

Our Excursion to learn about Reconciliation

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On 24 May 2010 all of the children from the Red Room at Radford went on a marvelous excursion to learn what reconciliation means. This week is Reconciliation Week, which means that we learn about how people can work things out together. We are apologising for taking the Aboriginal people's land and forcing them to learn the ways of the white people.

All the children from Years 3 and 4 hopped on to the Transborder buses to travel to the water's edge near Lake Burley Griffin. The teacher's talked to us about how we should behave and Ms Evans gave us questions to find out what they mean. Once our chat was complete, we made our way to a beautiful spot where all the tree leaves had turned to autumn colours. We ate lunch at this wonderful spot and looked at the lake's edge watching the calm water. After we had finished our lunch we walked to meet our guest speaker, Duncan Smith. Duncan Smith is an Aboriginal man who was raised in a mission. A mission is like a house for Aboriginal People who were treated unfairly even though they should have been ranked the same as all people.

We listened to Duncan Smith tell us the story of the Aboriginal People and what happened when the White people set foot on this land. He also told us that in the Northern Territory Aboriginal People were rounded up like sheep and pushed off a cliff. This story made us feel disappointed, sad, upset and angry. We all wanted to apologise for what happened.

Duncan also talked about how the Aboriginal children were taken away from their families to live with White people and live the life of white people. This made us feel terrible inside. Imagine if this was to happen to us. How would that make you feel?

Once Duncan had spoken to us we asked him questions about Reconciliation. It went for a long time. Towards the end of our excursion we did a dance, an Aboriginal Dance to say sorry for what happened.

Before we hopped onto the bus to travel back to school we looked at the artwork and we were stunned to see how good they were! We learnt a lot about Reconciliation and we will always remember that the bond between us is only growing stronger. We as children can change the future and make our country a better place to live with all cultures living together in harmony and happiness.

