

Dear Families,

How quickly the last few weeks have gone, it will be the Easter holidays again before we know it! We started the New Year here at the Kindergarten by talking and sharing our experiences about our Christmas Holidays, and taking walks to the woods to explore the frost and ice in the cold weather. This developed further when we started reading the "We're Going On A Bear Hunt" story to the children, which they loved. We planned more provocations around this new idea, such as creating artwork for our fabulous Bear Hunt Display, baking bear biscuits and walking barefoot (or should that be bear-foot?) through mud, water, leaves, sticks and grass. All this culminated in a wonderful 'Bear Hunt' down through the woods, where we read the story as we walked, and found a real (teddy) bear at the end!

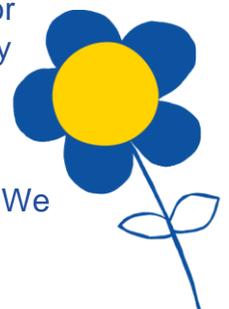
Another very enjoyable week was our 'Sleep Week', inspired by the story "Whiffy Wilson, The Wolf Who Wouldn't Go To Bed". We talked about sleep and how it related to healthy living, and explored a wide range of bedtime activities, such as toothbrush painting, fruit and cereal snack time, sleep-den building, bubbly bathwater play, tents and torches, and a pyjama party! It was something quite out of the ordinary for the Kindergarten, and was very well received by the children. From here, we moved on to Chinese New Year, which we celebrated with the children by creating decorations including paper lanterns, playing with red rice and playdough, eating Chinese food for snack time and creating our fearsome Chinese Dragon (called Tom) from painted cardboard!

More recently was our 'Bird Week', where we made sandwiches and took them to the woods to eat while we looked for birds. We watched videos of birds hatching out of eggs and created and decorated binoculars using cardboard tubes. The children also searched for 'woolly worms' out on the green to feed to our basket of 'hungry baby birds', and then searched for the 8 hidden birds inside the Kindergarten, using their binoculars. For the last week of term we looked at Road Safety, and celebrated Valentines Day by making cards with the children for the special people in their lives.

This week, we are celebrating World Book Day as our theme of the week. Next week we will begin our annual fundraising efforts for Kisumu, Kenya. We will also be celebrating Mother's Day and Holi in the following weeks, and then beginning to look at Spring! It's going to be busy, as always!

Two Yellow Dotters, Maryanne and Lauren are off to Kenya on the 10th of March for 3 weeks. You can follow their work in Kisumu via their blog <http://ydkenyatrip.blogspot.co.uk/>

The Kindergarten Team



yellow
dot
nursery

Reminders

*Please remember to use our 'one-way traffic system' to ease congestion around the Kindergarten, exiting via the back of the Hiltonbury Farmhouse. Details can be found on the door into the building.

*If your child has small tomatoes, grapes or mini sausages in their packed lunch, please slice them lengthways to minimize a potential choking risk. Please remember also that we are a strictly nut-free environment!

*Check the home box for lost clothes or toys, and please ensure that your child's name is clearly visible on their apparel such as lunchboxes and water bottles.



*If convenient, you may leave your children's wellington boots at the Kindergarten in the peg room, in a bag clearly marked with their name, during the week. (The Hall is often used by other people during the weekend, and so it would be wise to take them home during this time).

*Please do speak to a member of the Team if you are considering increasing your child's sessions. We still have a few afternoon spaces available, and Friday sessions also!

We also have lots of spaces for September so please spread the word to your younger friends.

Dates for your diary

World Book Day Thursday 2nd March

Holi Monday 13th March

St Patrick's Day Friday 17th March

Red Nose Day Friday 24th March

Mothering Sunday 26th March

Details of your new fees are being calculated, if you haven't received the fee letter by March 22nd please let us know.

How does your child learn? A focus on Schemas

Adapted from "Schemas for Parents" by Stella Louis

Think about how your wardrobe is organised.. Are you a 'positioner' where everything is hung in a particular way or order or are you an 'enveloper' where you have multiple clothes hung on top of each other on one hanger? Whichever you are will give you an insight into your thinking process which have a direct relation to your preferred schemas...

