

Dear Parents,

Welcome to another edition of our Greenacres newsletter, packed full of interesting information and an insight to our day here at Oldfield Road.

Each edition allows our staff team to share their wealth of knowledge with you, but please do get in touch if you would like to know more, would like to add to the newsletter or have information you would like us to tell you more about.

Happy Reading.

### Interesting Information – Music Matters

How music affects your child's brain

Early brain development is all about building connections through input from the outside world, and music provides a rich and supplementary source of input as young brains develop.

Exposure to music allows young brains to soak in the range of notes, tones, and words they will later use, essentially introducing them to the key elements of music they will build upon, and in doing so, build neural pathways that can influence and enhance cognitive ability for a lifetime. This process underscores the vital link between music and brain development from the earliest stages.

Music builds neural pathways throughout the brain, but especially in the corpus callosum, a band of tissue that connects the two hemispheres of the brain. This, neurologists believe, conveys a whole range of benefits, including increased problem-solving ability and greater emotional resilience.



One theory is that music, particularly playing music, strengthens the connection between a child's sense of hearing and the brain's ability to process sounds.

There's no specific child-development music that will make your children smarter, but there is evidence that learning music has a positive effect on brain development in children.

Music is important in the early years, as it affects children's intelligence and emotions, and helps them develop their skills, including:



- Early language development
- An increased ability to learn foreign languages
- Improved mood and emotional regulation
- Physical endurance
- Patience and discipline
- Gross and fine motor skills
- Ability to recognize small differences between sounds (auditory discrimination)
- Cooperation and cross-cultural awareness
- Improved memory and concentration
- Self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-expression



There is almost no aspect of human cognition and development that can't be improved by listening to and learning to play music.

These benefits last well into adulthood and even old age because when a brain builds more neural pathways early on, that brain is better able to retain new information and resist the deterioration of memory.

Exposure to music may influence your child's behaviour, but perhaps not how you think, because the style of the music may not matter. Exposure to music strengthens the corpus callosum, the tissue that connects the two hemispheres of the brain.

With that connection strengthened, a child will be better equipped to regulate their mood, emotions, and behaviour.



It is important not to underestimate the power of singing to children. Studies have shown that singing to children prepares their ears, voice, and brain for language. Lullabies, songs and rhymes carry the 'signature' melodies and inflexions of a mother tongue. This applies across all cultures and languages, and this prepares a child's ear, voice and brain for language.

Why is music in the early years important?

By being exposed to music, it improves a child's cognitive functioning. This is important as it creates pathways in the brain developed through musical activities that lead to development of language, reading and mathematical skill due to the beat, timing and rhythm.

Vocabulary is also developed through music, as music teaches children new word meanings and how words work together to be used in a sentence. This will help will communication skills as children begin to understand the words and sentences, they are exposed to.

Through listening to music, children can develop both their fine motor skills and gross motor skills, which develops both the smaller and larger muscles.

Playing with different sized instruments, making their own instruments and action rhymes are not only effective for learning, but also for co-ordination, as it develops a child's sensory skills. Co-ordination is especially important in learning with younger children, as it allows children to have the best possible control over their bodies and develop a strong motor planning of movement.

Communication skills are important for children to develop to prepare them for later life. Exposing babies to music such as singing is an extremely effective way of starting the children's learning from the youngest possible age, as it begins to teach them about inflections of the language they will go on to speak.

As a child begins to grow and develop, singing then benefits them in different ways. When singing, it strengthens a child's lips and therefore encourages clear elocution, whilst continuing to build their vocabulary.



Memory skills are also progressed through the repetitive nature of songs and are important to develop as this gives children information stored long enough to use it and put it into practice. The structure of songs or rhymes alongside the tune and rhythm make them easy to memorise and teaches skills that will be relied on during school and their future.

Sounds patterns are learned through rhyme, poem and song. Sound patterns when heard by a child, teaches them to distinguish various noises from each other, as well as joining and breaking sounds apart.

Sound patterns are practiced by children when rhyming, playing with instruments, singing and practicing syllables. All these features effectively contribute to learning how to read and spell and eventually will benefit a child academically in their writing and mathematics skill.

Overall, exposing a child to music from a young age in all its forms is a recognisable beneficial in supporting their learning and development of academic skill, which will benefit them throughout their education and in later life.

Recipes – Here is an example of some of the cooking we do here at nursery.

## Scones

125g Plain flour

$\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon baking powder

45g butter

$\frac{1}{2}$  cup of milk

1 tablespoon yoghurt

We measure out all our dry ingredients and gently blend them together.

We cut in our butter and rub until it forms breadcrumb style mixture

We make a well and add the milk and yoghurt – stirring gently, just enough to bring the mixture together, don't over handle it.

Gently roll out the dough and use a cutter to create rounds. If you dip your cutter into some flour first to prevent it sticking to your mixture.

Place on a baking tray and cook for 8 minutes until just going golden.

Serve warm with jam and clotted cream.

The real question is do you top them the Devonshire way of cream first then jam, or the Cornish way of jam first and cream on top? Either way we hope you enjoy!



