

Continuum & QI skills

Since the start of February when the new care arrangements took effect, it has been wonderful to watch the children forming relationships with their educators and other children as they have gradually become comfortable in their new learning environment. Each week, in response to the children's increasing sense of belonging in their studio, which greatly assists their readiness to learn, the educators add more elements to the curriculum.

You may have seen the "*Continuum of Kindness*" displayed in the newly set-up display area in the foyer and wondered what it meant and how a 'continuum' and 'kindness' are used in the curriculum for your children.

We use '**continuums**' in our teaching practice to support the children in their skills-development throughout their time in the Centre. For each of the key learning areas, we prepare a continuum to determine the children's skill-development progress. Each continuum shows both the various stages of development pertinent for each skill or learning area, and the carefully-chosen teaching resources and appropriate teaching strategies we adopt to support the children at each developmental stage.

For example, we use a continuum for '*mark-making*' (our name for drawing and writing skills). The '*mark-making*' continuum begins with the first stage of a child's development in relation to drawing and writing, i.e. being able to sit up and hold a brush. Children in this initial developmental stage are only given an easy-to-hold brush as a 'mark-maker', water as a medium to use, and a tile as a mark-making surface. As the children develop more '*mark-making*' skills, such as understanding that marks have meaning, are able to use a range of tools, and later work collaboratively with one or more people, different types of '*mark-making*' tools are offered to the children in line with their developmental progress. Consequently, at the other end of '*mark-making*' continuum, evidence is presented of children being able to manipulate a variety of tools to express their ideas through drawing and some writing, both individually and collaboratively with other children. Using these continuums ensures that we are supporting the children's skills-development in the key learning areas throughout their time at Totom House.

At Totom House, all children are guided and supported in learning and practising, through our play-based curriculum, what are referred to as the '*21 century skills*' and '*QI skills*'. These skills

include resilience, perseverance, respect, kindness, empathy, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, problem solving, mindfulness and effective communication. Our first project this year has been 'Kindness' and we are using the display space in the foyer and the display board near the sign-in iPad in each studio to share the children's learning journey and our teaching strategies with you in relation to this skill.

At the end of April, all families will receive a formative assessment report in which the progress of your child's learning and development over the past 3 months is recorded in relation to the 5 Learning Outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework(EYLF). Following this report, in June, a mid-year parent and educator interview will be offered to all families.

Hiro Grace-Director