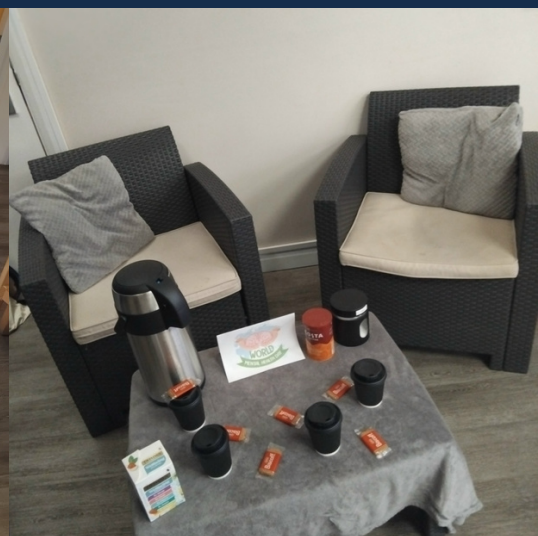




Dear Parents and Carers,

The Autumn term has flown by, and it's a great time to reflect on all the learning and fun we've shared. This term, our pre-school children have enjoyed biweekly trips to the local care home, travelling by bus and taking part in creative activities with the residents. In the Baby Snug, the little ones have been busy developing their independence, while the Toddler Den have been exploring different modes of transport with great curiosity.

We are also delighted to share that during our recent food hygiene inspection, we achieved a full 5-star rating!

Looking ahead, Charlotte will be sending out monthly Home Learning ideas linked to special dates we celebrate at nursery. We'd love for you to get involved at home, and if you do, please upload any photos to EY so we can see all the wonderful activities you've been enjoying together.

Finally, we'd be grateful if families could email across some photos so that each child can have a family book in their learning environment. Thank you all for a fantastic term, and we hope you enjoy a restful and joyful festive period!

Leilah

Dates for your diary

January

- **Thursday 1st** – New Year's Day (Nursery Closed)
- **Friday 9th** – Courtney's 3 year work anniversary!
- **Friday 23rd – Sunday 25th** – RSPB Big Bird Watch
- **Thursday 29th** – RNLI Day

February

- **Monday 1st - Friday 6th** – National Storytelling Week
- **Tuesday 3rd** – Meg's 10 year Work Anniversary!
- **Friday 6th** – National Wear Red Day
- **Tuesday 17th** – Random Act of Kindness Day
- **Tuesday 17th** – Pancake Day
- **Tuesday 17th – Tuesday 3rd March** – Chinese New Year celebrations
- **Saturday 21st** – Nikki's 8 year Work Anniversary!

March

- **Tuesday 3rd** – Holi
- **Thursday 5th** – World Book Day
- **Monday 9th – Friday 13th** – British Science Week
- **Sunday 15th** – Mother's Day
- **Friday 20th** – Spring Equinox
- **Friday 20th** – Red Nose Day

April

- **National Pet Month**
- **Friday 3rd until Monday 6th** – Easter
- **Tuesday 14th** – Vaisakhi
- **Wednesday 15th** – World Art Day
- **Wednesday 22nd** – World Earth Day
- **Saturday 25th** – Open Day
- **Wednesday 29th** – International Dance Day



Baby Snug

The Autumn term has been busy in the Baby Snug, settling in our new little ones. The team has worked hard to create a warm and welcoming environment, helping both children and families feel comfortable. As a result, the babies have settled really well and are now curious and engaged with everything around them.

A key focus this term has been supporting the babies' independence, particularly with feeding themselves at mealtimes. The team has made this a fun experience by incorporating different-sized spoons into the sand tray, allowing the children to scoop sand into pots and dig to find hidden animals. To further develop their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, the babies have also been practising fitting puzzle pieces into the correct slots, using shape sorters, and building towers.

The children have been exploring the changing world around them through autumnal sensory trays, discovering a variety of textures such as smooth conkers, prickly pinecones, and crunchy leaves.



Toddler Den

With road works taking place outside nursery, the children in Toddler Den have been fascinated by different vehicles and what they do. In the garden, we enjoyed watching a digger at work, making lots of loud and unusual noises, which sparked lots of conversation. Indoors, the children have continued this interest through creative play, using different transport vehicles to make artwork and experimenting with ramps and tunnels to move them from one space to another. This play has introduced new mathematical vocabulary, such as high, low, under, and small. The toddlers have also been building their own vehicles using construction materials, creating aeroplanes to "fly" around the world and tractors to "rescue" animals on the farm. Following this interest has encouraged imagination and creativity, while also supporting social skills like turn-taking and working together.



Pre-School

This term, our pre-school children have been exploring the world around them and learning about special dates, discovering lots of new descriptive words along the way. They welcomed autumn by using natural resources in their activities, creating artwork with conkers dipped in paint, and adding pumpkin seeds and pinecones to the playdough station and home corner. Halloween was a highlight, with children enjoying the home corner for cooking pretend meals, exploring a spooky tuff tray with coloured rice to find bats and insects, and dressing up in a variety of fun costumes. Bonfire Night gave the children a chance to share their experiences of fireworks with their families, describing the different sounds, smells, and colours they had seen. They then created their own firework pictures using cardboard cylinders dipped in paint, learning new words such as "zoom," "wizz," and "sparkle." For Remembrance Day, the children made poppy pictures while talking about feelings and ways to help others.

Continue at home

Try creating a small sensory tray with leaves, pinecones, or smooth stones for your baby to explore different textures. Encourage scooping and pouring using cups, spoons, or small containers, and build towers together with soft blocks or stacking cups to develop hand-eye coordination.

Continue at home

Encourage your child to explore vehicles at home using toys, boxes, or even recycled materials. You could create ramps from books or cardboard to race cars or build a simple "garage" for toy vehicles. Talk about the shapes, sizes, and movements of the vehicles, and introduce words like fast, slow, under, over, and tall.

Continue at home

Collect leaves, pinecones, or conkers and use them to create artwork at home. You could make leaf rubbings, paint with conkers, or create a nature collage. Talk about the colours, shapes, and textures, and use descriptive words like "crunchy," "rough," or "sparkly." You could also recreate a mini fireworks picture using toilet roll tubes and paint, or bake simple pumpkin treats together, encouraging your child to describe the smells, colours, and textures as they help.

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

We're pleased to share the fantastic training achievements across our team this term.

- Jo has completed her Just Rite training.
- Meg, Cheyenne, Leilah, Amelia, Jenny & Jo have all successfully renewed their First Aid qualifications.
- Charlotte has completed her Safeguarding Training.
- Hayley has taken part in an Introduction to Emotion Coaching in the Early Years.

Well done to everyone for their hard work and commitment to continuous learning!

Colleague Spotlight

Jenny has recently joined us at Portslade as our kitchen assistant, and she has already made a fantastic impression. Since starting, she has consistently gone above and beyond, supporting the nursery in so many helpful ways. We're also delighted to share that she played a key role in achieving our recent 5-star food hygiene inspection.



We're so pleased to have her as part of the team!

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