



# Newsletter

November 2017

The day is getting warmer and warmer, which gives our tamariki more opportunities to explore nature and the wider community...

## \* Greetings & Welcoming \*

Welcome! Nau mai! We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new children and their families who have joined our Bright Star whānau. In our under 2's room, we welcome William, Maia, and Skyler. In our over 2's room we welcome Asher who is new to Bright Star, and Carter and Mira from the under 2's room. We also say poroporoakia (farewell) to Renee and Mila who have left for school, and Conor's family who has moved out of the community.

## \*Over 2's Weather & Seasons Programme\*

To extend the children's interest and knowledge about weather and seasons, our teaching team has implemented a programme surrounding this topic in the last few months. This programme covered different curriculum areas like Tikanga Māori, art, literacy and numeracy, science, music and movement.

The children had the opportunity to learn about the weather a little more in-depth, such as how rain is formed; where clouds come from; how thunder, lightning, and hail occur; where the wind comes from and what types of weather different countries have. The children became more curious about the natural world around them and they also developed strategies to investigate and research the unknown things. For example, the children observed how rain forms by doing a science experiment.



The children were also able to represent what they learnt through different art activities, such as creating a 3D seasons book, and a canvas of four seasons. The children especially enjoyed making the 3D displays on the ceiling of the sun, clouds, rain, moon, rainbow and snow. Through these activities, their creativity is promoted, and they had the opportunity to practice team working skills.

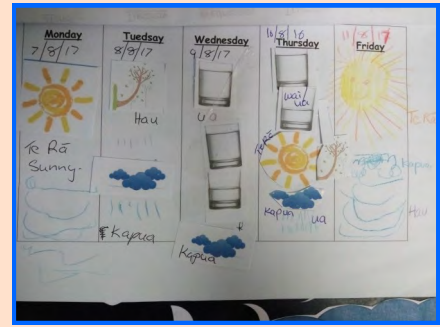


The children were able to develop numeracy and literacy skills through practical and fun activities. For example, the



children studied and recorded the weather of each day by using a chart, in which they used symbols to illustrate weather elements. They also measured how many cups of water the rain catcher caught every day.

Te reo and Tikanga Māori have been implemented into the programme. The children have been learning different weather in Te Reo through waiata, posters, korero about weather and recording on the weather chart. There was also a lot of Kaitiakitanga (guarding our tangaroa), Mohiotanga (sharing of information) and Maramatanga (applying learning in relevant situations) illustrated when we talked to the children about global warming, how to look after nature and why it is so important to look after the natural world.



To wrap up the programme we arranged a trip to the Wellington Botanical Garden. When we arrived at the Botanical Garden, we were so amazed by the beautiful flowers - daffodils, magnolias, tulips, cherries and other flowers that we could not tell the names - it all made a tranquil scenario. Walking in the garden, the grass was soft under our feet and the air smelt of earth and flowers. The sounds of the leaves rustling in the wind, the twittering of the birdies and our tamariki giggling all made a harmonious melody. The excursion extended the children's learning about the spring season and different flowers blossoming in spring. A lot of parents and whānau volunteered to go along and be a part of our Spring-time celebration.



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### *\* Current Programme ~ Ta Tātou Hapori /Community\**

Our last programme revolved around seasons and the weather, so we took quite a few excursions and trips such as Te papa and the Botanical Gardens. We also made a few trips to our neighbouring schools because we spoke to the children about "good weather" days and why we often take trips when the weather is appropriate for walking long distances.



All these little excursions contributed to the children's curiosity in our community and they started telling the teachers all the different places they would go with their families such as local parks, Newlands and Johnsonville Medical Centres, and even other places such as Pa-k'n'Save and North City Shopping mall!

This prompted the teachers to investigate further and



extend the children's current knowledge about the concept of "communities" and what this means, along with how we can contribute to the communities we live in. Teachers also realised that a range of parents and families can contribute to this programme as we have policemen, firemen, nurses, doctors, builders, contractors, etc. who can all contribute to our programme.

### *\* Parent's Workshop~ Active Movement & Nutrition\**

Wow! It was so great to see a lot of families join our workshop at Bright star this year. Discussed at the start of the workshop was how we believe in the importance of laying a strong foundation for children's later learning in the early years through physical/active movement. We also aimed to help parents recognise the benefits of active/physical movement for their children's brain development and holistic development. This was followed up by all the parents and teachers taking part in the music and movement activity that was set up to give parents further knowledge on what they can implement at home with their own children.



