NEWSLETTER

GORDON
EDUCATION CENTRE

Towards Independence



TERM 4 / WEEK 3



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Welcome to Term 4

Lisa Thomas Principal

Welcome back everyone to another busy and exciting term at Gordon Education Centre. We have many wonderful learning adventures and activities ahead, and it has been lovely to see students settling back into school so well.

A heartfelt thank you to all our families and community members for supporting our recent Hallowish event, where GEC gave back to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Make-A-Wish does incredible work bringing hope, strength and joy to children with critical illnesses by creating life-changing wishes for them and their families. Your kindness and generosity are truly appreciated and will help support this very special cause.

It has also been wonderful to see our older students taking part in Disability Sports Day at Wulanda, enjoying an exciting day of soccer, basketball and teamwork.

We are also looking forward to celebrating some very special milestones, with three students graduating this year, as well as enjoying our end-of-year Christmas celebrations, including the Christmas Parade and our annual Showcase Assembly.

It promises to be a joyful and memorable term for our whole school community.

KEY DATES

9 NOVEMBER
Student Free Day

11 DECEMBER
Graduation

Helpful resources

Here are some helpful resources from our inclusion teacher,

Michelle Adams
Gordon Education Centre



The world is so loud, bright, and fast. It can be a lot for Autistic people.

Constantly dealing with so much extra information is exhausting and stressful.



SOMETIMES THESE THINGS can cause MELTDOWNS.

NeuroWild

SENSORY BIN IDEAS FOR KIDS



FUN. SIMPLE. ENGAGING.

Sensory play supports learning, creativity, and development through hands-on exploration!



NON-FOOD SENSORY BIN FILLERS

- Pom-poms
- Cotton balls
- Dry pasta (shapes & noodles)
- Rice (plain or dyed)
- Water beads (supervised use)
- Feathers
- Shredded paper
- Fabric scraps
- Foam shapes
- Buttons (large, toddler-safe)
- Sand or kinetic sand
- Pipe cleaners

FOOD-BASED SENSORY BIN FILLERS

- Cooked spaghetti or noodles
- Oatmeal (dry or cooked)
- Cereal (Cheerios, Rice Krispies, etc.)
- Cooked rice
- Flour (scooping or mixing play)
- Dry beans or lentils
- Cornmeal
- Crackers or graham crackers
- Whipped cream (messy sensory fun!)
- Yogurt (supervised taste-safe play)

SENSORY PLAY TIP:
Always supervise young children during sensory play to ensure safety and maximize learning!

Shay's Learning Lab
PLAY. LEARN. GROW.

7 SIMPLE CALMING STRATEGIES DURING MELTDOWNS

Simple tools. Gentle support. Big impact.

1 DEEP BREATHS

Breathe in slowly through the nose, hold for a moment, and breathe out through the mouth. Do it together.

2 CREATE A SAFE SPACE

Move to a quiet, calm place. Dim lights, less noise, more comfort.



3 USE CALMING SENSORY TOOLS

Try fidget toys, stress balls, weighted items, or soft textures to feel grounded.





4 VALIDATE THE FEELINGS

Say: "I see you're having a hard time. It's okay to feel this way. I'm here with you."



5 USE SIMPLE GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

Name 5 things you see,
4 you can touch,
3 you hear,
2 you smell,
1 you taste.



6 OFFER CHOICES

Give limited, calming choices to help them feel in control.
Example:
"Do you want a hug or some space?"



7 STAY CALM & PATIENT

Your calm is their safe place.
Stay close, speak softly, and be their anchor.



YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIX IT.
YOU JUST HAVE TO BE THERE.

Jairus Ausome World

CLASSROOM NEWS

LA1

Tamara Cameron

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE

Here we are in Term 4 already! The year has gone by so quickly, and we have arrived at what is often the busiest, yet most enjoyable, term of the year.
We have a lot happening this term, including swimming, trips to Coles, weekly cooking, Hallowish, sporting events, the Christmas concert, and much more. The bike track is now up and running and the kids are loving being able to ride the bikes on the new track.

For our Learning Expedition, we are exploring where our food comes from. The students greatly enjoy their weekly cooking lessons, so we thought it would be a wonderful opportunity to learn more about where our produce comes from, how it is grown, picked or made, and how it travels from farms and factories to the shops, and eventually to our plates.
As part of this learning, we have planted vegetables in the school garden and have been enjoying watching them grow while learning about what plants need to thrive. Each week in cooking, we are also breaking down the ingredients we use, purchasing them from Coles, sorting them into the Healthy Eating Guide food groups, and learning about where they come from.

Other topics for this term include number skills and patterning, such as creating movement and sound patterns. We are also continuing to observe our frogs as they grow and develop. In literacy, students are building their skills by adding more descriptive words to their writing, while also engaging in drama and visual arts, particularly in preparation for the Christmas concert.



