



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we move into the winter term, we would like to thank all our families for their continued support and partnership. The children have been thriving in their routines, and it has been wonderful to see their confidence and curiosity grow as we approach the end of the year.

We are delighted to welcome two new members of staff: Ceylan, joining our Preschool room, and Rosa, now part of our Baby room. Both are unqualified practitioners currently training, and they are already building strong, positive relationships with the children.

The nursery has enjoyed a busy and exciting start to the season. Our Christmas Fair and Open Day brought families together, creating a fantastic festive atmosphere, while a special visit from the local Police gave the children a chance to explore a police car, meet officers, and learn about their important work in the community. We also took part in a fun PJ Day to support Children in Need, raising awareness while enjoying a cosy day at nursery.

The rooms are now buzzing with Christmas crafts, songs, and sensory activities, and the children continue to love their Monday football sessions with Stuart, developing coordination, confidence, and teamwork skills.

We are also excited to introduce EY Engage, a new app to enhance communication between home and nursery. Parents can use it to interact with staff, see updates, and access key information quickly and easily.

As the colder weather sets in, please ensure your child comes with warm, labelled clothing, including hats, gloves, and waterproofs. Don't forget to check the app and our notice boards regularly for important dates and upcoming events.

Thank you again for your support – we are looking forward to a positive, engaging, and inspiring term ahead!

Lorna

Dates for your diary

January – Light & Sound

- Nursery Reopens – 2nd
- Winnie the Pooh day – 18th
- World Religion Day – 18th

February – Friendships & Families

- National Storytelling Week – 31st Jan- 8th Feb
- Valentine's Day – 14th
- Pancake Day – 17th
- Chinese New Year – 17th
- Tell a Fairytale Day – 26th

March – Animals & Pets

- World Book Day – 5th
- Mother's Day – 15th
- Red Nose Day – 20th
- Oral Health Day – 20th

Term Dates:

- Christmas Break: 19th Dec-2nd Jan
- February Half-Term: 16th-20th Feb
- Easter Break: 30th Mar-10th Apr

Staff Birthday's:

- Ceylan – January 1st
- Kirsty – January 6th
- Rachel – January 18th
- Maisie – February 21st

Staff Work Anniversaries:

- Lorna 1 year – 28th February
- Rachel 1 year – 31st March



Baby Snug

Over the winter months, our focus in the Baby Room will be on supporting social confidence, communication, and early physical development through sensory play. The babies will explore textures, lights, and themed sensory activities, such as soft "snow" trays, light-up toys, and animal-inspired baskets, while practitioners model simple words and gestures to encourage interaction. Through tummy time, crawling, and cruising, children will engage with winter props and toys to build coordination. Gentle group times with music, stories, and puppets will nurture early social skills, while self-help routines like feeding and dressing support independence.



Toddler Den

This term, our focus in the Toddler Room is to build children's confidence in social play, support their developing language, and strengthen both fine and gross motor skills. Through our winter themes, we will encourage mark-making, early maths, imaginative play, and growing independence in self-care routines. The toddlers will explore winter stories, sensory ice play, music and movement, role-play linked to families and friends, and animal-themed small world activities. They will practice new vocabulary, naming objects, describing actions, and speaking in short sentences. Practical experiences such as threading, pouring, dressing, and toileting will support independence, while counting snowballs, exploring patterns, and building animal homes will develop problem-solving, early maths, and cooperation skills. Mark-making will be encouraged through winter materials, light-themed art, and animal-inspired creative activities.



