Greenacres Newsletter | **AUTUMN 2026 Edition** | **Oldfield Rd**

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 – Early years - Science

Early Science: Dr Sarah Earle

Why consider early science?



The first images of science that come to mind often contain white coats, test tubes and Bunsen burners, but science is much broader than this. Scientists like David Attenborough and Jane Goodall study the natural world on location, while others look to the stars like Maggie Aderin-Pocock or care for our health like Sarah Gilbert and Chris Whitty. We use science in every aspect of our daily lives and many jobs require scientific knowledge, from firefighters and electricians to hairdressers and dentists. Awareness of the important role of science and scientists is something that is built from an early age, something that needs to be representative of the community in which you work, to ensure that children grow up thinking that 'science is for me'

Science is not just for scientists or to provide a pathway to future jobs. Science is a way of thinking and questioning about the world, as well as a body of knowledge built up over time. Exploration and enquiry are how we develop our understanding about the world. Observing with all senses, raising questions, trialling, testing and thinking about the evidence in front of us: these could describe any young child's explorations, but they are also the methods of science enquiry. Such enquiry can be seen in three of the characteristics of effective teaching and learning, 'playing and exploring; active learning; creating and thinking critically' (DfE, 2021, p. 16), demonstrating the relevance of science beyond the 'specific area' of 'Understanding the World' in the statutory guidance for England.



What does early science look like?

Children develop their own scientific ideas from the outset. Sensory experience of the world builds foundational concepts –



for example, *naïve physics* ideas about the cause and effect of pushing or dropping, or *naïve biological* ideas about moving and growing or the naming of categories of animals (Goswami, 2015). This is not to say that sole discovery will necessarily lead to the development of science concepts; collaboration and communication with others are important in aiding understanding and developing the language with which to express scientific ideas.

Young children learn through play and such practical exploration is the precursor to later science investigations (Johnston, 2010). Open-ended first-hand experiences that are owned by the child are motivating and engaging, where children are able to proceed at their own pace – there are no time constraints for an infant exploring a rattle with their mouth or a toddler repeatedly pouring water between pots. Concrete sensory experiences support the development of the key scientific skill of observation, with children using their senses to explore the world. The Creative Little Scientists European study found 'playful experiences' and 'hands-on, minds-on exploratory engagement' (Cremin et al., 2015, p. 415) to be essential elements for scientific development. 'Minds on' notes the importance of the thinking and dialogue that go alongside the exploration, which may be supported by the adult.

Key Benefits of Early Science Education



Cognitive Growth: Hands-on exploration builds neural circuits during rapid brain development, boosting future STEM and academic success.

Critical Thinking: Testing ideas (like sink or float experiments) teaches children how to form hypotheses, observe changes, and accept mistakes as part of learning.

Language and Literacy: Describing observations expands scientific vocabulary and improves overall communication skills.

Transferable Life Skills: Inquiring about the world fosters persistence, collaboration, and social-emotional development.



Practical Ways to Embed Science

Sensory Play: Use magnifying glasses on textured leaves, rocks, or insects to sharpen observational skills.

Cause and Effect: Test simple reactions, such as seeing what dissolves in water (salt or sugar) or what sinks and floats.

Life Cycles: Grow plants or observe caterpillars to teach patience, responsibility, and change over time.

Science is in the everyday world around us and by promoting an open mind to scientific learning will support a better understanding and approach in our later learning lives.

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

Macaroni Cheese with side salad

Ingredients

Plain flour
Butter/Margarine
Whole Milk
Black pepper
Cheese
Macaroni
Salad

Instructions

Our mac and cheese is a real home comfort food for the winter months. 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 and black pepper.

Cook the Macaroni or pasta of your choice until soft. Stir through the sauce and place in an oven proof dish.

Scatter over more cheese and garlic breadcrumbs for a little extra crunch.

Bake until golden and bubbly.

We serve ours with a side salad for freshness.





Pumpkin Cookies

Ingredients

2 ½ cups flour
1 tsp Pumpkin pie spice
½ tsp baking soda
2 ½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
1 cup sugar
½ cup Butter
¼ cup pure maple syrup
1 tsp vanilla
1 cup pumpkin
1 cup of white and milk chocolate chips

Instructions

Preheat oven to 375 degrees.

Cream together the sugar and butter, until light and fluffy. Add the maple syrup, vanilla, and pumpkin puree and beat it until it is smooth.

Slowly add the flour, cinnamon, baking soda, baking powder and salt.

Bring the mixture together but don't over mix. At the last moment stir in the chocolate chips.

Drop the mixture onto a baking tray and put them in the oven for 8minutes.

Let them cool and enjoy.

What's been happening around the branch



Wow what a busy few months. In all that heat we have been looking after our gardens and watering our plants. We had a lovely smell coming from our herbs in the sensory garden and our new herb planter in the back garden.