CLASSROOM NEWS

LA2

Naomi Aston

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE

This term, students have been enthusiastically engaging in a wide range of play-based learning experiences that support their development across many areas of the curriculum.

In Music and Drama, we have been integrating music, language and movement to build students' phonological awareness, as well as their understanding of rhythm and beat. Through songs, action games and movement experiences, students have been developing their listening skills, sound awareness and confidence in expressive play.

In Numeracy, students have been exploring numbers and measurement in a variety of hands-on learning contexts. Activities such as I Spy, sensory play, and measuring lines with blocks have encouraged students to notice, compare and describe mathematical ideas in meaningful ways. They have also been comparing the lengths of rolled playdough and cut ribbon, sorting them into long and short categories as they build their understanding of measurement vocabulary and concepts.

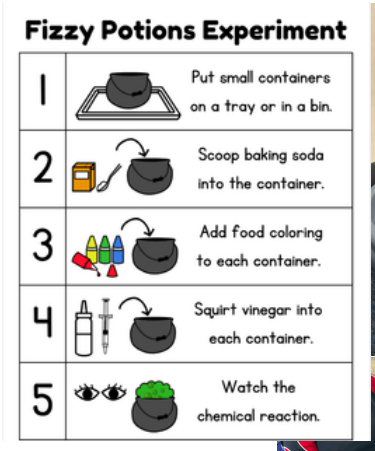
In Literacy, students have been developing their early reading foundations through activities focused on sorting letters, building phoneme awareness, and participating in an onset and rime mystery bag game. Students have also been developing their writing through pre-writing and fine motor skill activities, as well as by using picture prompts to communicate what they can see. To support individual communication and writing development, students have been using a range of alternative pencils, including eye-gaze charts, flip charts, and low- and high-tech QWERTY keyboards.

Our focus on Communication has continued through opportunities for students to practise the core words they have been learning throughout the year. These words have been embedded into play-based learning and discovery, supporting students to use familiar language in meaningful, everyday contexts.

Students also enjoyed exploring chemical reactions through a fun fizzy experiment using the attached recipe. This hands-on activity sparked curiosity, encouraged observation, and provided a wonderful opportunity for students to learn through exploration and discovery.

We have also begun our weekly gym sessions at Blue Lake Gymnastics Club, where students are building confidence, coordination and gross motor skills through movement-based activities. In addition, representatives from Freedom Wheels recently visited our site to give students the opportunity to try a range of their adapted bikes. This was an exciting experience, especially as we prepare to purchase new bikes for students to enjoy on our recently completed bike track.

It has been a joy to see students learning with such enthusiasm, curiosity and creativity across all of these rich experiences.



















CLASSROOM NEWS

LA4

Rebekah Eden & Michelle Adams

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE

Learning Area 4 has been very busy with lots of engaging literacy, numeracy, science and movement experiences.

In literacy, we are currently focusing on the letters Xx and Yy. Students have been enjoying mark making and practising their writing using flip charts and Word Wizard to help choose letters to add to their writing. We are also reading the book I'm a Dirty Dinosaur, which has been a wonderful text for encouraging student participation through its repetitive language. Many students have been joining in with the story and extending their learning through the use of dinosaur toys in our small world play.

We continue to enjoy self-selected reading, with many students choosing to read their family books. It has been lovely to see students showing enthusiasm and independence as they explore books that are meaningful to them.

In numeracy, we have been working on counting, sorting and matching, while also focusing on positional language and time. Our learning about time has mainly centred on the days of the week and routine events that happen throughout the school day and week. This week, we have been specifically exploring the terms "in" and "out".

We have also started our weekly West Gambier Gymnastics Club, where students have the opportunity to explore a range of different apparatus. Students have shown particular interest in the big trampolines, foam pits and ball pit, and it has been wonderful to see their confidence and enjoyment grow during these sessions.

Last Thursday, we also had visitors from Freedom Wheels come to school with adapted bikes for students to trial. The students really enjoyed experimenting with a variety of bikes on our brand-new bike track. It was a wonderful opportunity for students to build confidence, develop coordination and enjoy trying something new.

In Science this week, students engaged in potion making, where they were supported to create colourful potions and explore what happens when vinegar is added to bicarb soda. Students were very excited to watch the colourful foam bubble up out of our small cauldrons.

It has been a fantastic start to term 4 with lots of learning, exploration and fun.










