

The Early Bird Pre-School Wheathampstead Newsletter



May 2025

Term	Dates	Half Term	Setting Closed **
Summer Term	Tuesday 22 nd of April – Friday 18 th of July	Monday 26 th of May – Friday 30 th of May	Monday 5 th of May – bank holiday

Dates for your diary:

Saturday 14th of June – Family play and exploration group – 10am – 12pm
Saturday 5th of July – Family play and exploration group – 10am – 12pm
Saturday 12th of July – Village Day (The theme is Folklore and Fairytales)
Thursday 17th of July – Graduation Day
Monday 21st of July - Summer Party



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

FLEDGLING HIGHLIGHTS: Week 1 - We started the term observing the first signs of spring by going on blossom walks. The children enjoyed collecting petals, leaves, and sticks and used them in our mud kitchen to make potions, cakes, and pies. We also looked at them under the microscope, which led to discussions about how plants/flowers grow and the roles of the different parts of plants. This then led to enhancing our vegetable patch. The children have taken pride in preparing the soil, planting the vegetables, and caring for them daily. It has been lovely to see how they now incorporate gardening and watering their plants in their play, and it is now one of the first things they do when they go out in the garden. The staff couldn't be prouder of the gardeners they have all become.



Week 2 - The children enjoyed exploring rocks, crystals, and fossils. We started the week by looking for stones and rocks in the garden, and the children became enthusiastic archaeologists. They set up a cleaning station and washed their stones with paintbrushes and water. The children used their math skills to count how many they had collected and made comments on their appearance and size. We extended this activity by introducing fossils and crystals, which proved very popular. We introduced the children to vocabulary such as amethyst, quartz, ammonite, and geodes and explored their unique appearances, stimulating their sensory development. The children were very excited when we purchased different-sized geodes that they had to break using hammers to reveal the crystal inside. They could then look at the patterns and crevices under the microscope.



We also had the arrival of our caterpillars. The children looked closely at the caterpillars and had the opportunity to observe metamorphosis up close. It was amazing to see and hear the children using new vocabulary when they were looking at them and, in their play, chrysalis and cocoons. Experiencing the life cycle of a butterfly helps children understand how creatures grow and change, gain an understanding of the world around them, and learn how to care for living creatures.



Week 3 & 4. The highlight for our children and staff this term has been our duck experience. The children could observe the changes to the eggs as the ducklings began to hatch and their first movements as they entered the world. It was a magical learning experience for the children as they learned how to care for and nurture living creatures through a hands-on experience. It was lovely to see so many of them ensuring the ducklings had enough food and water and how they enjoyed looking closely at their webbed feet when they had their first swim. We explained to the children the importance of staying calm and quiet around them, as sudden movements and loud noises might scare the ducklings. They took this on board and would find a comfortable spot before handling them gently, with some of the ducklings happy to have a snuggle on their laps. We had some fantastic and unique name suggestions for the ducks, and we went with Banana Skin Cherry, Sizzle, Sonic, and Ducker.



NEST HIGHLIGHTS: The Nest children have had a lot of fun this half term. We welcomed new children, and they have all settled well. The children have continued to enjoy the changes to the garden and engaged in lots of water play and bubble fun. I don't know who enjoyed it more, the children or the teachers. We had the arrival of our caterpillars, which the children were very excited about. It was a magical learning experience for them as they observed both change and growth. We also had the arrival of our duck eggs, where some of the children even witnessed the ducklings hatch and then proceeded to see them grow. They learned how to care for the ducklings, and some even held them. We are very excited about the second part of our summer term and the adventures it will bring.



New Funding for Working Families

From April 2024, 15 hours free childcare became available to working parents of two-year-olds. If your child turned 2 on or before 31st of December 2024 you can apply for this funding NOW, for January at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Tip of the Half Term - Nurturing School Readiness

As lots of our children are about to embark on an exciting journey into school, we want to ensure they have enough tools in their toolbox to thrive.

To be school ready children DO NOT NEED to:

- Read
- Write
- Be proficient in mathematics.



They will learn this at school!

To be school ready, most children NEED to be able to:

- Be independent in meeting some of their self care needs. For example, put their coat, shoes, jumpers and trousers on, wash their hands, wipe their nose.
- Communicate their needs, for example be able to ask for help when needed or when they need the toilet.
 - Listen to and follow instructions.
 - Sit at a table to eat lunch/snack.
- Begin to show resilience and a 'have a go' attitude.
 - Take turns and share with others.

How you can nurture these skills at home through the POWER OF PLAY:

- Story telling- read to your child daily and have conversations about the story and its illustrations.
- Simple games such as 'Simon says' or turn taking building a tower. Introduce to rules and expectations and encourage turn taking.
- Give them time to try to overcome challenges and problem solve in their play, for example use phrases such as 'let's think of a different way' or 'what should we do next time'.
- Set up a tea party – have your guests washed their hands? Do they need help pouring their drink?

We are doing all this and more to ensure the transition into school is a smooth as possible for your child. We are also inviting your child's new schoolteacher into Early Birds to visit, and their key person will share all the amazing things your child can do.

If you have any questions, concerns or something you want us to focus on to support your child's journey into school, please speak to your key person.

Reminders

- We have a lot of lost property. Could you please ensure that your child's/children's clothing is named so that we can make sure it comes back to you.
- Please look through the lost property on the bench, as anything not collected by the first week of the new half term we will keep for spare clothes.
- Please ensure that your child has a bag with spare clothes for each session. We are running very low on spare clothes.
- If you have any letters or paperwork that needs to be handed in, please give it directly to a member of staff. They can be missed if left in your child's bag.
- Please provide your child with a named watered bottle.



Ofsted - April 2025

We were thrilled to receive a good grading at our recent first inspection.

The team have really worked hard at embedding the Early Bird ethos into the setting practice and this is testament to them for their commitment to the children and parents who attend. The full report can be read by clicking the link on the memo in tapestry or visiting the Ofsted website.



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)

Roxi – Early Years Helper

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