Our strawberries produced a great crop and now have lovely runners which we will be potting up to create new plants ready for next year. However, our tomatoes just didn't grow. Our plants stayed small but healthy for a long time inside and when we took the chance and planted them out, they have grown into lovely plants but only two tomatoes grew and as you can see there were tiny. Oh well we'll try a different variety next year we think!







Our scooter and bike days went down a treat with lots of obstacle and games in the front car park. There was a lot of giggling and racing around, with everyone needing a little drink and snack afterwards.





Our Macmillian coffee afternoon was a super hit as always. There were so many yummy cakes to enjoy whilst playing and enjoying all the toys and space in Lions. Thank you to everyone who joint us and helping us to raise money for such an important cause.

We have been enjoying the good weather with a splash water fun day at the hub, with lots of inflatables and water in the sunshine.

Out and About



Lions had been reading a story about the post, so we decided to head off tot eh post box with our very own letters, addressed to ourselves. We talked about what was going to happen and then told our parents to expect a letter to arrive for us to open.





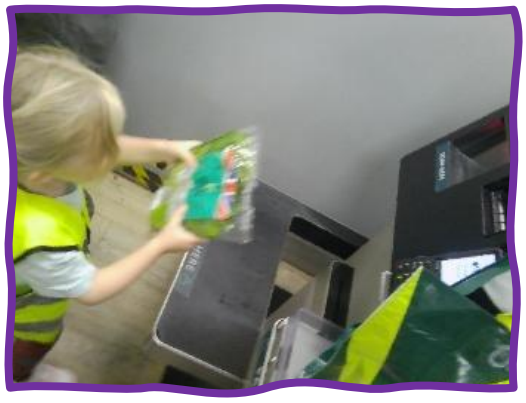
During our September topic we headed off down Oldfield Road to look at all the different buildings and ways of living. We took our cameras and recorded what we found. It was interesting to see the f=different houses, flats, bungalows, garages and shops. We also talked about how different the front garden were, from lawns and plants to driveways.



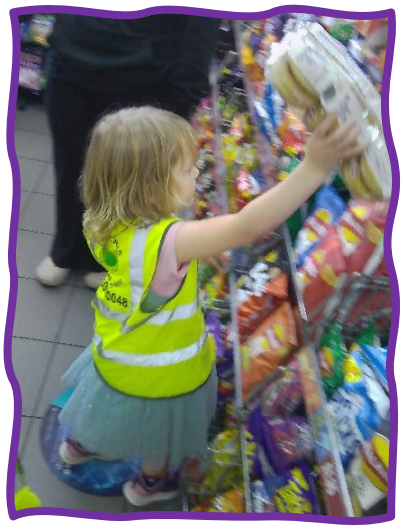


We held a Teddy Bear picnic day and decided to wander off to the hub to have our picnic. The weather was beautiful as we strolled along the road with our teddies in hand. After a little play in the Hubs Garden, we sat down to teddy shaped sandwiches, pizza and crisps and lots of other yummy food in our teddy bear picnic boxes. It was a really lovely outing with our teddies in tow.





We had a little visit to Waitrose to buy our ingredients for a cooking activity. That morning we have used our recipe book to choose our cooking that day, made our list and then headed off to choose. We learnt about scanning and paying for our shopping and carrying it back again.



Upcoming plans over next few months

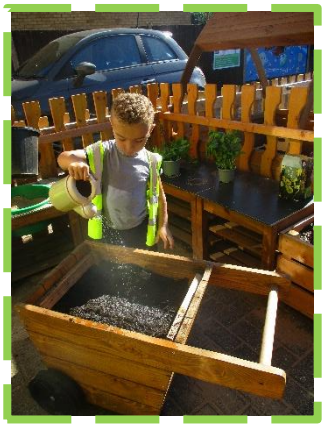
We like to explore a range of different themes and topics within our nursery day. Each month we will send you a Monthly liaison letter explaining in detail about the theme for the following month. Each month brings new experiences, conversations, ideas, and experiments. Whilst we have an idea of where 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:

- Christmas and Winter
- Life values
- Our healthy Bodies
- Animals
- Growing
- Minibeasts

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

Watch out for all our Christmas Parties, plays, concerts and fun.

Sensory Garden





We've been out and about in our sensory garden through the summer months, smelling the herbs and keeping everything watered during the very hot and dry season.

Everything is looking a little bit sorry for itself as the Autumn months draw in and the herbs hibernate.

So, we've been looking forward to next spring and went out on a beautiful sunning morning to plant our Tulip and daffodil bulbs.



We are going to look after them over the winter and can't wait to see the signs of sporing when they start to bloom.



Cosy Cubs



Music and rhymes play a very important role in babies' early development. They support brain development, language and communication skills, emotional well-being, and physical coordination from a very young age.

