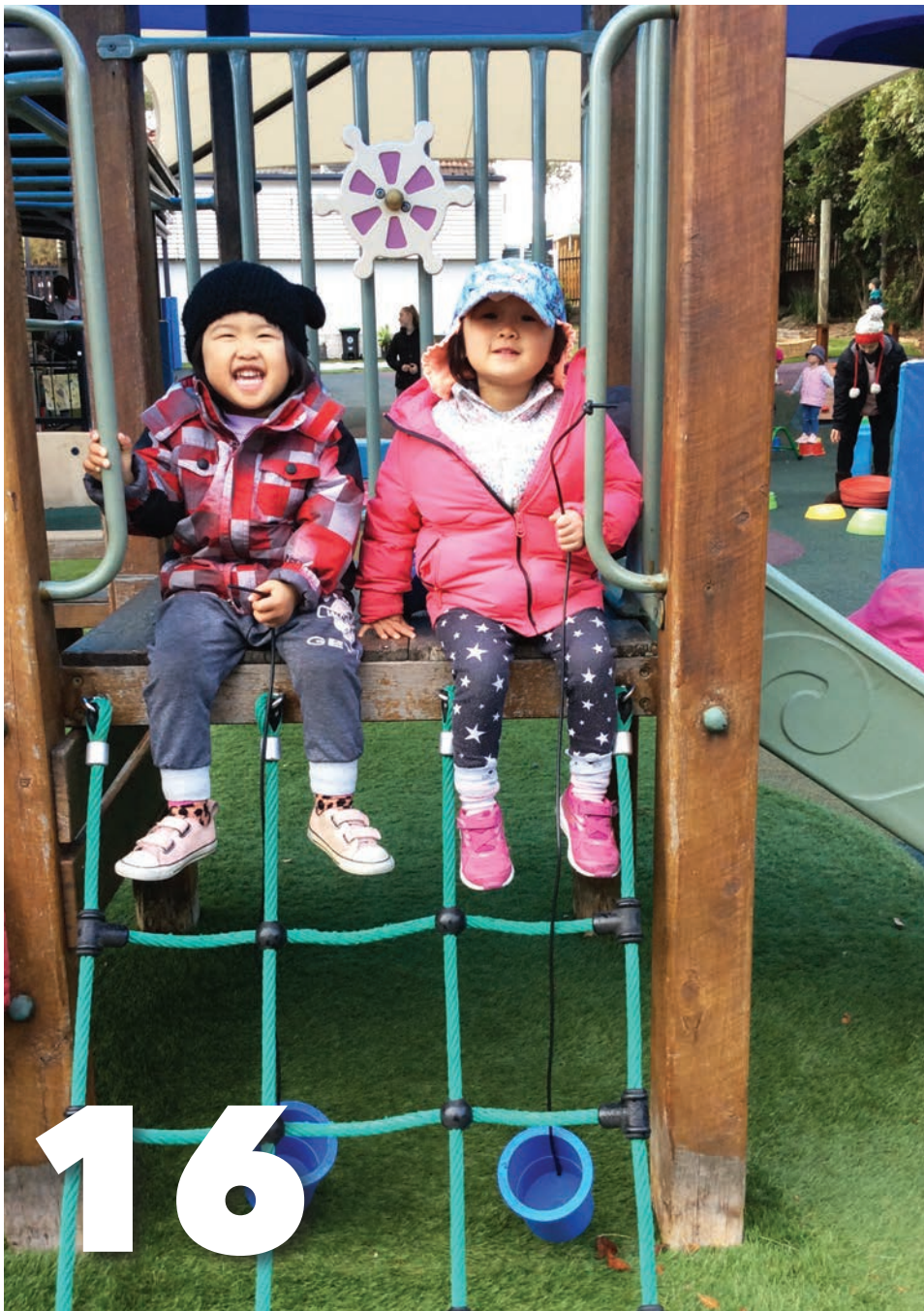
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NORTHSIDE CHRONICLE  
SPRING 2019

CONTACT US  
phone 02 9144 2835

email admin@  
northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au

PRINCIPAL  
Adam Scotney

GRAPHIC DESIGN  
Melissa Lopresti  
www.melissalopresti.com.au

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY  
Adam Scotney

© Northside Montessori School  
42 Bobbin Head Road  
Pymble NSW 2073  
northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au

# FROM THE PRINCIPAL



*Welcome to the 2019 Spring Edition of the Northside Chronicle. The year seems to be flying by and, with this, many wonderful opportunities and events in the life of Stepping Stones Long day Care and Northside Montessori School have occurred over the past term.*

It is a pleasure to be able to introduce this edition of the Chronicle and highlight some of the many events that have made Term 3 so special.



For those parents at Stepping Stones, over the past few months you would have seen the magnificent sculpture that began to emerge at the entrance to the centre.

## STEPPING STONE SCULPTURE

For those parents at Stepping Stones, over the past few months you would have seen the magnificent sculpture that began to emerge at the entrance to the centre. Over the weeks this sculpture grew and developed with the children taking ownership of this creation and embracing their creativity. Upon it being entered into the St Ives Wildflower Art and Garden Festival we were all thrilled when it was accepted as an exhibit. It was even more exciting to hear that the creation by the children at Stepping Stones received a third prize in the Junior division.

What an opportunity for our children to work on such a project and have the satisfaction of allowing others who visited the St Ives Gardens to appreciate the beauty of the sculpture that they had created. Thank you to all the children and staff who worked on this project and made this opportunity possible.



## PRIMARY PLAYGROUND

When Term 3 began at Northside there was much excitement as the new playground area was nearing completion. Within weeks this new area was opened to students and it has been a focal point for play during the school day and parent catch ups before and after school. During the recent Working Bee this area was enhanced even more with the removal of a large number of over grown areas around the riparian zone. This work has highlighted the magnificent tree ferns that line this area of our school and provide such a tranquil space for our students.

## SWIM SCHOOL

Throughout Term 3 students from Extended Day (kindergarten) to Year 3 go to swim school at Aqua Bliss each Tuesday. This is a wonderful program and our students enjoy getting ready for this activity and walking up the street together to the swimming centre. During the lesson the students are placed in small groups where an instructor works with them on basic swimming skills, different stroke techniques and some fun games in the pool. It is wonderful to see the children enjoying this activity.



When Term 3 began at Northside there was much excitement was the new playground area as nearing completion.



Our students enjoy getting ready for swimming and walking up the street together to the swimming centre.

