

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our Spring/Summer edition of our newsletter.

Can you believe it? – Greenacres is 30 this year!!!

We are all so proud, happy and excited to be celebrating our 30 year birthday!

Like everything we do, we plan to do it in style on Saturday 18th July, where we will also be celebrating alongside our school leavers, marking the occasion with a Graduation Ceremony and BBQ.

A wonderful chance for us all to get together in a relaxed atmosphere of positivity, celebrate each other’s achievements and just have fun! We hope you can all make it.

Please enjoy reading the rest of our next newsletter and don’t forget that we really do love you to get involved at Greenacres, so don’t forget our invitation for you to come and work alongside us for half a day doing ‘Nursery Officer for a day’ (details below).

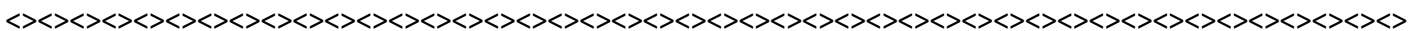
The spring and summer brings many opportunities for us to get out and about, and of course we have lots planned to take advantage of the better weather with fun trips, but also lots of fun outdoor activities at nursery too. So much to look forward to.

See you all soon



Happy Reading.

Miss Susan



Nursery Officer for a Day

Why not come and witness first hand exactly what we do with our curriculums and our days of fun and activity?

As they say,

“if you walked a mile in our shoes . . .” you’d learn so much more about what we do and why we do it.

It is often better to do this on a day or in an area when your child isn’t with you, so that you get a chance to really witness and join the activities for yourself. It’s a great way to meet staff and see how they work, maybe find out more about the next room that your child is going to move up to, or just understand some of the techniques, or behind the scenes plans.

Work with us for the morning, then finish with a relaxed lunch with Miss Susan and your keyworker to discuss your experience.



If you’d like to experience this wonderful opportunity to learn more about how your child spends their time at Greenacres, please speak to your keyworker to arrange a day to come in. We’d love to welcome you.

It Just Makes Sense

One workshop I recently went on with Dr. Andy Cope, made me rethink everything about happiness, leadership, and the energy we bring to Greenacres every day.

I'm lucky – we already have a brilliant, caring, committed team here. But a recent workshop called 'Being Brilliant' with Dr. Andy Cope challenged me to think: how do we take "great" and make it even greater?

Dr. Pope had been tasked with looking at why mental health struggles are so high today. Instead of starting with what's going wrong, he flipped it: what about the small percentage of people who are 'truly' happy?

What does truly happy even mean? We all said the usual things – positive, excited, motivated, successful. But the real answer was simple: you know a truly happy person instantly, because they make other people happy. They walk into a room with a cheery smile, genuine interest in others, excitement for what's next.

Dr. Pope's research suggested only about 2% of people live like that day to day. That 2% is powerful, because happiness feeds down. What if the secret to transforming any workplace wasn't another policy, but nurturing more of that 2% – more people choosing to be truly happy? And at Greenacres, I don't want to settle for 2%.

Because here's what I know: happy staff create a happy workforce. A happy workforce creates happy children. And happy children grow up influencing a happier world. This is big.

Dr. Pope also talked about "mood hoovers" – the "could be better", "hate Mondays", "nightmare" energy that drains a room. We don't have that here. But as leaders and as parents, we're always the first influence. If we drag ourselves out of bed muttering "Ugh, I've got to go to work", we teach children that work is something to dread. If we show up with energy, curiosity and joy, we teach them the opposite.

So my mission isn't to fix something broken. It's to build on something wonderful. To help our already fantastic team protect and grow their happiness – not fake, 100% happy-all-the-time, which Andy calls "toxic positivity". Real happiness. The kind you don't reserve for later, for the weekend, for some special occasion.

He'd asked children what they wanted to do with the next 20 to 30 years of their life. They were buzzing – so excited, motivated, full of ideas. When he asked adults, too many were filled with dread, focused on what wasn't going to happen. The happiness had been zapped out of their lives already!

But as Andy says, happiness isn't 'over there'. It's not in the future. 'Life' is the special occasion. We can choose it right now.



Childcare is hugely responsible work. Long hours, and never as much pay as we'd love to give. But it's also joyful, meaningful, and important. And happiness, like Andy says, can be a virus. The smiles, the enthusiasm, the great communication, the can-do attitude, the praise, the laughter – it spreads.

We've already got that bug at Greenacres and it all links with neuro science. Now let's make it a Greenacres virus.

Watch this space everyone there's more to come!