In Cubs, we love our music time! It is not only a fun and engaging experience for the babies but also a wonderful way to help them relax and feel calm.

Every Tuesday, we enjoy an extra-curricular session with **Crafty Tales**, where babies take part in a variety of exciting and stimulating activities. These sessions encourage them to explore sounds, develop their listening skills, express their emotions, and engage with the world around them.

Singing songs, listening to music, and enjoying nursery rhymes also create wonderful opportunities for bonding, helping babies build strong emotional connections with their parents and caregivers.

In Cubs, we believe that learning through music and rhymes makes every moment joyful, meaningful, and full of opportunities for growth and development.

Why are the music and rhymes important for babies?

Language and speech development

Babies listen to the sounds, rhythm and patterns of words. Nursery rhymes introduce new vocabulary, help babies recognize different sounds and lay the foundations for speaking and understanding language.

Brain development and listening skills

Music helps babies pay attention to sounds, recognize patterns and practice listening. Repetition in songs and rhymes helps babies become familiar with words, sounds and sequences.

Emotional wellbeing and bonding

Singing softly to babies can comfort them, help them feel safe and strengthen their emotional connection with parents. Gentle lullabies can also become part of a calming bedtime routine.

Physical development and coordination

Action songs encourage babies to clap, wave, kick their legs, move their bodies and eventually copy simple actions. These activities support the development of motor skills and body awareness.

How can parents support babies through music?

- Sing simple nursery rhymes every day, such as Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star and The Wheels on the Bus.
- Use facial expressions, gestures and gentle movements while singing.
- Repeat favourite songs so babies become familiar with the words and tune.
- Introduce a variety of gentle sounds, rhythms and musical instruments suitable for babies.
- Sing during everyday routines, such as nappy changing, feeding and bedtime.
- Watch babies' reactions and allow them time to respond with smiles, babbling or movements.
- Keep music at a comfortable volume and avoid loud sounds near babies' ears.

Music and rhymes provide babies with enjoyable learning experiences that support their communication, thinking, physical development and emotional security. The most important thing is not singing perfectly but interacting warmly and regularly with the baby. A familiar voice, repeated words and shared enjoyment can make music a valuable part of everyday learning.

Tiger Tales

Why are self-care skills important in a 2–3-year-old room?



Self-care skills are important in a 2–3-year-old room because they support children's independence, confidence, physical development and overall learning. Between the ages of 2 and 3 children are at a stage where they are becoming curious about the world around them and are beginning to want to do things by themselves.



They often start showing an interest in everyday routines such as washing their hands, putting on their coats and shoes, feeding themselves, wiping their faces and beginning to use the toilet. Encouraging children to develop these skills from a young age helps them become more independent and gives them a sense of achievement when they successfully complete a task.



Within a nursery environment self-care skill should be encouraged throughout the daily routine allowing children to practise in a safe supportive and positive environment.



At Greenacres our staff play an important role in helping children develop these skills by demonstrating tasks, offering encouragement and providing opportunities for children to try things independently and stepping in to support them when needed. Remember every child develops at their own pace; some children need more guidance, reassurance or physical support than others.





Lions Laughter



Literacy is one of those skills we can all start to nurture in our early years. But why? Because reading and writing are fundamental to early education, as well as that they crop up everywhere in our day-to-day lives. From reading road signs and writing shopping lists to learning a new language, literacy is a skill that is vital for everyone.

Reading helps to develop a young child's brain: Vital connections in the brain are made very early in life and when stimulated, these form the basis of all future learning and intellectual ability. To put this simply, reading to your children at a young age stimulates these brain cells and each time it strengthens them, and they form connections with even more brain cells. Stimulating your young child's brain cells through these early experiences will help them to become better listeners, readers, and communicators as well as instilling a lifelong love of learning.

Reading fosters a love of learning: Talking about that lifelong love of learning, that is why reading is important at such an early age. When children learn to read at an early age, they have greater general knowledge, a wider range of vocabulary, they are more fluent readers, and they have improved attention spans and better concentration. As well as stronger oral and literacy skills, proficiency in reading also allows young children to understand more, to learn more, and to become competent researchers. As you can imagine, all of these are skills that help young children perform higher in school.



Reading has many psychological benefits for young children: Early reading ignites creativity, sparks curiosity, and stimulates the imagination in young children. Often, this leads to role-play as children grow which helps to develop other skills such as empathy, problem-solving, and morality. While these are significant benefits to young children, the biggest psychological benefit is how reading helps to grow self-confidence and independence from such an early age. The simple act of taking time out of the day to read to your baby or sit down with your child helps to promote greater maturity and discipline. These are all so essential when it comes to your child learning to read in a school setting as sometimes the psychological pressure can be too much.