## Cheese and chive pie

Butter

Flour

Milk

Cheese

Black pepper

Chives

Peas

Filo pastry

Potatoes – We like the red skins ones, but any variety will work

Our cheese and chive pie is a simple but a firm favourite with the children.

It starts with a white sauce, make a roux with the butter and flour and cook out the flour. Slowly whisk in the milk and let it bubble a little. Stir in your grated cheese, chopped chives, black pepper and peas.

Meanwhile, chop your potatoes (skins on, this is where all the goodness is) into bite sized chunks. Part boil them until slightly soft. Drain and mix into the white sauce mix.

Place in an oven proof dish and place gently scrunched filo pastry onto the top. Bake until golden and the potatoes are cooked through.



## What's been happening around the branch

### Out and about

As usual we've been out and about, cubs have been using the pushchairs to head out on walks, enjoying the weather,



feeding the ducks and just watching the world go by. Tigers have been out and about on the bus, to the park and exciting play days at the den. Lions have been out on the train, off to Chessington world of adventures and exploring Carlisle and Bushy Park

### Special events

There are so many to choose from, but our Cubs and Tigers Father's Day BBQ was such a wonderful atmosphere and all that yummy food too.



There were lots of children, parents and staff enjoying all the fun in that beautiful sunshine. Tigers held a roaring tiger day, learning about tigers; all set with tiger face painting too.



Lions held a Scooter Day that was super-fast whizzing around the carpark. An ice cream day that was super cool, making and eating our very own ice cream, and our science fun experiments were super exciting.

We were all very luckily that the sun shone (but not too much) on beach day. We turned our back gardening into a fabulous beach, set with pools, sand and water squirters. There were lots of squeals of delight as we played in the pools, getting everyone soaked! Then we headed inside for a lunch of fish and chips, followed by ice cream treats.



And of course, lots of mini beast parties, water days, beach days, Hawaiian days and many more.





## Garden

We've been busy again this year with our green fingers



to make our allotment part of the garden thrive. We planted out tomatoes, beans, strawberries, chard, rainbow carrots and corn. We had a lone potato plant grow that we must have missed at



harvesting last year too. The children have loved to see the plants grow, watering them through the heat and best of all picking those yummy strawberries and tasting them straight away. We've also added a few new role play units to create more imaginary play opportunities.



## Lions' fest

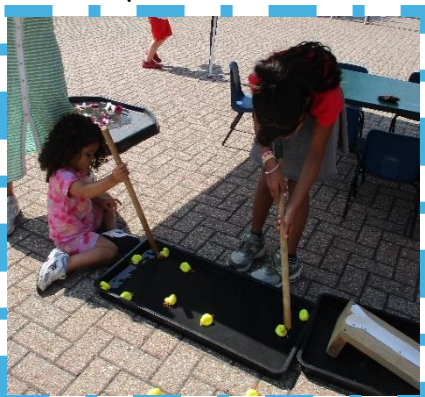
Where to start?? What an amazing day we had holding our first Lions fest. It was the perfect weather for a day filled with music, dancing, playing instruments and giggling. Our chilli zone



was filled with tents, chairs, stools and cushions, while our blow-up instruments, bubbles and pop toys kept us highly entertained.



As usual there was food galore, so many fun activities and fun filled games to be played. Our entertainment on the stage kept us busy, with Miss Lisa taking the legend slot at the end!! Face painting made us look the part and all that glitter and punch balloons just made the day. We can't thank everyone enough for making this such a great event.



Who needs Glastonbury when you've got Lions fest!!



## Upcoming plans over next few months

We like to explore a range of different themes and topics within our nursery day. Each month we will send you a Monthly liaison letter explaining in detail about the theme for the following month. Each month brings new experiences, conversations, ideas, and experiments. Whilst we have an idea of where we would like to begin, we always let the children guide their learning making each month individual to the children and what they are processing at this point. We would love your input into how we can support your child's learning, here at the nursery and at home and evaluate what they have enjoyed of gained from these experiences, so we can plan and tailor these experiences even more strongly.

Over the next few months, we will be exploring:

- Families and Us
- Music and Sounds
- Exploring Lights
- Winter and Christmas

Any suggestions on any other these topics or others will always be gratefully received.

Watch out for all our Christmas dates, from parties, concerts and plays.

## Cosy Cubs



Cubs action time!!!!!!

Cubs love to sing and dance .... If you are happy and you know it clap your hands! Come on join us and sign with us...

How many nursery rhymes do you know by heart? Chances are the lyrics of at least one is etched into your memory... probably more if you've been to a baby class recently!

Some of our favourite rhymes date as far back as the 17th century, and a lot of the lyrics are still the same as they were back then.

So why are these nursery rhymes so popular? And why should we still sing them to our children?

Nursery rhymes introduce children to new words and ideas that they might not encounter elsewhere at this stage of their development,"

Your child usually picks up language from the world around them, so singing nursery rhymes is a great way to introduce words they might not hear during an ordinary day.

Singing Old Macdonald together can be a great way to introduce animal vocabulary. Or you can use One banana, two banana to repeat new food words.

"Vocabulary development not only helps children on their journey to understanding and using spoken language, but it is also the foundation for later emerging reading skills."

