

Children are Change Makers.



Catherine Lee
Director and Early Childhood Teacher
The Point Preschool, Oyster Bay, Dharawal Country



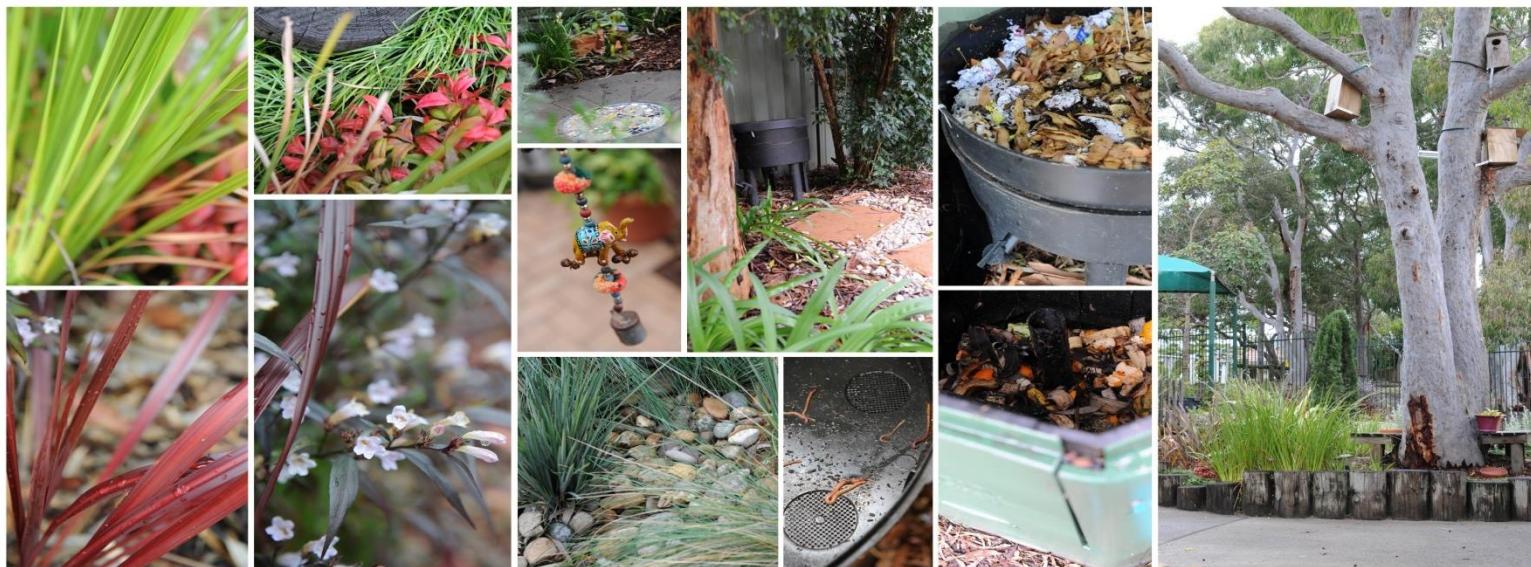
Naa niya – I see you

I wish to acknowledge the Dharawal people,
as the original custodians of this land and
their elders –past present and emerging.

I acknowledge their knowledge,
language and culture.

Dharawal Country is where I have the privilege
to play, teach and learn with the children of
The Point Preschool and the land
where I call my home.

I acknowledge the late Les Bursill, Dharawal
Elder and Knowledge Holder, for the knowledge
passed onto me so freely and
for his strong friendship.



The Point Preschool Dharawal Country, Oyster Bay NSW Australia

Proudly providing community based, not for profit early childhood education since 1956. Built by local parents, to this day these people's grandchildren attend the preschool.

Over the last 18 years our preschool has been transformed by the children's passion and advocacy and support of families, teachers and the local community.

"I look after my preschool with my Mum and Dad on the weekend.
It's my dad's preschool too cause he came here too.
And after I go to school my sister will come here too.
Poppy built this preschool for us you know"

Ellie, 4 years proudly tells a
visitor to the preschool

What is a change maker?

One who desires change in the world and,
by gathering knowledge and resources,
makes that change happen.

<https://changemakerobs.wordpress.com/what-is-a-changemaker/>

Change Makers at The Point Preschool

Winners of The Inaugural WWF Earth Hour Awards People's Choice 2011

The children of The Point Preschool are change makers.

These change makers are empowered with kindness, love, a sense of responsibility, advocacy and activism.

They are actively engaged in problem solving; critical thinking and community action that has inspired long term change.

They know their words and actions can make change happen.

They know they need to work together to solve problems and stand up for what they believe.