## TRANSITION PROGRAM

The Transition program for our toddlers in Term 3 is going very well with a large number of children participating in this program. The children spend time in the toddler room with Sandra and Sarah doing a range of activities, spend some time doing outside play and then move to the 3-6 classrooms so that the children can get a sense of these environments in preparation for the transition into the 3-6 program. This is an excellent program for our children and a great preparation for the move into the 3-6 section of our school. Thank you to Sandra for all the work that goes in to this program and also the Toddler program.

## FATHERS DAY

Term 3 was also an opportunity to celebrate Fathers Day with a breakfast and a morning for fathers to visit the classrooms. This event was very well attended, and it was lovely to see so many of our fathers visiting the classroom and taking the opportunity to see what their children have been doing at school. The students really enjoy showing their work and were very pleased that so many were able to visit. Thank you also to our Choir who sang for us all at breakfast. It really was a special day.

## IT IS A REAL DELIGHT

to be part of such a vibrant school community where so many things are happening for our students. Along with those that I have mentioned above, through the weekly newsletter you would have also read this term about the success of the school Open day, the wonderful Graduate Panel and Morning tea events, preparation for MMUN 2020, the collaboration between Stepping Stones and our 9-12 class on a cookbook, celebrating Maria Montessori's birthday, our 9-12 students helping in the community with Meals on Wheels and many other activities that occur weekly in the life of our school.

Thank you to all the students, staff and parents who make these things possible and who contribute so wonderfully to the life of our school community. We are all looking forward to what Term 4 has in store for us.

Adam Scotney  
Principal.



Our transition program is a great preparation for the move into the 3-6 section of our school.



It was lovely to see so many of our fathers visiting the classroom and taking the opportunity to see what their children have been doing at school.





# FOSTERING RESILIENCE

## CREATING BUILDING BLOCKS TO DEAL WITH PROBLEMS

*Recently I read a very practical article by Amy Joyce in the Washington Post on ways to help children navigate through life's problems. We all have bad days now and again and helping our children find their way through them can be challenging. Our first instinct often is to try and fix the problem. That's just natural. But this article might prove thought provoking and give some additional tools.*

by Margaret Kroeger (9-12 Directress)

**D**id you ever have one of those days where everything is going just fine, and then your child comes through the door upset, frustrated, angry and all your fine-ness slips down the drain?

Maybe you want to fix it right away. You tell your little one everything will be okay or you tell your tween how to handle a friend kerfuffle.

As much as you may ache to make it all better, that's not the way to go.

"Parents are taking so much responsibility for their children's mood and spirit that it feels like it's your job to reset as soon as possible," says Wendy Mogel, clinical psychologist and the author of 'The Blessing of A Skinned knee: Raising Self Reliant Children'. "It deprives them of the opportunity to be crabby and cross and to deal with their emotions." In other words, when we try to fix everything for our children, they don't learn how to work through their own problems.





## PART OF THE

reason kids may be upset when they get home is that home is “the soft landing,” Mogel says. It’s the place they feel comfortable enough to get it all out. Sometimes, says Robbye Fox, an independent education consultant and certified parent educator with the Parent Encouragement Program (PEP), “the child may just want to vent. If we rush in too quickly, we may make the issue seem bigger than it is, or that they aren’t capable” of handling it.

She suggests parents practice “reflective listening.” So, for instance, a child comes home and is frustrated after a tough Math lesson. The parent then says, “Wow, it sounds like your Math lesson was really overwhelming today.” Then the child says something else, and the parent reflects their feelings back to them. “Each time they feel heard, it brings the emotion down and they can see it for what it is,” she says.

“It’s hard to see any child angry and frustrated,” says Emory Luce Baldwin, a marriage and family therapist and PEP certified parent educator. But you can remind them, she says, that the best feeling in the world doesn’t last forever, and neither does the worst one.

“We don’t want to preach or teach to our kids, particularly when they are upset,” she says. You can say that you are sorry they feel so bad right now or that you can understand that the day was a really tough day.

“Show that you’re affirming that this was today, this is now. Don’t use a global ‘I’m sorry you’re so upset’ or ‘It’s terrible that you hate school,’” Baldwin advises. “Respond in a way that helps kids hear this isn’t a permanent thing.” Change the words ‘always’ and ‘every time’ to more temporary terms like ‘today’ and ‘this time’.

You can say that you are sorry they feel so bad right now or that you can understand that the day was a really tough day.

## WHEN HER

12- or 8-year-old is struggling, Cara Schaaf Whitmarsh reminds them that “it’s okay to have a bad day,” and then they talk about how to make “tomorrow a good day” by focusing on the things that upset them. She wrote “We acknowledge their feelings (anger, frustration, sadness, jealousy) and then make a game plan to help them deal with it.”

Along those lines, Baldwin suggests we remind our children they can do things to make themselves feel better. Sometimes, when children (or, let’s face it, adults) are upset or down, it’s hard to remember there are joyful, positive things in our lives. She suggests saying, “I’ve noticed you like to play with the dog when you feel like this, or put that music on that you love.”



## THERE ARE TIMES

when an issue is larger and requires a bigger plan, conversations with teachers and more. But many times, a bad day is just that. A parent's role in this is to help a child build problem-solving skills. Fox says she is on a parent advisory board at a college. She often hears about students who may have taken 15 Advanced Placement courses, but they don't know how to navigate an airport. "They have no problem-solving skills or resilience." So when your child forgets his lunch and it seems like a huge deal to him, your role is to help him rebound from that, Fox says, not just fix it or slough it off. "It's like building blocks to the next bigger problem."

Amy Joyce

This article is very reminiscent of the features of a Montessori education. We help the students identify their feelings, listen actively and use restorative justice. Council and circle time provides opportunities for this on a daily basis. Mostly there is only one of each piece of material in the classroom – a purposeful decision. Children must make plans, take turns and on occasion, patiently wait. In this way, small disappointments and flexibility in making choices are worked through.

She suggests saying, "I've noticed you like to play with the dog when you feel like this, or put that music on that you love."

## THE STATEMENT

"It's like making building blocks to the next bigger problem" is also comfortingly familiar for those in Montessori education. One material lays the foundation for the next. One lesson provides the ground work for ever increasing academic challenges. Montessori's spiral curriculum allows for key concepts to be introduced at a young age. The concept is then repeated with increasing degrees of complexity. The skills developed when a child works through disappointment in not getting to the one and only checkerboard in the classroom first and having to wait his/her turn, provide a building block for dealing with disappointment as a teenager. One 'bad day' can provide an opportunity for students to develop skills and resilience so they can face the next big hurdle. As the old adage goes in Montessori, it is our job to 'help the child do it for him/her-self'. This is true for navigating life's problems too.

The photos above of the air experiment took several attempts and refinements in design. Disappointment, frustration and resilience became part of the experience. They problem solved until finally success!

