



# Newsletter

October 2015

Kia ora! Spring is here. The weather is getting warmer and warmer. The birdies nesting in our pine tree are chirping all day long, and the herbs and vegetables in our garden are starting to flourish again.

## \* Greetings & Welcoming\*

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new babies and their families that have joined our Bright Star whanau in the Pukeko room. We also farewell Lien and Danielle who will leave Bright Star to start their primary school journey.

## \* Over 2's Programme — Construction \*

The over two's team have noticed that the interest in Super heroes has started to wane. So the team spent a couple of weeks observing to identify a common interest that the children might be exploring through their play. Different groups of children were investigating a variety of interests, from sea creatures, to the solar system and construction. The children continued to explore these main interest areas and the teaching team provided a range of resources to extend them.

After a month, the team noticed that the majority of the children had shifted their main focus to construction, using the Mobilo, Lego and wooden blocks on a daily basis. There were some elaborate constructions being built using the wooden blocks, and even wooden enclosures being made for animals. Other children were using the Mobilo to create transformers and vehicles. Overall, the children were using a wide range of materials to construct with, and were using these different constructions to extend their play and imaginations.

To extend the children's interest in construction, the team have provided them with a wide range of activities that will increase their knowledge - not just about construction, but what construction means, what materials are used, and the different types of construction around the world, the different crews needed on construction sites, etc.

Through the programme, the children have opportunities to develop:

- \* Extension of schemas of disconnecting, connecting and ordering
- \* Motor skills and hand-eye coordination
- \* Spatial and logical reasoning while constructing tree dimensional patterns
- \* Imagination, creativity and divergent thinking
- \* Social skills: team working, sharing, cooperation, communicating
- \* The scientific concepts of balance, stability and gravity
- \* Early literacy and numeracy
- \* Planning and design
- \* Strategies for problem solving
- \* Perseverance in the face of construction challenges



The children's interest is extended in the wider community – we visited a building site in the local community.

The teaching team will carry on supporting the children to explore their interest in construction. Daily activity ideas are displayed on the programme-tree at the door, along with lots of learning stories on the programme board. Please feel free to take a look at these.



## \* *Contruction with Recycling Materials* \*

As we had a good collection of bottle caps, Samin decided to extend the **children's current interest in construction** by using recycled materials. After some discussion with children, they came up with the idea of creating a butterfly and a flower with bottles tops to decorate our garden. The children were so excited, and they enjoyed comparing and sorting the caps into different colour groups. Then on two wooden boards the children took turns to paint the butterfly and flower. When the paint was dry they sorted the bottle caps. The children were concentrating, and matching the bottle caps to their respective colour bases really well.

We have also done a similar activity with recycled plastic bot-

tles. The children painted the bottles white, and we placed the bottles in our Bright star garden to make a beautiful swan. We have also used recycled cardboard boxes for making constructive models.

Here at Bright

star we use recycled materials in different activities to instil awareness amongst the children about the importance of natural materials like paper and how to use it mindfully, and how can we reuse it for different purposes.



## \* *Pukeko Group* \*

Haere mai and a big welcome to all our new children and their whanau **to the under 2's room. The weather has not been the most pleasant** but we have kept ourselves active with lots music and movement and putting our dividers/arches to good use for climbing.

Our relationship programme has been working well and we have seen some wonderful relationships forming across all areas. As we have **had four new children join us in the under 2's room, we will continue with our current programme of "building relationships" and "belonging"**.

To support the children in developing a relationship with the natural environment, the children have been exploring gardening with Mercy. They have learned about respecting and caring for nature, along with a little science about plants. Gardening provides a pleasant social time for the children and builds on their social skills through turn taking, sharing and communication.



We have also had our first excursion to see the construction site at Newlands Mall, after noticing the children showing curiosity and interest in this topic through our window.

The children were all excited and enjoyed exploring the new environment. This was a great opportunity to get out and begin forming relationships with the wider community, and we look forward to more opportunities to explore our community.



### \* Self Review \*

In the last term, the team has focussed on the topic of *transitioning to school*. We looked at what Koru group time means for us, and more importantly, for the children. We devised a plan to separate the koru group children even further, where the 4½ year olds will have a koru group session once a week where the activities will be even more focussed on school preparation (name/colour/alphabet/number recognition, using scissors and drawing, putting zips/buttons on, tying shoe laces, personal hygiene, and social skills). Results of this self review **have been emailed to all the parents/whānau. Please see Melanie** for any queries, suggestions, or feedback regarding self-reviews.



### \* School Transitioning Night \*

As a result of this successful self review, we are hosting a night with teachers from Bellevue School and Rewa Rewa School, along with early **childhood teachers to discuss "expectations" of primary school teachers** for children and their families. We will also discuss ways in which early childhood teachers and parents can support the children to experience a smooth transition to primary school. You are all welcome to attend. This exciting evening will be held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November 6.30pm—7.30pm. There will be a form near the sign-in charts for parents who are attending to tick, so that we can plan for the night accordingly.

### \* Reminders \*

Please send in a sunhat for your child, which is clearly named. Also, if your child has any specific sunscreen due to allergies, please bring this in with their name on it. Otherwise, Bright Star will provide sunscreen.

Please remember to sign your child in and out every day, and inform us of absences. This is very important information, especially in case of an emergency such as illness, natural disaster, fire evacuation, etc.

If your child is clearly unwell, please keep them home.

### \* Let's learn waiata together\*

#### **Kina Kina**

Kina kina (Star fish)

Wheke Wheke (Octopus)

I ka ika (Fish)

Tuna tuna (Tuna)

Pipi pipi

Paua paua

Kai moana (Sea foods)

Hi! (Hands on hips)