They know their voices and actions are needed to stand up for social justice, equity and sustainability that impact their lives – for their well being, their sense of belonging and their identity now and in the future.

“Behind every solution and every organization,
this means behind every school,
there is a choice of values and ethics.”

Carlina Rinaldi

In dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, Researching and Learning. 2006 p2

What are your
values and ethics?

The Point Preschool values and ethics

- Acknowledgement of our traditional custodians of the land
- Respect and deep connection to country
- Respect for each other, our land and all animals and creatures
- A sense of wonder and awe is critical to young children's lives
- Connecting Indigenous knowledge and sustainability to enable reconciliation
- Becoming with earth
- Listening to children's voices
- Upholding children's rights
- Creating a community of learners and advocates and activists
- Empowering children to take risks, be decision makers & take on challenges
- Strengthening our children and families' understanding of caring and nurturing each other and our environment
- Recognising our children as competent and valued citizens
- Giving our children our time, knowledge, hope and love
- Enabling our children to flourish

Education for Sustainability

“Climate change will directly affect the lives of young children both now and in the future.

It would be irresponsible for us not to share this information with children, to give them the opportunity to learn how their actions impact on the health of the planet.

This knowledge enables children to learn how to be part of the climate change solution and teaches them that they can make a difference.”

Tracy Young

“Why do young children need to know about climate change?” Early Childhood Australia, Every Child, 2007



Sustainability

“It means the truth. The truth about nature, saving the planet and what we need to do. It means bringing peace to everyone and having enough food and water and being fair and just wanting everyone to be able to live together even when some of us have gone from this land.

It means sharing and wanting others to have what you have. Not toys but the things that matter. Having a home and being able to live with your family and to be able to breathe fresh air. Yes that's it.”

Sophie Badham 2009

Aged 4 years

Every child lives someplace.
And that someplace begins to
matter when children are invited
to know where they are and
to participate in the unfolding
of life of that place –
coming to know the changes in
the light and in the feel of the air,
and participating in a community
of people who speak
of such things to each other.

Ann Pelo

<https://www.rethinkingschools.org/articles/a-pedagogy-for-ecology>





Yanma Nura

Walking on country has given us the gift of intimately knowing the land.

Our children now “look up at the beauty of nature”, as Zac describes, rather than “looking down to follow a paper map”.

This connection has engaged our children in heartfelt conversation about country and how we are custodians of this beautiful country.

We now walk the land, we know the names, we tell and share the stories and the path we take is known by our feet and as hearts.









“I can see ants, cockroaches,
spiders and birds – magpies, rosellas
and cockatoos.

I see trees, lots of trees and sandstone,
I make ochre on Dharawal Country.
I see the trees blowing in the wind,
I smell the native mint bush and
flowers and I smell fresh air.

I see the river too,
it's all glittery from the sun.

It's so good living on
Dharawal Country.”

Lucia, 4 years



“Hold my hand cause that’s the most important thing about Yanma Nura.

We stick together so we can see and share the beauty together.

Can you see the beauty?
It’s here on this Dharawal country.
I can see it and I love it so much.
Look at the canopy of the trees
and look at the river and look
at the plants – that’s biodiversity.
And its beautiful.”

Toby, 4 years

If we want children to flourish,
we need to give them time to
connect with nature and
love the earth before we ask
them to save it.

David Sobel





On earth, there's me and my family and my birds Ruby and Roger and there's nature and it's beautiful. There's the whole universe out there in space too.

There's so many things here on earth but the **most important thing** is there's **love** here.
Sofia 4 years.

**Life on earth is good because
it has the right atmosphere for you.**

**We breathe fresh air and have
water to drink and swim in.**

Finn, 4 years



“This is perfect. I love it here.
I saw hand prints. I like this one.
I saw the water with my Dad
and my brother.
Dharawal people lived
under this cave.
I walk on this land now.
I am a custodian too.”

Hurley, 5 years



“I know I’ll draw and paint my favourite thing, the giant Gynea lilies. I love the giant Gynea lilies. I love the colours of them and they are taller than me.

The water comes from the rain and waters them and that’s how they got so tall. I love the flower. It is so pretty. The flower is red and it’s up the top of the really tall stalk. I see rainbow lorikeets on top of the red flowers. I love when I see that. It’s so beautiful.

I love to see the giant Gynea lilies when we go on Yanma Nura. They are always taller than me. One day, I may be taller than them.

I wonder what the rainbow lorikeets see when they are up the top of the flower. I wish I could see what they see? The possums would climb up them too. The Dharawal people saw them too when there were no houses here. They will see them again if they walk on Yanma Nura with us.”