CLASSROOM NEWS

LA5

Emma Bramich

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE

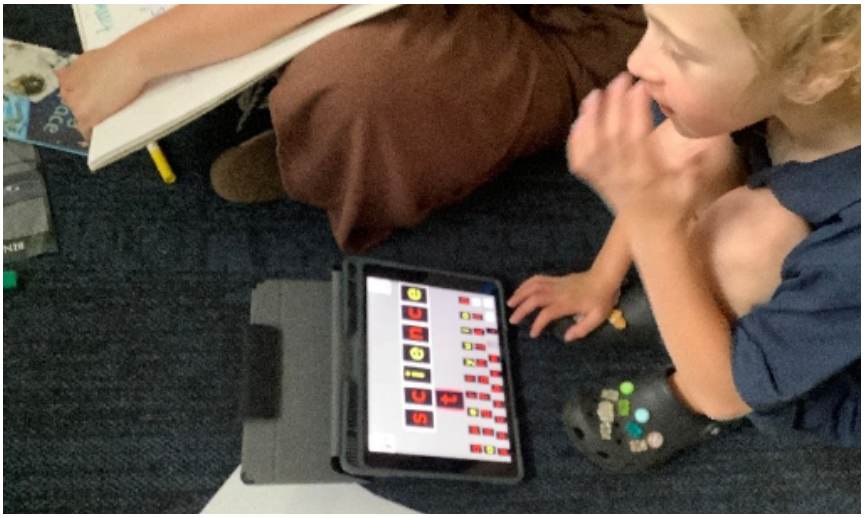
This term, our class has been busy exploring a range of exciting learning experiences. In Science, we have been investigating seeds through a very special experiment linked to the space station. We planted two different types of seeds — some that had travelled to space and others that had remained here on Earth. After carefully observing their growth, we have noticed that, so far, the Earth seeds have grown more quickly.

Students have also been learning about how to tell the time by using shadows, as well as exploring the planets in our solar system. These activities have sparked lots of curiosity and discussion in the classroom.

Our class writing sessions have continued this term and are becoming increasingly popular, with students showing great enthusiasm and engagement. In Numeracy, we have been building our understanding of number while also exploring position and location.

It has been a wonderful term of learning, discovery and growing confidence across all areas.









CLASSROOM NEWS

LA6

Eoin Mcilduff

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE

It has been a fantastic start to the term full of learning and fun in LA 6!

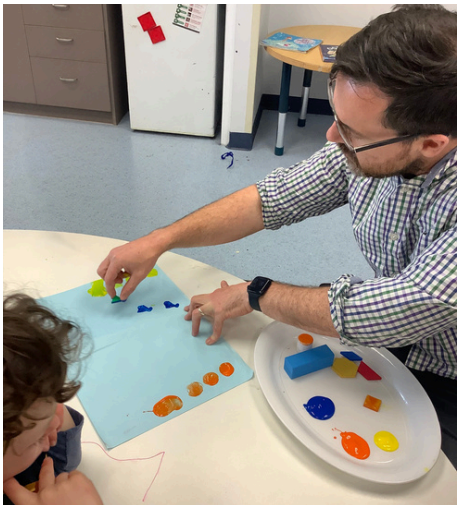
In Maths, we have kicked off our new topic of Statistics! We have loved heading out on our weekly bus trips to gather real-life data. We are using the information we collect to generate and display data in a variety of different ways. This week, we also enjoyed some spooktacular Halloween-themed activities, including a trick-or-treat adventure and some yummy maths activities that encouraged us to sort, group and categorise. Learning through hands-on experiences has made maths extra engaging!

In Literacy, we have been focusing on the letters K, L, M and N, continuing to explore the letters that make up our names. We have been building our letter recognition skills and finding fun ways to connect our learning to the letters we see every day.

In Science, we have been busy conducting experiments and exploring the world around us. We have been using our AAC devices to make predictions, share our ideas and record our observations. It has been wonderful to see everyone engaging in the scientific process and communicating their discoveries in their own ways.











CLASSROOM NEWS

LA7

Isabelle Swanbury

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE

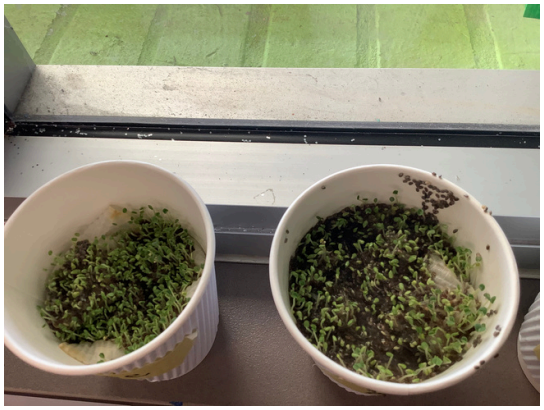
LA7 has been learning what it means to be curious! Students began by taking photos of things in their learning environment that make them feel curious. We have been recording our questions, ideas and learning experiences in our class floor book; giving students opportunities to contribute, reflect and recount on their learning. Some of our questions we have been exploring are: Where do fruit and vegetables come from? What are seeds? How do seeds grow? LA7 have cut open different fruits and vegetables and noticed there were seeds inside. We put the seeds into bags and cups to observe their growth and learnt that seeds need water and sunlight to grow.