A schema is a repeated action or behaviour. Schemas help us organise and process our thoughts and feelings. They help us to think. As we get older our schemas don't go away they just get more and more sophisticated.

Schemas begin from birth. They appear in all cultures and operate at different levels. Initially schemas are very simple but they will develop rapidly if they are supported. Research has shown that brain paths develop faster when connections are supported; schemas are a way of supporting children's thinking skills and extending their learning.

'Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood for it alone as the free expression of what is in a child's soul.' Friedrich Froebel.

Children learn through play and have a natural urge to do the same thing again and again whether it is throwing things, hiding things all over the house in bags or emptying all of the toys out of the toy box. This repetitive behaviour helps children to develop and deepen their understanding of concepts and is an essential part of healthy child development.

Schemas link directly to how young brains develop and grow. As children repeat their actions they make important connections in their brains, which helps them to modify or make changes to their actions.

Children need opportunities to practise repeatedly what they know and can do so that what is known becomes better understood. Schemas are typical behaviours seen in children as they grow and develop.

Parents and practitioners can support children by understanding and recognising schemas and encouraging children to play and learn in a way that links to the child's schematic interests.

Do children like to...	Schema	Definition	Example	What they are Learning
Drop objects? Push or Pull objects? Jump, throw, climb and run? Open and close draws and cupboards? Ride bikes fast?	Horizontal or vertical Trajectory	An interest in how objects and people move and how children can affect that movement.	Paints in lines, climbs upwards on climbing frames. Throws things	They are learning about height, speed, distance and how things move.
Put toy farm animals in fields with fences around them? Make block enclosures such as cages and prisons? Fill and empty containers? Build barricades with blocks using cushions or Lego?	Enclosure	An interest in creating or occupying enclosed spaces.	Plays with farm animals making fences	They are finding out about size, shape, measurement and volume of spaces.
Dress up in hats, shoes, scarves and belts? Hide under blankets or play under the table? Hide in places and spaces when outside? Make wraps and secure parcels using tape?	Enveloping	An interest in covering and wrapping up objects or themselves or in putting things inside bags, baskets and containers.	Hides under blankets, wraps things up paints over pictures	They are exploring with the idea of completely covering themselves.
Pull toys round and round? Spin round and round? Play with toys with turning or spinning parts? Draw circles? Ride bikes in circles?	Rotation	An interest in things that turn, such as knobs, taps, keys and wind up toys.	Interested in wheels or cogs	Through their explorations they develop an understanding of how objects and themselves turn
Tie things together with rope, string or shoelaces? Play with construction toys joining pieces together?	Connecting and disconnecting.	An interest in fastening and joining things together and in taking them apart.	Tie knots and take things apart	They are finding out about how to fasten things together using different materials
Move things from one place to another? Put paper and envelopes in bags? Carry things around in trucks? Move friends around in a buggy or on the back of bike?	Transporting	An interest in Moving themselves around and in transporting objects from one area to another	Carrying items to a special person. Loading a buggy or basket with lots of items	Through exploration children will be learning about distance, journeys and places as well as mapping where things are.
Turn objects upside down? Climb trees? Hang up side down? Do cartwheels and hand stands?	Orientation	Interested in seeing things from different angles and different points of view.	Turns things over or looks behind pictures	They are finding out how things look from different angles. They learn about balance, weight and width.
Spiders and insects? Fingers and eyelashes? People? The Sun?	Core and Radials	Making circles and extending with lines from them Often occurring when children who are exploring a rotation schema find the connection between trajectory and enclosures.	Likes to draw spiders or suns	They are finding out about how to extend themselves
Place objects in particular position, in front, behind, on top or around the edge? Move toy cars over and under bridges? Line up cars? Sit dolls and teddies in rows? Separate food on their plate?	Positioning	An interest in carefully placing objects or themselves in patterns or rows.	Always lining up cars etc. Likes to stand at the front or the back of a line	They are learning about order, sequencing, classification, shape, symmetry and mapping.