

Nursery news 2 – Spring term 2021



Welcome to 2021!

We hope you all had a lovely Christmas and we wish you all a happy and safe new year and we thank many of our families for our cards and gifts at Christmas. We are very touched by your generosity!

Nursery during lockdown

As we enter a challenging start of the year we would like to confirm that the nursery is open as usual. In the hope of staying open we would like to remind you of the great importance of the following:

- **Handwashing – please ensure that you and your child/ren wash or sanitise hands on arrival and departure of the nursery environment.**
- **Social distancing – please leave 2 metres between you and others both indoors and outdoors of the nursery.**
- **Face coverings – we request all visitors who enter Rotherly wear face coverings to protect nursery colleagues and others.**
- **Collect/Drop off – only ONE adult must enter the building to drop off and collect children into the nursery. This is to reduce the number of contacts for both children and colleagues.**
- **Space – to ensure sufficient space between families during drop off and collection times, only 2 adults may enter the shared area.**
- **Please bear in mind that others may be waiting outside to drop off or collect their children. If you wish to discuss your child, we are happy to call you at a convenient time to allow others to get to work or home rather than wait longer than necessary, especially in the winter chill.**
- **Ensure children and adults with any COVID symptoms MUST NOT ATTEND NURSERY.**

- **Please inform the nursery if your child has displayed any COVID symptoms or have had a COVID test. The nursery records attendance and test results as part of our track and trace system, therefore we MUST have proof of the result notification. This can be shared via the nursery@westgate.hants.sch.uk email address.**

We continue to move through ever-changing times and thank you for your patience with Tapestry observations as we endeavour to include extra hygiene within our daily routines as well as being there for each child. We appreciate your support with words but especially your actions to keep the nursery and our colleagues safe and well.

Colleague update

As you may recall, we have just said 'farewell' to Sharon and Patsy. On the last day of before the Christmas break we were able to celebrate Sharon's dedication to Rotherly, which has spanned almost 29 years! Sharon was touched by the generosity of both past and present families and colleagues for her send off.



Both Sharon and Patsy have asked to stay with the nursery as part of our bank team, so we know our farewell was not a full goodbye! Fiona and Rhiannon will be picking up the baton to buddy the Rainbow team and step in to cover Sharon's role for the time being.

We are welcoming Alice and Abi into our team. Alice is a qualified practitioner who will be based in the Caterpillar room. Abi will be working through her qualification whilst supporting consistency within the rooms to cover team absences.

Some lovely news now...Lisa and her husband would like to announce that they will be welcoming a little bundle of joy in April. A very exciting time for them indeed and I'm sure you'll join us in wishing them lots of luck! Lauren will be stepping up to cover Lisa during her maternity leave, which is due to commence in March.



School applications

All families with children due to move to school in September should have submitted their applications for Year R. school allocations will be announced in April. Once school places are announced it will be time to start thinking about notice periods!

Parent Handbook update

Our latest Parent Handbook version is now available in nursery and on our website. Take a look to see changes to admissions, terms and conditions. A copy is also attached to this email. https://16a4788d-de44-41ec-83b3-0846e9443555.filesusr.com/ugd/5109b2_eb565aadd884e0c87adfa73b30d5eac.pdf

As part of the nursery's evaluation and development, we are striving to find ways to streamline paperwork and our impact on the environment. To this cause we have slightly adjusted the display of daily information within the Rainbow room. All daily routines such as meals, nappies and supplies required are displayed on the window by the Rainbow trolley for you to consult on collection. This replaces the small basic pieces of paper which appeared in the yellow bags, and is now in line with the Caterpillar and Butterfly rooms. Rest assured that you will still have at least one Tapestry observation for your child each week and the shared 'In the moment' planning and activities daily to reinforce your opportunities of involvement with your child. We would also like to remind parents and carers that any photographs taken of the daily room information sheets are for personal use only and must not be shared without prior permission.

What have we been learning about at nursery?

Rainbow room

What a busy time we've been having in the Rainbow room!

We've enjoyed charging around the dining room with the trolleys, filling them and the bags up with food as if they were doing the weekly shop (watch out ...we might have some future contestants for supermarket sweep!)

On another day we went on a bear hunt, searching everywhere for the bear in the grass and we sat in the cave all together. When we saw the bear, we had to hide in the cave it was really fun and exciting!

We have loved exploring sensory activities such as playdough, ice and gloop. We used lollipop sticks to dig for sequins in the gloop and some children liked using their hands to explore the new texture, getting very messy. Some children used lovely language such as "sticky" and even "yucky" and they all seemed to have fun! We made some playdough on a couple of occasions, with a number of children who couldn't resist but taste some dough too!

Some of the Rainbow children have been exploring the world using schema, especially positioning. It is fascinating to watch. Take a look at these websites to learn more about schemas:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/schemas>

<https://www.teachearlyyears.com/enabling-environments/view/supporting-schemas>

The Rainbow's have enjoyed using our new curiosity area, exploring the underwater themed toys by touching, shaking and even tasting. We then all helped to make a display for the 'sea', doing painting and sticking to create various sea creatures.

After a visit from the snow fairy one weekend, we enjoyed chatting about our fun in the snow! We were crunching through the snow whilst playing in the garden and brought some icy snow indoors to explore with our hands and spoons.

