



St Swithin Street Newsletter – May 2025

Dear Parents/Carers

We would like to welcome all the new families who have joined us this term. The children are all settling in very well and we hope you are enjoying our nursery.

Staffing

Rebekka Pirttilahti has started in the Toddler room, joining us from our nursery in Victoria Street. She has almost finished her SVQ qualification, and so far, has had a great impact on the room, providing lots of excellent activities, and love and care to the children.

Rebecca Dey has now returned from maternity leave to a part time position in our Baby room.

Training

Caitlin McKechnie and Emily Innes are also continuing with their SVQ 3 with Cairn Training. The girls are getting on very well and are enjoying bringing their learning into practice at the nursery.

Menus

Menu boards are located on the front door, with weekly menus displayed on here for all parents to view. Please feel free to add comments about your child's likes/dislikes, or any suggestions you have for us.

Our new menus have been up and running for a full 5-week block and we are very happy that the children all seem to be enjoying the new menus and the changes. We continuously look for feedback from yourselves. Please do use our feedback jar in the hallway to let us know your thoughts.

Charity 2025

Our 2025 Charity of the Year is Archie's Child Bereavement Service, which supports bereaved children, no matter the relationship.

The Archie Foundation was formed in 2000 to support the building of the new Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital which opened in 2014, and Archie's work became visible to the outside world in 2019 when the Grampian Child Bereavement Network (GCBN) officially joined forces with The Archie Foundation. They offer a wide range of services, free of charge within Grampian, Tayside, and the Highlands and Orkney, which are carefully tailored to suit the individual needs of each child and their family. Every enquiry they receive is personally followed up by their highly experienced Bereavement Co-ordinators, who, through an initial phone conversation, assess how best to support the child or young person. This can include providing specialist books to help a child understand what the death of a loved one means and helping them to understand their emotions. For some families this might be all the support they need, but others may access many more of the services on offer. ACBS recognises

that every child is different, and believes that with appropriate support, information and guidance, all children and young people will manage their grief.

The charity is very personal to us as our Finance Manager, Loretta Ross, sadly lost her husband, George, very suddenly at the end of January this year, leaving behind Loretta and their two children, Lucas (10) and Keira (8). Prior to having her children, Loretta was Nursery Manager for eight years at our Inverurie nursery.

Deborah Mathers, who worked previously for us, and volunteers with the charity, bringing it to our attention, also lost her own husband very suddenly a few years ago. Deborah's two boys were also very young at the time.

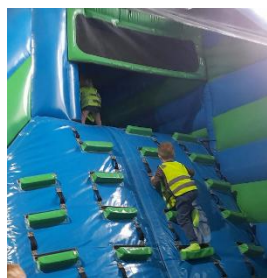
So far, we have raised £25 for our World Book Day donations, and £135 from our Easter entry competitions. We will continue to have charity events throughout the year. Thank you for your continued support.

Improvement Plans

Our new 2024-2025 improvement plans are now up and running and displayed in the hallway when you enter the nursery on the left-hand side. Our three improvement areas are detailed below:

1. Planning, Observing and Recording; the changes began in September 2024, and so far, we have had very positive impacts on the children and staff team. To date, we have received some positive feedback about the changes to planning and observing from both staff and parents, and we have also received some very positive feedback from the Care Inspectorate about our new planning and observing methods.
2. Staff Training and CPD – we continue to learn together as a team to ensure the children are receiving a fully trained and efficient staff team with extensive knowledge across the curriculums and additional documentations. I have been on a 4-day training course with Education Scotland where we were looking at Play Pedagogy.
Chloe from the Pre-School room has attended Mud Kitchen Training to support learning outdoors, and Emma has attended 'Observation and Communication for Improvement' training with the Care Inspectorate.
3. Staff Induction process - we are supporting our newly employed staff members to participate in a smoother transition period when they begin with us to support their learning and development on the job. Continuous staff training on Azilo continues to take place.

Trips and Outings



This term, the Pre-school children ventured out to Innoflate. They had a great time bouncing around, climbing through obstacles and trying to defeat the "impossible staircase".

All our trips are arranged on different days throughout the year to ensure everyone has an opportunity to attend a nursery trip. The Toddlers go on 2 trips throughout the year and Pre-school have 3 planned trips with an additional Christmas trip for all.

Toddlers have a trip booked in May to Scallywags soft play in Stonehaven.

The Baby room children continue to get out for some nice walks around the community in the buggies.

Learning Experiences



Chinese New Year:

The children celebrated Chinese New Year, and they used some fantastic resources from CRIS (Curriculum Resource Information Service) - dressing up in traditional Chinese clothing..... and becoming a Chinese dragon!

Burns Day:

We learnt about Burns Day, looking at famous poems and songs. The children participated in reciting simple verses and enjoyed listening to traditional Scottish music. To extend the experience, the children engaged in art and craft activities where they created Scottish flags, bagpipes and thistles. The day culminated with a mini "Burns Supper" where the children tasted a variety of traditional Scottish foods, such as haggis, neeps and tatties, learning about the cultural significance of each item.

Valentines Day:

This special day was dedicated to celebrating love and friendship among the children. They engaged in various activities, creating heart-shaped crafts and cards to share with their friends and family. The children learned about the history and significance of Valentine's Day through storytelling sessions, which emphasized themes of kindness and affection. Group activities, such as making friendship bracelets and baking heart-shaped cookies fostered a sense of community and togetherness. The day was filled with joy and laughter as the children expressed their love and appreciation for those around them.