## THE MOTIVATION

# TO CHOOSE FREELY

by Adam Scotney (Principal)

One key element of the Montessori environment is free choice. The idea of free choice is a simple concept, but not one that is readily available for students in traditional classrooms. When we think about choice, we realise that there are many times in our lives when we take choices for granted. We can also feel aggrieved when our ability to choose has been taken away. Choice has deep meaning for us in many ways, and in the Montessori classroom choice is a very important aspect of the learning environment.

### CHOICE

in the Montessori classrooms demonstrates an acknowledgement and respect for the child as a learner, as well as having deeper proven educational benefits. The Principle of free choice is something that sets Montessori apart from other methods of education.



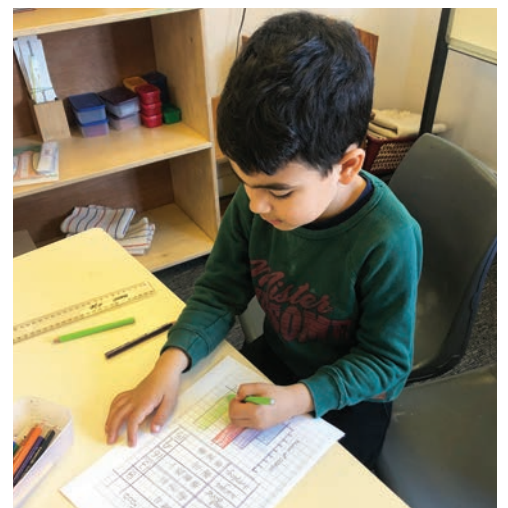


## IN THE EARLY YEARS

Maria Montessori made many significant observations through her work which she drew upon to develop the method that we have today. At one stage in the Children's House she made the following observation of children in their environment.

"One day the teacher came to school a little late. She had forgotten to lock the cupboard, and she found that many children had opened the door and were standing round it. Some were taking things from it and carrying them away. The teacher decided that this revealed a thieving instinct. Children who stole and showed a lack of respect for their school and their teacher, must, she said, be treated with severity and would have to be taught the difference between right and wrong. I, on the contrary, felt I should interpret this incident as implying that the children now knew the various objects and were able to choose among them. This, in fact, was the cue. A lively and interesting form of activity now began. The children had their special preferences and chose their own occupations. To enable them to do so, we later inaugurated low, pretty cupboards, in which the apparatus was, placed at the disposition of the children, who could choose what corresponded to their inner needs. Thus the Principle of free choice accompanied that of repetition of the exercise." (Maria Montessori, *Secret of Childhood*, 1966)

The Principle of free choice is something that sets Montessori apart from other methods of education.





## FROM THIS ACCOUNT

they see the respect and value that Maria Montessori places on the work of the children and how they responded to the environment and the materials. Today this principle of free choice allows our students to work in a way that supports their learning and provides them with both satisfaction and challenge. Montessori could see that the children knew their work and had an inner drive to undertake it.

We know that it feels good when we learn and grow and this is no different for our students. The ability to work at a level that is neither too easy or too difficult provides the stimulus to continue working and striving to do better. This mechanism to engagement and motivation is well recognised and can be explained through theories such as Vygotsky's 'zone of proximal development'.

While it may seem obvious, the zone of proximal development is the space in which the learning is appropriately challenging for the learner. If the work were too hard the learner would be frustrated and disengaged, however, too easy and boredom would also lead to disengagement. In the 'zone' is a place where the learner feels satisfaction and pleasure in the learning. When tasks are 'just right', this leads to a high level of engagement and optimal conditions for the learner to reach their potential.

## FREE CHOICE

in the Montessori classroom, coupled with wonderfully designed materials which engage the learner to work at a level suited to them, meets the needs of the child and provides the optimum situation for engagement, learning and success. What also occurs as a product of this engagement and success is the inner drive to continue learning, the intrinsic motivation for the child.

The Montessori classroom is a place in which free choice occurs which promotes intrinsic motivation and the desire to achieve. Intrinsic motivation is another factor that is linked to student success and engagement, and, is a hallmark of the Montessori classroom.





## WITHIN THE MONTESSORI CLASSROOMS

Montessori classrooms at Northside we maintain the principle of free choice while working alongside syllabus documents that are requirements by our government authorities. We find that the quality of the Montessori materials allow our students to meet the requirements of the various syllabus as they engage with learning tasks that are of interest to them. Among other things, the role of the directress in this regard is to observe and maintain records that keep track of the work each student has engaged with, and how they have met the required syllabus outcomes in each subject area. Our staff ensure that students meet or exceed the required outcomes and have a clear understanding of what outcomes are being met through the use of the various materials and activities. Through this understand the principle of free choice is maintained for our students.

When our students work in the Montessori environment in a similar way to those children observed by Maria Montessori in the early Children's House, we are fortunate to observe the engagement of children working through the established principle of free choice.

# STEPPING STONES



## NIDO ROOM

The outdoors has been full of adventurous discoveries for the Nido children. The children first discovered the natural dry creek bed while sharing the outdoor space with the older children and following them through the trees and over the rocks.

From that first discovery, the majority of our time has been exploring all that nature has to offer in our entire outdoor playground.

"The best way of invigorating a child is to immerse him in nature."





## FOLLOWING THEIR

keen interest to continue exploring, we have continued nature walks, collections and even ventured down to our lower level grassed areas to further explore and stimulate our senses through nature play.

Collections have then found their way indoors, so we have also found safe and meaningful ways to allow the children to keep or use the materials within our indoor environment. We hear the natural-life around us, feel the variety of trees and grass, collect rocks, smell our herbs and gardens all while building on language, providing our bodies with the movement they need and enjoying time with one another.

Through documenting and sharing the children's daily observations, discoveries and learning we received photos and feedback of the children's amazing nature play opportunities within their world around them at home.

The opportunities are endless, the learning will be continuous, and the children are developing an appreciation for our natural world at an early age.

"The best way of invigorating a child is to immerse him in nature."

By Karla Moggs

Nido Room Leader



## IC ROOM

In the Infant Community, we have been focusing on toilet learning. Toilet learning is different from toilet training as it is more child centred and following the child's lead to toileting as compared to an adult imposed way to go to the toilet.

For this age group, it is part of their development to want to learn to be independent and do things for themselves. Toileting offers the child dignity to be able to keep themselves clean and not have to depend on others.