Delilah, 5 years



Kathleen Dean Moore muses,

"Loving isn't just a state of being,
it's a way of acting in the world.

Love isn't a sort of bliss, it's a kind of work....

Obligation grows from love.

It is the natural shape of caring."

To love a person or a place
is to take responsibility for its well-being."



“Look at this dog poo. That’s disgusting” said Hayden.
Sarah agreed “Yes that is so disgusting”.

A robust discussion with Sarah,
Hayden and Will continued as they continued
to climb the 183 stairs.

“We don’t want to be known as the
dog poo group!!!!” said Sarah.

“What can we do about this dog poo?” asked Will.

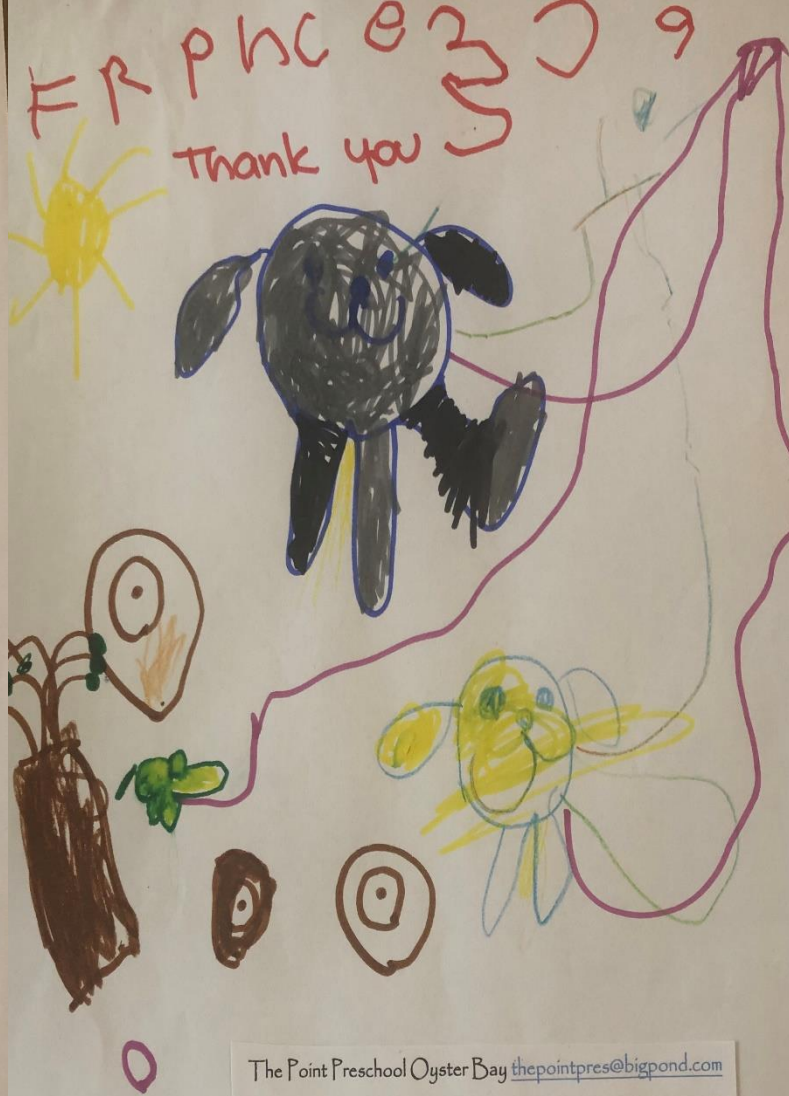
“We can be the problem solvers!!!!”
said Hayden.

Hayden, Will and Sarah , 4 years

We love dogs and we love Oyster Bay,
so please pick up your dog poo
along the way 😊

The Point Preschool Oyster Bay thepointpres@bigpond.com

Please email all
your friends
and family Thank
you from Haddon



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Our Chicken House - Winners ECEEN Reducing Resource Footprint 2017



We were a group with a common goal and a very strong sense of connection to build the best chicken house that would keep our chickens safe and also be a place of beauty.

Together we were decision makers, creative problem solvers, imaginative designers, courageous advocates and most importantly nurturing, respectful and loving citizens.

When I think back to the day we first talked about the idea of having chickens come to live with us at preschool, I know what we were really saying was we had room in our hearts to love chickens.

Our lives are richer with the girls sharing our place with



Chickens are good for the earth and
they are really good for your heart.”

Zac, 4 years





Now I know how to plant veggies. I know they need soil, water and sun for them to grow.

When I'm a mummy, I'll dig a hole and plant veggies and water them and help them grow. Then I'll dig them up and take them inside and wash them and cook them and give them to my family. I won't need to go to the shop cause I can grow the food you need.

