

March 2019 Newsletter

Dear parents and friends of Cowgate,

This month's newsletter shares a lovely comment by Andrew with you, and introduces Maximos's and Artemis's Mum, Valeria, in our 'Meet the Parent' section. It brings you photos of Stickland wayfaring adventures, and news about trips and outings this month, our new name boards in the garden, a seminar which Lynn led on 25th

February and a mind-map of children's views on the meaning of 'resilience', and training delivered by Teresa, Donna, Lynn and Lian. It also shares with you FABULOUS news about attaining our 7th Green Flag and a message from Lian about helping children to take care of their and others' belongings.

Finally, at the end of the newsletter, you will find two articles which Lynn would like to share with you about woodworking, and a poem by Michael Rosen which captures Froebelian views on young children's learning.

The Funny Things Children Say

One afternoon, Andrew told Claire, “I’ve got a baby in my tummy, and it’s going to come out in one sleep. Would you like to come to my house to see my new baby Claire?” Then he explained very seriously, “It went up my legs into my tummy, and soon it’s going to come out of my mouth!”



Meet the Parent: Valeria, Maximos's and Artemis's Mum (Artemis is 4 months old and will be joining Cowgate in the summer)



1. What was your favourite thing to do when you were a child?

A handful of favourites were playing basketball with my brother, roaming the neighbourhood unsupervised, riding my bike everywhere.

2. What is the thing you love most about being a parent?

Seeing the world through children's eyes and in some ways reliving and remembering my own childhood. I also love how my son's questions make me realise and sometimes challenge my own preconceptions about the world.

3. What kind of things do you like doing in your job?

Teaching students, solving analytical puzzles when doing research, learning new things, interacting with colleagues and students.

4. What do you do when you are not there?

If I'm not at work then I'm generally with my children, but very occasionally I may be out for a run or dancing in a class.

5. What do you like about Cowgate?

Many many things! The family atmosphere, the fantastic people who work there, the open plan rooms where children of all ages can interact with each other, the way spaces have been organized to have different characters and moods, and the independence children are given to learn and develop into little people.

6. What is your view of the child and childhood?

I think childhood is a precious time, and the experiences we have in childhood stay with us for life and shape who we become as adults. I also think it is and should be a carefree time focused on play, gaining independence, learning your strengths and limits, and building relationships.

7. If there was one thing you would change about Cowgate, what would it be?

Well if you must ask... Whenever we receive a snapshot of Maximos's life at the nursery via an e-journal photo or update it feels like Christmas has come early and we huddle by the screen together to read the journal entry. More updates and opportunities to see what shenanigans Maximos gets up to in nursery would be a treat!

8. What kinds of things do you like doing as a family?

I'll limit myself to three things: going on holidays and discovering new places, people and cultures; teaching and dancing our weekly Greek dance class; catching up with friends over a coffee or meal.

9. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you folks at Cowgate for caring for all children so well and for your incredible patience in coping with the mayhem...



Cowgate News and Notices

Visits this Month

What a list of visits this month:

7 & 21 February, a small group of children went to the Gaelic Bookbugs at Blackhall library.

8 February, a small group of children went with Emma to Princes Street Gardens. The children went to see the floral clock, but, as Emma wrote, "it was not there. The ground was being prepared for planting it. We did, however, see a picture of it on a rubbish bin. It was so windy that all of the benches were blown over! We got blown up the steps. We stopped many time to consult the book and discover which landmarks we could see. Lots of flags were spotted."



20 February, some children, accompanied by Claire and Rebeca, went to Dr Neil's Garden.

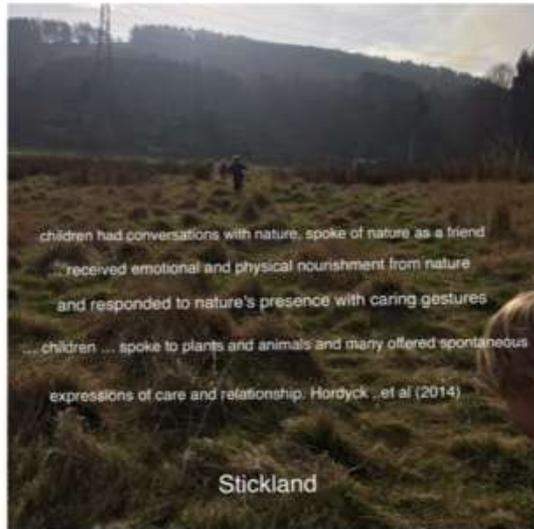


22 February, some children went with Emma and Kate to the 'Alight' exhibition in the afternoon.

So it has been a very busy, but very enjoyable month 😊

Stickland Wayfaring Adventures

Greetings from Stickland, hibernating ladybirds, awoken in the sun!



Naming the Day

After the health and safety police came to remove our climbing frame, we pondered where we would put the children's names. However, the children showed Trevor where they could live. They are now all displayed and looking lovely. THANK YOU Trevor for all your work with the children on 'naming the day'.