Another great event by Hampton Village Traders Association this Bank Holiday



Dog Show Categories
SPONSORED BY:
ASHLEY DENTAL CARE
FOOTIE TOTS ** HR WASTE
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Thank you for your support

Gander Green ~ Station Road, Hampton, TW12 2AS



Dog Show & Family Fun Day

Bank
Holiday

Sunday

May 24th

11am – 6pm



Cake Competition

* Picnic Area *

* Dog Show *

* BBQ *

* Games & Prizes *

* Children's Entertainment *



Rides



Bouncy Castle

Beer & Bubbles* * * Street Foods* * * Stalls

DOG SHOW - £5 per dog for up to 3 categories

ENTRY FEE - £2 entry per person in advance, £3 on the day.

FOR FURTHER INFO

PLEASE CALL/TEXT SUSAN ON 07713 405049



'Wellbeing' in our Modern World

Growing up in this modern world that we live in can be extremely tough. There seems to be a lot more stress and mental illness in adults these days, more than there used to be. Over time we have all learnt strategies to get through life. How many of you go home after a busy day at work getting through the day and then release that tension when you get home? Either having a glass of wine, relaxing in a hot bath or having a rant to a partner. Taking time for your well-being and learning ways to be resilient, bouncing back and to self-regulate are very important, as much for yourself, as it is for your children. Some children, as they grow up, learn strategies to manage and to release the tension when they get home, this is called masking, this can start as early as in their early years.

So, what is masking? Masking refers to the act of hiding or suppressing natural behaviours to fit in with 'social norms', most commonly in girls and neurodivergent children. A child can manage all day, 'holding it together', they're well behaved, compliant, getting by, fitting in with learnt or copied behaviours. When they get home to their 'safe place', they release the effort of holding in their discomfort all day, they may:

- *Have emotional outbursts or become dysregulated
- *Be exhausted, burning out/crashing, falling asleep really early.
- *Not listening/ignoring/answering back/being defiant, saying 'no' answering back/attitude or shouting.
- *They may appear quiet and not want to talk about their day.

And you the parents can get the negative behaviour, as much as it's not nice for us, children need to release the feelings that are bottled up, we need to be able to support this process, which can be very tough on you, keeping yourself regulated at the same time, especially if you are asking them to do something or to stop doing something.



Why do we mask?

*Social acceptance - to fit in, not to be judged

*To meet expectations - to conform to adult expectations, to get praise.

*Survival mechanism (fight or flight) - becoming overwhelmed, to avoid negativity.

The effects of masking, can cause internal stress, increased anxiety. We should be aware of signs of anxiety in children's early years. It is essential to support children's wellbeing and to help them to manage their emotions.

At nursery we create calm spaces inside and outside, offer sensory resources, use visual aids and work with you at home, using the same consistent strategies. Providing the language for them to be able to talk about their feelings and frustrations and for them to understand that having 'a go' and not getting it right the first time is ok. Giving a child time to recover, if they become distressed, to validate their emotions and to make them feel secure.

We need to teach children the skills to be able to regulate their emotions for their future life as adults, we are their role models.

RESILIENCE
is the ability
to find the inner
strength to bounce
back from a
SET-BACK OR CHALLENGE

Articles to read for further support:

When 'good behaviour' hides a struggling child - <https://babiesandchildren.co.uk/child-masking-behaviour/>

Understanding Masking - www.kids.org.uk/guides/masking/



Thameside - Manager's Message

Summer is definitely on its way, and we are really enjoying the warm bursts of sunshine.

The garden is having a small revamp at the moment and I'm sure your children are telling you all about the new mud kitchen and water feature.



Please ensure your child brings in a sun hat & maybe a spare pair of shoes to stay at nursery in case of water play.

The Parent Forum is coming up on Tuesday 23rd June and it is a fantastic way for you to have a chance to take a look around the nursery, visit the room your child is about to move to and have a chat with the staff. This is an adult only event so please make sure you book in your babysitter!



This year is Greenacres 30th anniversary and we want to celebrate! On Saturday 18th July we will be hosting a Anniversary BBQ with a Graduation ceremony for our school leavers, please save the date as we would love to see you there. Details to come...



And last, but not least, our website has had a big revamp and we would love for you to take a look, there are photos regularly uploaded, lots of information on subjects such as funding and a day in the life of a child at Greenacres. We are also adding a calendar for Greenacres events so you can see these in plenty of time.

www.greenacres-childcare.co.uk

Miss Ellen

Dates for your Diaries.