When babies are learning a language, they are not only learning words. Before they can begin processing meaning, they must first listen to what we say and work out where one word ends and the next begins.

"It has been suggested that children are born with a sensitivity to rhythm in speech," "This helps them to work out where words begin during normal speech."

Because nursery rhymes exaggerate and repeat predictable rhythms, they can support children's ability to spot word boundaries in speech and can improve this sensitivity to speech rhythm and boost children's language development.

Rhymes like Sleeping Bunnies or Wind the bobbin up, which can be easily slowed down and sped up, are great for helping with this rhythmic awareness.

From learning how to kick their legs as a newborn to sitting up, crawling and eventually walking, your baby is constantly testing the boundaries of their movement.

Singing nursery rhymes with actions is a great way for babies to develop their motor skills and hand- eye coordination.

Lay your newborn on their back and help their arms do the movements in rhymes like Wheels on the Bus or Wind the Bobbin Up. This can help their body learn and practise movements that they will soon perform by themselves.

These are also great for them to try on their own as they get older. Developing coordination when they're young will help with other life skills when they're older, such as getting dressed and playing sports.

"Some nursery rhymes teach basic maths concepts, such as counting and geometry,". "These are really important early numeracy skills."

One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Once I Caught a Fish Alive and Six Fat Sausages are great rhymes for all ages, but can especially help pre-school children get to grips with simple maths concepts.

Making up rhymes around an everyday routine, such as bath time or a nappy change, can also help your child understand the steps behind these events and help them process them.

"When you are sharing songs and rhymes these are special moments,"

Singing rhymes regularly with them while you cuddle them is a great way to bond. This then increases the production of a hormone called oxytocin in the brain.

Oxytocin is known as the love hormone as it reduces stress and increases relaxation, so it's great for you and your baby.

When you are connected through laughter and shares experience, what could be better so don't stop and keep singing!!!



## Tiger Tales



Role play offers numerous benefits for children, from fostering creativity, developing language and social skills, to, enhancing emotional understanding. It allows children to make sense of the world around them, build confidence, and practice problem-solving in a fun and engaging way.

Role play encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making as children navigate different scenarios and roles. It helps them understand cause and effect and develop planning and organizational skills.



Through role play, children practice speaking and listening, expand their vocabulary, and learn to express their thoughts and feelings using both verbal and non-verbal cues.

Role play provides opportunities for children to practice sharing, cooperating, taking turns, and resolving conflicts. It helps them develop empathy by understanding different perspectives and building stronger social connections.

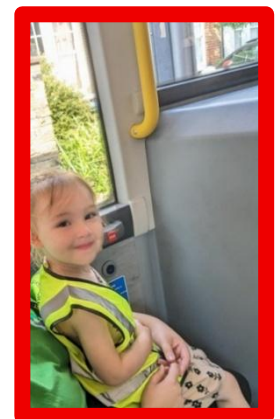
Role play allows children to explore and express a range of emotions in a safe and controlled environment. It helps them build self-awareness, self-confidence, and emotional regulation skills.

Role play sparks imagination and creativity as children invent scenarios, characters, and stories. It encourages them to think outside the box, explore new ideas, and develop their problem-solving abilities.

Role play helps children understand real-life situations, such as going to the doctor or playing in a shop, by acting them out and making sense of the different roles and interactions.

As children take on different roles and engage in imaginative play, they build confidence in their abilities and develop a stronger sense of self.

Here in Tigers, we create many opportunities to see the world through different sets of eyes, heading out for walks to see the world around us in action. We try to create everyday situations, walking up to the post box or Waitrose, or exploring travelling on buses/trains to playing in the park.



Within our walls we then explore in our environment which is designed to allow the children to thrive on the knowledge they have gained and use role play to understand it further.

## Lions Laughter



Let's get cooking.

When you think about cooking with children the first thing that springs to mind is mess! Well, yes cooking at any point for anyone will lead to washing up but let's look at the bigger picture of why cooking with children can be more than just fun.

Children love to cook anything. When getting your child involved in cooking it doesn't have to mean baking sweet treats, but helping to prepare breakfast, lunch, or dinner for that day. Our children in Lions love to set up for snack/lunch, tidy away, create picnics in the role play, look through recipe cards and bake.

One of the biggest benefits of cooking with children is how it can help them to develop an adventurous and varied taste palette. Children who have been involved in the preparation and cooking process are generally more likely to give new food a go as well as trying different textured food. Growing your own and then prepare that to eat can be even better!

Cooking can create a sense of achievement, complete a recipe and create a meal can provides a sense of accomplishment, boosting self-esteem and confidence. Whilst positive reinforcement by praising children's efforts and celebrating their contributions encourages them to try new things and build confidence.

Children learn by using all their sense, touching, tasting, feeling, smelling, observing, reading, and listening. The kitchen is the perfect place for learning - it provides a range of senses and a range of learning styles.

In Lions we feel that it is important to remember that we need to teach children to use the right utensils for the job. It's important to learn to use tools safely and understand what job they can do. Using a butter knife to chop carrots is more dangerous than a little chopping knife used under supervision, so teaching the children these skills is essential.