ACE Seminar

I delivered a seminar at the University of Edinburgh titled: 'A Counter Argument to the ACE's Discourse' on 25 February. If you are interested in reviewing this I can ask Claire to pop it up on our website.

Sharing Practice

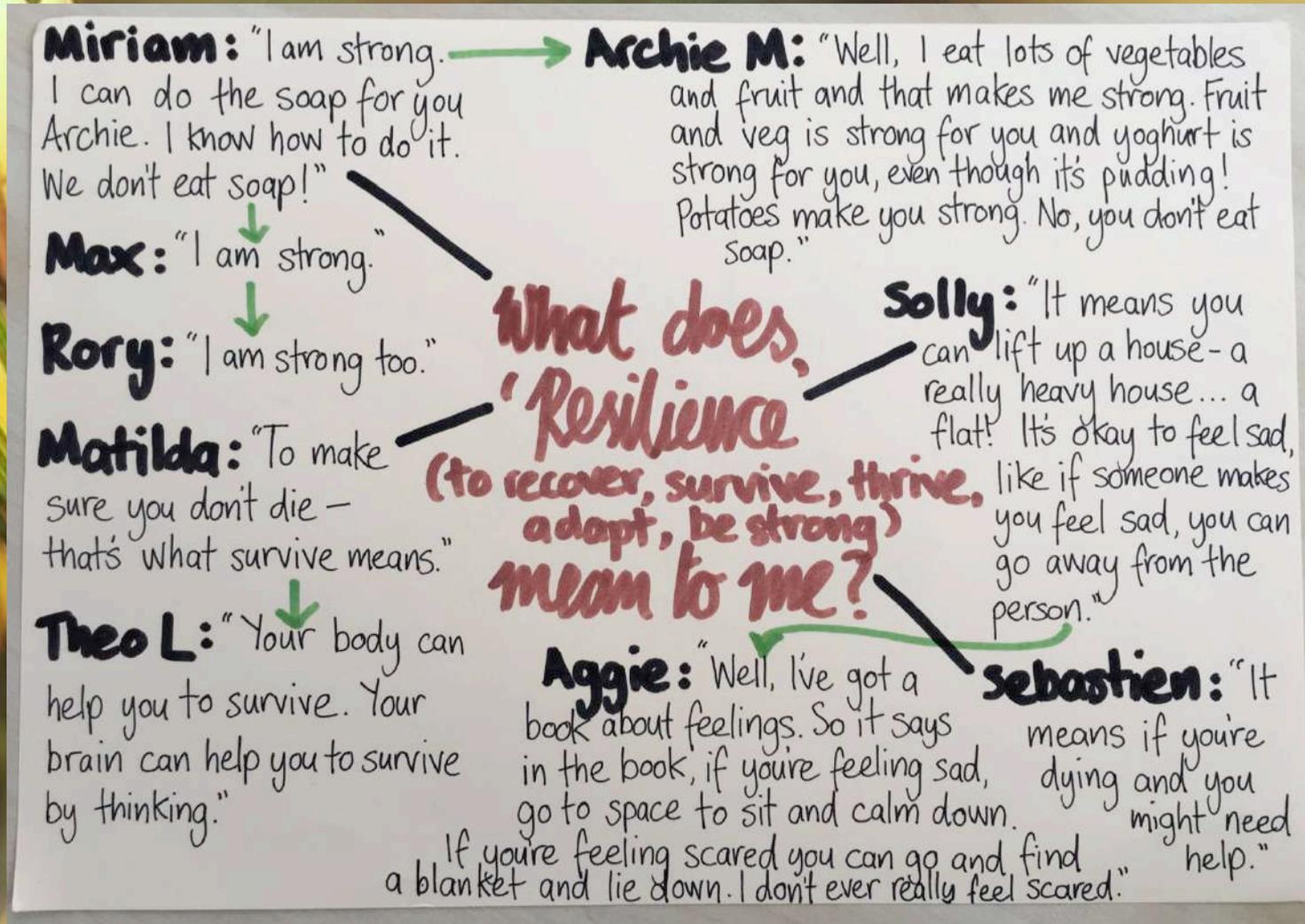
Teresa and Donna shared their excellent practice with a nursery in Falkirk.

On two dates this month, 15 and 22 February, Lian and I delivered training on Froebel for Children in Scotland. (This training generates a small amount of funding for nursery funds 😊).



What Does 'Resilience' Mean to Our Children?

In relation to Lynn's seminar, 'A Counter Argument to the ACE's Discourse', she asked Emma if she could ask the children for their views on what 'resilience' means, and record their views in a mind-map.



How We Heard about Our 7th Green Flag

'Good morning Ms Clarkson,

It was so lovely to speak with you on the phone earlier! I've just finished assessing your Eco-Schools application and wanted to send my congratulations to Cowgate Under 5s Centre on successfully renewing their Eco-Schools Green Flag Award! I was extremely impressed by your application and how much the pupils have accomplished. We endeavour to get your flag in the post to you soon. Along with the flag, you'll receive feedback on your application and instructions on how to proceed with your next journey using the Online Application System. Thank you so much for your continued participation. We look forward to receiving your next application and hearing more about the amazing work being done at Cowgate Under 5s Centre.

