

17.08.2022.

Today Catherine brought her rabbit, Ermengarde or 'Emy' for short, to preschool. She is currently recuperating from an accident and has to be encouraged to eat. Many of the children were keen to assist with this task and they set to work finding fresh grass and dandelions for her to eat.



There were many exchanges of dialogue and questions as the children tried to feed her, and of course give her a pat.

Lena: Bunnies eat grass and also carrots.

Catherine explained that Emy does not like to eat carrots and that her diet usually consists of hay, but as she has a sore mouth with stiches, she is eating grass, herbs and other leafy plants for the time being.

Frankie: I never seen a rabbit like that before. She's so soft.



Mia: Does she want to eat some grass? That's a rabbit bed. In the night time does it sleep?

Kian: She's fluffy.

Oliver: She's so soft and very cute.

Mia: Can she hop?

Lily: My rabbit kind of hops, but not on one leg. Her name is 'Pebbles' and Jackie's rabbit is called Honey. Your rabbit is so big! My rabbit listens to me (when told to eat). Does your rabbit listen to you?

Catherine mentioned that Emy is two and a half years old.

Lena :!m four and a half...am I older than she?



Ermengarde's visit also gave us the opportunity to practise when to use 'he and 'she' and her' and 'him' as there was much discussion about whether she was a boy or girl.

Lara: He needs to eat the leaves.

Kian: But it's not a he..

F: it's a girl. So you have to say 'she'.

Sometimes a big bunny comes near my house.

Mia: No bunnies are near my house. Rabbits do lots of poo.

We spoke about how because Emy has not eaten, much there is not a lot of poo...



F: I have lots of rabbits on my farm and they poo everywhere!



17.08.2022

Lena: Why is she cleaning herself?

Leo: How will she get home?

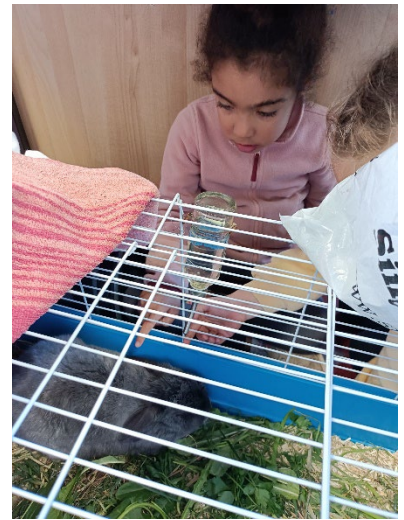
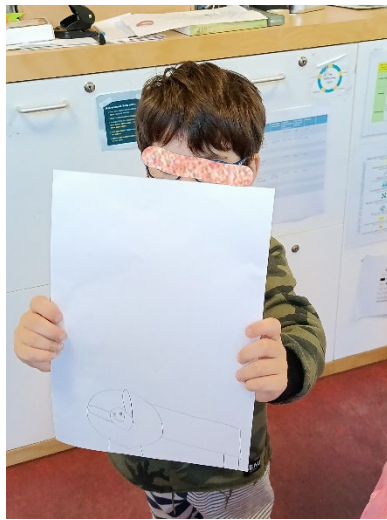
Lena: Go to sleep, Ermy. We sing a go to sleep song.

O. was the first to take up the challenge of drawing her and he proudly showed her his drawing...

Look, Ermy it's you! Emily came to preschool and was very intrigued with Ermy as she also has a rabbit (soft toy) called 'Bella'.

Catherine took her out of her resting spot, so that the children could give her a gentle pat. We also spoke about the importance of someone else's needs first (in this case, Ermy's) ahead of our own and that at the moment she is not really wanting to be handled and has a need for food and rest.

Lara: Look at her big feet!



When Mina arrived at school, she too was very taken with Ermy and she spent a lot of the day checking on her and ensuring that she was eating. 'He has to eat all day'.

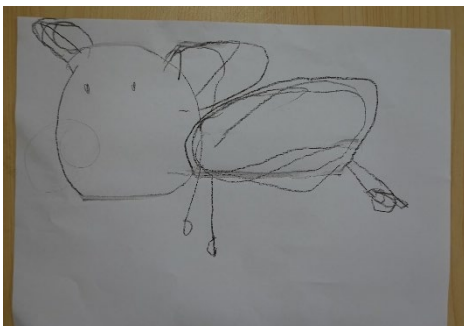
Lara: She has to eat. Mina: Yes...her must do it.



Many of the children went to draw a picture and after her first attempt, Mina was encouraged to draw her from observation by sitting next to her enclosure.

Luca: Why is he here?