Cooking requires us to develop different techniques from rolling, whisking, stirring, kneading, shaping. All these skills help to enhances our Fine Motor Skills and gross motor skills and understanding of how tools work. Moving our wrists in different ways, using both hands to hold a bowl and stir at the same time.

Spending time in the kitchen Increases Language and reading. Start by talking about what the options are for dinner and what you would need to make it. Where are the ingredients kept, what do they look like, where did they grow, what do they smell/feel like? All these conversations create more questions, bigger vocabulary, and the ability to find information out.

Weighting with scales, cups, spoonful's or mls in the jug increase our maths skills. Whilst also exploring portion skills and thinking about how hungry you are and how much food you need. Problem solving, trial and error - the mixture is too wet, lets add more flour, will lead to children being able to think for themselves and work out what actions they might wish to take.



Science is great to explore in the kitchen. Looking at how bread rises, chocolate melts, pasta goes from hard to soft, potatoes mash etc. This helps children to gain the concept that food changes with heat, cold, water etc. By seeing this change in front of our eyes makes it easier to understand.

The kitchen is a great place to build relationships and spend quality time together. It can be a place to talk, laugh, learn about family traditions, through passed down family recipes, or it can simply be a place just to

catch up with day-to-day life. In lions we love to get together around food, whether it be with the role play picnic set, looking for new recipes, baking something delicious or having snacks throughout the day. Best of all while Cooking is a great Life Skill to follow throughout our lives, you can eat all that delicious food at the end!!!



Here are a few of our favourite recipes, why not give them a try, we would like to see a picture of all the fun!! We hope you enjoy having fun in the kitchen.

Love Lions



### Cheese and Onion Pasties

#### **Ingredients**

##### Pasty:

450g plain flour  
2tsp baking powder  
1tsp salt  
125g unsalted butter  
2 egg yolks  
125ml cold water

##### Filling:

Cheese  
Potato  
Onion

#### **Method**

**To make the pastry:** Place the flour, baking powder, salt, butter and egg yolks into a food processor and blitz until the mixture forms crumbs. Slowly add the water until a ball of pastry miraculously appears - you may not need all the water. Wrap the pastry in cling film and leave it to chill in the fridge for an hour.

Cook the potatoes in small squares, once cooked, cool and add cheese and onion.

Bake 10-15 minutes.

### **Double Ginger Gingerbread**

#### **Ingredients**

140g Butter  
100g Dark brown Sugar  
3tbsp Golden Syrup  
350g Plain Flour  
1 tsp Bicarbonate of soda  
2 tsp Ground Ginger  
Pinch of Cayenne Pepper  
A little Stem Ginger

#### **How we made them**

Stir together the Melted butter, sugar and syrup with a wooden spoon

Add in the flour, soda, spices and a pinch of salt

Chop the ginger and add it to the dough.

Use a rolling pin to roll out dough to about 5mm thick.

Stamp out gingerbread men, re-rolling and pressing the trimmings back together and rolling again.

Bake them in the oven for 12 mins until golden.

### **Focaccia**

An Italian bread perfect to serve as a tear and share bread with balsamic vinegar and olive oil.

#### **Focaccia Ingredients:**

450g Strong White Bread Flour  
1 sachet yeast  
1 tsp salt  
5 tablespoons olive oil  
¼ teaspoon sea salt  
300ml warm water  
1 medium sprig of rosemary

#### **How we made it:**

Put the flour, yeast and salt in a large bowl and mix them together.

Next stir in the olive oil and warm water.

Place the dough onto a well-floured surface and knead until the dough is smooth and springs back when gently pressed.

Leave the dough to rise, double in size.

Roll the dough into small balls and flatten into circles

Make indentations in the dough using your fingertips and drizzle over the remaining olive oil, sprinkle with sea salt and rosemary and bake in the oven for 20 minutes until the bread is golden brown.

## Policy update – Food and Nutrition

At Greenacres we believe that it is important to provide nutritious balanced meals that are appropriate to each child's individual dietary needs.

The children are encouraged to make their own choices of healthy eating by giving information, advice and opportunities to choose through activities and mealtimes.

The key points used within the setting to ensure that we met our commitment to healthy eating are

A four weekly rotational menu, researched and chosen for their balanced nutritional values, variations of taste, textures and multicultural reflection.

Our commitment to the healthy accreditation scheme to ensure that food unnecessary high in salt, sugar or fat content are substituted for healthier options where possible.

Children dietary needs are recorded, clear and prominently use to avoid illness or accidental upset.

Appropriate dining utensils, table areas, and environment are designed to ensure children's choice and ability to

dine in a comfortable, relaxing atmosphere.

Water is available to all children throughout the day, with older children being able to self-serve and younger children using visual aids to show their preferences.

Allergies and Allergens are treated with the upmost importance and are double checked regularly. Parents will be required to give all information around food allergies and preferences to ensure that diets are catered, scrutinised for safety by all parties involved.

When celebrating birthdays, we request parents do not bring in birthday cakes, snacks or food to comply with our healthy eating guidelines. Instead, we feel we can celebrate your child's special day in lots of other ways.