Everyone can do it too. It's easy.

I'm 5 and I can do it.

Riley

A child is not a citizen of the future;
he is a citizen from the very first moment
of life and also the most important citizen
because he represents and brings the possible...
a bearer, here and now of rights,
of values, of cultures.”

Carlina Rinaldi

In dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, Researching and Learning.

“I was so happy that the Dharawal
people did really good things
for the world.

If you think back many years ago
they looked after the land and
protected the animals.

I am so happy the land is here today.
I hope the land is still here when
I’m not even in this world.”

Sophie, 4 years





I know we can send a postcard (petition)
to everyone around the world to tell them
'If you want you can join in and tell the
Japanese not to hunt down whales anymore.
Because we want the whales to stay healthy
and strong and they're gentle creatures and
we don't want them to become dead
or extinct ever like the dinosaurs.
We don't want them to go to extinct heaven.

If you don't want to join, you don't have to.
I'll do the work to save the whales for you.

Ethan
5 years

"A plane from the sky
could see this whale.
Everyone will know that
all The Point Preschool
children are doing
something really good
to help the whales".

Tom, 5 years.



Save The Whales



Nana and her friends
saw our quilt at the art gallery.

Nana said
“rubbish can be beautiful”.

Chloe, 4 years

The Point Preschool Boomerang Bag Community



“You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. **What you do makes a difference**, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