## TOILETING

in the Montessori classroom starts from the preparation of the environment. Everything has to be within the child's reach; nappies, fresh clothes and handwashing facilities. This also includes allowing the child to be part of the process. Collaborating with the child to undress and dress themselves is part of the preparation. It is also important not to rush the child in this process. It has taken the children several months with daily practice to be able to perfect dressing and undressing and now most of them are doing it themselves without any help from the teacher. They go to the toilet when they feel like they need to. The children do not always get to perfect the timing of holding their urine for the toilet but through practice, repetition and freedom they are now able to do so without the aid of the adult. Knowing the the child knows the toileting procedure the adult can trust the children to go to the toilet whenever they feel the need to.

Toileting is assisted a lot with the routine established for the day. Getting the child into routine is an important step. The child may not always go and do something in the toilet. They will do so in their own time. The child's lead in the process still remains important. Now that the summer weather is approaching (seemingly sooner on some days) we will hopefully get more children in underpants and fully able to go to the toilet by themselves, even at home!

By Emma Elegado-Kotulic

IC Room Leader???

It has taken the children several months with daily practice to be able to perfect dressing and undressing and now most of them are doing it themselves without any help of the teacher.



## CASETTA

During the past term, the Casetta children have been actively engaging in their work, as well as using opportunities to socialise through free play time. At this stage in their lives, the Casetta children are learning so much through interacting with one another, and their educators that we try to spend as much time as possible throughout the day, allowing the children to make their own decisions on what to do.

## DURING THE

time we spend outside, the children are practicing their grace and courtesy, as well as improving their verbal and non-verbal communication. We see this through the meaningful interactions, whether it be sharing resources, joining together in play episodes, or communicating our needs and wants with others. This cooperative learning also follows on to inside time, where the Casetta children use their voices to communicate with each other respectfully, waiting their turn to use a work another child has, or offering help to someone who is struggling.

The children in the Casetta room have also been very interested in numerical works and are busy practicing many different strategies. One work which has proved popular is the cards and counters. Many of the children have mastered counting with the counters from numbers 1 to 5, and in the future will be working towards the number 10!

In the future, we will work with the Casetta children to further encourage grace and courtesy, as well as communication. Our goal is for the children to be able to communicate effectively with one another, so that they can confidently resolve conflict without the input of educators. These skills will help them to foster an understanding of others' needs and feelings as well as encourage positive social skills for life.

By Abbie Sullivan

Casetta Room Leader???



Our goal is for the children to be able to communicate effectively with one another, so that they can confidently resolve conflict without the input of educators.





## CASA

Reading and writing are sometimes taken for granted by adults who have mastered the skills—but looking at them from a child’s perspective, they are skills of Herculean difficulty. Literacy is a complicated, integrative process that involves auditory discrimination, the association of symbols with sounds, sounds with words, and words with ideas. It means learning to fluidly encode ideas into symbols and decode symbols into ideas. On top of everything else, it involves acquiring complex physical production skills, such as the fine motor skills involved in writing with a pen or pencil.

The Montessori approach uses a distinct set of practices that nurture a positive, natural learning experience to teach reading and writing. The Montessori curriculum is thoughtfully built around teaching children the many elements of reading and writing one by one, in a way accessible to and enjoyable by a child. We want the children to experience reading and writing as interesting, fun activities, not as a mechanically learned chore.

## LITERACY WITH JOY

Here are a few of the steps in the sequence used in a Montessori environment to ensure that children master literacy with joy.

Children in our Montessori environment learn to write first, before they learn to read. This approach is organic, as children are able to put the letters for the sounds they know together into a word before they are ready to interpret and string together the sounds of a word on a page. Children begin learning the letter sounds using sandpaper letters, which incorporate the sense of touch to further reinforce learning. While the child learns the letter sound, they trace the letter with their fingers on a textured sandpaper inscription of the letter, learning the strokes used eventually to write that letter on paper. Additional works, games and songs are presented to support and consolidate this growing knowledge and understanding, such as the I Spy Game - a class favourite!





Children begin learning the letter sounds using sandpaper letters, which incorporate the sense of touch to further reinforce learning.



## ONCE A CHILD

has mastered the sounds associated with each letter, they'll be shown the moveable alphabet, which will allow them to easily put letters together, sounding them out to spell simple, then progressively more complex, words. Children love to move, and learn by doing. They learn best by physically interacting with the world, so why not take advantage of their natural tendencies to do so? The moveable alphabet allows children to begin "writing"—even before they develop the fine-motor skills to control a pencil.

Writing is a hands-on process, and the Montessori approach fully leverages the fact that children are naturally hands-on learners. In the Montessori classroom, children develop hand strength early on during activities that encourage use of the "pincer grip", such as the cylinder blocks. The hand position used to pick up the blocks is the same as the one used in holding a pencil!

## WHILST FOUNDATIONAL

hand strength is developing, we begin direct work with pencils by introducing children to our collection of coloured pencils and the metal insets. Instead of plodding through tedious handwriting worksheets, they are drawn to the coloured pencils and start using them to trace shapes, draw parallel lines or make patterns. Children also love to free draw, colour, paint and create artwork, practicing a skill that they will later use to write letters and words. Through doing this, the child learns to use and control writing utensils while expressing themselves in a creative way.

Once a child has learned how to use the letter sounds to construct words, they progress towards joining words together into sentences of their own construction, and from there, there is an explosion of writing ability and enthusiasm. After mastering the skills associated with producing written letters and words, reading naturally comes as the next step. They discover that they are now able to see printed words on a piece of paper and decode their meaning. Children will suddenly show a new, heightened interest in the written word. By learning to read, a whole new world is opened to them. Just watch them start to read the side of a milk carton or the label on their shampoo bottle, and you will see the excitement that can come from learning this essential skill!

Teaching children to read and write in Casa at Stepping Stones is an incredibly rewarding experience. Myself and my fellow educators follow your child through these and other steps, guiding them through a process carefully designed to encourage enthusiastic producers and consumers of the written word. We all take pride in growing these fundamental roots of each child's education—the foundation that will support their learning for the rest of their lives.

Bronte Nielsen

Casa Room Leader



Writing is a hands-on process, and the Montessori approach fully leverages the fact that children are naturally hands-on learners



# TOILET LEARNING

## FOR TODDLERS

by Sandra Sin (Infant & Toddler)

In the Toddler Transition Class, we work closely with families to support their child's growing independence and this involves learning how to use the toilet. There are some pointers that parents may follow to support their child's toilet learning:

- Buy a potty and use it in the bathroom
- Adopt a standing change position - change nappy in the bathroom next to the toilet as your child stands and holds onto a low bar so that they begin to connect bodily functions with the toilet.
- Change nappy as soon as it is wet or soiled, so that your child begins to understand that it feels nicer to be dry and begin to hold for longer periods.
- Build routines that encourage your child to sit on the potty often - encourage them to sit on a potty on waking up, before nappy changing, after a meal and before a bath etc. Even though your child may just sit on the potty for a couple of seconds, they will get used to the idea of using the potty and will become more comfortable each time. As your child's interest and ability in using the toilet increase, change the language to "It's time to use the toilet" because most toddlers will automatically say "no" if you ask if they would like to do so. If your child doesn't want to, try offering a limited choice such as "You may use the toilet now or in 5 minutes".
- Encourage your child to practise pulling up and pushing down their pants before and after nappy changing to encourage independent dressing. This is an essential skill when their child needs to undress quickly to get to the toilet in time.
- Get your child into a routine of using toilet paper to wipe their bottom, flushing the toilet and washing hands after nappy changing.
- Be a model of using toilet - most toddlers are fascinated with the toilet and what happens there, long before they are ready to use it themselves.

