

February 14th 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

This week we hosted two cooking sessions led by South Oxford Family Room (SOFR). Meg had secured some funding to organise these sessions and it was lovely to see some people that we know well and some new families accessing the sessions. For the Monday session, some of our nursery children were invited to join the session and they all had a wonderful time. On Monday the recipes were flatbreads and humus and on Friday it was a cauliflower and rice dish. All looked and smelt delicious.



FOOD LARDER

You may have noticed that just inside the front door we now have some 'store cupboard' food items. With our links with South Oxford Family Room (SOFR) we have made contact and are now working with Oxford Food Hub to have these items available for you to take as and when you'd like to. The initiative is a great way to reduce food waste so please do take any items that you think you might use. They will be sending us a new delivery each week to keep the stock of items topped up. We currently have lots of really great food, please help us help the planet and each other and do take what you'd like.

For more details about Oxford Food Hub please see their website - <https://oxfordfoodhub.org/>

HINKSEY PARK COMMUNITY LARDER

Here is information about another local larder which has recently been set up locally.



HELP IN COLD WEATHER

With the ongoing cold period of weather we are highlighting the support that **Better Housing Better Health** can provide, especially with covering costs of additional heating for those with children. The service can issue **emergency fuel vouchers of at least £50** if people are finding it costly to heat their homes during these colder temperatures. They can also provide other sources of advice and support for a longer term interventions to improve the warmth of the home.

More [general advice can be found here](#) on support in Oxfordshire.

EASY FUNDRAISING

We have had a few people sign up to Easy Fundraising and we can see how much of a difference it will make over time. Please do consider signing up. If you have a regular delivery from the supermarket, using the fundraising page for that alone would really help. We are hoping to use the funds to support us with redeveloping and resourcing our outdoor area.

Please ask if you'd like more details or see the link here – https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/support-a-good-cause/step-1/?char=365917&invite=nkpwx&referral-campaign=c2s&utm_campaign=web-referral

Or use the QR code. To borrow a well-known phrase – Every Little Helps!



RAINBOWS – UNDER TWOS



The under 2's have been really enjoying story sharing.

Some of our favourites include Dear Zoo by Rod Campbell, The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle and the range of Usborne That's not my... books.

'Parents don't have to be proficient readers to enjoy sharing stories with their child – and this should be stressed to them. Adults don't need to read all the words in a book, they can talk about the pictures, the characters, why events are happening or about to happen etc. Pointing to the things that you are talking about helps children to understand that words have meaning and helps develop their vocabulary.'

Many toddlers have a favourite book and they want that read to them time and time again, and this is good.

Repetition strengthens connections in children's brains and cements learning.'

- The National Literacy Trust

Please take a look at the Lending Library in the entrance area and borrow a book to share at home.



SWANS AND RAINBOWS – OVER TWOS



We have been very excited to welcome new families to our nursery throughout this term and begin to develop new friendships and relationships within our community. We are continuing to develop our understanding that we belong to a community, and listening and valuing others with kindness. A sense of being loved and cherished helps us to feel safe and cared for, so that we can explore and be creative.

Through positive, loving and nurturing relationships I can grow my sense of self, developing an understanding of who I am and show an awareness of how I am feeling.

During group times we are learning that we have similarities and differences that make us all unique, showing kindness to each other and creating things together collectively. We are thinking and talking about our families, people we care about and who care for us. Being part of our groups is an important part of growing our sense of belonging and inclusion and building upon all the things that I already know or can do. I might not be talking yet, but I am thinking, planning and using my memory.

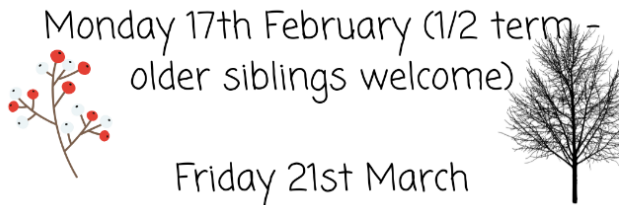
We would love to share a family photo you may have in our group times, to continue to build our sense of community. Thank you, if you have already sent in a photo.