Mother's Day:

Again, another celebration of the mummies and grannies in our lives, the children explored relationships and what they mean to us, creating cards, art and craft pieces and lots of group time activities.



Pancake Day:

This delightful day was filled with excitement as the children engaged in various pancake-themed activities. They learned about the tradition of Pancake Tuesday and its significance in different cultures. Each child had the opportunity to make their own pancake, selecting toppings of their choice, and learning about measurements and ingredients in the process.

Easter:



The children had opportunities to engage in a variety of activities, participating in egg painting sessions, where they got to decorate eggs with vibrant colours and patterns, learning about symmetry and design in the process. An Easter egg hunt was organized in the nursery garden, encouraging the children to explore and work together as they searched for hidden treasures. Stories about the Easter Bunny and the origin of Easter celebrations were shared, sparking each child's curiosity and broadening their knowledge.



Baby Room

Transport

The Baby room started off with a topic about transport, as the children were showing so much enthusiasm for the window, seeing all the modes of transport outside. We incorporated lots of art and craft, and sensory exploration throughout the topic to extend the children's knowledge of various types of transport and how we can get about.



People Who Help Us

After our visit from the fire engine, the children showed lots of interest in fire trucks, which then led on to our transport topic. We then moved onto looking at people who help us, and the children have loved dressing up, playing doctors, and they have become especially good at checking everyone's heart beats, with real life sound effects the most exciting part!



As always, the babies have been exploring lots of messy trays, as well as participating in planting opportunities throughout this term. We were very happy to see some of our plants sprouting already, and we have been very gentle with them, learning all about how to care for them.

Toddler Room

Animals

Toddlers started of the year with a vote for their topic, and after it was concluded, we discovered that animals were the most popular. The children have explored a variety of animals from around the world, organising them into categories depending on where each animal lives.

We have provided opportunities for learning about getting dirty and cleaning, and the children loved painting all the animals and then cleaned them afterwards.

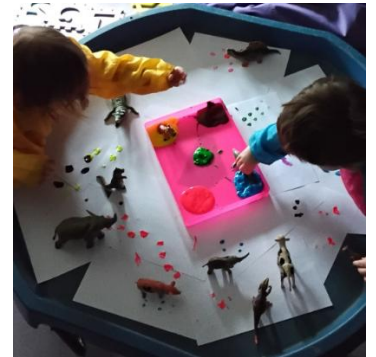


Colour Recognition

Recognising and naming colours is an essential skill that supports children's cognitive development. In the Toddler room, the children have been participating in various activities to identify and differentiate colours. These activities include sorting objects by colour, engaging in colour-themed arts and crafts, and playing interactive games which encourage colour recognition. By combining fun with learning, children are able to grasp the concept of colours more effectively. Additionally, discussions on how colours can be mixed to create new hues have sparked their curiosity and creativity, making the learning process enjoyable and enriching.



Planting



Toddlers have been exploring lots of planting, as well as caring for existing plants. They have been very enthusiastic, watching their plants grow, and have started to take these home.

Pre-school Room

Animals

The Pre-school children delved into learning about Arctic animals and skiing. Inspired by a peer's skiing holiday over Christmas, we explored various Arctic creatures, their habitats, and survival adaptations. The children's enthusiasm was fantastic as they engaged with stories and videos, enriching their understanding of these fascinating animals.

Under the Sea

Following our Arctic adventure, the children took a plunge into an underwater exploration. They became captivated by the diverse marine life, learning about pollution, recycling, and the living conditions of sea animals. Discussions from home experiences made the topic even more relatable and engaging. We examined various sea creatures, their ecosystems, and the importance of protecting our oceans.



Routines

The children have been looking at their routines and the times of the day, creating their routine for the board so they can identify what is happening throughout the day. With lots of teamwork and support, the new display is looking great and the children are using it daily to link into their routines.



Caterpillars

Our latest addition to the Pre-school room has been the arrival of the caterpillars. The children have been eagerly observing their life cycle, from tiny caterpillars to beautiful butterflies. This hands-on experience has sparked a newfound interest in nature and the environment. So far, we have 16 butterflies in the nursery and the children are enjoying watching them, extending their learning through understanding symmetry, colour recognition and science topics.



Science experiments

In addition to their work with caterpillars, the Pre-school children have been supported through various science experiments this term. They have shown a great interest in colour mixing and substance changes, linking their play to the learning and creating their own experiments. These activities have nurtured their curiosity and introduced basic scientific concepts in a fun and engaging manner.



Show and Tell

One of the most eagerly anticipated activities this term has been the 'Show and Tell' sessions. Every week, the children have had the opportunity to bring in something special from home to share with their peers. This activity has not only boosted their confidence and public speaking skills but has also provided a lovely way for them to connect with each other. The children have brought in a fascinating array of items, from beloved toys and family photos to shells collected from beach trips and homemade crafts. Each item has sparked curiosity and storytelling, providing opportunities for the children to share experiences and learn new things.

Dates for the Diary

- Saturday 21st June – Sports Day
- Tuesday 24th June – Parents Evening
- Saturday 26th July Graduation
- Friday 15th August – family fun evening 5:30pm-7:30pm

Kind Regards

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