Greenacres is a NUT and SHELLFISH FREE area. No staff, visitors or children are permitted to bring any products containing nuts or shellfish onto the premises due to them being high allergens.

A copy of our menu can be found, with allergens in our foyers, please ask a member of staff if you would like to know more about the policy.

## Forest School

Last term Lions took part in a Forest School program initiative that aimed to promote outdoor learning, exploration, and adventure. Through a variety of activities and experiences, our goal was to foster a deeper connection with nature, develop teamwork and problem-solving skills, and encourage creativity and imagination.



We participated in:

- Nature walks, scavenger hunts and exploration:
- Outdoor games and challenges: Building dens, creating obstacle courses, and engaging in team-building activities that

promote physical activity and social interaction.

- Craft and creativity: Using natural materials like leaves, sticks, and rocks to create art, crafts, and storytelling.



- Environmental education: Learning about weather, growing, mini beasts and looking after our world.

- Team building and collaborating with peers, developing communication skills, and building confidence through shared experiences.

Our Forest School program was designed to be a fun and an engaging way for the children to learn and grow. We believe that this experience not only enhanced their learning but also promoted their physical and emotional well-being.

We had a lot of fun and laughter through the sessions, in pouring rain and basking sunshine. Learning skills we brought back and used at nursery, lighting fires, seeing the Monkey tree and collecting as many pinecones as we could hold in our hands.

A huge Thanks to Tess from Bushy Tails Forest school for supporting us in this adventure.





## Questions – How many and why?

Why does my child ask 'why' so much? –

Article from BBC's Tiny Happy People

**Has your child turned into a little detective, asking you question after question after question?**

One study found that on average, children aged between 14 months and 5 years asked 107 questions an hour!

And often the number of questions that children ask rockets up as they discover the power of one small word that can help them make sense of the world: 'why?'

The more they ask 'why?' questions, the more adults tell them about the things they're interested in. So, you may find that in answering 'why?' questions, you're faced with more and more of them – 'why?.. why?.. why?..'

**Why do children ask 'why?' questions?**

According to Linda, children begin asking 'why?' questions as their brains develop and they discover more and more about the world around them.

"At around 2 and a half all sorts of connections are being made in your child's brain, in particular the connections about how things are grouped together, as well as how one thing happening leads to another thing happening," she says.

Once they begin to understand how things they see are related to one another, they have a thirst for more of this knowledge. They soon realise this can be met by asking questions to the adults around them, and parents often start to get a barrage of 'why?' questions between the ages of 3 and 4. "As they become more aware and more confident, they explore more. Then there are more questions to be asked – almost faster than they can take it in."

It's uncertainty in how things are connected that leads to 'why?' questions, says Linda. "They ask 'why?' because they don't understand how something has suddenly appeared, or how that thing there looks different than the one over here. For example, they think that dogs have short hair because their dog has short hair, but then they see one with long curly hair."

*Having adults answer their 'why?' questions help children to feel safe and secure in their world.*

Parents often start to get a barrage of 'why?' questions between the ages of 3 and 4

There are two reasons for this, says Linda. "Firstly, they want you to clarify and explain things to them so that they can make predictions about the world and what will happen within it. Just like adults, children are most afraid when they're not sure what is going to happen."

The other reason is that it allows them to share with you something they're excited by and interested in, making them feel important and loved. "By sharing an interest with you, they feel valued, and that also grows their self-esteem."

*We used to think kids were asking questions simply to get attention. I don't think so. Most studies suggest that they want the information and that they also want you to know that they're interested in something.*

"That's different than just asking for your attention. They're asking to share what they're loving with you."

Once you and your child are sharing a focus on something that interests them and talking about it, they're much more likely to be engaged and listen to the words you're saying, as they're actively looking to learn.

"As a parent you really have an opportunity at that point. When they don't have any language, it really is hard to guess what it is they want to know about. But you have a strong tool now to make them excited about learning and discovery."

### **How to respond to children's questions**

You can encourage a love of learning by asking your child questions about everything they're curious of.

One clever way of responding to a 'why?' question, is to turn the question back on to your child, says Linda, by asking them in return 'what do you think?'.

Their response can give you a better idea of what they really want to know. Take as an example, your child asking, 'why is it raining?'. "They may want to know why it's raining for reasons that you couldn't dream of. And we often answer from our view before we find out what theirs is," says Linda.

By asking them questions in return, you can find out what their level of understanding is and work out what information they really want. "Maybe what they really want to know isn't the literal reason why it's raining. Maybe it's what they should wear when it's raining? Or if they are allowed to run around in the rain?"

The quicker you find out what they really want to know and can provide an answer, the quicker you'll put an end to the endless chain of 'Why?' questions too. "The reason they keep asking more questions is often because you haven't figured out what it is they really want to know. Once they know it, they'll probably stop. So just keep asking them back in a nice way."

Another advantage to this approach is that you're encouraging them to be curious and imaginative about the world around them. "By asking 'why do you think?' back to them, you're developing their imagination. You're also giving them self-confidence through praise when you say, 'I never thought of that, that's a great idea', before you say 'here's what I think...'"

