

# The Early Bird Pre-School Wheathampstead Newsletter



## February 2025



Term	Dates	Half Term	Setting Closed **
Spring Term 2025	Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> of January – Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> of April	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> of February – Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> of February	
Summer Term 2025	Tuesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> of April – Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> of July	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> of May – Friday 30 <sup>th</sup> of May	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> of May – bank holiday

### Dates for your diary:

Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> of March - World Book Day

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> of March - Family play and exploration group – 10am – 12pm

W/C Monday 10<sup>th</sup> of March - British Science Week (Change and Adapt)

Friday 21<sup>st</sup> of March – Red nose day

Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> April - Parent consultations 4.30 – 6.30pm

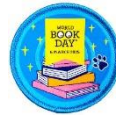
Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April – The draw for our raffle

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> of May - Family play and exploration group – 10am – 12pm with special guests

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> of June – Family play and exploration group – 10am – 12pm

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> of July – Family play and exploration group – 10am – 12pm

Monday 21<sup>st</sup> of July - Summer Party



### The Early Bird Pre-School Wheathampstead latest news . . .

#### Fledgling Highlights

**Week 1**—The children explored an Arctic provocation, which included animals and books. When looking at the books, we introduced keywords and facts about life in the Arctic and the animals that live there. The children explored light and shadows by shining torches inside cardboard boxes; we observed them moving their hands closer and further away from the torch to make their shadows bigger and smaller. The children were keen to bake and work together to add and mix the ingredients; they made apple and banana oat bites, which were very popular at snack time. Over the Christmas break, we created a new sand and water area, the children were keen to combine the two to make sandcastles, which encouraged lots of conversations about past experiences at the beach.

**Week 2** – The children explored maps and the different types of roads in Wheathampstead. We looked at where we lived and how close we were to Early Birds, which led to conversations about different types of transport. They also made their own maps.

**Week 3**—The children enjoyed marking the big garden birdwatch week by exploring and investigating common British birds. The children used binoculars in the garden to look closely at the birds flying over them and those perched in the tree. Red kites seemed to be very popular. They also listened to the different bird calls and made some lovely nests in the creative area. We went for a walk to the River Lea and fed the ducks; together we counted how many there were; there was an impressive 20 ducks in total. The children also made bird feeders by spreading lard onto wooden shapes and dipping them into bird feed.

**Week 4**—We learnt about the importance of looking after our teeth by providing opportunities for the children to explore dental tools in the role-play area. We also introduced some new toothbrushing songs and spoke about the importance of keeping our teeth clean. The children were also very excited to take home their new toothbrush, toothpaste and timer.

**Week 5** - The children engaged in lots of group learning activities this week. There has been a strong interest in imaginative role-play, and we have seen some lovely friendships forming. The children have made their own restaurants and have pretended to be dentists and chefs. Some of the children worked together to make an arctic scene by balancing and arranging blocks and materials and then adding animals. They expressed their ideas, listened to each other, and gave each other roles during the activity. During outdoor play, the children made an obstacle course using our new, large wooden blocks and planks and took turns to balance and cross the course. It was lovely to see them taking their friends and hands and giving positive encouragement. The children practiced their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination when threading, using scissors and hammers.

**Week 6** – The children have explored magnets; they have had lots of fun stacking them as high as they could possibly reach and it has been a great opportunity for us to introduce new mathematical language and even better to see them using the vocabulary they have learned in their play. They have continued to work as a team and have been able to solve problems that have arisen.

#### Nest Highlights

This half term we have explored the community by going on walks around Wheathampstead. We have looked at different winter birds on our adventures, during the big garden bird watch week, and even went on a walk to our local dentist as part of looking at cleaning our teeth. We hope you are all enjoying using your free toothbrushes, timers and toothpaste at home. Our main focus has been communication and language development and we have continued to explore our core books including, That's Not My Unicorn and Going on a Bear Hunt. Singing has also been popular and the children have enjoyed exploring our nursery rhyme finger puppet and box. Our current favourite songs are Sleeping Bunnies and Tommy Thumb so lots of practicing our physical skills too. The children have enjoyed taking home story bags and looking at the books with their families. Exploring our senses including gloop, paint, glue and playdough has also been popular.

#### **New Funding for Working Families**

From September 2025, 30 hours free childcare becomes available to working parents from term after 9 months. If you currently have a 15 hour code this will change automatically. Remember to renew your codes regularly.

[www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk)

We need help to fundraise for our duckling experience (coming in May). This costs us over £300 and is a highlight of the year. We will be holding a raffle next half term (prizes to be announced soon) that will be drawn on 4<sup>th</sup> April. We will also be holding a cake sale on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> May (donations and purchasing will help us get to our target).



### Special Events

#### Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> of March

#### World Book Day

The children are invited to dress up as their favourite characters. For children that do not attend on this day, they are able to dress up during the week.



### Reminders

- Please label your children's clothing.
- Please update all emergency contact details. It is really important that we are able to contact you in case of an emergency.
- Hopefully it will get warmer next term. If you wish please could you provide your child with a named water bottle, for next term.



### Wishlist

We are asking for donations of plant pots, soil, watering cans, seed packets, seed trays, mini beasts (bugs snails, butterflies etc.), play food which represent things that we grown in the garden, fake flowers, bells and shells and bells.



### Tip of the Half Term

#### Developing a Love of Storytelling

Storytelling is an important part of Early Birds. We incorporate it in all aspects of children's play.

#### Some of the benefits of storytelling

\*Boosts listening and attention skills\* \*Improves language skills\* \*sharpen memory\* \*develops imagination and creativity and inspires curiosity\* \*Teaches empathy\* \*develops cultural understanding\* \*improves children's mental health and wellbeing\* \*makes them feel valued and strengthens relationships\*

#### Top storytelling tips to help you at home

- 1. Develop family reading routines and rituals.** Find a regular time of day when you can dedicate story time into your day. Making story time a cozy routine makes reading an essential and pleasant activity.
- 2. Read what interests your child.** The nutrition facts on cereal boxes, newspapers, recipes, maps and game instructions all make great reading material if your child is interested.
- 3. Try books that reflect your daily experiences.** Making connections to topics you read about is a fun way to keep children engaged. For example, if you are planning a trip to the zoo or dentist, find a story about these experiences.
- 4. Re-read your child's favourites – repetition is very important in your child's development.** It's common for young children to request the same book again and again. Re-reading familiar stories offers children a chance to absorb information over time and lets them master the whole story.
- 5. Encourage storytelling – storytelling doesn't always mean books!** Encourage your child to tell you a story from time to time or to re-tell a story after you've read it several times. Don't feel the need to correct how they are telling the story. You can tell stories while drawing or use puppets to act out a story, follow your child's interest!
- 6. Have fun while reading.** Try acting out the story while reading by using facial expressions, gestures, body movements and voices to make the story come to life. Or make the story relevant to your child's life by adapting the story to include their name, a friend's name or your pet's name.



The Early Bird Pre-School Wheathampstead - The Team



**Denisse** – Director, Early Years Manager, SENCO & DSL (Level 6)

**Ella** – Setting Leader, DSP and H&S Officer (QTS, Level 6)

**Dawn** – Deputy Setting Leader & Deputy SENCO (Level 3)

**Juanita** – Room Leader of Nest Room (Level 3)

**Lyndsey** –Senior Early Years Educator & DSP (Level 3)

**Emma** – Early Years Educator (Level 3)

**Le'oshe** – Early Years Helper (Level 2)

**Mary** – Early Years Helper (Level 3)

**Sarah** – Early Years Helper (Level 2)

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