"Learning to use the toilet is a natural process that begins when your child's desire to be grown up and his neurological development have reached the point where he can control his bladder and bowels. We don't train children to use the toilet, we support them when they are ready."

(HOW TO RAISE AN AMAZING CHILD:  
THE MONTESSORI WAY TO BRING UP CARING  
CONFIDENT CHILDREN BY TIME SELDIN)

## LEARNING AT HOME

In order to prepare your home for toilet learning, we recommend that families:

- Buy spare underwear or training pants and clothes so that your child can change as many times as they need to and then continue with their day with minimum stress.
- Buy pants that toddlers can take off and put on easily by themselves e.g. elastic-waisted pants (no dresses to get in the way, no buttons, snaps, belts, overalls please!)
- Have a bucket into which used underwear can go before being washed.
- Prepare a cleaning bucket together with cleaning cloths for when your child toilets on the floor.
- When your child wets their underwear, stay calm and reassure them by saying "I see you are wet. It's time to use the toilet and change clothes." Involve your child in the clean up process and ask them to choose fresh underwear after sitting on the potty to see if there is more.
- When toddlers are ready to move from the potty to the toilet, find a wide secure stool that they can step up and turn around on the stool, in order to sit on the toilet.
- Look out for signs of readiness before starting toileting and be consistent - if possible, plan to stay home for a few days to avoid the need to put on nappies for a long car trip.
- Be organised and prepared with spare clothes and a bag in which to put wet clothing and some clothes for cleaning up when going out.
- Be emotionally prepared - be positive, patience and calm in supporting your child going through this natural and gradual progression. Toddlers will eventually learn to control over their bodily functions at their own unique pace.

Rather than using a predetermined age that the child should learn to use the toilet, observe your child for signs of readiness.

## "FOLLOW THE CHILD"

is a common saying in Montessori and this includes toilet learning. Rather than using a predetermined age that the child should learn to use the toilet, observe your child for signs of readiness. These signs often include:

- Stays dry for longer in their nappy
- Is able to push down and pull up pants easily
- Shows general interest in using potty or toilet
- Shows increased awareness of bodily functions - tells you when they are toileting or move to a quiet/private spot to have a bowel movement
- Dislikes staying in wet or soiled nappy and/or requests for nappy change
- Expresses a desire to wear underwear.



## PLEASE BE

aware that some family issues can cause a setback to toileting, for example, the birth of a younger sibling, a divorce, moving house or some other big changes happening at home. Many families consider summer time a better timing to start the process of toilet learning because children can be allowed to run around just in underwear at home, which helps them become very aware of what is happening with their bodies. Toilet learning is a natural process and should be done at a pace the child is comfortable with. Please remember although your child may wet their underwear, they are not having "accidents" or "failing" at toileting rather learning the "lessons" and sensation to need to use toilet and the discomfort of having wet clothes. This is part of the learning process that is Toilet Learning.

Some family issues can cause a setback to toileting, for example, the birth of a younger sibling, a divorce, moving house or some other big changes happening at home.

## TIPS FOR BOYS

Bowel movement control often happens before urinary control. If they are regularly going to the toilet to urinate, chances are they may have a bowel movement while urinating. It is for this reason that boys should preferably sit instead of stand during the first stages of toilet learning until they have mastered bowel movements.

# BURSARY APPLICATIONS FOR 2020

The school makes a number of Bursaries for financial assistance available to families each year. Applications are made in Term 4 to the Bursary Sub-Committee of the Board and close on Friday 1 November. All applications are treated in the strictest confidence and are awarded on the basis of means testing and a strong commitment to the Montessori education system.

A bursary will generally continue while the student is enrolled at the School and the bursary criteria continue to be met. Bursaries are reviewed annually. New bursary applications and annual bursary re-applications are made on the same form. Forms will be available in the school office or can be downloaded from the school website under the 'Enrol' tab in 'Bursaries'.

Completed forms with accompanying documentation can be given in an envelope addressed to the Principal at the school office or emailed to [adam.scotney@northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au](mailto:adam.scotney@northsidemontessori.nsw.edu.au)

Adam Scotney  
Principal.



# SPORT IS EVERYWHERE!

*Sport is all around us, if you drive around on the weekend you will see people of all ages participating in different sporting activities.*

by Mary Abolins (Sports Teacher)

When children take up a sport, they learn to interact with people from different ages and cultures. Joining a sports team helps give children a sense of belonging and gives them an opportunity to make friends.

People can be involved in organised sport and physical activity as players, participants, competitors, or in non-playing roles as coaches, instructors, referees, umpires, committee members, administrators, scorers, timekeepers, medical support and other roles.

Australia is well known for our successes in lots of different sports including cricket. What a few weeks this has been with Australia nearly taking a 2-0 lead for the Ashes Trophy at Headingley in England.

On the radio driving home the other day I heard the announcers say, cricket lovers have had a week of excitement and disappointment, for those that don't like cricket they have missed out on a great sporting moment.

Sport never seems to end from season to season, we go from one sport to another in a flick of a button and we are great spectators.

Basketball has been another highlight with teams visiting Australia from Canada, America and New Zealand for some warm up games before the FIBA World Cup in China.

Rugby League and Australian Rules Football are now coming to the pointy end of the season with the playoffs looming. This is the Rugby World Cup year, which will be played in Japan and this is the first time it has been held in Asia outside the traditional heartlands of Rugby Union.

Netball is also in the top 10 popular sports in Australia, played since 1897 and continues to grow with the popularity of the Sydney Swifts and our national netball team the Diamonds.

The televising of these games helps with the popularity of sports in Australia and often can motivate children to get involved.

## SPORT IS

becoming more and more popular with younger generations and children as young as preschool age starting to play and train. After swimming, cycling is the second most popular sport in Australia, with most children starting to learn how to ride a bike at a very young age, usually a lot younger than most children first start participating in any sports competitions.

