

MY KIDZ COTTAGE NEWSLETTER

We Value Each Child's Potential



CHINESE NEW YEAR CELEBRATIONS

TEACHER JEFF

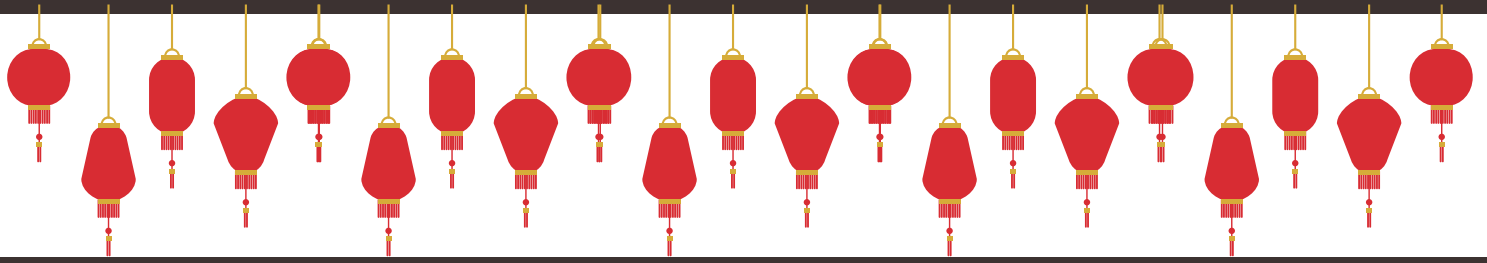
Did you know that the character “福” is often seen pasted upside down during the Chinese New Year? The character implies that “good fortune has arrived”.

It was the very first time for most of our students to write calligraphy. It fulfilled their sense of wonder and curiosity. The Chinese teacher was patiently holding the children's hand with little strength to write the strokes of the character while children also demonstrated perseverance to complete the character with full concentration.

The lion dance is a traditional Chinese dance performed during big occasions, such as the Spring Festival. In Chinese culture, the lion is an auspicious animal that symbolizes power, wisdom, and superiority. The dance brings good fortune and chases away evil spirits.

To create a festive atmosphere and bring happiness, we also encourage our children to perform lion dance in their way in the class. They picked the music instrument they wanted to use and made lovely accompaniment to the lion dance.





Students from the enrichment class have worked as a team to complete a Chinese New Year wall display. Their teacher delegated tasks according to their strengths and interests. Some enjoyed cutting and decorating, while some were good at drawing. The teacher also encouraged them to explore various ideas and possibilities to decorate on the wall display. It meant to promote their sense of inventiveness.



ZHAO LAO SHI

狮子外形威武，动作刚劲，神态多变，人们相信狮子是祥瑞之兽，舞狮能够带来好运，所以每逢春节或其它一些庆典活动，都会在阵阵锣鼓鞭炮声中，舞狮助庆祈求吉利。

“福”字指福气、福运，寄托了人们对幸福生活的向往，对美好未来的祝愿。



POLICE TALK

TEACHER JESSICA

On 25 Feb 2022 the school organised a police talk with Marine Parade Neighborhood Police. Each child was given a bag of activity book with a teddy bear and miniature police car. Our students were excited with the items in their goodie bag.

The police talk was via zoom conducted by Ms Fadil, the police officer. She explained about how to be safe in the neighborhood as well as the dangers to look out for. The students recalled the number to call in emergency. All the students listened intently to Ms Fadil as they watched the visual images on the screen



Finally, the students from K1 and K2 had the opportunity to interview Miss Firah about her role as a police officer.

Dominic asked, "Why do you park the police car at the carpark?"

Nay Yuang asked, "Are you scared when you meet the bad people?"