We sang Old MacDonalD for one of our songs of the week and made prints with the duplo tractors and animals in the paints, whilst singing Old McDonald over and over! In the garden we've been experimenting with water. We worked together to find lots of ways to move the water using different containers and spoons! The wetter we got the funnier it was!

We have even managed to learn about Chinese new year and made some lanterns for the occasion. Of course, we have had a few 'songs of the week'. Why not practice your vocal skills by singing 'Old Macdonald', 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes', 'The wheels on the bus' or 'Leo the lion'.



Caterpillar room

Lots of children have been learning new skills such as toilet training and dressing themselves. We are very impressed! We have been practising other physical skills with lots of threading, painting with vehicles and paintbrushes, snipping with scissors, putting on slippers and finding ways to break the ice and move the snow that we found in the garden. We loved climbing on and jumping off bricks, balancing beams and structures that we have built ourselves!

We were engaged with hospital role play and used the stethoscope to listen to adults and babies hearts and explored the medical kit to make everyone better. In the garden, we even had a 'ride' in an ambulance!

The Caterpillars enjoyed exploring space, painting our own rockets, singing '5 little men in a flying saucer' and listening and re-telling the story 'Whatever next'.

The dinosaurs are always a favourite for the Caterpillar children. We made caves and jungles for them to live in and we even made a volcano for the dinosaurs to play near!

Fun was had with the exploring of all things mechanical from diggers, trains, rockets and cars to machines that cut and shred tree branches! We wonder if you can look for mechanical things when on a lockdown walk?

In the garden we used the guttering to help us transport different sized objects down it, from balls to fire trucks. The Caterpillar friends also loved experimenting in the mud kitchen by making food using pinecones, pine needles mud and water making pesto pasta with cheese, cupcakes and mud tea...doesn't that sound lovely! We expanded this indoors too by being very engrossed in cooking in the home corner, making cakes for birthdays (there have been lots of Caterpillar birthdays recently!) and learning about vegetables and our favourite foods including animal soup!

We discovered the magnetic numbers and letters, putting them on the boards, some of us recognised many different numbers. The Caterpillar's are using good mathematical language and we have been finding out how tall we all are. Some of the Caterpillars are as tall as a sheep but not as tall as a chimpanzee! We've made pictures using different sized stripes, using language such as long, short, big and small. The children carried on using the language of size and coloured in different sized circles and talked about which size order they would go in. We went on a bear hunt, which gave us mathematical language such as over, under, through and inside!

National story telling week is held in February and we have enjoyed many stories; Pirate Pete, Shark in the Park, Animal rhymes, and Oh dear! Why not find out how to support your little one with stories by visiting these useful websites:

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/resources/supporting-early-years-children-tell-stories/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/bedtime-stories>



Butterfly room

Some of the children have been talking about who is tallest and said that we could measure our friends and grown ups. We have taken turns lining up at the wall and measuring who is the tallest. The children have been using a tape measure and rulers to see which bricks are the longest and shortest and have been guessing which of the toys are biggest too. The children have been using lots of language to describe size and compare their heights.

During group time we have been talking about different types of exercise, why exercise is good for us and how it helps us to keep warm. Lots of the children have been telling us how strong their daddies are, lifting lots of weights at home! We decided to make an obstacle course inside, jumping on the mats, rolling over the big mat, and going through a tunnel. At

group time and music and movement times, we enjoyed getting warm and using different instruments and dancing to the music.

Our love of water lead to pirate play and all things sea. We made treasure maps, learnt about coral reefs, sea creatures, enjoyed lots of role-play, made our curiosity corner into an aquarium and even walked the plank!

Snow was a welcome event in January. We had many conversations about snowy antics at home and continued our interest in all things cold, creating individual snow scenes and learning about igloos, the weather and 'winter' animals. When we still had some snow left at nursery we had fun in the garden investigating the snow, making snowballs, searching for ice and making snow footprints!

The Butterfly children have been taking part in the 'Big Birdwatch' event. Lots of us have been very excited to tell each other what birds we have found on the weekend, and we shared this during group time. We decided to make a tally chart to show what birds we all saw and what bird was the most common. The Butterflies made their own birds, using different coloured feathers, worked together to complete puzzles, made bird seed play dough, making birds nests with it and decorating them with feathers and we also tried our hand at observational paintings of insects after our bug hunt. In the garden we used the binoculars to search for birds, luckily we found lots to add to our list!

The Butterfly children have just started to explore space as well now...we have been incredibly busy haven't we!



connect4communities Update:

Holiday Food Vouchers, January Reconciliation and Discretionary Grants

Food vouchers and free school meals



Please let us know if you require support via food vouchers to all children and young people who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) and to the additional cohort of children and families including:

- All children with a social worker
- All children open to early help services
- 16-18 year olds previously eligible for FSM
- All 2-4 year olds accessing childcare and eligible for Early Years Pupil Premium

The connect4communities remains unaffected by the FSM guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance-for-schools>) and will continue to enable support for families and children throughout the winter period, up to the end of March 2021.

Watch out for our 2021 Dates for your Diary, as they will be available online and will be sent to you via School Comms soon.



Stay safe and well everyone, from Mrs Woodall, Jayne, Lisa, Charlotte and the nursery team.