To make sure you receive the most up to date information about Eco-Schools Scotland, please consider signing up to receive our monthly bulletin. You can sign up at the bottom of this page on our website: www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/SDEbulletin.

Best Regards,

Marygrace Rowe
Education Support Officer
Keep Scotland Beautiful'

A Message from Lian – Labelling Clothes

As you are aware, at Cowgate we provide an autonomous environment, where children determine where they play and with whom. We do also talk of “freedom with guidance”. Adults encourage community responsibility and advocate that we all take care of each other, our resources and our space.

Some of our children appear to be exploring a scattering schema, which several times this week has involved the removal of every bag and coat from the corridor pegs to be scattered around the floor. We remind our children that actions have consequences, and if we create a mess it is then our job to tidy the mess up. This has proved a bit challenging over the last few days, as many children’s clothes are not labelled, making it hard to return them to the peg from which they were removed. Please can you write your child’s name or initials on their clothes. This will help enormously and hopefully prevent the frustration experienced at the end of the day when items prove difficult to find.

We have introduced a homelore element to our day, every evening, in a bid to involve our children in the processes of returning resources, clothing, etc to their homes. We do this to encourage our children to take care of belongings, both personal and community. Please support our endeavours by also encouraging your children to take care, both of their own and others’ belongings, at home and at nursery.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and your continued support.

Reading That May Be of Interest to You

Still on the theme of woodwork, I thought these articles may be of interest:

‘More about Woodworking with Young Children’ by David Sonza,
‘Beyond Banging: Woodwork in the Nursery’ by Karen Lennox.

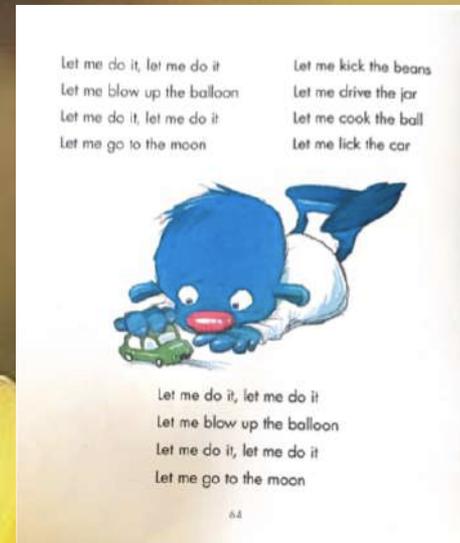
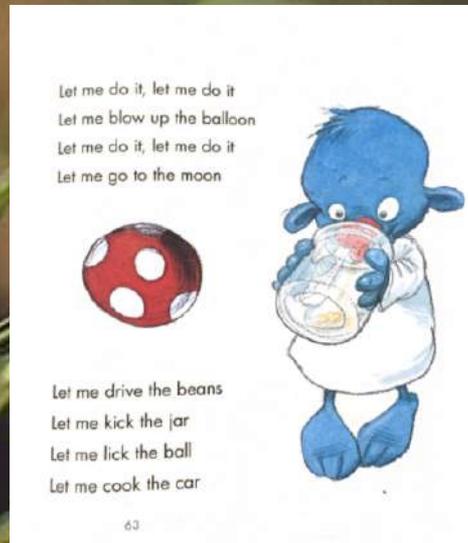
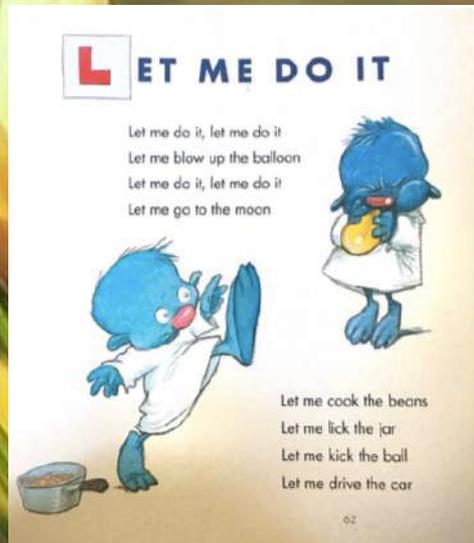
These articles can be accessed through the following link (the link will be available until 7th March 2019):

<https://wetransfer.com/downloads/b8f8bb0f176c56b137395ba28dd15c2920190228195251/a2d53a9e1fd0aad88bfa7ff17fec0ce520190228195252/283c41>



A Froebelian Poem

Simon shared this lovely poem from Michael Rosen's poetry book, 'A Great Big Cuddle'. It captures an aspect of Froebelian philosophy!



*Warmest of wishes until next month,
Lynn and the Cowgate Team*

Catch up with us on twitter @CowgateUnder5s