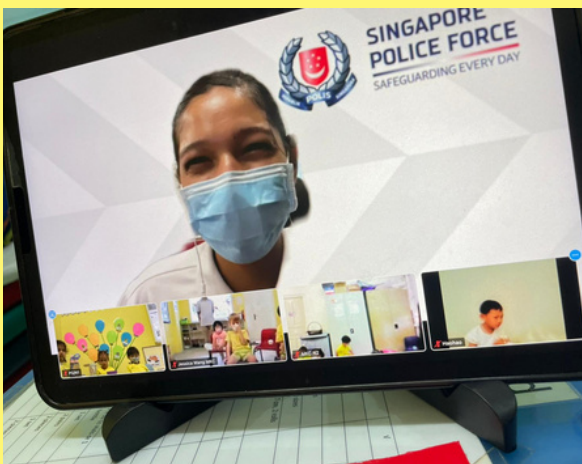
Eden asked, "Why do you have so many things on your belt? What is it for? I am scared of police officers. Are you scary?"

Yusoff asked, "What is so cool in your police car?" "Do you have a friend just like Teacher Tin?"

Adrien said, "I want to be a policeman when I grow up."

We thanked the team of police officers from Marine Parade Police for sharing with us on how to be a good citizen to be honest and righteous. Most importantly, Ms Firah shared that police officers would rather give a second chance to a person where he or she will repent and turn over a new leaf.

To the students, the police officers are their HEROES.



LET'S GET COOKING!

SUGEE CAKE

TEACHER NAYAK

In January, we had a fun-filled cookery activity to enhance the all-round development in our bright and enthusiastic children. The children were able to engage in the tactile experience with the guidance of their teachers.

They learnt how to measure using different measuring spoons which developed their mathematical concepts.

While pouring and mixing the buttermilk into the sugée, they also observed and explored the science concepts behind solid and liquid states of matter.

The best part of the cookery activity was gifting the healthy and tasty cake to celebrate our Auntie Ivy's birthday. What better way to teach our children than care and compassion for others?



INGREDIENTS AND RECIPE

- | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| 1. Powdered Sugée | 2 Cups | 5. Baking Soda | 1 Teaspoon |
| 2. Milk | 1 Cup | 6. Butter Milk | 1 Cup |
| 3. Flour | 1/2 Cup | 7. Oil | 1/2 Cup |
| 4. Baking Powder | 1 Teaspoon | 8. Sugar | 1 Cup |

Step 1: Mix all the ingredients and let rest for 30 to 40 minutes

Step 2: Grease the cake pan with butter and place the parchment paper

Step 3: Pour batter into cake pan.\

Step 4: Bake in a preheated oven for 30 to 40 mins at 180 degree celcius.

Step 5: Once baked, rest to cool for 5 minutes.

Step 6: Bon appetit!

BONUS RECIPE: CHEESY BUNS

INGREDIENTS AND RECIPE

- | | |
|----------------------|----------|
| 1. Yoghurt | 1 Cup |
| 2. Self Rising Flour | 1 Cup |
| 3. Shredded Cheese | 1 Cup |
| 4. Melted Butter | 1/2 Cup |
| 5. Salt | To taste |

Step 1: Mix the yoghurt, self rising flour and shredded cheese into a big bowl.

Step 2: Roughly knead the dough until fully mixed.

Step 3: Roll the dough into small palm sized balls.

Step 4: Place on a baking sheet, brush the tops with melted butter, and sprinkle some salt to taste.

Step 5: Bake in the oven for 15 minutes at 200 degrees celsius.

Step 6: Once baked, rest to cool for 5 minutes.

Step 7: Bon appetit!



SENSORY WALK



Nature walks are the perfect way to explore environment, take in details of things around using all the senses, and have fun. All you need is some where to walk.

TEACHER HAJRA

The natural world is a giant, open-ended learning laboratory. Children are innate scientists and love to experience the sights, scents, sounds, and textures of the outdoors.

You can go to a neighborhood park or plan an excursion to a nature reserve. Walk with children at their pace. Take as long as children want. Let the walk be about connecting with the environment, rather than getting to the end.

Ask open-ended questions as you go encourages children to deliberately notice things and observe the environment with all their senses

With right guidance from adults, children can learn to focus their attention and take in the details of things around them. Nature provides countless opportunities for discovery, creativity, problem-solving, and STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math).

Taking nature walks can be a peaceful, reflective experience for both adults and children.



Open Ended Questions

Seeing Questions:

- What can you see? Look all around you, up at the sky and down at the ground.