—Jane Goodall

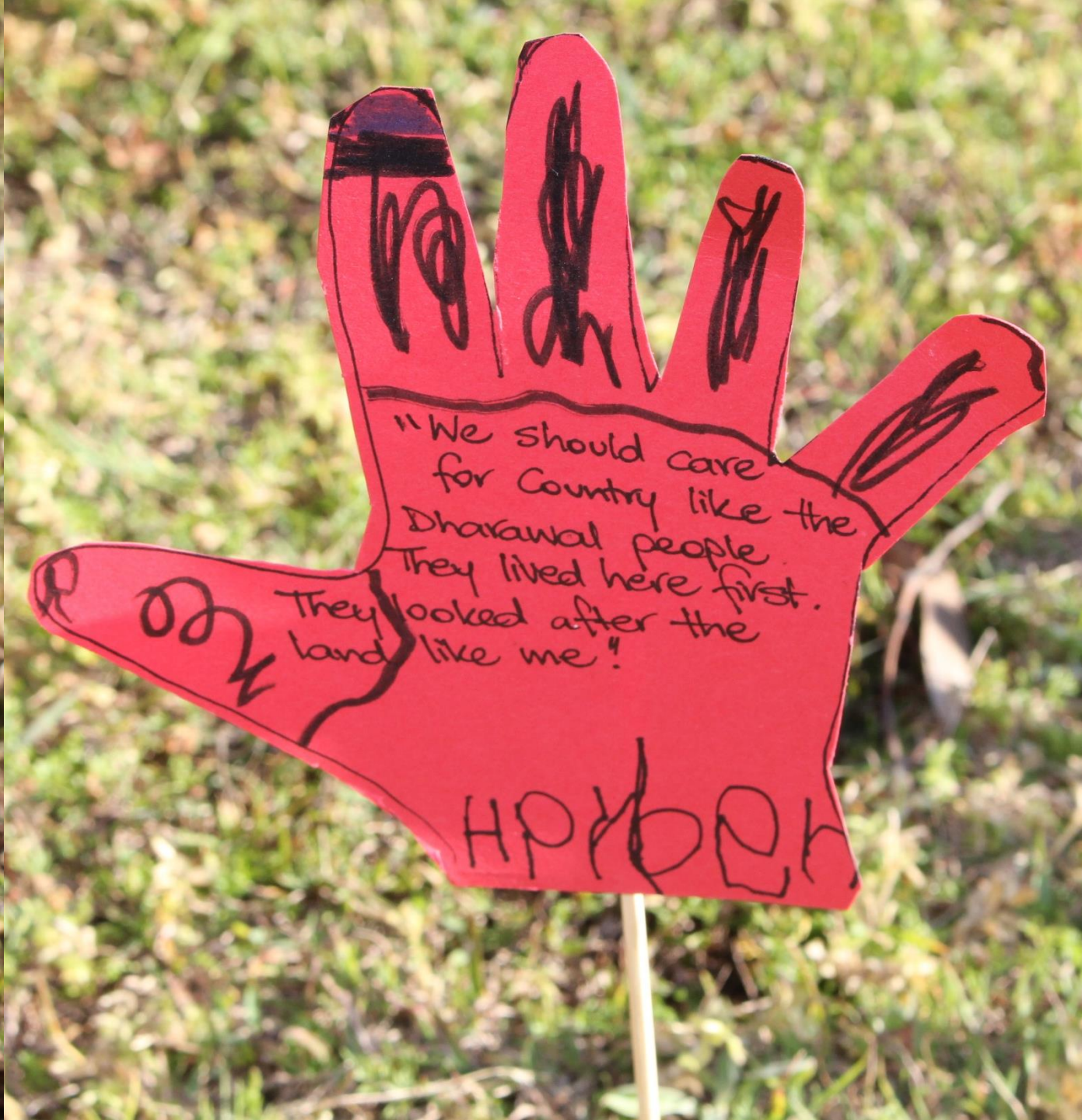




"We're
sharing
beauty
and
kindness
to
everyone
walking
on our
climbing
frame"

Sutherland Shire Reconciliation 21st Birthday Celebration Sea of Hands





We are the Green Point Reserve Bush Care Group

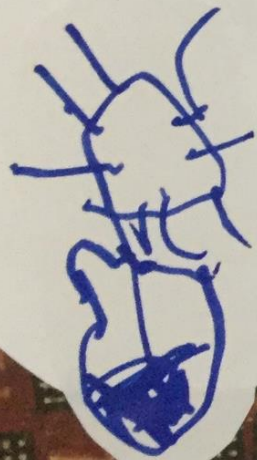


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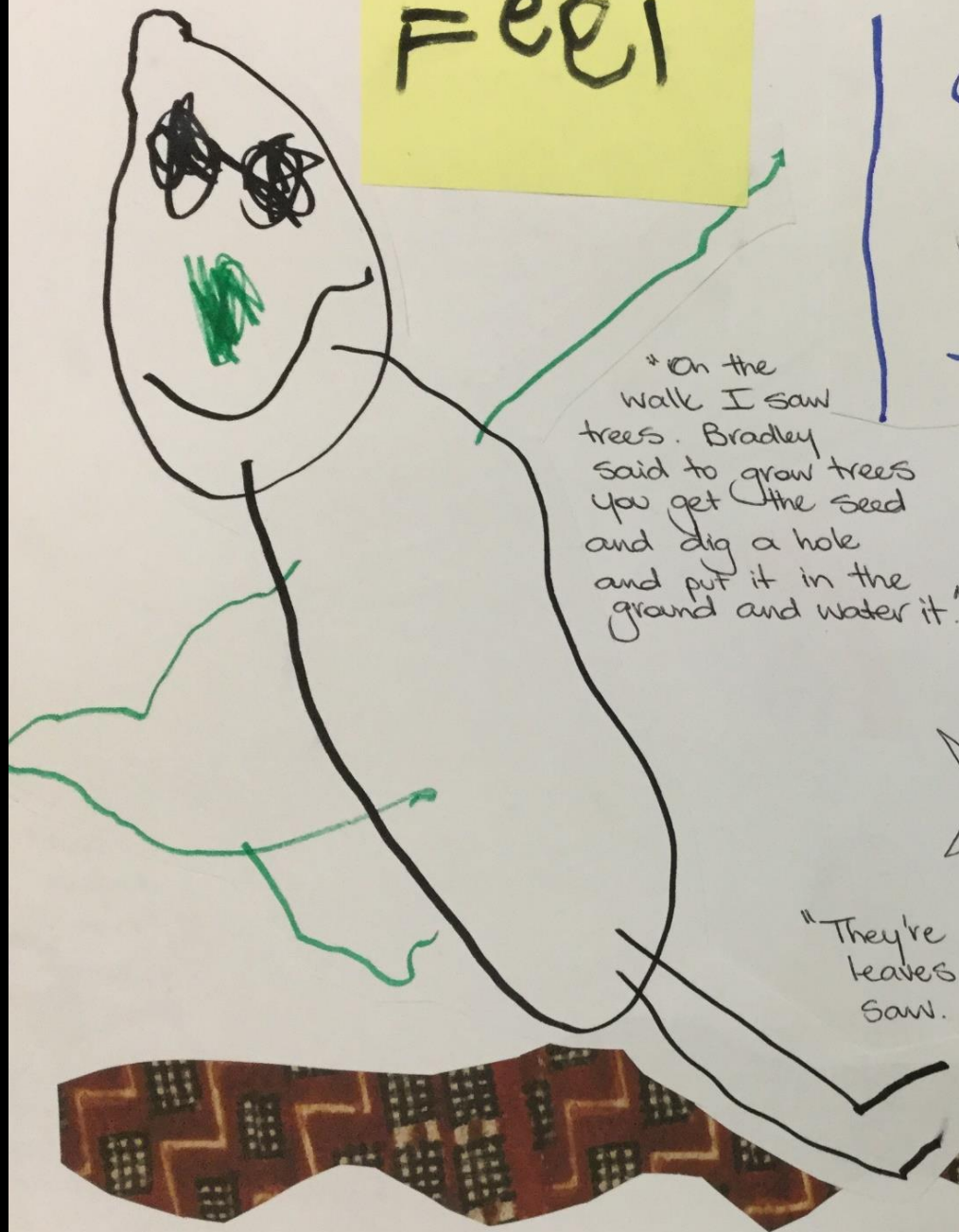
"I saw the really little gumtree. Bradley said it's going to grow taller than a giant." Dean.

