

# Elder Street Pedagogical Post

SEPTEMBER 2023

Avenues of Exploration  
and Discovery with the  
Possum room



## "LIGHTS AND SHADOWS" THE CONCLUSION OF OUR PROJECT LEARNING

With slow, unhurried time, the children have concluded their project learning based on lights and shadows. There were so many amazing learning moments throughout this project, as the children discovered, explored, questioned, challenged their thinking and developed their knowledge of new concepts. They discovered that shadows can be created through the manipulation and positioning of objects and each new resource provided opportunities for the children to create new streams of optics while utilising the light box and reflection wall to project their ideas and emerging theories. Educators have observed throughout this project learning that it has sparked new language and communication, with the children both questioning concepts and sharing their ideas with confidence.

"It's a shadow" **Hank** explained.

**Joseph** shared "lots of light" and "I see me" while exploring.

After discovering his own reflection, **Tex** stated "wow, look!"

Through incorporating new elements into their environment such as clay and art mediums, the children have been able to see their learning emerge through new avenues and ways of thinking. They have thought critically, problem solved and directed their own active learning.





**WATER PLAY** - With some warmer days, comes opportunities to explore and engage with water in a range of contexts. The Possums have been eager to splash, pour, experiment and hypothesise as they use their bodies and all of their senses to play and learn. Cause and effect has been explored as the children experimented with different objects to determine splash size. They utilised their imaginations as they saw the tubs or puddles of water as different things. "Bubble bath" **Tex** shared. "Swim pool" **Harvey** stated. This time spent with the natural elements encouraged the children to interact with and make sense of the natural world around them.



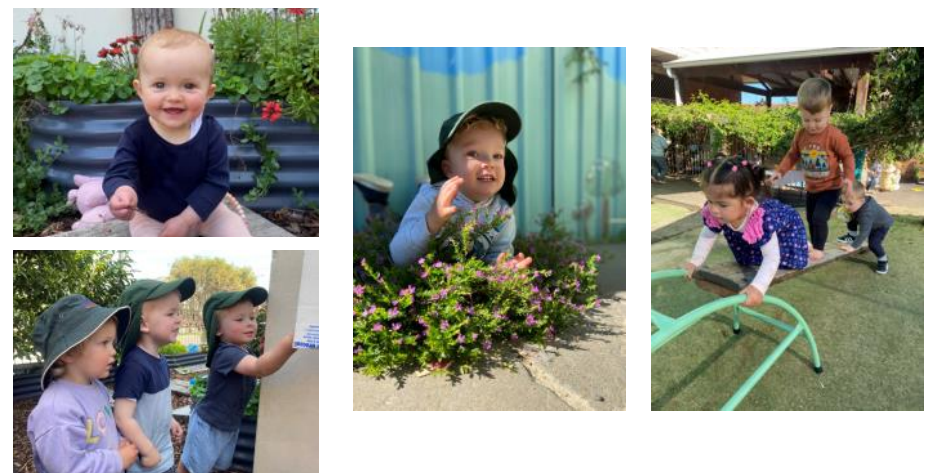
*Love,  
Lauren, Casey, Chloe  
and Roxi  
xxx*

**LOOSE PARTS PLAY**

Educators have been providing unhurried opportunities for the children to explore and understand better, the value of loose parts play. This was something that was introduced slowly to the children. Educators observed the children's movements, challenged their thinking, engaged them in conversation and explored new concepts while slowly adding new resources for them to explore. The outcome of this; wonder in new and exciting elements in play, intrigue, "what do I do with this?" "how does it work?" and the ability to think outside of the box and use creative thinking in play.

**PICNICS & TIME OUTSIDE**

As the weather has warmed up, we made the decision to stay out in the sunshine a little bit longer some days to take advantage of the opportunity for the Possum children to explore the large outdoor space uninterrupted. This time has been spent independently exploring, making new discoveries and enjoying picnic lunches with peers and educators. We feel that this has been a beneficial routine change as the children have gained more confidence and have developed a sense of belonging within the larger space. This will be a great stepping stone to becoming Joeys next year, making the transition to spending all of their outdoor time within this space a lot smoother.





# Landscapes of Curiosity and Creativity in the Joey Room



## **SPEAKING CONFIDENTLY – News Week in the Joey Room**

There is nothing more exciting than running into your space of belonging to share some exciting news with your educators. This is something we often observe happening in the Joey Room. Throughout the week we heard about exciting trips to the Knights games, learnt some new ballerina moves, viewed prominent environments and households to the children, and shared a sense of love and connection within the group. Throughout this exciting week, educators noted the sense of belonging that it nurtured amongst the children and our wider educator and family communities. Each evening there was a shared anticipation to see the new photographs added to the documentation wall that provoked new conversations and learning relationships. Speaking in front of a group of people also evoked encouragement to use new descriptive language while also nurturing connection and appreciation for all members and families of our Joey Room community.