Smelling Questions:

- What can you smell? Can you describe the smell? Leafy? Like mud?

Hearing Questions:

- What can you hear? Birds? The wind? Other people?

Feeling and Touching Questions:

- What can you feel? Is the sun warm? Is the ground rough or smooth?

A TRIP TO THE NEARBY LIBRARY



TEACHER WEI ZHENG

As screen time has become part of the lives of our children, they need to learn to appreciate the stillness of books, to understand more about delayed gratification. Hence, as part of our school theme of “Myself, My School and My Neighbourhood”, the children were given the opportunity to visit the Marine Parade Library.

As the African proverb goes, “It takes a village to raise a child.” So, we recognise the importance of how every part of the community is responsible for nurturing these little ones.



According to Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological theory, a child has five environmental systems, one of them being the microsystem where it consists of the home, school, and neighbourhood, and each system can impact a child’s life positively (Couchenour, 2014). Whether it is to speak to a librarian, or ask questions to a bus driver, every person in our community can teach our children something valuable.



Also, removing screen time can boost the brain development of children up to the age of 5. Studies have shown that exposure to screen causes children to have poor emergent literacy skills and be weak in express language, and it is beneficial if a child is read books daily (LaMotte, 2020). While technology is a crucial aspect of our lives, it is important that we nurture our little ones with the right strategies.

Hence, it would be good if parents brought them out, if Covid rules permit, for them to learn and engage with different members of the local community. Also, the next time we as adults feel children are getting bored, why not whip out a book instead?



Couchenour, D. (2014). Families, Schools, and Communities: Together for Young Children. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
LaMotte, S. (2020, January 16). This is your child's brain on books: Scans show benefit of reading vs. screen time. CNN health. Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/01/16/health/child-brain-reading-books-wellness>

INTERVIEW WITH A LIBRARIAN

TEACHER CHRISITINA

You can feel and see the excitement of the students when interviewing someone whom they have been learning in class and now they are able to talk to in real life. When done right, with preparation and practice, such a conversation gives them a sense of accomplishment and sparks their interest more on the topic they are interviewing about.



Interviewing requires students to listen, focus, think on their feet, and react appropriately to what the other person says. Listening and really trying to appreciate where the other person is coming from is also an exercise in empathy and discovering how to connect. These life skills will help prepare students for scenarios that they may encounter in real life. At the same time, it is also a great way to learn and discover about the topic that they are learning right then and there and make it more meaningful

The students have been learning about the different community helpers in the neighborhood prior to their trip. This made their questions more relevant. They have also included some questions that they are truly curious about, that made the interview more fun and relatable.

Now more than ever, we appreciate learning new things outside the four corners of our class. We hope to be able to meet people face to face more in the near future.



SPLISH SPLASH, 5 INTERESTING BENEFITS OF WATER PLAY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

TEACHER LLOYD

1) DEVELOP MOTOR SKILLS

Water Play gives many opportunities to develop fine and gross motor skills across age ranges. Children will increase their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination through actions like pouring, squirting, scrubbing, stirring and squeezing.

It's an amazing sensory experience introducing them to textures (slippy, slimy...) and temperatures. It will also help master the pincer grip which will enable them to hold a pencil correctly at school. Actioning the pump is a favourite of our pre-schoolers and sure helps to build these large arm muscles!

2) DEVELOP PROBLEM SOLVING SKILLS

Water play allows children to explore a substance and make discoveries about it. Observing a branch or paper float or sink will teach them, in a very practical way, how and why things happen. But above all, it encourages them to use their imagination, develops creative thinking which plays an important role in problem-solving.

3) DEVELOP SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SKILLS

Imagine the discussions you can have asking what they are doing. Imagine then, the number of new words they will learn while having fun with water and having conversations about it! Basin, Damp, Depth, Drain, Flow, Drenched, Drizzle, Sieve...



SPLISH SPLASH, 5 INTERESTING BENEFITS OF WATER PLAY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

4) SOCIAL EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Water play releases energy, it can be both invigorating or relaxing and calming for young children. It increases their ability to concentrate on one activity when presented as a tranquil and repetitive activity (scooping, pouring and running their hands through the water). Gentle water play allows them to unwind, order their thoughts and relax.