"They're learning the thing that every scientist must know, which is that there isn't one answer. There are several possible answers, and they must decide which one is best."

But what if you ask them what they think, and you're met with a response of 'I don't know' or they just aren't able to give an answer? In this case, Linda suggests that you make a best guess at what they want to understand better and explain it to them as best you can.

*They might ask more 'why?' questions, which will hopefully help you to narrow down exactly what it is they're hoping to understand. The more you talk to them, the more likely they'll build their vocabulary and be better able to express themselves in future.*

### **What do I do if I can't answer my child's questions?**

Linda is keen to stress that it's ok not to know the answers to everything your child asks you.

*One of the biggest gifts you can give your kid is to engage with them in a joint search for knowledge.*

"Say to them things like, 'actually, I don't know why there are so many stars in the sky. But shall we find out together?'. You're demonstrating that nobody knows everything and acting as a role model by starting to find out with them. You also give them one of the greatest gifts that you can: encouragement to keep on learning throughout their lifetime."

## From our Foyer

### Holistic development and learning

"Every child is a unique child who is constantly learning," says the EYF's principle, emphasising that each everyday experience is an occasion for holistic development and learning, as seen in this example of a toddler enjoying his snack.



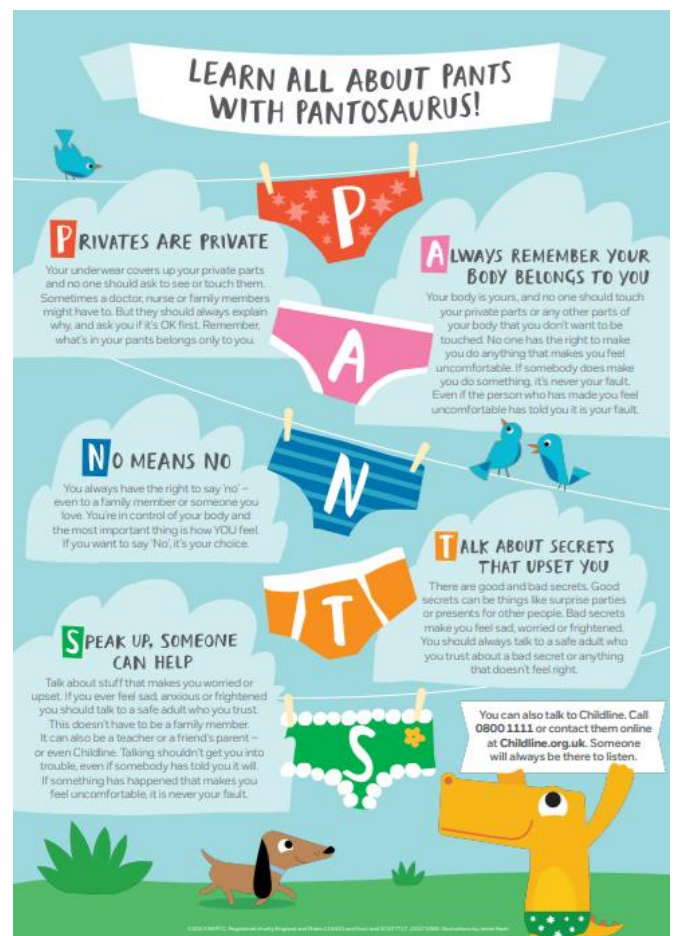
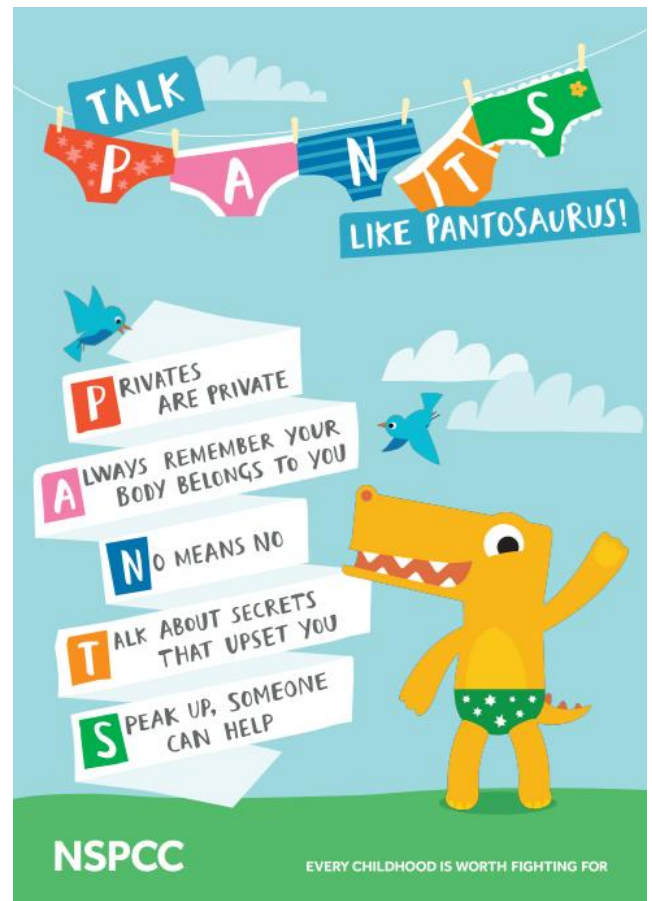
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### Holistic development and learning

Enabling environments foster holistic approaches to early development and learning, recognising that different aspects are constantly connected in a child's experiences. In the EYF's, areas are described separately in order to break down the complexity of development and learning, but it is important to keep the whole child in mind. As a child encounters objects, events and other people, all spheres of development and learning are in action at the same time, as in the example below of two children who are experimenting with water and a construction using tubing and plastic sheets.