Reading helps boost a young child's self-confidence: Children have social awareness, from a young age. By reading with your children early on and helping them to learn at their own pace in a fun setting, you can foster a love of reading and help them to become competent and confident. This confidence will help them to show their peers what they are capable of and use the information they have learnt in their play, helping them connect on different levels with their peers.



Reading will help young children become better writers and communicators: When you think about why reading is important, you may think of the obvious benefits such as expanding your vocabulary and knowledge but what many people don't realise is that for young children, it develops so many other skills too. The move a child explores books, stories and rhymes, the more opportunities they have to encounter the written word, letter sounds and playing with words. More exposure then leads to better spelling, grammar, writing, and oral communication.

Literacy is not just about written words.: Literacy is not all about reading and writing, chatting away in funny voices as you flick through picture books, enjoying interactive eBooks together, listening to stories being told via video or audio and singing nursery rhymes can all spark communication and literacy learning. Essentially, it is these ideas and questions the activities promote that create the foundation for developing reading and writing skills.



Stories that encourage imagination: Stories can be told in so many ways. By listening and creating stories we head into the wonderful world of imagination, where anything is possible. Give children a starting point to begin their stories and ensuring they have the tools to take it further, gives them to opportunity to think for themselves, work with others and share ideas. Stories allow us to role play what we know, share our worries, and express ourselves through multiple forms.

Developing an awareness of sounds: Stories help dramatically to develop children's listening skills and their awareness of phonics. Children need to develop listening skills and the ability to tune into and discriminate between sounds before they start to learn letter sounds. Discussing a story and having to remember what happened allows children to recall the details and ask questions they may not have understood. Repeating words back to the adult or re-telling the story themselves, allows them to hear and repeat the words, pronouncing the letters as they have heard them.

Here in Lions, we love stories, not just written stories read from books but the magic of storytelling. Here's how we share the magic:

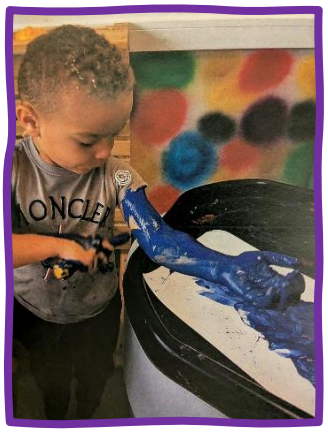
- Role play areas to act out every-day experiences as well creating new ones.
- Small world – people, cars, animals, train sets: all allow for scenes to be created and acted out.
- Fun with puppets
- Pictures of us at home, out and about and at nursery to talk about what happened. These are in physical form as well as a slide show on our big screen.
- Yoga stories, acting out the stories with our bodies.
- Physical stories to get us moving – (We're going on a bear hunt!!)
- Activities that link our day, hungry caterpillar picnics, big box plays for a rocket to the moon (Whatever Next!!)



- Getting out and about, finding Stick Man in Bushy Park.
- Having great, funny voices if reading the book.
- Playing with sounds, using rhyming stories or books that have an emphasis on a certain sound.
- Using picture books so we can create the story from what we see and what we want to happen.
- Our book bags with book to share from nursery to home – why not bring your favourite from home to share with us??
- Playing with sounds, funny words, watching the movement of our lips and tongues in the mirror as we make the sounds.

The most important thing to remember is to have fun and you can't go wrong.

Space Den



At Greenacres, our philosophy is centred around ensuring every child is seen as an individual who can be nurtured by our great team.

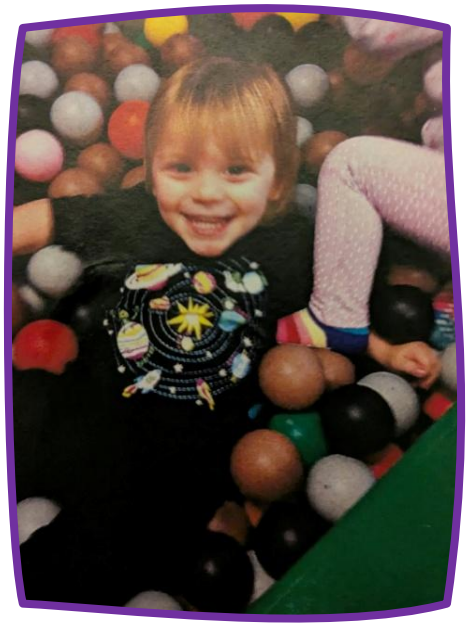
We ensure free flow, fun, laughter and great experiences so that they gain the best start in life. With this in mind we created the Space Den to give each child these opportunities.

In the Space Den, children are able to spend quality time in small groups and one-to-one. Together we have so much fun with lots of laughter and creativity, with an emphasis on crafts and physical play. We really get to explore what motivates each child's learning. We also love getting out and exploring our environment.



The Space Den has definitely become a big part of the Greenacres programme. It offers a safe place for children to wind down or explore their feelings.