Throughout the spring term we will be learning to value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment through being curious about people and showing interest in stories about people, animals or objects that we are familiar with or which fascinate us. We will also be talking about the places we go, celebrations we enjoy and the people we love.



FOREST SCHOOL SESSION

SOFR have very kindly offered for some of our Nursery children who attend on Fridays the opportunity to come along for these sessions. If your child does not attend nursery on a Friday and you're free to go along, please do.



Leaving at 10:15am. Snack for children provided and a marshmallow over the fire. Please wear long trousers and sleeves.

HEALTHY START TO THE NEW TERM

[UKHSA is reminding parents and carers](#) of the simple steps they can take to ensure their children make the healthiest start to the new school term.

The new year brings with it an opportunity to teach children about the importance of good hygiene and with the recent increase in cases of flu and high levels of other viruses such as norovirus, it's more important than ever. The simple steps include teaching good hygiene habits; knowing when to keep your child at home and when to send them to school; stopping the spread of stomach bugs and getting vaccinated.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/parents-and-carers-urged-to-help-children-start-new-year-healthy>

HOME IS WHERE THE START IS

Early Years Alliance are a fantastic resource and source of information for families and for childcare providers. They are running some family sessions in February including one with the author Michael Rosen. Please see here for more details and booking information; https://public-gbr.mkt.dynamics.com/api/v1.0/orgs/e5154b7c-a307-ef11-9f85-0022481ae5a1/channels/emails/vib/bd736cee-9696-ef11-8a6a-6045bdd00a99_18798b71-47b6-ef11-b8e9-6045bdc1de0c_4dab526e-3047-1c65-ad37-ff106a4c43eb_18188202-4cb2-ef11-b8e9-6045bdc1de0c#msdynmkt_trackingcontext=55223747-710d-4786-adc0-c67675af7910

HELEN AND DOUGLAS HOUSE COMEDY GALA

The fundraisers at Helen and Douglas House asked if we could share information with you about this event which is taking place on Monday 17th February. For more details, there are flyers in our foyer and also here is a link – <https://www.helenanddouglas.org.uk/events/comedy-gala/>

If you do decide to go, you have the opportunity of a good evening out, supporting Helen and Douglas House and if you've signed up to Easy Fundraising, you could be helping the Nursery School too!

With our very best wishes.

Sarah and the team

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Half term break for Swans – Monday 17th February to Friday 21st February

Thursday 6th March – World Book Day

HALF TERM HOLIDAY FUN

FOREST TOTS SESSIONS AT HILL END

https://hill-end.org/news/forest_tots/



Hill End Family Forest Days

10am - 2pm

Tuesday 18 & Wednesday 19 February (half term)

- * Make a bird nesting box or bird feeder
- * Create a giant nest in our den building area, or make crafts in The Barn
- * Follow trails, climb - enjoy our space, woodlands & wetlands. SO MUCH TO DO!
- * Meet Oxford University bird researchers - ringing and monitoring the blue tits and great tits and you can learn more about the Wytham Woods Tit Project

£9 child / £11 adult

includes a jacket potato or soup



 Hill_end_centre  @HillEndOEC  @Hill_End

Hill End Outdoor Education Centre, OX2 9NJ 01865 863510

INDOOR ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

The NHS Healthier Families website have put together a list of indoor games and activities for children so they can still get the 60 minutes of daily physical activity they need – even when they cannot get outside.

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/activities/indoor-activities-for-kids/>



Instagram



Facebook

TAPESTRY

Here is a link to various guides that you may find useful in using Tapestry. Please do speak to us if you can't find what you are looking for and we will help.

<https://eyfs.info/forums/topic/47795-tutorials-contents-page-for-relatives/>

SAFETY

FRONT DOOR INTO THE BUILDING and FOYER - Please can we kindly request that you do not let anyone else through as you go through the front door. This helps us to know who is in the building and to keep everyone safe, thank you.

If your child is in our Swans, term-time provision, please could you stand towards the back of the foyer when waiting for your child. This helps us to see who is waiting more easily and the children to find their adults more easily too. Many thanks.

