



# MELROSE PARK VACATION CARE BLOG

Vacation Care 2020 - Week 1

WELCOME BACK TO OSHC/VACATION CARE 2020. WE HOPE EVERYONE HAD A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON.

## OUR WEEK AT VACATION CARE

### **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January: Fossil Day**

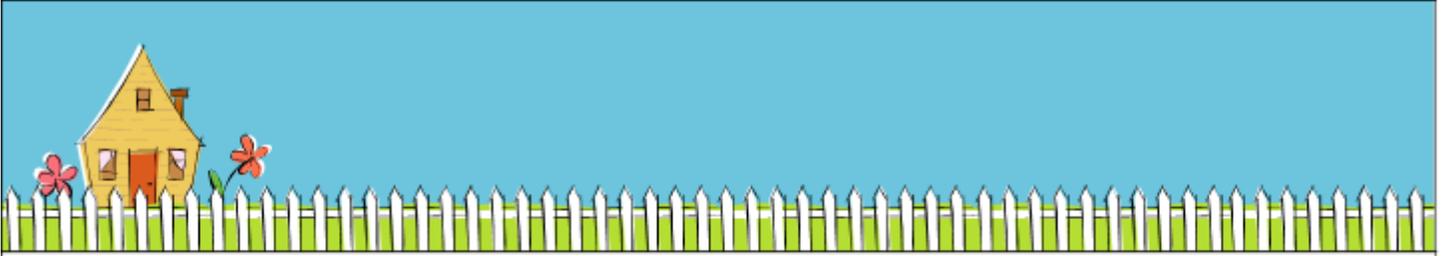
Vacation care 2020 began with fossil day. We were very excited to see all the children and hear what wonderful breaks they had over Christmas and the New Year. On Monday, the children welcomed Lisa from Pieces of the past, who brought with her fragments of the past. Lisa explained to the children how fossils were created in the earth, where they came from, how they were excavated and found. The children had lots of questions to ask as their interest in fossils grew, Oscar and Marius shared their previous knowledge of dinosaurs with the group. Next the children were invited to play a guessing game using the fossils of dinosaurs. They were selected one by one to choose a fossil and guess which dinosaur it had come from and which part of the dinosaur it was. There were feet, toe nails, jaws and eggs.

The children were invited to dig for their own fossils using a small shovel, brush and magnifying glass to get a better look at what they had dug up. Alice remarked "There are shark teeth in here!" They were delighted to find sand dollars, artinite shells and dinosaur teeth! At the exploration table the group explored fossils from millions of years ago including Megalodon and velociraptor teeth! The children compared the different sizes of fossil teeth with their own teeth and were amazed by the size of how big dinosaurs really were. To the group's amusement the favourite fossil of the day was fossilised dinosaur poo, that the children were encouraged to smell!

### **Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> January: Alphabet Day**

Alphabet day was all about celebrating each child's individual name and letter. It was great to see some of the children get into the alphabet spirit by coming dressed as something that the letter of their name begins with. The day consisted of various activities such as craft, creating letter shape biscuits and outdoor games. The day began with a Lego competition where the children were individually challenged to create an object with the first letter of their name and had to beat the 1-minute timer. The children demonstrated great creativity as they were able to use their imagination to create various objects and shapes that related to the letter of their first name. For example, a child's name starting with B created various objects such as a baseball, building and bear. Outdoor play was then offered to the children where games such as Oztag were thoroughly enjoyed by all children. For the children who were interested in craft, clay was used to create objects that began with the letter of the child's first name. This meant that we ended up with a wide variety of clay objects ranging from the letter A to Z. Once dry the clay was then painted by the children.

After lunch, the children were offered the opportunity to enjoy some outdoor play or bracelet making. For those opting to make bracelets or necklaces the children used their fine motor skills to create various pieces of jewellery with their name spelled out in beads. This activity required the children to use their critical thinking in having to measure out the length of the string, attach the beads and finally the clip to tie the jewellery pieces together. The afternoon consisted of a group cooking activity in which all the children participated in. As a group the children worked together to mix all the ingredients to create rainbow cookies. This included printing the cookie dough into the letters of their name using lettered stencils. We then created a giant cookie where all the children were able to decorate it with mini M&M's. The day ended off with some outdoor chalk play. The children enjoyed the process of using the washable paint chalk by mixing water with the chalk to create a paint substance. Various designs were then painted by the children on the asphalt