## **MEAL TIME CONNECTIONS**

Over the past few months, educators have placed emphasis on making meal times for the children a meaningful time where they can connect, engage and share conversations in a calm setting. We looked at our current practices and thought of ways that we could enhance this time that the children spend together each day. These changes have included platters offered for morning and afternoon tea so that the children can help themselves when they are hungry and self serve lunches, offering the children the opportunity to only take the food they want to eat but to also go back for seconds. These new practices not only encourage slow and meaningful mealtimes, they build on the children's autonomy and independence. Our last implemented practice (which we think is the children's favourite) is the introduction of babycinos. This brings the children together as they arrive of a morning and provides a great transition for children who may be finding the morning drop off a little bit tricky.



*Love,  
Bree, Paula, Sarah,  
Carley and Leisa*

*xx*



### **I'M AN ARTISTA - A JOURNEY TO DISCOVER OUR INNER ARTISTA:**

The children embarked on this journey of discovering their inner artista early in the year. It was a new learning environment, and with that, the children were presented with new opportunities for deep learning and engagement. We noticed the children express a common interest in exploring the processes of what they can create with marks using various mediums. This representation, coupled with the expressive richness of sharing their ideas, documenting their learning, and illustrating people, places, and memories, highlighted an emerging research project.

The children instantly accepted this invitation to explore and research artists and artworks. It is our understanding that children enjoy research as a community of learners, where they can engage in collaboration and theory building together as a group. In agreement with this understanding, the children also held great value in expressing their individuality and sense of ownership of their learning and work.



**“This my artist. This Loula artist” – Alana**

**“I put my artist on the front there. I draw it” – Grace**

**“Purple rock for daddy. Ari one is lellow. Mummy colour red. Ella colour blue” – Ari**

**“Look here. This one Elliotte’s. She’s not here today” – Violet B**

**“My artist Damien and Pilpo. I go get them. Home is hot, hot, hot, and lots of dot, dot, dot” - Otilie**

**“Juliana my one” – Loula**

**“Bush potatoes in the painting. Mummy cooks the potatoes at home. Want to do some painting like my artist. My paint on paper” – Otilie.**

Adapted from the children's voices while engaging in research, educators pieced together their emerging theories.

*Art holds the ability to connect people.*

*Art can heal.*

*Art can be interpreted in many ways.*

*Art portrays emotion.*

To test this theory, educators conducted a range of different art experiences that linked to the children's lines of inquiry.

We noticed that the children utilised materials, environments, social contexts, and learning experiences to connect with what they were creating. Additionally, when the children's funds of knowledge, culture, and experiences were valued, they felt empowered to contribute to curriculum decision making, or the direction that the project was taking. Towards the end of the project our atelier transformed into a beautiful and vibrant gallery depicting the stories, memories, and lived experiences of our children in the Joey room.



# Stories of Excitement and Wonder in the Wallaby Room



## THE WONDER-FUL HUNDRED

**Library Visits-** As we continued to connect with literacy through the hundred languages, we decided to utilise our community connections and spend time at the local library. The children were ecstatic at the prospect of attending the library and after weeks of discussions and planning this was made possible. Over the course of two weeks each of the children were provided with the opportunity to spend time at the library. They engaged in conversations and storytelling about book genre's, the process of book borrowing at the Library and respecting the books that were borrowed.



**Book Week-** Although the excitement of book week for the children was all about dressing up as their favourite character, they developed a more valuable understanding of story writing and literacy concepts as they immersed themselves into their characters. Each year since 1945 the CBCA has brought children and books together across Australia through Children's Book Week. Connecting to their project and engaging with literacy concepts, the Wallaby group utilised this time to emphasise the importance of early literacy with the children. Throughout the week educators and children alike were dressed as characters from some of their most treasured books and as a group they engaged in reading these connected books. These group times exposed the children to a range of book genres, books they would typically not read at home and a new way to connect with literacy.







### HEALTHY HAROLD - 'Big Feelings'

Healthy Harold is a much loved character who many families may remember from their own childhood. He delivers words of wisdom, important messages and big concepts in fun, exciting and interactive ways through the safety of a friendly giraffe. During our healthy Harold visit, the children explored a range of feelings they may experience while at school, how to navigate these feelings, strategies to calm themselves down, and safe people to seek support from. Throughout the show the children were supported to collaborate, learn from and help one another. Harold and the children discussed strategies to regulate their own behaviour, respond appropriately to the behaviour of others and communicate effectively to resolve conflicts.



### STEM LEARNING

As the children began to spend time exploring science and delving deeper into stem learning, educators challenged their thinking through engaging in science experiences. We supported the children in hypothesising, thinking outside of the box and exploring conflicting ideas as a group. This exploration overlapped with Science week and although the theme was a little challenging to explore in our context, the children and educators adapted their thinking to engage with experiences that required innovative thinking which has the potential to power future industries.

### LOOSE PARTS

Loose parts are an amazing and open ended resource to challenge the children's creative thinking. Educators noticed an increased amount of construction with the children's play and made the curriculum decision to introduce a loose parts space to the Wallaby room. This space continues to be a hive of activity filled with recycled items, blocks and bits and bobs. The children have been challenged in creating buildings, cars and even interactive worlds. They have also been transferring this play into the outdoor environment, integrating a range of natural and constructed loose parts into their play.



Love,  
Olivia, Hannah,  
Leisa and Roxi  
xxx