When children take up a sport, they learn to interact with people from different ages and cultures. Joining a sports team helps give children a sense of belonging and gives them an opportunity to make friends. With more friendship circles sport helps improve their communication skills, which will help them in their future careers and relationships.

Let's get out there and participate.

Yours in Sport  
Mary.



# TEACHING OUR 3-6 CHILDREN ABOUT THE GREATER ENVIRONMENT

by Jane Walker (3-6 Directress)

**T**his term, we have been talking about different habitats and biomes on our Planet Earth. This has included; deserts, wetlands, rainforests, forests, oceans and polar regions. In our discussions, we talked about the animal habitats and how the animals have adapted and survive in each biome. Through our various factual books and some fictional books, videos and other mediums, our older children have made their own folders about the different biomes. Books by authors such as Jeannie Baker help children to understand how we as humans, are quickly changing the surface of the planet as we consume the world's resources at an ever-increasing rate. The damage by fire to the Amazon rainforest has been briefly discussed through group discussions as we in Australia, also lose many forests through fire and drought.

In the  
Pre-primary classroom,  
we try to help children to  
understand how resources  
are precious.





## IN THE PRE-PRIMARY CLASSROOM,

we try to help children to understand how resources are precious. We have a recycling bin, a general rubbish bin and a paper bin in the classroom and all our food scraps are given to the chickens. We have often discussed the packaging of processed food in lunchboxes and this includes the plastic, giveaway toys from the large supermarkets. We have watched videos of the plastic floating in the sea and discussed how this hurts the sea creatures. Even though the children are young, they are beginning to understand how this is affecting our sea and land.

The younger children are taught responsibility of the environment through the Exercises of Practical Life. Keeping the Prepared Environment clean and in good order encourages children to take responsibility for keeping the classroom and environs immaculate. The children are taught from the beginning to keep the plants inside and outside of the class watered and trimmed. Our rules for picking the flowers in the garden are strict. We help the children to understand that if they pick the flowers, there will not be any food for the bees or the butterflies. We also encourage the children not to hunt for the insects in the garden and to put worms back into the soil when they are accidentally dug up.

We have a recycling bin, a general rubbish bin and a paper bin in the classroom and all our food scraps are given to the chickens.

## IN OUR CLASSROOMS,

most of containers we use are made from wood, from sustainable sources or from baskets or wooden holders found on the side of the road or from second hand shops. Much of the glass, cutlery and crockery are found in second-hand shops and have been re-used repeatedly in the classrooms. Cutting down on plastic in the classroom also helps to spread the message of "respect" and "care" of the materials. Plastic is so readily available, but soon becomes unsightly within a year. "Real" glass, "real" china, metal utensils and wooden objects seem to last in the classroom for years provided the children are taught to care for them through our

The children are taught from the beginning to keep the plants inside and outside of the class watered and trimmed.

## OFTEN, WE AS ADULTS

are afraid to talk about the "horrible" topics to children, for fear of frightening them with things they don't understand. As Montessorians, we feel that we should start talking about these things and thinking about what kind of a world are we are leaving to our children. Children of all ages understand what is happening to their world, but they cannot do anything about it. It is up to us as adults to help them understand how to minimise our impact. It is definitely easier to get a 15c plastic bag, some free miniature collectable or other promotional "knick-knack" every time we spend \$30 at our local supermarket. We need to start talking about reality to the children and help them to realize that the World's resources are not going to last for ever and humankind needs to stop and think about our future.

We can help as a family by demonstrating awareness for the environment. For example, when the family go to the beach, pick up any plastic you find and dispose of it sensibly in the bins. If you are going out somewhere, take a bottle with you instead of buying it or perhaps when you are making lunch for the children to take to school, take another look. Is the yoghurt in a disposable tube or do you put a few spoonfuls of yoghurt in a container for lunch? Have you used a ready made cream cheese and cracker pack in the lunchbox or could you have bought some crackers and a tub of cream cheese for dipping?

Listed below are some wonderful books about the environmental impact we are having which have been written sensitively for children.

"Window" by Jeannie Baker

"Where The Forest Meets the Sea" by Jeannie Baker

"The Hidden Forest" - by Jeannie Baker

"Belonging" Jeannie Baker

"Here we are" by Oliver Jeffers

"A Bag and a Bird" by Pamela Allen

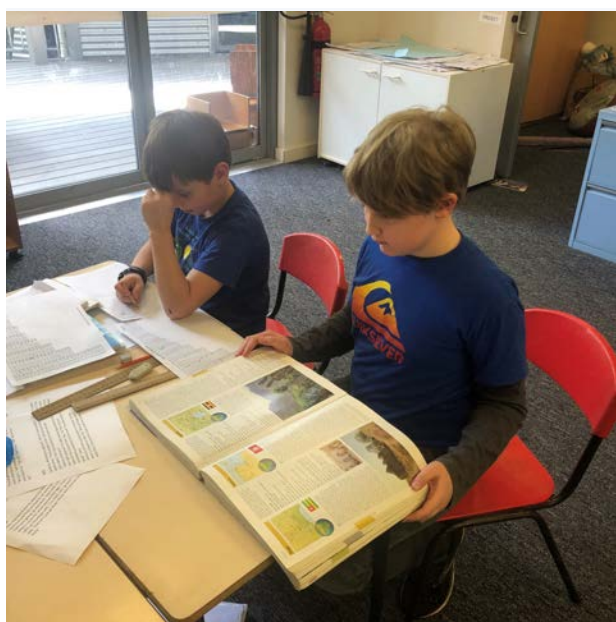
"Under the Kapock Tree"

"Journey of the Sea Turtle" by Mark Wilson

# THE SECOND PLANE

## OF DEVELOPMENT IN GUNYA

by Sarah Bazylenko  
(6-9 Directress)



In Gunyah, we have been busily preparing for Production. The older children have been working together to create the script they will read on the night. We have worked on choosing the music together and some children have been interested in working on the choreography that will be used. There is a mood of excitement in the air and we will soon begin costume and prop building. In Montessori Education, we see the child in the Second Plane of Development (6 -12 years of age) as an extrovert that is turned outwards toward the society or the community in which they reside. They move away from the family and become closer to their peers. This extroverted personality loves to collaborate with their peers in group work. As we move through the different stages of preparing for production, the children in Gunyah have embraced their independent, extroverted selves by using their imagination and reasoning mind in a group context.