Samin, who has an educational background in health and nutrition, and often volunteers for the Heart Foundation to deliver health and nutrition workshops to other early childhood centres, delivered a presentation on healthy eating. Discussed were the main four food groups to include in every meal to make a balanced diet. We focused on the serving sizes from these four groups to be consumed during the day. We learnt about the different classification of foods and drinks and why should we reduce the consumption of occasional foods. We learnt about the empty calorie foods and we spoke about the different ways to make it easier for our children to accept different foods. For further information on this workshop you can log onto Story Park.



What a fantastic outcome we had at the parents work shop here at Bright Star this month. All the teachers presented their knowledge on active movement, nutrition and songs/dance's that can help benefit children's development. Through demonstrations, scenarios and advice, the teachers educated parents on the benefits of all of these areas. This workshop seemed to be a huge success and it was great to hear the positive feedback and further questions that parents had for them and their tamariki. If you have any questions about this workshop please feel free to discuss it with one of our Bright Star staff next time you're in.

### *\* Pukeko Group \**

Over the winter we kept active with our music and movement programme where we danced, played music, sang songs and ended with a dress-up dance party. The children got to hear different types of music and built some great friendships from dancing together. Over the programme, we saw the children gaining body coordination, balance and confidence along with new vocabulary.



Other highlights have been the visit from the local Newlands volunteer fire brigade. The children enjoyed being able to get up close to the fire engine and sit inside it. As it began to rain we returned inside where we were able to watch the firemen use the hose, flash the lights and sound the horn. The children were also able to meet some of the firemen and received a sticker and a balloon each. We also visited the Wahine anchor by the Newlands community centre. The children enjoyed exploring this new area and we are hoping to do it again in the near future.



After observing the children's current interests, our new programme will be around imaginative play. We are looking forward to enjoying a lot of fun times exploring this programme and seeing what new learning will take place. If there is any great imaginative play occurring at home please feel free to post pictures on Story

Park and we will add them to our board.

### *\* Diwali \**

**Diwali** or **Deepavali** is the Hindu festival of lights celebrated every year in autumn in the northern hemisphere (spring in the southern hemisphere). One of the most popular festivals of Hinduism, it spiritually signifies the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, knowledge over ignorance, and hope over despair. Hindus across the world celebrate Diwali in honour of the return of Lord Rama, wife Sita, brother Lakshmana and lord Hanuman to Ayodhya from exile of 14 years after Rama defeated Ravana.



Here at Bright Star, we celebrated Diwali together. Some of the teachers and the children dressed up in traditional Indian wear. We had started our day by visiting the store next door - Wellington spices, to buy some ingredients for our Diwali lunch.

This was followed by watching a video narrating the story of the Diwali celebration. Our lovely parents contributed by bringing

in some delicious desserts - coconut barfi, parathas and some Diwali snacks for the teachers. We all enjoyed the yummy Diwali lunch - paneer makhni and paratha. For afternoon tea we had the delicious coconut barfi. The tamariki thoroughly enjoyed the delicious food. At the end of the day we painted clay lamps and lit them to add more brightness to our celebration. It was a fun-filled day for all of us as we learnt about the Hindu festival of lights together.





### \* Internal Evaluation (Self-review) \*

The last self review the team completed was regarding how effective we are at integrating and promoting multi-cultural knowledge and values in the day to day running of the centre. This internal evaluation actually finished a lot earlier than planned because the information we gathered showed us that our teaching practices with the children and each other demonstrated that we respect and appreciate other cultures in a range of ways.

The most recent and last internal evaluation that the team has been focusing on revolves around teacher's appraisal process. This is because during this year, the education council made a lot of changes to our documentation processes. We have been investigating how well we are aligning our appraisal system with our teacher registration folders in to order to achieve best practice.

Please feel free to come and talk to Linda at any time regarding our internal evaluation as Melanie will soon be on maternity leave. We look forward to your feedback regarding our centre reviews.

### \* Learn Waiata Together \*

## Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star Tirama, tirama nga whetu

Tirama, tirama nga whetu  
Kei te pehea ra koutou  
Kī runga ake ra  
He taimana to rite  
Tirama, tirama nga whetu  
Kei te pehea ra koutou