With the lead up to winter and Christmas, we intend to experiment with temperature and sensory play even more. We love to wrap up and go jumping in puddles. We love winter walks and finding out what we can discover. We will be collecting leaves, conkers, sticks and lots more – so lots of fun to be had!



Please feel free to find out more about Space Den and how it might be enhancing your child's learning.

Policy update – Safer Sleep

We recognise the critical role of sleep, in supporting children's emotional well-being, cognitive development, and physical growth. Quality rest is essential to children's overall health and development.
We are committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and responsive sleep environment, in partnership with parents and carers, and in line with guidance from NHS Safer Sleep Advice, EYFS Statutory Framework, Local safeguarding procedures and The Lullaby Trust. The safety of every baby and child is paramount during sleep and rest periods.

Safe sleep practise:

To reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and other sleep-related risks, we adhere to the following practices of recommended safer sleep guidance to ensure the children's safety during sleep times.:

Before sleep/rest, staff ensure that:

The child has had a fresh nappy and is clean and comfortable.

Additional clothing (thick coats, cardigans, bibs, hoods, etc.) are removed to avoid overheating.

The room temperature is appropriate (ideally 16–20°C), with thermometers used to monitor this.

The room is well ventilated with good air flow.

Soft lighting, white noise, or gentle lullabies may be used to create a calm environment.

During sleep:

*Children are provided with individual, clean bedding, that fits the cot mattress well. Only cellular blankets are safe to use in cots.

*Babies are always placed **on their back** to sleep. Once they can move from their back to their front and back again by themselves, they can find their own sleeping position. However, we will continue to place them on their back to sleep.

*Children/babies will be placed in the "feet to foot position" with their feet touching the end of the cot.

*Only cots or daybeds are used for sleep —**bouncy chairs, beanbags and car seats are never used** for sleep.

*Babies ages 1 year and under **must only be placed to sleep in a cot.**

*Sleep spaces should only contain a firm, flat, waterproof mattress and lightweight bedding which is firmly tucked in and around the child below their shoulders to prevent head covering. Alternatively, a well fitted baby sleep bag may be used, some clothing should be removed when using a sleeping bag.

*Day beds must have appropriately fitted sheets on them that cover the whole bed.

*Comforters, such as soft toys, may be used if agreed with parents to help settle babies/children to sleep and then for babies under one year, they will be removed once children are asleep.

*Cots must not contain extra items such as toys, pillows, extra blankets, bumpers, wedges. Staff ensure no blankets; muslins cover a child's face or head at any time; muslins must be tied to the cot rail.

*Babies are regularly monitored and checked visually every 10 minutes which is recorded on a sleep record form. Monitoring includes checking for normal breathing, colour, position, temperature & overall well-being.

*Children under six months of age **must** always have an adult with them in the same room for every sleep.

*Children are always within sight and hearing of staff when sleeping.

From our Foyer

Mr Men – How children learn





The Characteristics of Effective Learning



Who have you been in your learning today and why?

Mr Happy & Miss cheerful



Playing and Exploring

I am curious
Join in with open ended activities
Take part in make believe and pretend
Engage in role play
Initiate activities
Learn by trial and error

Mr & Mrs Busy



Active Learning

Maintain focus and not get distracted easily
Keep trying when challenges occur
Show satisfaction in meeting goals
Being proud of how I accomplished something
Enjoy meeting challenges

Mr clever & Little Miss Brainy



Creating and Thinking Critically

Think of ideas
Find ways to solve problems
Find new ways to do things
Make predictions
Developing grouping sequences, cause and effect
Check how well my activities are going
Planning and making decisions about how to approach a task, solve problem, reach a go
Use language of thinking and learning: think, know remember, idea, plan, learn, make sense, trying to do, or figure things out.



Characteristics of effective learning



The Unique Child reaches out to relate to people and things through the **Characteristics of Effective Learning**, which move through all areas of learning.

* Playing and exploring
* Active learning
* Creating and thinking critically

The ways in which the child engages with other people and their environment – playing and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – underpin learning development across all areas and support the child to remain an effective and motivated learner.

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and exploring – engagement

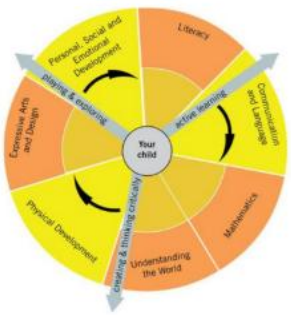
Finding out and exploring
Playing with what they know
Being willing to 'have a go'

Active learning – motivation

Being involved and concentrating
Keeping trying
Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

Creating and thinking critically – thinking

Having their own ideas
Making links
Choosing ways to do things



Children develop in the Context of relationships and the environment around them

This is unique to each family and reflects individual communities and cultures



The early learning goals



The prime areas

Communication and language

Listening and attention: children listen attentively in a range of situations. They listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions. They give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.

