



Newsletter

June 2016

Winter is here! We cannot believe how fast the first half of this year has flown by, but time sure does fly when you are having fun and have been as busy as our awesome tamariki and teachers! We have started this winter off with some lovely Matariki festivities. We are looking forward to what these colder months will bring us.

* Welcome*

Welcome to all our new children and their families. We are happy you have joined our Bright Star whānau. We also farewell Skye, Eva, Evelyn, and Masyn who had left for primary school.

Over 2's Programme — The Animal Kingdom

We started our 'Animal Kingdom' programme at the beginning of the year.

It is rewarding to see so many of the children continue to show a keen interest in learning about animals.

As a teaching team, we have facilitated a programme that attends to our **tamariki's learning needs and goals, both** at an individual and group level. The toddlers have been able to expand their vocabulary through storytelling and participating in puppet shows. This helps to support their imaginary play, social interactions and relationships. The older children have been engaging in dramatic play with animal themes. We have seen this play become more and more complex, allowing the children to negotiate social rules and develop social skills. The children have also developed their fine motor skills through hands-on activities such as craft making.



The children are enjoying an animal puppet show.

The children have also developed their fine motor skills through hands-on activities such as craft making.

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Our programme covered different curriculum areas, and topics such as farm animals, zoo animals, ocean animals, jungle animals and pets. We have explored concepts such as herbivores and carnivores, endangered animals, and so on. The Koru group children were also able to learn about scientific concepts through investigation, using the internet, books, experiments and excursions. They have learned different methods of making inquiries and discoveries.



A fun-filled trip to Te Papa

The children enjoyed many excursions as part of the programme. At Wellington Zoo, they were astounded to see wild animals, up close and in real life. During our trip to Te Papa, the **children discovered information about New Zealand's native animals that live** in the mountains, forests and sea. A teacher brought her chickens to the Centre for the children to learn about. The children also visited the local supermarket to learn about different farm animal products.

Thank you to all the parents and whānau who have contributed to our pro-



gramme! We also had parents bring in insects for the children to observe. **Maira's family shared home stories for our programme board. Cole's parents took him to visit a farm in Ohariu Valley, which extended Cole's interest in** farm animals. We also had family members and whānau accompany us on our trips to the zoo and Te Papa.

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* Matariki Celebration *

Matariki is the Māori name for the cluster of stars also known as the Pleiades. It rises in mid-winter - late May or early June. For many Māori, it heralds the start of a new year also a time of harvesting and sharing food together. Here at Bright Star we have been celebrating it by learning all about the constellation, what it means to us and to others. We have all contributed, created and shared a meal of vegetable soup together with our families and learnt all about the vegetable. Learning about hangi was also a big component of the curriculum as this is traditionally how Māori people cooked their food for celebrations such as this. We carried out some traditional art making activities such as manu tukutuku (kites) and porotiti (hand instrument). We also went on trips to Te Papa as well as



Our teachers and children created a doom, where children could explore the Matariki



With teacher's support, our tamariki are experimenting making Hangi in the sandpit.

Newlands Community Centre to hear more stories and songs about the Māori culture to extend our own knowledge. These activities have helped us all to gain more knowledge of the indigenous culture of Aotearoa. It is also a time to remind us to celebrate the important things in life like, whānau and kai and to remember all of those people that made it possible for us to be living together in Aotearoa.

* Self-review *

The first self-review we completed this year was on 'Authentic Interactions' with the children. The results of this review have given us some great pointers and next steps to consider in our practice, such as **reviewing our centre philosophy, using the teacher's council registration criteria** for us to reflect on our practice, continuing to be strong in our team approach when interacting with the children, implementing the RIE philosophy even more, and so on.

The second self-review topic we are currently reviewing is considering to what extent we implement Māori Tikanga values in our programme planning. Melanie will be sharing the results of this self-review in early July via email. Our next self-review topic will be literacy and numeracy in our early childhood setting.

We welcome your suggestions, questions, and advice in regards to our self-review. Please come and talk to Melanie if you would like to have a say :)

Reminder:

Now that winter is here, the teachers have started (and will continue) to have on-going discussions and do activities with the children regarding hygiene topics. This is to encourage the children to wash their hands regularly and the correct way, along with how to blow their nose, catch their coughs, and so on. Please could you teach your child these basic hygiene practices also so that they can make links between their home and our centre. We also ask/request you to provide them with appropriate clothing such as socks, boots/proper shoes, winter hats, and warm jackets because we encourage the children to continue enjoying our outdoor area in the winter months, as fresh air and sunshine helps with maintaining good immunity. **Naming your child's belongings will ensure that they always return home.**

* *Pukeko Room*

We would like to welcome our new children Mia and Hunter to the pukeko room and welcome Emily back from her extended holiday. While welcoming our new children, we will say goodbye to Isaac and his whānau who have moved to a new house out of the area. We will all miss you Isaac and wish you all the best for your new centre. We also have several children transitioning to the over **2's room over the next month.**

Our current programme of wheels and motion is coming to an end.

We have all enjoyed exploring this topic by using our bodies to ride or push things with wheels, real life experiences and building our knowledge and working theories through books, music and art. As we are



seeing lots of physical play and development, we have begun planning for our new programme of Active Movement. Active movement is not only enjoyable and develops physical skills, but also helps to build strong foundations for future learning and a healthy life style. We look to forward working together and exploring active movement.

* *Let's learn waiata together**

Matariki Stars

Waitī, Waitā, Waipunarangi,

Tupu-ā-nuku, Tupu-ā-rangi, Ururangi e

Koinei ngā tamariki o Matariki
(*These are the children of Matariki*)

Ngā whetū e pīataata i te rangi e
(*The bright stars that shine in the sky*)

Waitī, Waitā, Waipunarangi,

Tupu-ā-nuku, Tupu-ā-rangi, Ururangi e