"When I was in the bush I could see plants and lots of leaves. I could smell the leaves. They smelt like dirt cause the leaves were on the ground. The green leaves on the trees were like soft and the dead ones were like crispy!"

"This seedling is going to have our history in it. Who knows what it will see in 100 years. This seedling is breathing the same air we breathe. This is our future." Bradley

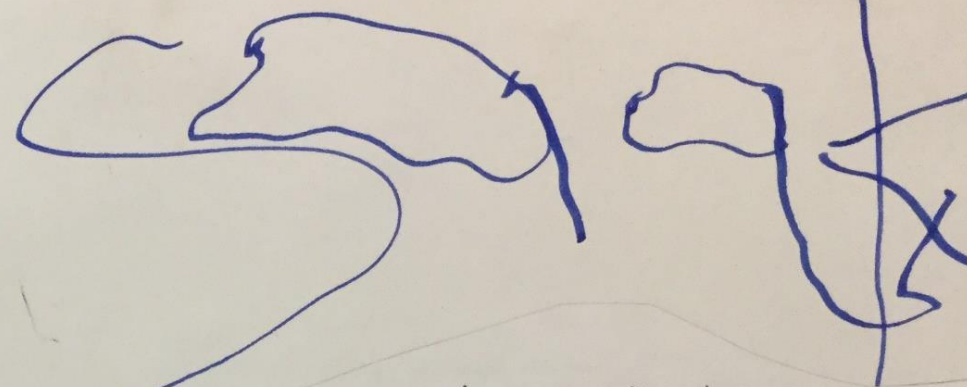
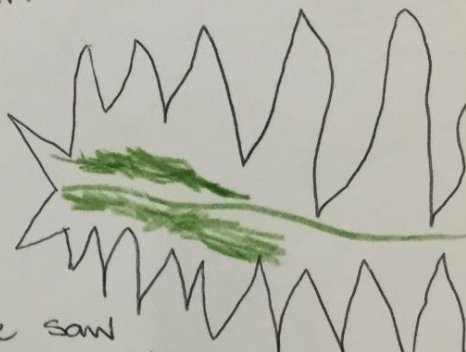


FEEL



"On the walk I saw trees. Bradley said to grow trees you get the seed and dig a hole and put it in the ground and water it."

"They're saw leaves. They look like a saw. Bradley told me that."



"I like touching the leaves. I can smell the soil and I love the fresh air. There's lots of space in the bush. I love the bush. That's why Bradley loves the bush like me."



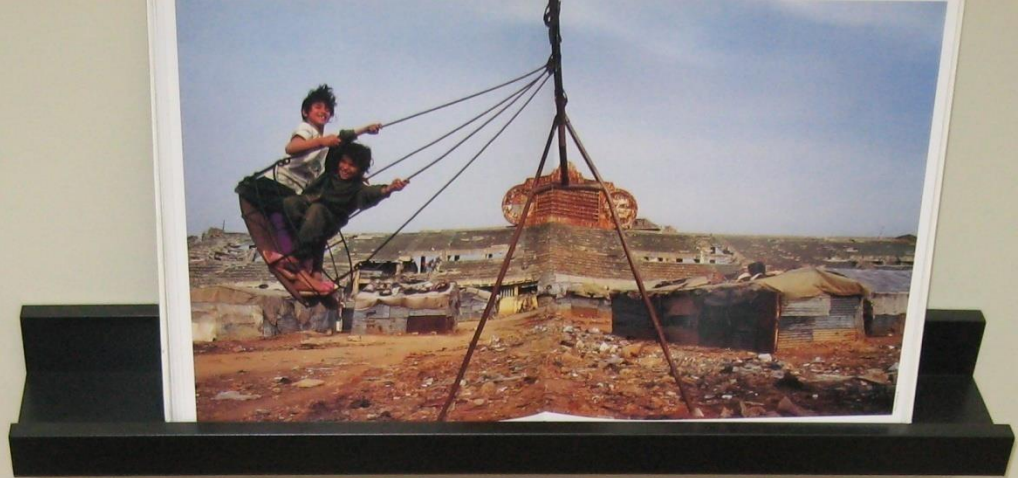
Children need to know
that early childhood classrooms
are places where questions
can be asked and answers sought,
where the unsayable can be announced
and comfort from within a
caring community experienced.