Tuesday 23rd June - Thameside's Parent Forum is coming up on in the evening.

Saturday 18th July - Greenacres 30th Anniversary/BBQ/Graduation Ceremony



Fun in Bears



Reading

Reading to babies supports language development, brain growth, emotional bonding, and sets the foundation for lifelong learning and social skills.

Sensory and Interactive Learning

Even very young babies explore books through sight, touch, and sometimes taste. Board books, fabric books, and colourful illustrations engage multiple senses, supporting early literacy and cognitive skills.

Babies learn by pointing, turning pages, and mimicking sounds, which enhances both fine motor skills and interactive learning.



Emotional Bonding and Social Skills

Reading together provides physical closeness and emotional connection, signalling safety, love, and attention.



Make it daily

Read to your child for at least a few minutes each day. Try to get in as much reading as you can. Babies might only be interested for a few minutes. As they get older, their attention span can start to handle longer stories.

Follow their lead

Does your child want to turn back to look at the first page again and again? Just roll with it. Let your little one point out the pictures they like on the page or talk about what you see

Pick the right books

Babies do well with chunky board books they can hold (and, yes, chew).

They like bright colours and big pictures.





Explorers Chat

Self-Care and Independence

Explorers have been busy working on their self-care & independence skills this month. We have been cutting our own snack with knives and chopping boards, self-serving at lunch time, scraping our plates after meal times, exploring the coat trick and taking off and putting on our own shoes.



Key aspects of toddler independence include:

Confidence & Self-Esteem: Doing things for themselves gives toddlers a sense of accomplishment and control, boosting their belief in their own abilities.

Resilience & Problem-Solving: Allowing toddlers to navigate small challenges (like putting on shoes) helps them learn to cope with failure, try again, and develop grit.

Reduced Frustration: Independent children are often less frustrated because they rely less on adults to meet their needs, allowing them to explore and learn at their own pace.

Brain Development & Self-Regulation: Independent tasks help toddlers learn to manage emotions and understand their capabilities, which is linked to better cognitive development.

How to Encourage Independence:

Offer Simple Choices: Start with easy choices, such as, "Would you like to wear the blue shirt or the red shirt?"

Encourage Self-Care: Promote independence in daily routines like brushing teeth, putting on shoes, or feeding themselves, even if it takes longer.

Allow Safe Risks: Encourage climbing, jumping, and exploring to help them understand their limits.

Provide Routine: A consistent, predictable routine helps children know what to expect and what is expected of them, fostering a sense of security and autonomy.



Toddler self-care focuses on fostering independence, hygiene, and emotional regulation through simple daily routines. Examples include washing hands, brushing teeth, dressing, feeding themselves, and learning to manage emotions, often supported by allowing extra time for practice and providing simple choices to build confidence.

Physical Self-Care Examples (Hygiene & Independence):

Handwashing: Washing hands independently before meals or after playing.

Toothbrushing: Holding the toothbrush, with adult assistance for thoroughness.

Self-Feeding: Using a spoon, loading it, and bringing it to their mouth with minimal assistance.

Dressing: Putting on/taking off shoes (Velcro) and simple clothing items.

Bathroom Skills: Using the toilet and wiping.

Self-Care in the Bathroom: Washing parts of their body with a washcloth during bath time.



Discoverers Chat

Forest School Fun!

We have been very fortunate to introduce a new extracurricular activity for our preschoolers recently – forest school. Forest school allows the children to explore the outdoors without restriction, teaches them new skills, promotes a connection with nature and encourages team work and inspires confidence in an inclusive and exciting environment.

At forest school children are encouraged to explore all aspects of nature including the messy parts! Children can freely, and are encouraged to, explore mud, water, sticks and leaves. These types of materials provide rich, open ended and sensory driven play, allowing children to explore, problem solve encouraging child-led learning, fostering confidence and skills in team work.

Although children have access to amazing activities and resources while at nursery, exploring these materials in the forest allows the children to explore with no barriers, or expectations – only imagination and the excitement to play, learn and explore.

Since going to forest school, the children have already learnt some amazing new skills such as fire lighting, cooking, den building, learnt about different trees and plants and so much more! It's been a great addition to our extracurriculars and our preschoolers are having so much fun at forest school.



Messy play is just as important at nursery as it is at forest school, exploring a wide range of materials is crucial for children's development. This is why we always encourage parents to dress their children in clothes which they don't mind getting dirty and to always provide spares in their bag. These types of activities aren't always planned. We follow the children's interests and these can change and develop rapidly, leading to spontaneous activities of all types.