Understanding: children follow instructions involving several ideas or actions. They answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events.

Speaking: children express themselves effectively, showing awareness of listeners' needs. They use past, present and future forms accurately when talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future. They develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

Physical development

Moving and handling: children show good control and co-ordination in large and small movements. They move confidently in a range of ways, safely negotiating space. They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

Health and self-care: children know the importance for good health of physical exercise, and a healthy diet, and talk about ways to keep healthy and safe. They manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs successfully, including dressing and going to the toilet independently.







Personal, social and emotional development

Self-confidence and self-awareness: children are confident to try new activities, and say why they like some activities more than others. They are confident to speak in a familiar group, will talk about their ideas, and will choose the resources they need for their chosen activities. They say when they do or don't need help.

Managing feelings and behaviour: children talk about how they and others show feelings, talk about their own and others' behaviour, and its consequences, and know that some behaviour is unacceptable. They work as part of a group or class, and understand and follow the rules. They adjust their behaviour to different situations, and take changes of routine in their stride.

Making relationships: children play co-operatively, taking turns with others. They take account of one another's ideas about how to organise their activity. They show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings, and form positive relationships with adults and other children.





The Specific areas



Literacy

Reading: children read and understand simple sentences. They use knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

Writing: children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular commons words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible.

Mathematics



Numbers: children count reliably with numbers from 1 to 20, place them in order and say which number is one more or one less than a given number. Using quantities and objects, they add and subtract two single digit numbers and count on or back to find the answer. They solve problems, including doubling, halving and sharing.

Shape, space and measures: children use everyday language to talk about size, weight, capacity, position, distance, time and money to compare quantities and objects and to solve problems. They recognise, create and describe patterns. They explore characteristics of everyday objects and shapes and use mathematical language to describe them.

Understanding the world

People and communities: children talk about past and present events in their own lives and in the lives of family members. They know that other children don't always enjoy the same things, and are sensitive to this. They know about similarities and differences between themselves and others, and among families, communities and traditions.

The world: children know about similarities and differences in relation to places, objects materials and living things. They talk about the features of their own immediate environment and how environments might vary from one another. They make observations of animals and plants and explain why some things occur, and talk about changes.

Technology: children recognise that a range of technology is used in places such as homes and schools. They select and use technology for particular purposes.

Expressive arts and design



Exploring and using media and materials: children sing songs, make music and dance, and experiment with ways of changing them. They safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.

Being imaginative: children use what they have learnt about media and materials in original ways, thinking about uses and purposes. They represent their own ideas, thoughts and feelings through design and technology, art, music, dance, role-play and stories.



Safety reminders





Cycle safety from Health for Under 5's

Cycling is a fun way to keep fit and active, and by the age of five your child might have already started riding a trike or a bike with stabilizers. Whether this is the case, or if you're just thinking about getting going, we've put together a guide to cycling safely.

Cycling with your child

Before children are ready to try riding a bike themselves, you can take them out on a bike yourself using a baby cycle seat.

Look for a child bike seat that conforms to British Standard number BS EN 14344:2004.

There are seats available for children of different weights, so make sure your child is within the weight range of the seat you choose.

Before you cycle for the first time with the extra weight of a child on board, it's a good idea to have a go in a safe place where there's no traffic.

Make sure you are wearing cycle helmets and high-visibility clothing. Helmets must be always worn, even when cycling slowly and on soft ground, as they can prevent serious head injuries in the event of a fall or crash.

If your child can see you wearing a helmet when cycling, this will make it easier for them to get into the habit of wearing one too.

Getting a bike for your child

It's usually easier for a child to learn to cycle on a bike with stabilizers, or by using a trike, before moving onto two wheels. Gardens or parks with soft ground can be safe places for your child to try and get to grips with cycling; just aim to keep away from any obstacles such as trees, fences or other people.

Wearing a helmet is a **must** when out on their bike. Helmets will prevent serious head injuries if your child falls off or crashes into something. Children are more likely to land on their heads if they fall off.

Children aren't ready to cycle in traffic until the age of 11, even when supervised by an adult, so be sure to keep well away from public roads and supervise your young child when they are on their bike. Many schools will offer cycling proficiency training for children when they reach this age, which will help them to transition safely to cycling in traffic.

Knowledge on Hand

CBeebies parenting - **Helping your child say the sounds in words**

Most children struggle with certain sounds in speech at one point or another. What can you do to help them along?

If your child is getting muddled up, or unable to say certain sounds at all, take a look at these top tips from speech and language therapist **Ruth Crampton**…

Try 'recasting' their words

This means repeating the words back to your child correctly, no matter how their attempt sounds.

"It's really important," Ruth explains.