### **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> January: Science Day**

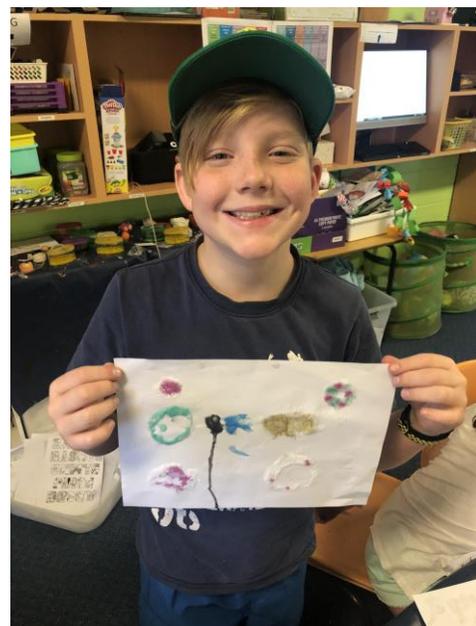
The children unleashed their inner mad scientists today by engaging in a wide variety of science experiments. The children first worked together to create a solar powered chopper. They had to delegate jobs to each child in order to build the chopper. Problem solving skills were critical to the success of this activity where many small parts had to be placed together in the correct order. All skills levels were catered for with each individual child completing a specific task. The children were then able to grow their own crystal kit. The chemical powder was firstly mixed with water. The crystal rocks were then added into the container. The solution was then poured over the rocks with crystal seeds being added. It was great to see all ages interacting with each other as the older children really helped those younger to create their own crystals

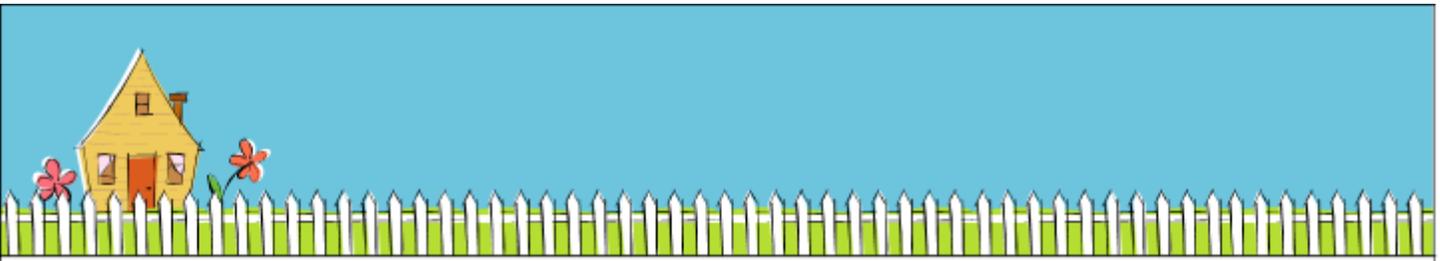
### **Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> January: Challenge Day**

Using Lego, the group were challenged in minute to win it games, these included trials like building the highest tower blind folded, building something that begins with a certain letter within a minute and building a bridge that could hold a Lego character. The group moved outside for some physical challenges one of their favourite being the team sport of capture the flag! Other challenges included games of pom pom throwing, balloon hiding, cookie face and one-handed threading. The challenges won came with prizes! The group also made a fort inside using the blankets and pillows to create a comfy space.

### **Friday 17<sup>th</sup>: Movie Excursion**

The weather was stormy making it the perfect day for a movie! The group made up their snack bags to take along with them and eat through out the movie. The bus arrived and drove the group to Top Ryde cinemas where the children watched the film "Dr Dolittle" the film was about a vet who had the ability to talk to the animals and taught the children a lesson of kindness to all beings. When the movie had finished the group returned to school and participated in many creative activities such as creating with clay.