SICKNESS – Please telephone to let us know if your child will not be attending a session by 9.30am, many thanks. Also a gentle reminder that if your child is sick and/or has diarrhoea, please keep them at home for 48 hours after the last bout. This will help us to minimise the spread of tummy bugs, many thanks.

CAR PARK - For your child's safety, when dropping off and collecting your child from Grandpont, please keep them on the paths and not in the car park itself, many thanks.

DOORS - For the safety of all of our children and so that staff are aware of who is in the building, please do not open doors for other visitors, including parents, many thanks.

Rainbows – Please ring the bell next to the main door when you arrive. A member of the team will come and open the door for you.

Swans – Please wait until a member of the team opens the door at 9am and 3pm. They will invite you in to collect your child. Please stand towards the back of the foyer so that the children are able to come out to you.

TIMINGS –

Rainbows – You are able to bring your child any time after 8am. If you think you might be later than 8.30am, please let your child's keyperson know if it is planned and call the office if you're running late in the morning. You are able to collect anytime later in the day, again let your keyperson know if you are planning to collect before 5pm. Please ensure that you collect your child between 5.45pm and 5.55pm and by 6pm.

Swans – You are able to bring your child for a 9am start and 3pm or 3.30pm finish dependent on the sessions your child is attending each day. Please ask your keyperson if you are not sure of pick-up times.

MORE INFORMATION THAT YOU MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN...

HEALTH VISITORS

The Health Visitor has kindly signposted us to some great support that you may find useful. Here is a link to their website which then offer support for specific groups; children 0-1 years, 1-2 years and 3-4 years.

<https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/hv/>

They also have a support and advice messaging service. Parentline 0-4 years. Text: 07312263081

The Health Visitor advised that if you need advice, you can text this number and one of the Health Visitors will message you back. Please do also speak with your child's keyperson as we may have access to some more information that might be useful too.

HOME START

Home-Start Oxford provides non-judgemental, compassionate, confidential and individual support to families who are going through tough times and have at least one child under the age of five. If this is something that you might find helpful please contact them directly or speak to your child's keyperson.

<https://homestartoxford.org.uk/>

50 THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU'RE FIVE

This is an amazing app that offers lots of fun and engaging ideas of things to do in and around Oxford. There is also an app for older children that may be useful if your child has older siblings.

<https://oxfordshire.50thingstodo.org/app/os#!/welcome>

Let us know how you get on and how much fun you've had!

BBC TINY HAPPY PEOPLE

The BBC have created an incredible website with lots of advice, hints and tips to support us all with parenting and supporting our children's development. The website has been created with the support of Early Childhood Experts and contains a wealth of information.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>

THE WILDLIFE TRUST

The Wildlife Trust has some lovely information

https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/where-to-see-autumn-wildlife?utm_source=Engagement+List+2024&utm_campaign=821e860e7c-BWW24+-+Autumn+focus&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-adf3d3b08e-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D

All Aboard the Toilet Train

ERIC have launched their new campaign, All Aboard the Toilet Train, which aims to help more children get ready to use the toilets independently. Please do ask your child's keyperson if you would like support with this.

[All aboard the Toilet Train: Get ready for school - ERIC](#)

Oxfordshire Healthier Together

The [Oxfordshire Healthier Together website](#) provides expert advice from local healthcare professionals for parents and carers when their child is unwell.

With a user-friendly traffic light system, parents can find clear information on common childhood illnesses, including what symptoms to look out for, what they should do, and when and where to seek help if required. The website features a translation tool, a directory of local services to support family health and wellbeing, and advice on whether a child should go to school when they have a virus or infection.

Parents can also download the Healthier Together app if their child is unwell, to get advice at their fingertips. Using a red, amber, green self-assessment of symptoms, parents are directed to the appropriate setting at the right time. Search for 'Healthier Together' in the [App Store](#) or [Google Play](#)

Strengthening family relationships

All families disagree sometimes. You might have problems that are hard to solve, or things going on that cause you stress.

There is a section of the Family Information Service website with information and tools that can help reduce or improve conflict at home. For more information click here: [Family Information Service | Family Support Toolkits \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)