"Children need to hear a really good model of a word to be able to think about how they're saying it."

"Give good examples of how you want your child to pronounce words accurately."

Plan and avoid distractions from chat

By removing toys and other things you know will distract your child from the environment, you can help your child focus on what you're saying and the sounds in words.

Remember to sit face to face with them whenever possible.

Have fun with sounds

Your child might not be ready to use certain sounds in words. Can you have fun making those sounds at playtime?

Use lots of words that contain the sound they're struggling with too.

Try using a mirror

This is a great way for your child to get a good look at both of your mouth movements as you say certain words and sounds.

Turn it into a game

In the film above, one mum makes some simple picture cards with objects that sound slightly different. For example, 'bat', 'cat' and 'hat'.

What if they get the same sounds wrong again and again?

"Continue to repeat those words back to them," Ruth says.

There are all sorts of things that could contribute, "can your child actually hear the difference between the accurate sound and the sound they're using? Sometimes children's hearing might be reduced so they're not picking up on some of these sounds, and they do think they're saying it accurately."

"Quite a lot of children will start to correct them themselves, but if it is persistent, get a referral to a speech and language therapist."

CBeebies parenting - **Children's emotions: How to help children understand their emotions**

Created with help from child psychologist Dr Claire Halsey and child development researcher Dr Michelle Lowe.

As children's emotions develop, there are bound to be ups and downs for both them and you as a parent.

What makes it difficult is that they take time to be able to both understand and express clearly how they are feeling.

So how can you help your child understand their emotions?

How do children come to understand their feelings?

Children usually start to work out how they feel by around 16 months. By this time, they might use facial expressions to show emotions, and they might be getting frustrated when they don't have all the words to tell you how they feel, which can lead to tantrums.

By the time they are between the ages of 2 and 3 years old, they're starting to name some of their feelings - such as 'sad', 'scared' or 'happy'.

Later on, between the ages of 2 and 4, they begin to really tune into their own feelings and notice similar feelings in other people around them.

Tips for helping children understand emotions

1. Help them to label feelings.

- It can be really useful to draw or make faces together, showing them feelings like 'happy', 'sad' and 'angry'.
- You can also use pretend play as a way to help explain emotions to them – tell them how teddy feels when he is poured a cup of tea or how daddy feels when the superhero saves him.

2. Chat about feelings throughout their day.

- Chat to them regularly about feelings, whether it's theirs or the people around them
- Talk to them about a range of feelings, not just when there's a problem. Talk about times they feel excited, surprised or left out.

3. Set a good example.

- Try to be open and share feelings as a family.
- Make it clear that all feelings are OK, but not all behaviours are.
- Tell your child how you are feeling and what you are going to do about it.

Messages from Miss Tanya, Oldfield Road's Manager –

As I spend more time in each room getting to know the children, it's been so lovely to see everyone settling into their routines, finding their feet in new rooms, making new connections, building friendships and growing in confidence. I've really enjoyed wandering through the building and seeing all the wonderful learning happening across the nursery. It's a real pleasure to see the children so engaged, curious and happy.

Over the coming weeks we will continue to provide a wide range of exciting, play-based experiences that support development, independence, creativity and confidence. Please keep an eye out for all the lovely artwork, photographs and information displayed in your child's room, including each room's wonderful spider graphs.

We also love you to get involved from home. If you have anything that could support your child's current learning or interests, books, photographs, objects, natural materials or something special from home please feel free to bring it in.

We would love you to feel more involved in the wonderful things happening at nursery, so how can we make this happen?

Please do stop me for a chat and share your ideas on how we can involve you more in your child's nursery experience. I'd love to hear your thoughts. We are always so grateful for your liaison slips, items from home and consultation feedback please keep them coming. These little contributions make such a difference and help build a stronger connection between nursery and home.

As we head towards the end of the year, we already have some exciting plans for Christmas. That time already?! I know!

I've heard wonderful plans for singalongs, concerts, plays and Christmas parties. Some very exciting times ahead.

We can't wait to share this magical time of year with you and celebrate all the wonderful memories we've made together at Oldfield Road. Please stay in the loop over the next couple of months so you don't miss any events or opportunities to join us.

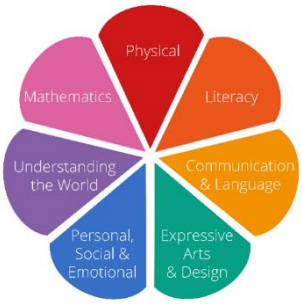


I look forward to seeing you all around the nursery at drop-off and pick-up. If you have a question, suggestion, idea or concern or just something you'd like to share. Please stop me for a chat. I'm always happy to listen.

Miss Tanya

A Note from Miss Susan –

Keeping up with Latest Legislation and Terminology



You may have heard a lot of talk about GLD in childcare recently. GLD stands for 'Good Level of Development' and it is used to look closely at children's early years and consider which children are likely to naturally reach a good level of development, and which children might need that little bit of extra input to get there.