Pre-School

This winter term, our Preschool curriculum focuses on building independence, problem-solving, early literacy and maths skills, and confident communication. Children will follow multi-step instructions, take part in phonics, explore number and shape, and use imagination across a variety of activities. They will engage in collaborative winter projects, light and shadow exploration, family and friendship discussions, and animal-themed investigations. Phonics games, story sequencing, mark-making, and creative arts will support literacy, while recognising shapes, building patterns, comparing quantities, and using maths in everyday play will strengthen mathematical understanding. Children will take greater responsibility for self-care, practise tools such as scissors and tweezers, construct purposeful models, and explore simple technology. Role-play, storytelling, music, and creative arts will also develop communication, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Continue at home

Create a simple winter-themed sensory tray using items you have at home, such as cotton wool for snow, spoons or small cups for scooping, and toy animals or figurines. Encourage your baby to explore the textures, make sounds, and practice picking up objects. Talk to them about what they see and feel, using simple words and gestures like "soft," "cold," or "bear." You can also sing familiar songs or tap out rhythms with your hands on the tray to build early communication and listening skills. This activity supports sensory development, fine motor skills, early communication, and curiosity about the world around them – all in a fun and interactive way.

Continue at home

Encourage your toddler to explore winter-themed activities at home. You could:

- Sensory Ice Play: Freeze small toys in ice cubes and let your child explore melting them with warm water, spoons, or hands.
- Winter Art: Use cotton wool, paper, and safe paints to create snowy scenes, practicing mark-making and colour exploration.
- Counting and Sorting: Count and sort buttons, pebbles, or cereal "snowballs" to develop early maths skills.
- Role-Play: Pretend to be animals in winter, or act out family routines to encourage imagination and language use.

Continue at home

- After reading a story together, ask your child to retell the events in order using their own words or by drawing simple pictures. This supports comprehension and sequencing skills.
- Encourage your child to count objects around the house, sort toys by size or colour, or notice patterns in clothing or food. These activities reinforce early maths concepts in a practical way.
- Provide paper, crayons, scissors, or recycled materials and invite your child to make cards, decorations, or simple models. Encourage them to explain what they've created to support language development.

Recipe of the Month

BEETROOT BROWNIE

INGREDIENTS:

- 500g whole raw beetroot
- 100g unsalted butter, plus extra for the tin
- 200g 70% cocoa chocolate
- 1 tspn vanilla extract
- 100g caster sugar
- 3 eggs
- 100g plain flour
- 25g cocoa powder



Instructions

1. Wearing a pair of rubber gloves to stop your hands from staining – top, tail and peel the beetroot – you'll need about 400g flesh.
2. Roughly chop and put into a large bowl. Add a splash of water, cover with cling film, pierce, then microwave on High for 12 mins or until tender.
3. Heat oven to 180C/160C fan/gas 4.
4. While the beetroot cooks, butter then line a 20 x 30cm traybake or small roasting tin.
5. Roughly chop the chocolate and cut the butter into cubes. Tip the cooked beetroot into a sieve, drain off any excess liquid, then put into a food processor or blender with the chocolate, butter and vanilla.
6. Whizz until the mix is as smooth as you can get it. The chocolate and butter will melt as you do this.
7. Put the sugar and eggs into a large bowl, then beat using an electric hand whisk until thick, pale and foamy, about 2 mins.
8. Spoon the beetroot mix into the sugar and eggs, and use a large metal spoon to fold together.
9. Sift in the flour and cocoa powder, then gently fold to make a smooth batter.
10. Pour into the prepared tin and bake for 25 mins or until risen all over, with just the merest quiver under the centre of the crust when you shake the pan. Cool completely in the tin, then cut into squares.

Recent Training

This term, Ceylan and Rosa successfully completed their Paediatric First Aid training. Rachel has begun her Level 3 SENCO course, attended the Brighton and Hove DSL training, and participated in the Early Years Conference, further enhancing her skills and knowledge to support the nursery community.



Colleague Spotlight

This month, we are delighted to recognise Rachel, our Deputy Manager, Preschool Room Leader, and SENCO, for her dedication and positive impact across the nursery. Rachel has created a Preschool environment that reflects the children's needs and interests and has led the planning of our recent celebration days and Christmas Fair, both of which were hugely successful thanks to her creativity and attention to detail. Always ready to offer support and guidance to children, staff, and parents, she has also taken on additional responsibility by beginning her SENCO training, further enhancing the support we provide to families. Thank you, Rachel, for your leadership, hard work, and commitment to our nursery community!



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