

January 31<sup>st</sup> 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

We have had lots of fun learning over the last two weeks. All of our children have been listening and looking for birds in our garden and have been so excited when they notice them. We have all been listening to birdsong at different points in the day. It has been lovely to see the children so enthusiastic in their discoveries. We are also planning to make some bird feeders and hang them in the garden in the hope that we may encourage some new birds to our garden.

This week was also Chinese New Year. Yan, one of our governors and a friend came to share some of the traditions and customs with the children. They explained about the lucky money envelopes and everyone had a lovely time listening to traditional music and recreating our version of the dragon dance. Kung hei fat choi.

#### TOTS TUNES SESSION

<https://soundscreativeprojects.co.uk/tots-tunes>

We had an amazing time with Tara who came in to lead the session for us. She brought her cello and djembe drum and played them alongside singing some songs that we were all able to join in with. Some of the songs were in Swahili, some folk songs from a variety of countries. The children were able to join in with call and response songs where they practised the rhythm and pulse of the music. Lots of the songs had some fun actions that the children could join in with too. The session was held in the book area which has fantastic acoustics. There was a palpable excitement for all of the children (in fact for everyone involved, adults too!).

All of our children were transfixed for the whole session – we were amazed at how engaged they were. If you play an instrument and have a few minutes to spare it would be lovely to hear you play and for the children to experience a variety of different instruments.

#### BIKEABILITY

Kulsum and Kam completed Bikeability training just before the Christmas break. As part of the scheme, we have access to six balance bikes and safety helmets and a programme of planned skills based activities to support the children's development in their cycling skills. The first session took place in the sunshine on Thursday this week. Kulsum and Kam were amazed at how well the session went. They were able to support the children at their individual skill levels and are really looking forward to seeing the progress over the next few weeks.



## 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 need to. They will be sending us a new delivery each week to keep the stock of items topped up. Please do take what you need.

## NATIONAL STORYTELLING WEEK 1-9 FEBRUARY 2025

Our children have engaged really well with our Tales Toolkit sessions where they have the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the key structures of story. In these sessions the children are learning about some of the structures of story including characters, settings problems and how to solve them. They are so confident with creating new stories of their own which is lovely to see. We are planning to harness this keen interest and enthusiasm by spending lots of time exploring and creating stories.

## 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.

## RAINBOWS – UNDER TWOS



We have noticed that the children have been noticing and caring for each other this week – so very lovely to see! They are more aware of who is with them each day and are helping to find things and give them to their friends. The team have all commented on how the children are interacting with their peers and forming friendships.

We have had lots more fun exploring the sensory room, always a firm favourite area of the room. We have also had a wonderful time outside playing together and exploring the natural world, puddles and puddle jumping are the best!



### SWANS AND RAINBOWS – OVER TWOS



Winter is proving to be a season of discovery and curiosity for the changes in weather and the wildlife we share our community with. Before we embark on our explorations outside we wrap up warm and think carefully together about what items of clothing we will need to wear in the winter. We are beginning to develop our independence as we try to put on our own hats, gloves and coats. "Look I can do it!"

We are learning that some animals fall asleep in the winter and create cosy homes to keep them warm too! Let's find out about the animals that hibernate and develop our knowledge of different types of animals. Hibernation is our new long word this week.

During the colder weather it is important for us to use our whole bodies to move and travel in a variety of ways. We decided to play a game of hide and seek, which was not only fun, but a wonderful way of taking turns and playing together. "I hide, you count." "Now it's your turn." Can you find us?

As it is was the RSPB Birdwatch last weekend, we have been demonstrating lots of curiosity for the birds that visit our garden. I wonder what will entice them in and how can we care for them during these cold days. We made bird feeders, with bread, margarine and seeds. We waited for a little while, but no birds. We can hear them but not see them. "Maybe they scared." We decide to move indoors and watch with our binoculars through the window. "There they are!" It's very important that we help the RSPB to count the different types of birds that we see. We notice 4 types of birds, and we create a tally chart to keep a record of what we see.