Silin 2012



“We want to know how you
help poor people?”

Greer 4 years



One morning, Natalia came to preschool with a large piece of cardboard. This is not unusual for the children as they are encouraged to follow up ideas from home.

Natalia announced she was going to make a poster that she could take to a rally. She said she was going to protest about children who are in detention centres that are just like 'jails'.

Natalia is a very empathic and socially aware child and so her passionate declaration did not surprise us.

Reference: Fleet, A; Patterson. C and Robertson, J (2006) Insights – Behind early childhood pedagogical documentation. Castle Hill: Pademelon Press. (p.239)

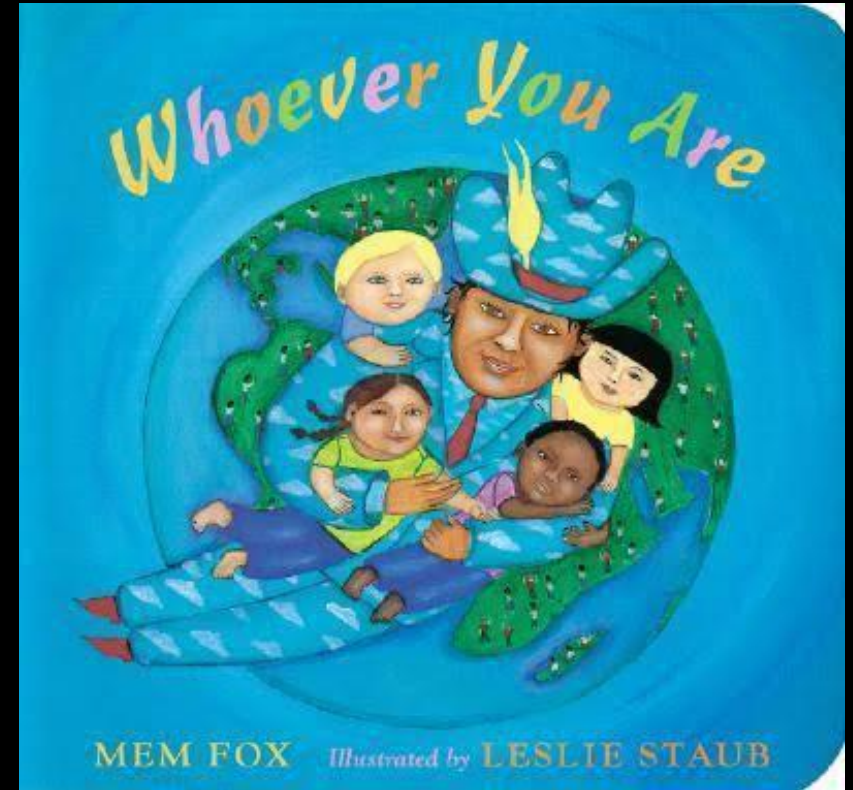
“Did John Howard’s mum read the same books to him when he was little like you read to me?”

Natalia had been very interested in the book with a child with dark skin, crying, cradling a bleeding knee.

The text read

“pain is the same and blood is the same”.

Natalia decided to that she would write a letter to the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr John Howard and tell him about the books.



Natalie’s story about protesting against children in Detention Centres in Australia was published in
Insights: Behind early childhood pedagogical documentation:
Ed Alma Fleet, Catherine Patterson, Janet Robertson 2006



Outside our door at our place we see
grass, soil, trees, plants, ants, bees,
flowers, fairies, leaves, sand, rocks, logs,
lizards, mud, butterflies, compost, worm
farms, veggies, bush tucker, space, fresh
air, wind, rain, clouds, birds, pebbles,
seeds, mosaics, friends, stepping stones,
Dharawal dreaming, history, community,
the world, freedom.

The children of The Point Preschool 2011



Can I just say something about
our future?

In our playground our future
looks really pretty.

Georgia, 5 years



Treasure

I see treasure.

When you walk in the gate
at our place there's
always treasure.

Elisabeth 5 years

Fairy garden treasure is the big tree with the boxes for the rainbow lorikeets, the possum and the owl. There's no owl visitor yet. When the owl comes, the owl will be treasure too.

The flowers are treasure at the table. The big rocks and some smaller rocks near the sandpit. They are the treasure too.

The sandstone is the treasure along the sandpit. The worms are the treasure and the grass. And the flowers that fall onto the grass are the treasure. Then you pick them up and they are the treasure at the table.

