**Day 1: Monday 15th September, 2014**

The day commenced by being introduced to some of the children, and developing an awareness of the program incorporated into learning each day. This also involved observing children and communicating with children and staff.

Play based learning is incorporated into children’s learning, which supports individual and group learning, as well as one on one and small group collaboration to support children requiring extra support in their learning.

During one of my observations, I was observing one of the children (Child A), engaged in drawing undetermined marks on paper. In attempt to support ways to further develop knowledge, I traced around some objects, while observing what Child A would do. The child incorporated the idea of tracing some similar objects, to create flowers.

I noticed several children creating play ideas, which were based on real life. Such ideas included dinosaurs, mums and dads, and emotions such as angry and sad.

This was an exciting day to see how children developed ideas, and without informing a child how they should play, I occasionally incorporated small ideas, to further extend their knowledge. Play involved a variety of ways including individual and small groups. Some play was solitary, while others enabled other children to join and share experiences.

There were two specific occasions I vividly remember children building on existing knowledge and also creating new knowledge. One involved large plastic washbowls, turned upside down in a circle, where children practiced skills in gross motor skills. While observing children moving from one “stepping stone” to another, I occasionally made suggestions to a child:- “be careful you don’t fall in the water”; “be careful of the crocodiles in the water”. One child clearly informed me, that the ground was grass, and not water – other children took on the idea of falling/not falling into the water, extending play to suit their own knowledge, and sharing it with other children. On another occasion, a child was playing in the sandpit, making pies. It was interesting conversing with the child asking them what they were making, and what was in the pies. The child obviously had gained prior knowledge of some of the ingredients and process that went into making pies, and was able to tell me what fruit was being used in the pie. To extend play and knowledge, while sifting sand through my fingers as I observed this child, I found a small zebra. Without saying anything to the child, I used my best “Disney” character voice, putting the toy to the edge of the “pie”, saying “I’m hungry. Please may I have a piece of pie”. The child observed me for a short while, followed by using the toy themself, to imitate voice and play based around sharing the pie with the toy.

At the end of the day, a workbook is written up, using two separate headings: “Intentional Teaching” and “Children’s Voice/Interests”.

**Day 2: Monday 3rd November 2014**

The day commenced with students able to engage in free play before going outside. The day consists of a variety of intentional teaching, and children’s voice/interest ideas. This was an opportunity for me to further connect with students that I had met on my first day, and get to know some names, further ways the Centre functions, and exploring resources to use in my lesson plans.

I was able to incorporate a story “The Old Black Fly”, by Jim Aylesworth. I wondered how best to keep students engaged in their learning, particularly after lunch and some free play time, when children can often become tired. This story contains some repetition on subsequent pages with “Shoo fly, shoo fly, shoo”. Using a medium sized rubber “fly”, I was able to encourage most students to repeat the words along with the story, when they were shown the cue to verbally repeat them, when shown the fly.

Students are learning about lifecycles and were supported with the story “The Very Hungry Caterpillar”, and real, live silkworms that can be observed. Many students were fascinated with the silkworms. This is also a great opportunity to incorporate learning for our environment and its’ inhabitants.

**Day 3: Thursday 6th November, 2014**

There were 13 children present during this very busy day. The tables are set up with different crafts/activities for the children to engage in free play before teaching and learning begins. Children have been learning about capital letters/uppercase, as well as questions marks at the end of questions.

The theme story “Hairy MacLary from Donaldson’s Dairy” was also incorporated further, with children recalling what they learnt about dog safety. Maths was incorporated into learning through children choosing their favourite story character, and turning it into a graph (Data collection).

To recall student’s exploration regarding a visit with a wombat, another teacher focused on two students answering questions in front of the whole group.

**Day 4: Friday 7th November, 2014**

This day was an extreme hot weather day and as a result, there were a minimal number of children present. Most of the day incorporated cool play activities.

Many children have new siblings in their families which also sometimes results in children showing different behaviours. One of the stories “A baby for Grace”, was incorporated into learning and discussion.

The story “We’re going on a Bear Hunt”, was also read, with children able to focus on repetition, rhyme, and sounds.

