



Head of Preschool, Ms Judy Pfeffer

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DATES TO REMEMBER:

TERM 1:

Monday 25 January to Friday 26 March

Mon 15 Mar: Yr 4 Camp Info. Session 3.30pm
Wed 17 Mar: Yr 7 Camp Info. Evening 7pm
Mon 22 Mar: Yr 5 Camp Info. Session 3.30pm
Fri 26 Mar: Last Day Term 1

TERM 2:

Monday 12 April to Friday June 18
Mon 19 Apr: Middle School Camp Week 1
Mon 19 Apr: NO CCAs
Wed 21 Apr: Parents' Assoc. Newcomers' Morning Tea
Sun 25 Apr: ANZAC Day
Mon 26 Apr: Primary School Camp Week
Mon 26 Apr: Middle School Camp Week 2
Mon 26 Apr: NO CCAs
Mon 3 May: Labour Day Pub.Hol. NO SCHOOL

Conferences

Last week's Reggio Emilia International Conference delegates were treated to some traditional Aussie treats for morning tea, following a tour of the Preschool. For some homesick teachers the Vegemite sandwiches were a nostalgic treat, for others - well, we needed to explain the unique taste sensation of Vegemite - such risk takers! Some of the visitors got very involved in some classroom activities, with the Preschoolers enjoying showing how they dress up and learn through role play (or how to get your hair done!).

Feedback from these visiting Early Childhood educational professionals highlighted how highly regarded AISS Preschool is. Our own teaching staff members were able to report back on their attendance at either a PYP conference on The Written Curriculum or on the RE conference and their visit to other Early Childhood schools in Singapore.

Teachers' Feedback on Conferences

Professional development for all of our staff is a priority and we have been fortunate to have high quality conferences held locally to allow our staff to keep up to date and inspired. The two particular teachers who attended the PYP workshop here in Singapore reported to their colleagues that over the three days, "they investigated the written curriculum used here at AISS and how it may be improved". They noted that it was "a very informative workshop where they were able to share ideas from a wide variety of schools across the Asia Pacific region including Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan and other schools from Singapore."

Kelvyn Fuller and Nadia Ghani

For the four teachers who attended 'Experiences in Dialogue' (the first ever Asia Pacific Reggio Emilia conference), there were speakers from Sweden, USA, Australia and Korea (as well as many others) sharing their experiences of implementing the Reggio-inspired approach.

"Amelia Gambetti and Emanuela Vercalli visited Singapore last week to share ideas, videos and their experiences as educators from Reggio Emilia, Italy. The conference, the first of its kind in Singapore, presented a unique opportunity for us to listen to, and engage in dialogue with educators from around the world. We were inspired, challenged, provoked and amazed, and have shared the information gained over the three days with the Preschool staff, leading to much discussion and ideas that will enrich our practice at AISS."

Lynda Darby, Julie Jamaludin, Jude Winten and Helen Staples

Open Afternoons

There was a wonderful response to attending Open Afternoons this week and on Monday, I followed the wafting aroma of popcorn to the Kookaburra's classroom. The children delighted in showing off their world with opportunities for family (lots of grandparents involved as well) to try out puzzles, sensory activities and even join in a movement game.



The Wallabies' group enjoyed creating family puppets with their guests as well as inviting them to take off their shoes and enjoy the sandpit 'beach' with them. Making their own coloured play dough is a weekly event for the Echidnas' group and parents were instructed on "We do it like this!" from the children.

The Wombats' group were painting with special 'smelly paints', the usual colours had distinctive aromas of rose petals, coffee, cinnamon and turmeric, just to name a few, with the addition of sand for texture of course. To add to the sensory experience, the play dough was even peppermint-flavoured!

For those of you who have attended student led conferences in the other sub-schools, this is an early introduction given by the Preschoolers who were encouraged to suggest and choose activities. They assisted in the setting up, explaining and modelling of the everyday experiences (and of course the packing away), to show how learning through inquiry happens.

Classroom Snippet

Even the three year olds are well on the road to developing those all-important cutting skills as the following words show. The looks of intense concentration on the faces of these Preschoolers display just how hard they are trying to master this skill.

Open shut them...open shut them give a little snip! The Kangaroos have had their first experience with scissors this week. Cutting is one of those necessary skills that has to be taught in order to take on and accomplish many construction type projects. In preparation for this big event the Kangaroos have had lots of opportunities to exercise the "cutting muscles" in their hands through experiences such as pegging out the washing and ripping small pieces of paper. Here are a few of the hints that we are teaching the children in their quest to master the scissors...

Keep your thumb on top. Use the pointer and middle finger in the bottom handle for added support. Refer to the hand that holds the paper as the holding hand and make sure your child does not hold the paper too close to the scissor blades. Start with simple skills such as fringing. Sing open shut them while your child is cutting to help coordinate the motor skills necessary for this manoeuvre. The next step is to move onto strips of paper that require only one or two snips. When your child has fully mastered the control of their scissors then they can move onto cutting on straight lines. This would be followed by cutting along curved lines and finally zigzag lines. Sit down and spend some regular time encouraging your child and before long they will be independent and capable cutters!

P.S. Remember that many young children are still ambidextrous and are not sure about a favoured hand. Put the scissors on the table and see which hand they naturally pick the scissors up in. If your child prefers their left hand then you definitely need to purchase a small pair of children's left handed scissors.

Mrs. Wendy John - Kangaroo class teacher

New Equipment

The Preschool Administration Office has been looking a little like Santa's Workshop this week, and Miss Kerry was feeling like Santa Claus as she has just received some much anticipated equipment including a variety of cars, bikes, traffic signs and water play trays. Luckily we convinced 'Santa' to deliver the goodies to the classes and not keep them to herself!

Reminders

Gate safety

Some children are opening the entry gate at Preschool and running off from parents and carers during drop offs and/or pick ups. Please take care in closing the gate and pushing the barrel bolt along, as well as discouraging children from opening the gate themselves.

Holidays

With only two weeks left in this term, some families may be leaving for holidays early or returning to school late. Could you please let class teachers and Kerry Low (our Preschool Secretary) know, as well as any changes to contact details.

