

Tuesday, 19th May 2015

Aurora Newsletter #4

For Your Calendar:

Term 2 Wednesday April 22nd - Friday June 19th

Whitsun Festival Tuesday May 26th – please read important information attached

Mansfield Reserve Excursion Friday June 5th

Dear Aurora Parents and Friends,

Hello from Middle Lesson, Outdoor Classroom and Peer Support

We have had a great start to the term with lots of activities keeping our hands active in our learning. The focus of the middle lesson is to consolidate, target and strengthen English and Maths learning that is happening in during the Main Lessons.

Years 1, 2 and 3 have been playing maths games that have students practicing basic addition and subtraction. Games are a big theme in our maths lessons as they are a fun way to strengthen maths knowledge while engaging the body. We have even made some of our own card games including Y1's memory match game with the numbers 1-10 and Y2/3 1-100 cards which we will use for sequencing numbers and addition/ subtraction of larger numbers in the next week. We often use dice to generate numbers and have a range of different sided dice with the most difficult (and fun?) with 20 sides! If anyone has a spare and complete pack of cards they would like to donate there are lots of card games I would like to introduce as well. We have also been measuring the length of things around the playground and classroom using our bodies, large paces, rulers and tape measures.

Stories are a big part of the English Practice sessions and we have been reading as a class, in pairs and individually. The students in Y2/3 are independently reading every day (15 minutes as a minimum) and I've been so very impressed with their effort and advancement. It is very exciting to see students pick up increasingly challenging books and being excited to give them a go. Y1 are striving ahead with the knowledge needed to underpin independent reading. The addition of a great range of books in the school library has helped facilitate this and we thank those who donated books and spent time setting it up into a lovely space. We have also been working on handwriting and I've been very impressed with the effort and increasing neatness of the work I've been seeing. We have a class mail box and we have so far made cards for friends and will do more with this in the future.

Outdoor Classroom this term started with the planting of some seedlings and seeds in the existing garden. Take a look as you walk past, our broad bean seeds will start popping up soon. We hope to implement a proper compost bin to tackle the organic waste from cooking, morning tea and lunches.

We have replanted the strawberries in the gardens near the classrooms. It is our hope that come summer we will be able to eat these tasty treats on the way to class!

The students have made some amazing observations of the playground with each student finding a quiet spot and observing/recording what is there. And of course we have added in some outdoor maths as well, getting a feel for larger lengths. I was impressed as the students paced out 20 metres nearly perfectly!

Peer support has been a fun way to spend time with the Kindergarten class on a Friday afternoon. The last few weeks we have prepared a snack to share with the kindergarten class and this has involved setting the tables, cleaning up and of course cooking. We have had fun using the apples from apple picking.

We had a special visitor last Friday during Main Lesson. Melissa Yu, who was working in Kindergarten with Annabel, came to the classroom and taught the students some things about Chinese culture. She showed us her Tai Chi sword, some Tai Chi, how to count on our hands the Chinese way (ask your child if they remember!) and told us the story of the 12 Chinese zodiac animals. This was an amazing interactive presentation and we were very lucky she was able to spend some time in our classroom. Thank you Melissa!

Have a great week and feel free to contact me with any questions/comments on email or catch me after school Thurs and Friday to make a mutually agreeable meeting time.

Sincerely,

Jeddah Teasdale

Jeddah.Teasdale@det.nsw.edu.au

From the Kindergarten...

Our Kindergarten is thriving on the calm and ease of our new timetable. The children are settling beautifully into the flow of our days, and the solid rhythm is actually creating more space for spontaneity and responding to the children's moment-to-moment needs. Cooking our harvest of Moonacres potatoes and apples, going on glorious nature adventures, milling grain, making warm footbaths for cold toes, watching the new school sign go up - these are the sort of everyday miracles that we get to experience within the security of our cohesive early childhood group.

I am now gently and firmly guiding the children away from media-based play and towards making their own characters, games and play scenarios. Already this is yielding results and helping their initiative to blossom. Play is deepening in wonderful ways. In particular, the children have been engaging in lots of storytelling play - making puppet shows, creating their own 'Autumn Story' in outside time, and, through their own organising, taking it in turns to tell jokes and stories around the lunch table. Constructing narratives, appreciating word play and building skills in speaking and listening - this is all a vital part of their literacy learning.

We are now having regular library sessions - looking at books and having story book time in our new Aurora Library! We've also begun formal Peer Support sessions, with the younger children each being buddied by one of the Primary Class. It's been a joy to see their relationships growing in a new way.

We say a goodbye-for-now to Imogen Bray and her family, and wish them well as Imogen returns to her original preschool. They are open to joining us again in the future - here's to that!

Similarly we say goodbye-for-now to Practicum student Melissa Yu who is in her final year of training at the Sydney Rudolf Steiner College, and who has been with us in the Kindergarten for the past two weeks. She has a lovely presence with the children, and they've enjoyed all of the Mandarin rhymes and games she brought. It's amazing to watch the way that the children take up language learning so readily at this young age, and we hold the possibility of Melissa's future involvement in our language programs.

From the College of Teachers

On Wednesday afternoon at 3.30 during the teacher's college meeting we are having a short 10 - 20 minute section of Anthroposophical study and discussion. This part of the meeting along with the opening meditation/visualisation is open to anyone interested in attending. If you would like to attend please contact Mel or James.

We are embarking on the book by Christof Wiechert "Teaching, The Joy Of Profession: An Invitation to Enhance Your (Waldorf) Interest".

The author will be visiting Australia in July. He is the Main speaker at the Teacher's Conference: "The Meeting Point: Transforming Understanding into Action" to be held at Cape Byron Rudolf Steiner School in Byron Bay. James, Jeddah and Jenny will be attending this conference on behalf of Aurora Jenny

Hat Reminder

Just a reminder that students need to wear a broad brimmed hat during morning tea play and lunch during the month of May. During June, July and August beanies will be acceptable. From September on brimmed hats will again be required. This is the recommendation from the Cancer Council. Students who forget their hats will be invited to wear a spare hat or to play in the shade so please make sure your child has a hat to wear. Thanks!

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For matters concerning individual students please contact your child's class teacher.

For administration matters including fees, please contact Mel on admin@aurorasteiner.nsw.edu.au or 4862 2300.

For whole school matter please contact me (James) on principal@aurorasteiner.nsw.edu.au or 0432212586