It also encourages role play and crucial social skills like cooperation and sharing. They learn to work with one or several children, to take turns and share the space and accessories with their friends. At Kids Club we love seeing the interactions that the children have around water play when the Ocean and Outback Rooms share the outdoor area. There are a lot of bonds growing between the children in a big brother and big sister fashion. What an easy way to work on school readiness!

4) SOCIAL EMOTIONAL GROWTH

Water Play builds the foundation for understanding various scientific concepts. Did you know we use water play to teach basic mathematics? It will introduce children to terms such as Full, Empty, Half, Less. We will measure, compare volumes and observe motion, maybe a plant and animal life if we are lucky... We will count the rocks in the basin and notice the flow change as we move them. All these concepts are part of the Curriculum in Kindergarten. What a fun way to work on Preschool readiness programs! Science is everywhere around us.

Our educators not only monitor them and make sure they have sunscreen and a hat when the sun is shining, but they also participate in the play showing they value them and their activities. They look for opportunities to stimulate fantasy play: make sure children have interesting options such as buckets, boats or dinosaurs (hey, they also need to cool down!).

At home, don't hesitate to take buckets, cups, sifters, empty bottles ... in a shaded area out in the garden or on the balcony and participate with your children to their pretend play, they are learning as well as enjoying your participation! Never leave children unattended during Water Play.



小小理发师



JIANG LAO SHI

每个小朋友都有剪头发的经历，每次当老师问起是谁给他们剪的这么帅帅的发型时，他们都会一边炫耀自己的新发型，一边叽叽喳喳的说是爸爸剪的、妈妈剪的或者是在理发店剪的，有的小朋友还会自豪的地说：“我都没有动，很乖的”。针对小朋友的这一兴趣点，我们决定开展一次小小理发师的手工活动：

材料准备 1、一个废纸桶； 2、半张黑色纸； 3、一把剪刀； 4、一个马克笔



简单的材料粘粘画画，头发又长又乱的纸筒娃娃就准备好了！下面小小理发师登场了！小朋友第一次体验剪头发，剪得非常认真，他们反复调整剪刀的角度，认真观察哪里的头发比较长，剪的不好的还会反复认真的修剪，经过一番努力，终于剪好了，莹莹开心的炫耀她努力的成果。通过这个活动，小朋友们锻炼了小肌肉的力量和灵活性，学会了更好更安全的使用剪刀，享受到了作为小小理发师的成就感，也体验到了理发师的辛苦和乐趣！



PLAYDOUGH

TEACHER PRIYANKA

In January, we had a fun filled playdough event to increase the development in our students. The play task improved fine motor skills. Playing with play dough prepares a child for school and many of the activities that they need to master in life.

Play dough is a tactile experience that promotes sensory development, and improves hand-eye coordination. The soft squishy medium is therapeutic to squeeze and manipulate. It is a calming activity that promotes and improves concentration and focus.

Play dough is engaging, as it is an open-ending activity that keeps children interested. Imagination is sparked and enhanced once the skills have been mastered to manipulate play dough. All manner of models can be created, the possibilities are endless.

Children can also learn about colours, textures and shapes as they learn how to manipulate the play dough. Creating new and different models stimulates a child's imagination which promotes creative play.

Play dough provides an activity that allows free play and thinking, as well as allowing a child to express their creativity. Play dough is a fun activity for children of all ages and it boasts many educational benefits that are particularly useful for pre-schoolers.

A model of a spider was showed to the children which they then imitated. Different colours were placed in different trays. The children were very excited during the activity.



JOY OF GIVING



Merry Christmas To You All

I thank God for his guidance and his love in 2021. And secondly, wholeheartedly thanks to Singapore team and express our gratitude for Christmas gifts for us. This is a very special gift for us. In this year we are mentally and emotionally depressed by the political situation of Myanmar, but your Christmas gifts make us joy and happy in this time. Thank you for your love and Christmas gifts.

With Thanks..
Mother Home



The children from Myanmar received their Christmas presents and cards that were sent to them during last year's Christmas. They were elated to receive their gifts.

Our students made the greeting cards to these children with love, showing care for one another.