All the veggies are the treasure in the veggie garden.

The treasure in the amphitheatre is 2 treasures.

One is when you eat there with all the Rosellas and the other is the music. You can hear the music all over the other side of the sandpit. That is real treasure. You can't see it but you can hear it.

If you walk in the gate at our place there's always treasure.

You can hear it. You can see it. You can touch it. You can smell it. You can feel the treasure in your heart anywhere you go in the preschool.

Treasure is all around my preschool. The teachers are treasure too. Here Catherine, this map is for you so you will always be able to find the treasure.



























Be brave
Be daring
Be disruptive

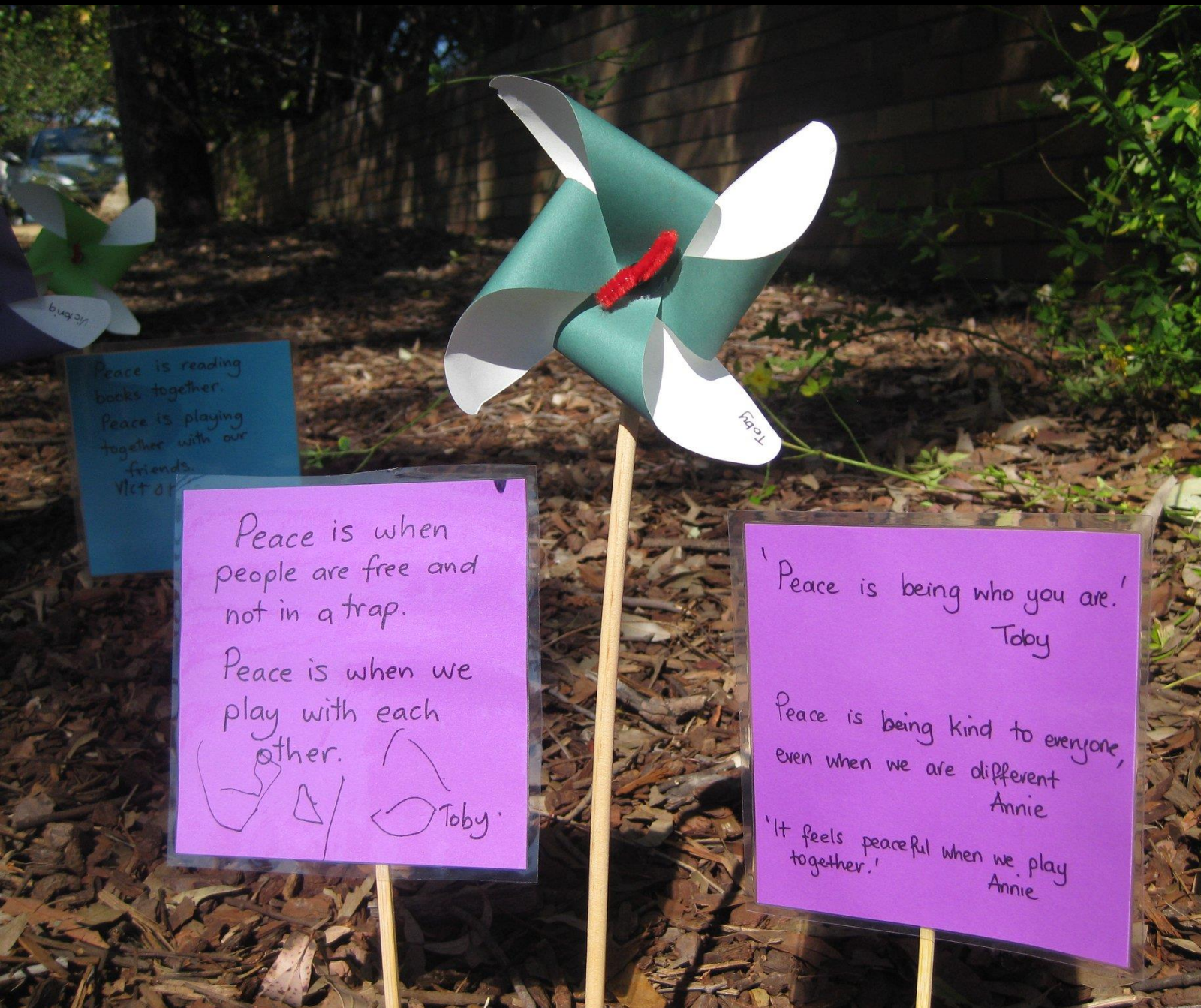
Let your faith be greater
than your fears

Catherine Lee



There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.

(Nelson Mandela)



Thank you

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