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## Safety reminders

Slushies unsafe for children under 7

**Hollie Cole**

BBC News - Published 17 July 2025

**Children under seven years old should not have shop-bought slushies over health concerns about a chemical they contain, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) has said.**

The government watchdog said slushed ice drinks containing glycerol - a type of sweetener - were unsafe for young children, and consumption of them should be limited for children aged between seven and 10.

Most slushies contain naturally occurring glycerol instead of sugar to stop them freezing solid, giving them the slushy effect.

The FSA said consuming large amounts of it can cause side-effects, including headaches and sickness, low blood sugar levels, shock, and loss of consciousness in children.

Prof Robin May, the FSA's chief scientific advisor, said: "While these drinks may seem harmless and side effects are generally mild, they can, especially when consumed in large quantities over a short time, pose serious health risks to young children."

The fresh FSA guidance comes following [research indicating children under eight should completely avoid drinking slushies](#).

It studied the cases of 21 two- to seven-year-olds in the UK and Ireland who needed A&E treatment after becoming acutely ill within an hour of having the drinks, mostly between 2018 and 2024.

The children all recovered and were discharged from hospital.

Dr Duane Mellor from the British Dietetic Association told the BBC that it was "relatively rare" for children to suffer ill side-effects after drinking slushies containing glycerol.

The registered dietician said the "heat of the day", dehydration and a child being excited could "exacerbate" symptoms linked to consuming the drink.

He recommended that children have water or cold milk as alternatives to slushies - or if they want a sweet drink, fruit flavoured water with ice cubes, a diet drink or a low-sugar ice lolly.

The FSA's updated guidance is stricter than its previous advice, which said that under-fives should avoid slushies.

It now also says children aged seven to 10 should have no more than one 350ml slushy drink - "roughly the size of a fizzy drink can" - a day.

"We are asking parents and carers to take extra care when buying drinks for young children, particularly during warmer months when consumption of 'slushies' typically increases," said Prof May.

This guidance also applies to ready-to-drink slushy pouches and make-at-home kits of slushy concentrates.

The FSA says its guidance should be on a "written warning at [the] point of sale" and that producers should make the drinks with the "minimum quantity" of glycerol "technically necessary to achieve the required 'slush' drink effect".

It also recommends against vendors offering free slushy refills in venues where children under the age of 10 would likely consume them.

## Be careful what you wear when you're out to scare

Some fancy dress costumes are highly flammable so they can ignite almost instantly and burn fast.



Try to buy from a reputable store or website. Cheap costumes may not meet UK safety standards.



Look for a costume with a UKCA or CE mark



Look for a label that says: "This garment has undergone additional safety testing for flammability"



Remind children to stay well away from naked flames and other heat sources

## Nappy sacks warning!



Young babies under six months naturally grasp things and pull them to their mouths, but then find it difficult to let go.



As nappy sacks are very thin, they can cling to a baby's face as they breathe in and result in suffocation or choking.



Keep nappy sacks well out of reach of children and never put them in a buggy or cot.



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## Firework safety: lessons for little ones

There's no substitute for good adult supervision when it comes to preschoolers and fireworks. Even sparklers burn many times hotter than a kettle of boiling water! But you can start teaching them how to stay safe. Use our safety messages and activity ideas to make firework safety fun!

### Safety messages

- Fireworks are exciting, but they can be very dangerous and can hurt you. Listen to your grown-up about where is a safe place to stand.
- Never touch a firework. Don't pick up a firework after it has been used.
- Wear your gloves when you hold your sparkler and keep it away from your body.
- Hold one sparkler at a time.
- Keep your sparkly sparkler safely away from other people and don't run around with it.
- Don't throw your sparkler in case it hits someone.
- Once your sparkler is finished, put it into a bucket of water, don't pick it back up. It stays hot for a long time and can burn you.
- Stand well away from the bonfire and stay close to the grown-ups.
- Don't be tempted to throw things into the bonfire or poke at it with sticks.
- Practice your STOP, DROP and ROLL before your fireworks celebrations.

More advice here:  
[www.capt.org.uk/firework-safety](http://www.capt.org.uk/firework-safety)

### Activity ideas

- Build on your work teaching children about hot and cold. Using pictures of hot things (including sparklers, fireworks, bonfires) and cold things (including a bucket of water to put used sparklers in) develop some simple games around matching/difference e.g. pairs, snap, spot the difference.
- Encourage children to make safety posters. You can print out pictures for children to use. Or use their bonfire night paintings and crafts as part of a fireworks safety display in your setting.
- At circle time ask the children questions:
  - What should you wear on your hands if you are holding a sparkler?
  - Should you run around when you are holding a sparkler?
  - What should you do with a sparkler when it has gone out?
  - You must never touch fireworks. Why not?
  - Why should you stand well away from the bonfire?
- Role play children sitting at a safe distance behind a rope around a firepit or pretend bonfire.
- Practice STOP, DROP and ROLL.