This year, the children of Gunyah have been practicing meditation at least once per week. We started by practicing for one minute using the Smiling Minds program and have now progressed to 10 minute guided mediations. Practicing mindfulness meditation has a variety of short and long term benefits such as being able to be still and observe ones thoughts, developing resilience and developing strategies for coping when feeling overwhelmed. Children are naturally mindful and in Gunyah this ability is something we want the child to maintain into adulthood. In the Second Plane, children are developing responsibility through self-evaluation. By stopping and observing oneself, the child can evaluate where they are at and what help they may need in a constructive, independent way. This meets the child's new psychological needs.

This year, the children of Gunyah have been practicing meditation at least once per week.

## WE OFTEN

set aside time for the teacher to read aloud to the children. Currently we are reading 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' by C.S. Lewis. Literature is one of the seeds of culture that Dr. Montessori asks us to sow in children. We do this not with the idea of making them a language specialist but we want literature to appeal to children so they can proceed to the third plane with a foundation for the specialised studies that third plane children are interested in and ready to undertake which includes more in depth literature studies. We have been 'planting the seeds of discovery' in the Gunyah classroom.







## WE WOULD

like to welcome Tate Symons and Woody Machin to Gonyah and look forward to Oliver Nguyen joining us full time in the near future. Thank you to Caroline Fitz-Gerald for all your hard work in the library. The children really enjoy your story-telling and the library has become a place of fascination and wonder. Thank you also to Naomi Cook who has inspired the children to take an interest in and participate in maintaining the garden. We love your persistence and enthusiasm!

*"Education between the ages of six to twelve is not a direct continuation of that which has gone before, though it is built upon that basis. Psychologically there is a decided change in personality, and we recognize that nature has made this a period for the acquisition of culture, just as the former was for the absorption of the environment." (Montessori, M., 'To Educate the Human Potential', p. 3).*

We often set aside time for the teacher to read aloud to the children. Currently we are reading 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe' by C.S. Lewis.

# LEARNING TO WRITE MUSIC

by Marilyn Williams (Music Teacher)

*At Northside the concepts of both reading and writing music start very early.*

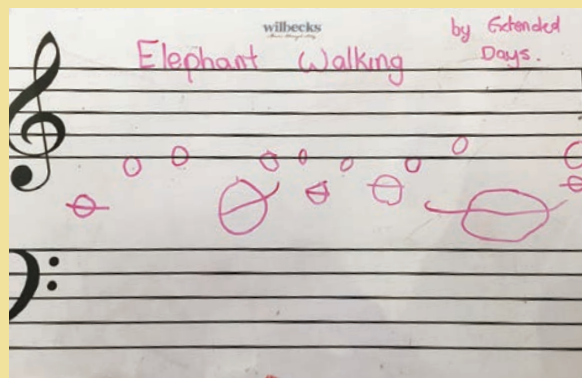
## PRE PRIMARY

3 and 4 years olds are taught to clap rhythms whilst been shown rhythm cards to match. Some children start to read the rhythms themselves as well as recognise musical symbols that are shown to them



## EXTENDED DAY

At this stage the children are learning to write basic symbols and start writing notes on a staff as well as differentiating notes of different values and making rhythms.



## LEVEL 1

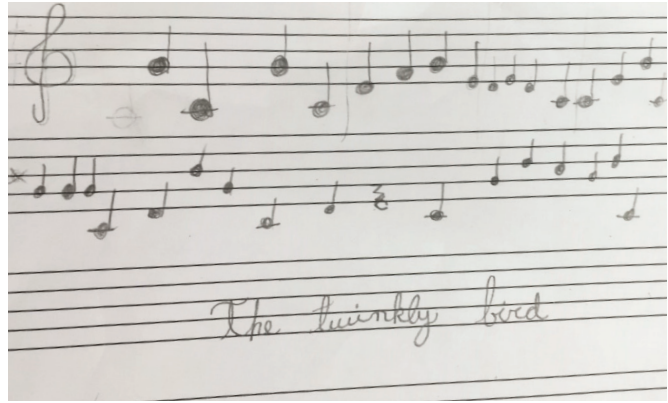
The children start combining note values and notes of different pitch together on a staff to start composing their own pieces

## LEVEL 2

At this level children are reading their own music and learning how to give written instructions about how they would like it played.

## LEVEL 3

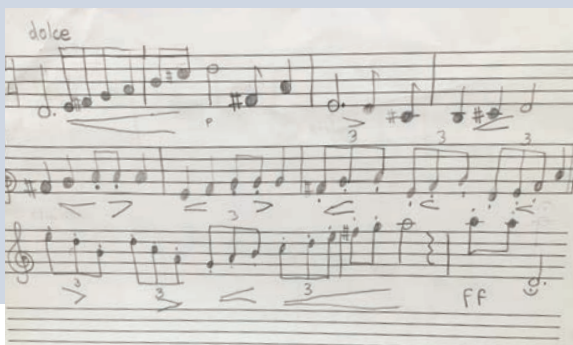
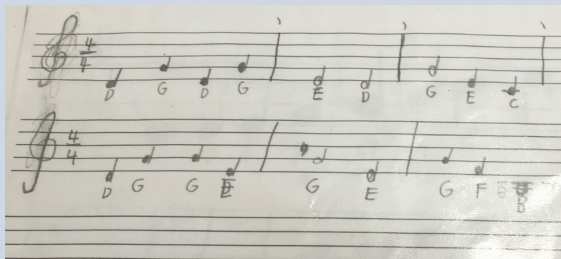
Children begin to think about what they would like their pieces to sound like and for which instrument. Using different types of articulation and dynamics to help set the mood for their piece. Bar lines are encouraged.



...When they bring their music over to the piano for me to play there is an incredible sense of satisfaction on their faces, seeing that I am able to transfer their spots on a page into music.

## LEVEL 4- 6

More freedom is given to think of instrumentation, keys, articulation and dividing values correctly into the right quantity of beats per bar. Some children at this level are writing music for more than one clef... Others prefer single line but with lots of articulation, some are writing for different keys Depending on what exposure to music children also have outside school, sometimes their compositions are too complicated for me to be able to play!



## OFTEN WHEN

a child has transferred from another school which has not done any music notation, they will see the others in the class confidently writing their own pieces and be very reluctant to plot their first notes, not being very sure where to start. I love being able to explain that they can't make mistakes and work through with them drawing a few notes.. when they bring it over to the piano for me to play there is an incredible sense of satisfaction on their face seeing that I am able to transfer their spots on a page into music.

Writing and reading music notation is not part of the syllabus for Primary music education and consequently I have found that the children from Montessori generally feel very confident when they start high school and already have a solid basis. As music classes in high school will always be of mixed abilities, the teachers are very happy to work with the existing skill sets as those children who can read are in a good position to lead ensembles and read harder parts.

