How do sunflowers grow?

Exploring sunflowers

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world
Evidence: Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
I show growing appreciation and care for natural environments

Returning to preschool after a summer break we saw a row of sunflowers growing amongst the tomatoes in the vegetable garden. These majestic flowers grew from the seeds that were collected by the previous group of children from the sunflowers that stood proudly in the vegetable garden last summer. The educators were delighted to see the cycle of sunflowers returning to our garden. The children and educators became immersed in a creative experience with the sunflowers. The children drew, painted and investigated its properties and colour.
Celebrating Chinese New Year 2015
Year of the Goat

The first day of Chinese New Year festivities began on Thursday February 19th. The children embarked on a journey exploring the celebration and tradition of Chinese New Year and aspects of Chinese culture.

Activities included

- Making dumplings
- Creating a dragon for the dragon dance
- Creating dragon puppets
- Making fans
- Moving to music and playing instruments
- Making lanterns
- Listening to stories and songs about welcoming the New Year
- Chinese writing using paint and crayon
- Language learning in Mandarin
  
  Counting 1 – 10
  
  Hello  Ni hǎo 您好
  
  Good bye Zàijiàn 再见
  
  Thank you Xièxiè 谢谢
  
  Happy New Year Xīnnián kuàilè 新年快乐

The colour red flourished throughout the kindergarten including fairy lights depicting fireworks lighting up the night.

A Chinese Restaurant was set up with a menu written in Mandarin. The children attempted to use the chopsticks to pick up the food and noodles.

The children listened to stories and songs about welcoming the New Year. In one song the children learned that when we see the first new moon it is time to celebrate with family and friends.
The Premier's 'Be Active' Challenge is an incentive based physical activity program that encourages children to be more active or in those cases where the children are already active, simply being conscious and recording what physical activity they have been doing.

The Challenge is about achieving and recording 60 minutes a day of physical activity. This does not need to be done all at once, it can be done in 10 minute blocks throughout the day; every bit of physical activity that they do will add up. Participants need to complete at least 4 weeks of the program to receive a medallion.

In preparation for the Premier’s Be Active Challenge the children participated in some physical activities this term.

In term 2 the children will begin their program.
Gardening in preschool supports children’s natural curiosity about the natural world and teaches them the true source of their food, as well as giving them skills of gardening and the responsibility to care for the natural environment.

Children are born naturalists. They explore the world with all their senses, experiment in the environment, and communicate their discoveries to those around them. Gardening in preschool supports children’s curiosity and their natural affinity towards nature. Dirt, water, plants, and small animals attract and hold children’s attention for hours, days, even a lifetime.
Cooking at Preschool to Promote Development and Learning

Images of children enjoying preparing sauce from the produce collected from our preschool vegetable garden.

Pasta Penne with vegetables in a tomato sauce.

The preschool vegetable garden was covered with an abundance of cherry tomatoes. The children spent the last couple of weeks collecting cherry tomatoes. The cherry tomatoes were taken home by Laura so that she could turn those tiny red tomatoes into sauce. On Monday March 16th Laura presented the children with a bottle filled with tomato sauce. The children were delighted and couldn’t wait to taste it. But we had to first cook the tomatoes along with other ingredients that we can find in the vegetable garden. The children helped Laura collect silver beet, celery, spring onions and basil. They carefully washed the ingredients so that Laura can steam them and add them to the tomato sauce for cooking. While the sauce was simmering a packet of pasta penne was immersed in some boiling water. Within minutes the pasta was ‘Al Dente’ and the sauce steaming. The sauce was added to the pasta and a group of children helped mix it all together. It was ready to be served. Many children looked forward to trying the pasta with tomato, basil, spring onion, silver beet and celery. Yummy!!!!!!!
Images of children enjoying cooking and preparing treats with produce picked from our preschool vegetable garden.

Cherry Tomatoes and Cheese Skewers 26/2/2015

The children helped pick the cherry tomatoes and basil from the vegetable garden. One group of children used scissors to cut the basil into tiny pieces for the marinade. Another group of children removed the stalks from the cherry tomatoes and placed them in the bowl with the basil. Olive oil was added. While the tomatoes were taking in the flavours of the basil and oil, the cheese was cut into small squares. A group of children returned to the table to add the cheese and marinated cherry tomatoes onto toothpicks and placed them onto a platter for serving. The cherry tomatoes and cheese skewers were served for afternoon tea and many enjoyed the flavours and went back for more.
In preparation for the arrival of the eggs a story titled “Alexander’s Outing” was presented to the children. It is a story of a duckling trapped in a hole and the people were trying to find ways of saving the duckling. One small child quickly solved the problem by filling the hole with water so Alexander can float up to the top. The child’s idea of rescuing the duckling in the story was used as a countdown for the arrival of the eggs. The children busily created a deep hole and painted it blue to represent the water.

A drawing of Alexander was created by one of the children and was used as a marker to show the children how many sleeps until the arrival of ‘Living Eggs’.

The countdown was finally over and Alexander the Duck reached the top of the deep hole. The children knew the eggs were arriving very soon. The children welcomed the arrival of 10 eggs with great joy and excitement. The children couldn’t wait to show their family at the end of their kindergarten day. By the middle of the week the children witnessed the first hatching. They watched with anticipation and waited to see the arrival of a baby chick. The first chick appeared and the children rejoiced with great happiness.

Later that day another chick entered into the world. By the end of the day 8 chicks were hatched. On Thursday morning another chick hatched giving a total of 9 chicks. A record showing the number of chicks hatched was kept. The children immersed themselves in activities that involved exploring other animals hatching from eggs, how to care for animals, viewing and describing the chicks they saw and creating paintings and drawings of eggs and baby chicks.
Celebrating Harmony Day
March 2015

Harmony Day is a day where all Australians celebrate our Cultural Diversity. The colour chosen to represent Harmony Day is orange, and many people use orange in their celebrations. At preschool the children were involved in a number of activities using orange and sang songs such as “We are Australian”. We discussed the many different countries that are represented in our Australian Culture. A family day celebration was organised with a shared morning tea with delicious food that reflected our cultural diversity.