Let's make our own nests, with materials that we find in the garden. We learn about the materials that birds collect to build their own nests. The books and props in the story area, help us to find out information about the birds we see, and the birds that we may not see, as they only come out at night time. "Owls! Owls come out in the night!"

Nocturnal- that's another new word we have learnt.

We will continue our explorations and investigations of winter as we progress into February and notice the subtle changes as we head into spring.



## COOKING WORKSHOPS - SOFR

A HUGE thank you to @GoodFoodOxford who are funding two cookery sessions for our families. These sessions are open to all families. Due to space we ask 1 adult to maximum two children (babies in arms will not count towards numbers)

Monday 10th February 10:00 - 11:30am and will be hosted by @GrandpontNurseryandChildcare.

Friday 14th February 10:00 - 11:30am at the @SouthOxfordFamilyRoom

### Cooking Workshops for children and their adults



Monday 10th February 10:00 - 11:30am: SOFR sessions hosted by Grandpont Nursery School and Child Care



Friday 14th February, 10:00 - 11:30am: South Oxford Family Room.

### Booking Essential - limited spaces!



If you would like to book to attend one or both of these sessions, please complete the form in this link - [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScXLQ\\_hj3Hs61wZnAFnvgAG\\_EQYcr0xlePY0UGihnii-Anltw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScXLQ_hj3Hs61wZnAFnvgAG_EQYcr0xlePY0UGihnii-Anltw/viewform)

## FOREST SCHOOL SESSION

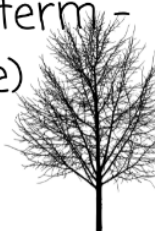
SOFR have very kindly offered for some of our Nursery children who attend on Fridays the opportunity to come along for these sessions. If your child does not attend nursery on a Friday and you're free to go along, please do.



SOFR Nature Play and campfire

Friday 24th January

Monday 17th February (1/2 term - older siblings welcome)



Friday 21st March

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>

## EASY FUNDRAISING

We have been looking into different ways of fundraising and have found Easyfundraising. We're now registered with Easyfundraising, which means you can help us easily and for FREE! Over 8,000 retailers will donate to us when you use Easyfundraising to shop with them – at no extra cost to yourself! All you need to do is sign up and remember to use Easyfundraising whenever you shop online. It's easy and completely FREE!

These donations really mount up, so please sign up to support us at [https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/grandpont-nursery-school-and-childcare/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=pmc&utm\\_content=email-1](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/grandpont-nursery-school-and-childcare/?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=pmc&utm_content=email-1)

We are hoping to fundraise for specific areas of our provision. The first area is our story area. We are hoping to develop it further to become a cosy, warm and inviting space where children feel comfortable and confident to share stories and books together.

## 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](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 17<sup>th</sup> 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**

**Cooking sessions - Monday 10th February, 10:00 - 11:30am. Grandpont Nursery School and Childcare.**

**Friday 14th February, 10:00 - 11:30am. South Oxford Family Room**

**Half term break for Swans – Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March – World Book Day**

## **HALF TERM HOLIDAY FUN**

FOREST TOTS SESSIONS AT HILL END

[https://hill-end.org/news/forest\\_tots/](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

The children have been having lots of fun in their learning and we send home an observation of their play to share a little of what they are doing. We will also be printing the observations to add to the children's folder here and sharing them with them. Reminiscing is a joyous activity and is also fantastic for the children's learning. If you are interested in how this supports their learning please read the blog below – <https://childandfamilyblog.com/the-benefits-of-reminiscing-with-your-child/>

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](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 \(oxfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

### **HOT WATER BOTTLE SAFETY**

The Child Accident Prevention Trust has produced some information on hot water bottle safety and preventing burns and scalds

[https://capt.org.uk/hot-water-bottle-safety/?utm\\_source=capt&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=parentsjan25&mc\\_cid=61efda2036](https://capt.org.uk/hot-water-bottle-safety/?utm_source=capt&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=parentsjan25&mc_cid=61efda2036)

### **HOME IS WHERE THE START IS**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/home-is-where-the-start-is-an-online-festival-of-fun-and-learning-tickets-1097149797579?aff=oddtcreator>