# OOSH NEWS

## BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE

by Surendrini Giritharan  
(OOSH Coordinator)

**W**e had a smooth start to Term 3. Everyone settled in well after they all had a good Winter break. We also had Nia, Skarlett and Woody start OOSH this term. In general, most of the children socially interact with their peer group but at the same time they have also made many new friends. It's great to see the primary and pre-primary children mixing together during outside play and also during their play inside sharing board games, Legos and Duplo.

The new equipment and the play area in the front have created lots and lots of enjoyment amongst all age groups. What a great transformation to our front play area with these new additions. The pre-primary children watch the primary children climbing on the ropes and they take that as a challenge and without any fear enjoy climbing by themselves.

### OUR FATHER'S DAY

craft was a big hit amongst all the children. Everyone was very keen to take part in the project and to take the finished product home for their dads as a surprise. It's amazing to see their commitment and care in making their gift to show how much they love their dads.





## OUR OOSH PROGRAM

covers different aspects of learning in a practical way which sparks the children's curiosity. The program touches on skills like language, fine motor, reading, social/emotional and gross motor skills.

Every afternoon we encourage all the children to take part during our story time and we also encourage all the children to read out loud to us which will encourage the children to become fluent and read with confidence.

Children spend their inside time interacting with Chess, Lego, Playdough, threading beads, Hama beads and knitting which encourages them to build their fine motor skills. During winter months children were very busy making their own beanies and scarves for themselves, their siblings and family. They made them with their favourite colours and took them home. You can see the pictures in our newsletter.

## OUR THURSDAY COOKING

program is continuing to be very popular and it helps children understand how to take measurements and identify ingredients. Most importantly, children are learning to cook and becoming interested in cooking at home. They also create a recipe book with all the recipes they made each week and at the end of each term they get to take their recipe book home to their families.



During our last project we all made water colour paint using things from our kitchen pantry.

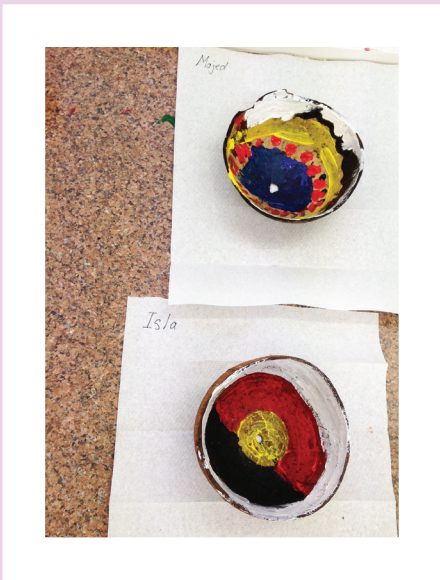
### CHILDREN LOVE

our our holiday program projects. They bring lots of variety to the day and are enjoyable and unique opportunities for learning. The recycling project was a great one loved by all the children and their parents. We used coconut shells to create a salad/nut bowl and received good feedback from parents that the children have been using the bowls for nuts and snacks. The children spent quite a lot of their time in the process of preparation - cleaning, sanding, oiling before they painted with their own colour and design. This is a valuable learning experience for them as they are able to understand the environmental impact of their actions and the ability to reuse and recycle seemingly unusable items with a bit of creative thinking.

Children also love the science projects and closely watch the chemical reactions and changes happening during the projects. For our last project we all made water colour paint using things from our kitchen pantry. Each child made four colours and were very excited to see the finished results.

The variety of outside incursions we have each term create a lot of new experiences, learning and most of all is a lot of fun!

**A GENTLE REMINDER**  
 to all parents and carers whose children attend our holiday program: Please provide morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, water bottle and a hat. Since it is a long day for the children, they need lots of food during the day, so please ensure you pack enough food for your little ones.  
 Finally, I would like to thank all the staff members for their commitment and support for the smooth running of the program during the term.  
 Have a safe spring break and we look forward to another exciting and busy holiday program!!!



WHAT'S ON...

# THESE SCHOOL HOLIDAYS



## MAGIC CARD TRICKS WORKSHOP

Amaze your friends with fun, easy card tricks at **Gordon Library**. Step by step instructions are given and all materials provided. Suitable for children aged 8+ years.

**Thursday 3rd October 2:30-3:30pm**. Visit [kmc.nsw.gov.au](http://kmc.nsw.gov.au)

## TANGRAM FOR KIDS

Test your skills and challenge your mind with tangrams! These puzzles originated in ancient China and have been a popular pass time for generations of children and are completed by moving and rotating seven shapes. Suitable for children age 8+ years. **Gordon Library, Thursday 10th October 2:30-3:30pm**. Visit [kmc.nsw.gov.au](http://kmc.nsw.gov.au)

## DAD'S READ

### 'THE VERY HUNGRY CATERPILLAR'

A special evening 'Dad's Read' story time to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Eric Carle's much loved children's classic. Bring your dads and granddads. Hear the story read by local actor, Don Swonnell and get creative with arts and crafts. **Thursday 10 October 6pm-7pm, Chatswood Library**. Visit [emergefestival.com.au](http://emergefestival.com.au)

## CHATSWOOD FESTIVAL OASIS FUN DAY

Parents can kick back and relax these school holidays while the children are entertained in a special kids zone at The Concourse, Chatswood. A series of drop in workshops including slime making, circus skills, bollywood moves, taekwondo, Jiu Jitsu and breakdancing. **Thursday 3 October 10am to 4pm, Chatswood concourse**.

Visit [emergefestival.com.au](http://emergefestival.com.au) for details.

## RIDE SAFE

Improve your bike skills for safe cycling on footpaths and shared paths. For children aged 7-12 years.

**Tuesday 1st October 10am - 12pm**. Location to be confirmed upon booking. Visit [emergefestival.com.au](http://emergefestival.com.au).

## POP-UP ART MAKING

Join the State Library Art Educator in the 'Paintings from the Collection' exhibition for a fast and furious art lesson at the **State Library, 30 September - 4 October, 12pm-1pm**. Suitable for all ages. Visit [sl.nsw.gov.au](http://sl.nsw.gov.au)



**NORTHSIDE MONTESSORI SCHOOL**  
42 BOBBIN HEAD ROAD PYMBLE NSW 2073  
[WWW.NORTHSIDEMONTESSORI.NSW.EDU.AU](http://WWW.NORTHSIDEMONTESSORI.NSW.EDU.AU)

**STEPPING STONES MONTESSORI LONG DAY CARE**  
196 BOBBIN HEAD ROAD TURRAMURRA NSW 2074  
[WWW.STEPPIESTONESMONTESSORI.COM.AU](http://WWW.STEPPIESTONESMONTESSORI.COM.AU)