#### **Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January: Reptile Day**

Today the children were visited by Taronga Zoo Wildlife Park where they were able to learn, experience and engage with a wide variety of reptiles and animals. The children got to first meet 'Houdini' the green tree frog who is able to change the colour of his skin to camouflage to his surroundings. Adam had explained to the children how Houdini was a dark green in the zoo but then had adapted to the colour of the light green leaves by the time they arrived at Melrose Park School. The children were also introduced to 'Gordon' the shingle back lizard who was described as slow and not a good climber. Many of the children commented that after touching his back it felt like rocks. The children engaged in the experience by asking lots of questions and touching each animal softly and gently. We learnt that Gordon was cold blooded and thus utilises his environment to keep him warm. The next visitor the children got to meet was a python named 'Olga' who is from Outback Australia. The group was able to observe the beautiful pattern of her skin and laughed each time she stuck her tongue out. Adam had explained how Olga was only a junior snake so the children were very interested in questioning Adam as to how big she would get. Adam explained once at full length Olga would grow to about 6 metres. Lastly, we met 'Wattle' the ringtail possum a native Australian animal. Wattle is nocturnal and a vegetarian. She was sleeping in her pouch with some leaves and to the children's surprise woke long enough for the children to each have a pat. They children loved that this animal was really fluffy and soft. Adam was then thanked by the children for bringing the beautiful native animals to Melrose Park and for teaching them lots of fun facts about animals. Not only was this an enjoyable experience for all the children it was also very educational. The children were able to identify the animals and learn key facts about each individual one.

#### **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January: Jumping castle Day**

It's no surprise to many of us that kids just love jumping castles. From the morning there was impending excitement to jump on the jumping castle. Jumping castle day consisted of lots of fun and bouncing on our own jumping castle that came with a slide. There was something about being able to throw their body around in pure glee without the harsh consequences of gravity and solid surfaces that the children really enjoyed. The children were able to jump and fall in harmless fun, again and again. In between jumping the children were able to make their own glow in the dark slime. A very fun (and messy) activity. The children ask to make slime every vacation care and were therefore given a choice between glow in the dark, colouring changing, glitter and clear Elmer's glue. After choosing their colours they poured the contents into a bowl and added slime activator to bond the slime together. Next, they mixed the slime until it formed a gooey substance. The children then chose to add shaving cream and foam balls to change the consistency of the slime. When they had finished, they experimented with the glow in the dark effect and the amazing colour changing abilities of the slime.

#### **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January: Environmental Day**

Today the children planted their very own OSHC garden. Various plants and succulents were planted outside the OSHC room. The children enjoyed being outdoors and loved digging in the soil, getting dirty, creating things and watering the plants in order for them to grow. From picking up tiny seeds to pulling weeds and gently caring for your seedlings and plants, gardening encouraged the development of fine motor skills every step of the way. The children had to pay attention to whether the plant thrives in direct or indirect light which affects the health of each plant differently. Learning how to care for the plants properly is a great lesson in responsibility for the kids. New skills were developed as the children learnt about science and nature from growing and planting vegetables such as snow peas, beetroot and chocolate capsicum. The experience creates environmental stewards. Once the children were able to see how much time and effort goes into gardening, they were able to become more empathic towards those who put food on our tables every day. This time was used to talk about the importance of local farmers and taking care of our planet by recycling and not littering.

#### **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January: Colour Day**

A rainbow of colour was explored by the OSHC children today who were very excited to paint each other's faces in Fluro face paints. The children painted flowers, animal faces and patterns onto their arms and faces with the most popular painting being the unicorn and skeleton faces. A large canvas was covered in balloons full of paint and then pooped to create a cool colourful splatter pattern. The group also coloured their hair with hair spray making themselves look like super stars. The group participated in colourful clay creations which has been a very popular holiday activity with the children making everything from bowls, to dragons using the clay. The children explored the art of tie dye to use on bags and were offered fabric paints to draw pictures onto their bags.

### Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January: Tropical Day

Tropical day was a fun filled day that involved the children exploring all things tropical such as making mermaids using foam shapes, creating colourful sand bottles where the children layered the sand in a rainbow using a funnel. Unfortunately, the weather in the morning was gloomy so the children participated in several games of musical statues before having a disco dance with colourful glow sticks. Those who didn't want to dance created pictures on sparkly scratch art sheets and painted plasters. A highlight of the day was definitely the pinata which was enjoyed by all of the children and was filled with prizes and lollies for a special treat!

### Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January: Mini Masterchef Day

The children tuned into their cooking skills as they helped out in the kitchen, making their own lunch and afternoon tea as well as many yummy healthy snacks along the way. The group started the day with yoghurt parfait where they were encouraged to try new fruits and flavours as they layered the yoghurt, granola and fruit into their cups. For lunch each child made their own pizza, covering their pizza bases in healthy toppings before an educator cooked the pizza in the oven. In response to the children's ideas the group made melon balls with a melon baller for late snack and banana muffins for afternoon tea. In between cooking activities the children were encouraged to be creative making their own jelly soaps, designing chefs hats and making candles.