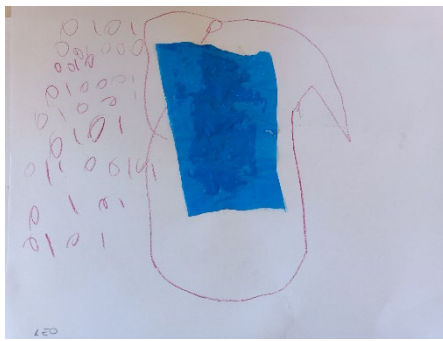
Lena: It's a 'she'...She's a girl. She's hurt and we have to make sure she eats her grass.



Fabio also drew the rabbit and Emily drew her in a field.



17.08.2022.



Leo visited Emry many times with small handfuls of grass, which she ate.
Leo: I think she likes to eat the small grass.



E.: Why does she never, ever go to sleep?

Leo's right..she likes little bits of grass, not big bits.

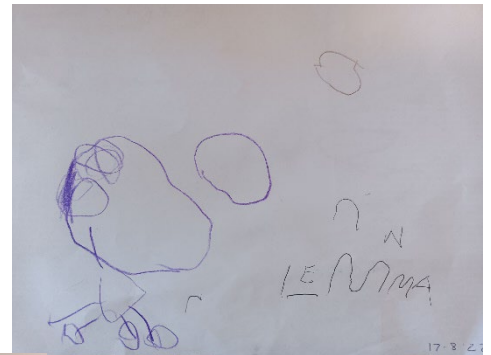
Luca and G. came in to the office to feed her too. Luca had been listening to the conversation about the grass and went to get some more, while G. persisted with feeding Emry dandelion leaves.



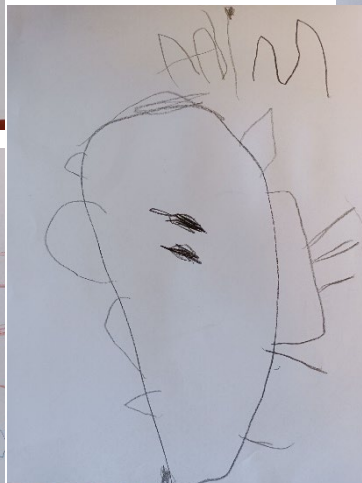
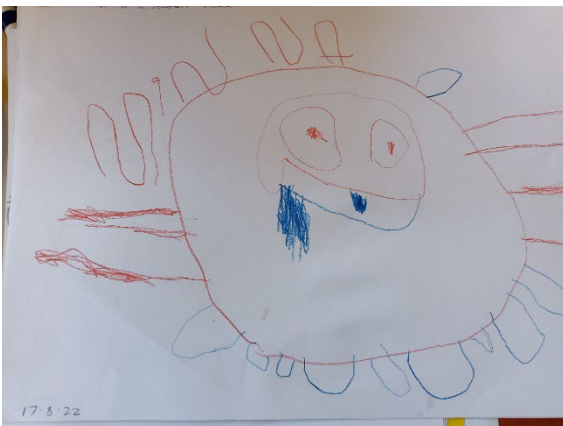
To answer E.'s question we observed Emry closely and discovered that Rabbits tend to 'rest' with their eyes open.



Some more drawings...



Mina's first drawing and her second attempt, where she drew from observation. Mina: See? I did the eyes like this...on the side of her head.



The visit from Emry encouraged the children to inquire, to observe, listen and think. Dialogue was shared and they had the opportunity to look after an animal in need. Here we also spoke about this frequently, pointing out that it is important for Emry's survival that we think about her needs ahead of the 'want' to cuddle her. The children were proactive in assisting with the mission for her to eat and many checked on her throughout the day.

EYLF OUTCOME 2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD

Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment

This is evident, for example, when children:

- use play to investigate, project and explore new ideas
- participate with others to solve problems and contribute to group outcomes
- demonstrate an increasing knowledge of, and respect for natural and constructed environments
- explore, infer, predict and hypothesise in order to develop an increased understanding of the interdependence between land, people, plants and animals
- show growing appreciation and care for natural and constructed environments
- explore relationships with other living and non-living things and observe, notice and respond to change
- develop an awareness of the impact of human activity on environments and the interdependence of living things

Educators promote this learning, for example, when they:

- provide children with access to a range of natural materials in their environment
- model respect, care and appreciation for the natural environment
- find ways of enabling children to care for and learn from the land
- consider the nature of children's connectedness to the land and demonstrate respect for community protocols
- share information and provide children with access to resources about the environment and the impact of human activities on environments
- embed sustainability in daily routines and practices
- look for examples of interdependence in the environment and discuss the ways the life and health of living things are interconnected