Our class was excited to visit the school garden and noticed a tree with lemons! "Lemonade!" said Ambalee! We collected the lemons to squeeze into homemade lemonade. Declan was curious about the smell of lemons and squeezed some lemons into juice. Declan thought it was sour but enjoyed drinking the juice! "Strawberry lemonade" was the next suggestion, and we added some new fruits into our lemonade. Ambalee noticed that adding the strawberries changed the colour of our lemonade: "pink!" We cut into one of the lemons and made a discovery: "seeds!"

Our class also visited Coles for the first time with a fruit shopping list, and we practiced looking at the price labels and noticing how many dollars when going through the check-out. LA7 created their own shop of lemonade flavours, such as blueberry lemonade, mandarin lemonade and mango lemonade, and we practiced identifying the value of coins through shop role-play. We practiced finding coin values on the Proloquo, such as "$1" and "$2" and learnt how to add $1 coins to find the total amount.

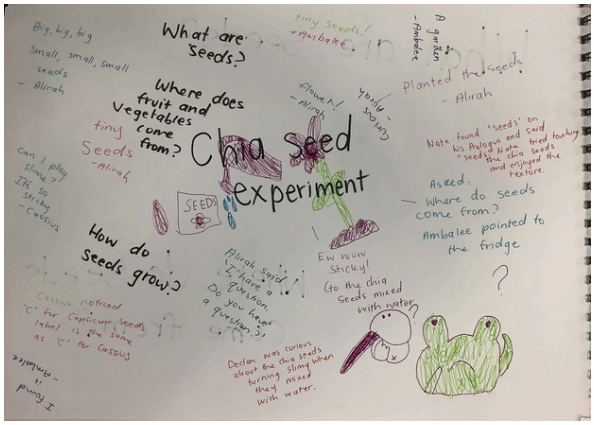
Inquiry-based learning supports students' sense of curiosity, reflection, community-mindedness and confidence. I wonder where our questions will take us next!















CLASSROOM NEWS

LA8

Kirilee Chapman

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE

LA8 have had a busy start to the term. Last newsletter we were waiting on some of our class eggs to hatch and now we have 5 chickens. We still won't know for a few weeks if they are boys or girls but they are growing very quickly.

This term we have been very excited to use the new bike track and once again have access to the gym. We have been practicing our basketball and soccer skills in preparation for the Variety Games at Wulanda. This is a sporting tournament for students who attend special schools or special classes in the limestone coast run by School Sport SA and sponsored by Variety and Novita. We have been working on our shooting and passing skills and learning how to be gracious winners and losers.

We have also had some special guests from the high school visiting us helping us to coordinate our Christmas concert dance piece while its early in the term we are hoping that we will be able to memorize the dance and organize some costumes and decorations in preparation.

We celebrated Hallowish, raising money for the make a wish foundation. We decorated our door and voted for the best door.

We are really looking forward to our senior school camp which is happening next week so by the next newsletter you will have lots of photos of our adventures to see.







CLASSROOM NEWS

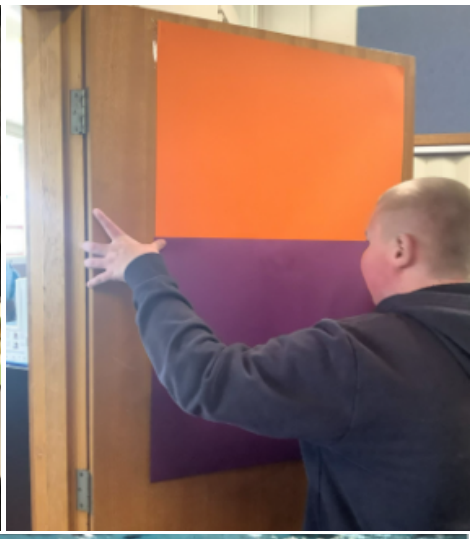
LA9

Suman Sharma

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE

Welcome back for the final term of 2026. We have had a great start to Term 4 and have welcomed Miss Dakota into LA9. Over the past three weeks, we have been settling into the term. During Week 3, we worked on creating our door decoration for HalloWish. Each student has contributed by creating designs and elements to add to our display, “Trick or treat, smell my feet!!!”. On Thursday, we will celebrate HalloWish with our peers by dressing up and visiting each class to view their door decorations. The students are also glad to be back at swimming lessons on Mondays, where they have been practicing different strokes and learning how to safely enter the pool. In numeracy this term, we will be focusing on scheduling, with the goal of students creating an excursion for the end of term to celebrate the end of the year. The students are also eagerly awaiting their school camp, where they will visit key landmarks and participate in activities around the Limestone Coast.









School Value Awards

GORDON EDUCATION CENTRE