Research shows us that whether it is through children's physical, emotional or social needs, possible deprivation in the environment, or simply a lack of opportunity, knowledge or input, the gaps that can be bridged are most effective during a child's earliest years. It is up to us as nursery practitioners to look at every child's individual needs and assess how we can give them the best platform of opportunity for the greatest outcomes in the future.

My staff here at Greenacres are trained to look at each child and create an individual learning plan to ensure we understand how to take those exciting steps towards each child's full potential. This takes real commitment — ensuring staff have the knowledge, understanding and patience to achieve it. Dedicated staff who will adapt activities, provide specialised resources and give time for one-to-one and small group support where needed are essential to really making a difference.

At the end of Reception there is an assessment that looks at 12 early learning goals that we would like every child to be able to meet. My staff use those goals to create small stepping stones for each child in our care, so they can keep working towards them in a rich learning environment, with quality staff around them to ensure that stimulation remains fun, exciting and appropriate to the child's wellbeing.

I recently ran a workshop on how Greenacres can work in conjunction with parents. If any parents are interested in me running a workshop on GLD outcomes and how Greenacres ensures every child's best possible start in life, please flag it up to your manager or key worker and I will create a workshop for the New Year.

I hope our newsletters are helpful and informative but remember they are also just a springboard for you to find out more or get more involved. I look forward to seeing you for all the exciting winter activities and plans leading up to Christmas.

Regards,

Susan Green

A Note from Miss Michelle –
Safer Screen use for younger children

In our ever-changing modern world, mobile phones, and other electronic devices have become a massive part of our everyday lives, we have become a society that has become dependent on screens. If children regularly see us on devices, they're likely to have a lesser number of meaningful interactions which could have a negative impact on their development.

Evidence shows that screens can have a big impact on children and their development in the early years. Too much screentime is associated with poorer cognitive and behavioural abilities in children, such as reduced verbal activity and reduced vocabulary, and can be associated with developmental delays, reduced attention and lower executive function.

Screen time advice for children aged 0-5

Under 2 years - avoid screen time altogether, other than in exceptional circumstances such as a video call with family/friends.

2-5 years - screen time should be limited to 1 hour a day, but less if possible.

Restricting time children spend on screens, supports healthy child development, which requires sufficient sleep, play, real-world interaction and responsive adult engagement.

In our settings, we only use screens for an intentional purpose of specific learning aims and only for short periods of time. We have very few devices available to the staff, as we believe having purposeful interactions will enhance their language and provides a richer learning environment. Getting outside and having real-life hands-on experiences is far better than sitting on a screen. The children are supervised at all times and are unable to come across any inappropriate material.
Suitable content and safety considerations

You should consider the nature of any content you plan to use on a screen, to ensure it is safe, age appropriate. You should not allow children to access or use screens alone or with other children without adult co-engagement.

All digital content should ideally be:

Checked to ensure it is suitable for young children, prior to viewing.
Slow-paced, repetitive and predictable.
Advert-free, as young children cannot distinguish between advertisements and other content.
Free of scrolling and autoplay features.
Avoid children using AI until better evidence is available about the impact of use with early years children.

Practical tips to follow:

Do not allow children to view screens, without any interaction or communication.
Only use screens with children for short periods at a time, to protect children's ability to focus and concentrate.
Avoid using screens with children during mealtimes or within an hour of a sleep period, as this could affect their sleep quality.
Don't have screens on in the background, as they can distract from communication and social interaction and active play.
Avoid using screens for routine management or to calm children, as this impacts on children's ability to learn to self-regulate - screens should also not be used to occupy children.

Children with communication needs and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
Some children with SEND or English as an additional language may need a more tailored approach when it comes to screen use. This includes children with communication challenges. Screen-based assistive technology can be an important tool to help these children and families communicate, to take part in everyday activities, and create an inclusive learning environment.

Guidance for parents and carers on screen use can be found here: Baby and toddler screen time guidance - Best Start in Life.

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

Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes

Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.
Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.
And eyes and ears and mouth and nose.
Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.



Hot Cross Buns

Hot cross buns!
Hot cross buns!
One ha' penny, two ha' penny,
Hot cross buns!
If you have no daughters,
Give them to your sons
One ha' penny,
Two ha' penny,
Hot Cross Buns!



Pat a Cake

Pat a cake, pat a cake, baker's man,
Bake me a cake as fast as you can,
Pat it and prick it and mark it with 'B',
And put it in the oven for baby and me.



<u>Nursery Officer for the Day</u> – Why not join us for the morning and see what all the fun is about!

Why not come and witness first hand exactly what we do with our curriculums and explore how our days of fun and activities run?

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 age group without your child, 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.



Gallery Fun

