### STOP, DROP and ROLL

If your clothes catch fire STOP, DROP and ROLL:

1. STOP what you're doing.
2. DROP to the ground and cover your face with your hands.
3. ROLL over and over to put out the flames.

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## A Note from Miss Susan – Exciting Times Ahead

As some of you may have heard, I'm excited to share that we're merging the Hampton Hill nursery children with our Oldfield Road and Thameside sites. I'd like to take a moment to explain the reasoning behind this decision.

The nursery industry is facing challenges in finding quality staff who not only excel in their roles but also bring passion and enthusiasm to their work. As a result, I've made the difficult decision to consolidate our efforts into two strong settings, rather than spreading ourselves too thin across three locations.

By combining our teams and resources, we'll be able to create two exceptional nurseries that function at the highest level. The close proximity of the Oldfield Road and Thameside sites will allow our teams to work together seamlessly, support each other, and engage in exciting activities and projects.

As we move into the next term, you'll see some of the fantastic plans we've put in place. We'll be sharing extracurricular plans and updates in your newsletters, so stay tuned!

If you'd like to discuss this decision further or learn more about what it means for Greenacres, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can call me, send an email, or set up a time for a coffee. Alternatively, you can participate in our "Nursery Officer for a Day" program, where you'll get to work alongside our team and gain a deeper understanding of our work.

I'm looking forward to keeping you all updated as we embark on this new chapter together.

## A Note from Miss Michelle – Importance of Visual aids

At Greenacres we believe that supporting children's learning with visuals can improve their learning outcomes. Over the years we have worked with many professionals and have put support into place for individual children.

We have seen the benefit of using visuals for **all** children, not just children with additional needs, as this helps children to know what is coming next and to be able to anticipate changes with less anxiety. We ensure that all visuals are clear and relates to the Childs room and activity. We have various ways in which we support the children's learning, these are:

- Visual timetables, our routine in photos.
- Now and next boards, we involve the children in changing these, as the activity changes.
- Visuals on lanyards or keyrings.
- Transition books
- ALD boards (Aided language display)
- Photos in different areas to show children what happens there, or what to do with the resources.
- Children's name cards with photos on, to help at self-registration time.
- Photos on pegs, to give a sense of belonging
- Use real objects (object of reference)
- We use Makaton to support the children's language development. This supports the language that we use with signing, some children sign and speak, some sign before they speak.

We always have a move around session before we get the children to sit down, as this helps with their attention.

Visuals serve as powerful tools in early childhood education because they align naturally with how young brains develop & process information. They enhance comprehension, language development memory, critical thinking skills, as well as inquisitively, Visual learning enriches experiences for young children, making education not only more accessible but also more engaging & fun.

Early childhood is a critical period for cognitive, social & emotional development. During these years, children absorb vast amounts of information about the world around them. One of the most effective ways to enhance learning during this stage is through the use of visuals, they play a crucial role in improving learning outcomes for young children. But why exactly do visuals have such a powerful impact?

The human brain processes visual information more quickly and efficiently than text or auditory input. Research suggests that about 65% of the population are visual learners, and even among young children, visuals help stimulate brain regions associated with memory, attention, and comprehension. Investing time in creating vibrant visual environments around children paves the way for stronger foundational knowledge and lifelong curiosity.



**Song time**– We are always enjoying new songs and rhymes, here are a few of our favourites at the moment.

### Row, Row

Row, row, row your boat  
Gently down the stream  
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily  
Life is but a dream.

Row, row, row your boat  
Gently down the Nile.  
If you see a crocodile  
Don't forget to scream!  
Aaaah!

Rock, rock, rock the boat  
Gently down the river.  
If you see a polar bear  
Don't forget to shiver!  
Brr!!

Row, row, row your boat  
Gently to the shore.  
If you see a lion there  
Don't forget to roar!  
Roar!

Row, row, row your boat  
Gently down across the puddle.  
If you see your best friend, there  
Give them a great big cuddle!



### Incy Wincy Spider

Incy Wincy spider climbing up the spout,  
Down came the rain and washed the spider out.  
Out came the sunshine and dried up all the rain,  
And Incy Wincy spider climbed up the spout again.

Incy Wincy spider climbing up the tree,  
Down came the snow and made poor Incy freeze.  
Out came the sunshine and melted all the snow,  
And Incy Wincy spider had another go.



### Miss Polly had a Dolly

Miss Polly had a dolly who was sick, sick, sick.  
So she phoned for the doctor to be quick,  
quick, quick.

The doctor came with his bag and his hat  
And he knocked at the door with a rat-a-tat-tat.

He looked at the dolly and he shook his head  
And he said "Miss Polly, put her straight to bed!"

He wrote on a paper for a pill, pill, pill  
"I'll be back in the morning yes I will, will, will."



## Gallery Fun