**Day 5: Monday 10th November, 2014**

Children begin a new week, with a new theme of work.

**Day 6: Wednesday 12th November, 2014**

It was an enjoyable morning being able to interact with some of the parents briefly when bringing in their children. The focus this week for maths, is relating to numbers, from 1-14. The numbers of girls and boys have been counted to determine numbers present. Other activities for the week have focused on finding correct numbers; a dice game; matching dots to numerals; and writing numbers. The focus for English, is on Beginning sounds. Lesson content has investigated the book “The Alphabet Song”. A very useful and enjoyable activity was included, where the teacher used toy animals/sea creatures to illustrate the beginning sounds of words. Children were able to have a turn at finding the animal/sea creature that started with each letter.

**Day 7: Thursday 13th November, 2014**

Lesson content continued the theme of beginning sounds, incorporating visual images, where the students were required to identify what the beginning sound of each image was, and make the sound. This was followed with an activity – again visual, with a series of images for several letters, with an odd one out. Students were required to identify what each image was; state its beginning sound; and discuss the object that didn’t belong.

**Day 8: Friday 14th November, 2014**

Throughout the learning session, it was evident that children generally relate well to numbers and their content. This was shown through a dice game, where the teacher threw a large foam dice with numbers, and the children needed to state what the number shown was, and incorporate their favoured clap, performed according to the dice number. Students were then able to take turns throwing the dice, determining the number, and demonstrating the number through claps. Other activities included identifying numbers and colours through the story *Brown Bear, brown bear, what do you see?*

It has been interesting to observe school age students from the beginning of the practicum thus far, and following their readiness for school, and the changes within each child, compared to students who are not quite ready according to age or readiness.

**Day 9: Monday 17th November, 2014**

The focus for this week, involves students exploring shapes – 1D; 2D; 3D.

**Day 10: Wednesday 19th November, 2014**

Students explore shapes including cylinders and triangles. Further exploration of colour patterns, to identify what comes next is incorporated.

**Day 11: Thursday 20th November, 2014**

Throughout the placement, I have noticed that although children of 5 are developing many skills, socially, cognitively and physically, they also develop skills in determination and how to survive in this world. However, one thought that came to me throughout my observations, is that although these children can have the determination to achieve, it is easy to overlook just how young they really are, particularly when faced with emotionally challenging issues, such as being hurt through injury.

**Day 12: Monday 24th November, 2014**

**Day 13: Tuesday 25th November, 2014**

**Day 14: Wednesday 26th November, 2014**

**Day 15: Thursday 27th November, 2014**

**Day 16: Friday 28th November, 2014**

One of the principles shared with me was the concept of “Strive for five”. This aims to engage in communication with all children, with conversation going back and forth between the child and the teacher/adult at least five times.

**Day 17: Wednesday 3rd December, 2014**

The excitement of the end of term, mixed with Christmas is incorporated into children’s learning, with lots of Christmas based crafts. It is interesting to experience the different abilities in children, and especially their ways of doing things. Enabling children of any age, to make and create according to their own style, is essential to develop lifelong learning, extending both the child’s knowledge and abilities, as well as my own understanding of different ways children can make and create. An example of this was with the craft activity where children made their own reindeer headbands, complete with large wiggly eyes, reindeer antlers, and a shiny, red, glitter nose. I had presented a completed model for children to see, and to use for demonstration purposes. One student, after I explained how it was made, turned the headband upside down, cut out half circles where the eyes would normally have be glued, and pasted some shiny red glitter under the eyes. It was a brilliant version of the “standard” reindeer headband, and was a reminder to me, that as a teacher, while it is important to offer children guidance and ideas for making and creating, it is equally important to enable children the freedom to make and create for themselves according to what they already know, and are yet to know.

**Day 18: Thursday 4th December, 2014**

This was a full on, but exciting day, to see children transitioning to school, and be part of their graduation ceremony. Although my placement has only consisted of 20 days, it has been wonderful to see the continual growth in school age children emotionally, socially, cognitively and physical development of these children, as they begin to commence a new stage in their young lives.

**Day 19: Friday 5th December, 2014**