



Spateston Early Learning and Childcare Centre



Winter Newsletter 2021



Engaging you in your child's interests at nursery is essential to us in ensuring that they continue to make the best possible progress in their learning. It is important that we can share this with you regularly and keep you updated on the projects that we are developing alongside the children as their interests grow. At present we are developing an area within the website where families can sign in and see the learning across our environment first-hand. This will include a story about the learning, photographs and possibly video footage. We will provide ideas of how you can extend this learning at home and create resource bags that you can borrow to help you do this. We will be supporting you to share the experiences children have at home to extend their project and will include this within their individual learning journey book to showcase their amazing achievements. Having you in the nursery this week to share your children's achievements is a fantastic step forward, and we will be happy to hear your ideas on how we can develop our engagement with you further as we add depth to the opportunities and experiences, they are engaging in.



Operational Changes

Now that we are operating as one across the nursery, it has been fantastic to see the children play within a learning environment that allows them to make choices about who and what they play with. Although the restrictions we have in place are not as limited as they were not having parents in the building remains the same. We thank you for your patience with this at drop off and pick up times and know you appreciate that it takes time to get children's jackets and shoes changed when you arrive to collect them. Sometimes children are getting changed into dry clothes after being outdoors. All of this can mean that you need to wait on them a little longer. We all appreciate your patience with this especially coming into the winter months.

Children's Toys from Home

This is just a reminder that we would appreciate children NOT bringing in their toys from home. It is very upsetting for them if any get lost or broken.

Christmas Holidays

The service will close to all children on Wednesday 22 December 2021 and reopen on Wednesday 6 January 2022. The 1140 entitlement is calculated over 50 weeks due to this two-week shut down over Christmas and New year. We hope that you all have an amazing family time over the festive period and that Santa is kind to you all.



Supper with Santa

This year we will be having the children's Christmas celebrations with Santa on Tuesday 21 December 2021 from 4.30pm until 7.00pm. There will be games, dancing, Christmas craft making and a special supper with Santa. Santa will have a grotto in the garden where children will visit him to receive their special gift from him. If your child is in nursery that day either in the morning or on a term time placement, we would ask that you collect them at their normal time and bring them back to nursery at 4.30pm. Where children's normal collection time would be later than 4.30pm then you can leave them with us and collect after the celebrations at 7.00pm. For those children we would be more than happy to help them change into their party clothes if you leave them with us. Children who do not normally attend on a Tuesday should come along from 4.30pm till 7.00pm. We would ask that you drop off and collect children at their usual door.

Sponsored Event

Thank you so much to everyone who has supported our 'When you go down to the woods today you will be in for a big surprise', sponsored event. The money raised will help us in purchasing the children's Christmas gifts and ensure that they have a special time. If you have not yet had the chance to hand it in it's not too late. Thanks once again for all your support, we really appreciate it.

Please have a look at the fantastic learning that has been happening so far!

Within our Social and Imagination Zones the children have been to the shops to buy bulbs for the garden and have now planted them for the Spring. They have been recycling bottles to make their own planters and now can tend to theirs to make sure the plants grow. A greenhouse for the garden has been purchased and the children understand its purpose and are looking forward to using it to increase the variety of produce we can grow. The children have been making their own soup for the children to take to the forest for lunch and baking bread that is also available at snack, they are understanding the concept of measurement as they do this. A new 'bug hotel' has been created and the children used a book to research the process, they went into the local community to find the resources needed. Our potion making table has led to the children mark making and creating their own recipes to be used at it. Mark making has linked into children creating their own books and being 'authors'. The play across the learning environment is connected and the structures at block play are visible as the children use sticks and peas to replicate buildings in the local community. The children have visited these to support their work at this area. The outdoor building blocks are 'bricks' with the sand becoming 'cement', this is being developed further with the children's ideas and architectural design skills being pursued!

As the children took part in a sponsored walk to find the three bears from the story, 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', this sparked an interest in animals that we might find outdoors. Exploring the forest, the following week, the children continued to talk about the bears and other animals. The children then heard 'Rosie Robin' during their walk to the forest and when they got there some children decided to create a nest for her. They used natural materials such as, sticks, leaves and mud. The children then discussed what they thought birds might eat and went on a hunt for some bugs and worms. They used tools to dig for the worms and some children were confident enough to pick the worms up. We spoke about the different sizes of the worms and used our measuring tapes to measure the lengths of them. While investigating in the forest, some children noticed footprints and reverted to discussions about the bears wanting to go on a bear hunt through the forest. During our bear hunt, they met a man called Stuart who was cutting the trees down. The children asked lots of questions and discovered that the trees were diseased. Stuart gave them all a special wood cookie to take home and encouraged us to come back and visit the following day to see the process of the trees being discarded. The children went back to investigate the following day and saw the trees being shredded in the shredder and turning into wood chips. They had lots of enjoyment investigating the wood chips and some suggested it could be a bed for the bears!

Within our Creative and Discovery Zones the children have been exploring their learning across the environment including outdoors. They have been particularly interested in Autumn and have used a pumpkin as a provocation whilst investigating the clay. Children have been mixing paint to create the colours they need as they broaden their interests in artists and the different types of paintings they have produced. These have been visible as the children explore their own creativity and imagination at the easels indoors and out. The sculptures created with the clay have become more complex with the children using twigs, stones, pebbles, and pinecones to enhance them. The story of 'The Smartest Giant in Town' has led to the children becoming designers, drawing the clothes they would like the giant to wear. The children have been talking about themselves as being 'artists', discussing their pictures and deciding how they should be framed and displayed. The children are developing a love of music through experimenting with low and high sounds at our music wall in the garden. They have an awareness of different music types which we are expanding, classical and pop, with the musical tastes of the family being shared, for example, The Foo Fighters! Block play is providing wide opportunities for the children to show their creativity skills as they build complex structures to replicate a variety of ideas they have. This has included building a McDonald's, adding the letter 'M' to it and 'Hotel Transylvania House'. They have shown great skill in building their own steps to a great height and creating a desk and chair to mark make at. At the woodwork bench their creativity has expanded with them designing and making fairy houses which have gone into the garden and boats which they experimented with at the river to see if they float or sink. The children have also been talking about the wind and investigated online information about the Beaufort Scale. They explored the scale from 0-12 and new that "it would blow away when it is 10", this is developing further as the children explore the wind through the trees and their hair blowing.