

The Early Bird Pre-School Wheathampstead Newsletter



December 2024



Term	Dates	Half Term	Setting Closed **
Spring 2025	Monday 6 th of January - Friday 4 th of April	Monday 17 th – Friday 21 st February	Friday 3 rd of January

Dates for your diary

Spring Term 2025

- **Saturday 8th of February** - Saturday family play and exploration group - 10am - 12pm
- **Thursday 6th of March** - World Book Day (We invite children to come dressed as their favourite characters).
- **Saturday 8th of March** - Saturday family play and exploration group - 10am - 12pm
- **Friday 21st of March** - Red Nose Day



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

Nest Room Highlights: The Nest Children have had a fabulous Autumn term, and this is culminating with a magical end of term Christmas celebrations. We have had a term full of exciting invitations to play, including, exploring making marks with ice paints and glitter playdough. The children have enjoyed investigating various textures including foam and bubbles in water. They have squeezed sponges and filled jugs, where we have been able to introduce new vocabulary such as, pop and squeeze and encouraged the use of their fine motor skills. This promoted social interaction between the children where they smiled, laughed and clapped together. It has been lovely to see how settled the children are now and how they come into the setting and seem to understand the morning routine of taking coats and shoes off. There seems to be a group interest in nursery rhymes and actions songs which we explore in our group time at the end of the session, the children are keen to choose props from our rhyme box and are starting to join in with the actions and some of the words, with a favourite being sleeping bunnies. We have also set up nursery rhyme provocations in the room that the children have enjoyed exploring for example, shiny material and star shapes for twinkle, twinkle, little star. We have read and looked at lots of books during our sessions and it has been great to see the children making choices, bringing them to an adult for us to read and also looking at them independently. We have not let the cold weather stop us from spending time in the garden where the children have played on the ride on toys where they have been learning the concept of taking turns.

Fledgling Room Highlights: The countdown to Christmas has officially begun at Early Bird's but, we have also had lots of fun exploring all that the autumn months have to offer.

- We marked bonfire night by exploring light and colour by using torches to create shadows of various objects and making firework pictures using cardboard tubes and paint. The children explored colour mixing and were all keen to share their experiences of seeing fireworks, including the colours they have seen and the sounds that they heard.
- Exploring pumpkins has been popular this half term. The children have compared the size and weight of different pumpkins and used their fine motor skills to scoop out their insides and made patterns with the seeds.
- Practicing scissor skills has been an activity the children frequently ask to have out. It has been lovely to see the progress and determination of the children as they have transitioned from using training scissors to scissors with finger inserts.
- The children have grown in independence this half term, they are hanging their coats up on their labelled pegs and they have been putting their coats on themselves. They have been doing this by placing their coat in front of them, with their hood at their feet, then placing each of their hands in the sleeves, raising their arms and flipping it over their head. It has been amazing to see how quickly they have picked up this trick.
- Art and mark making has been popular this half term. We have seen progress in communication and language as the children have been sharing the meanings behind their marks.
- There has been lots of team working at Early Birds as the children have helped each other to build using the crates and wooden blocks outside. They have also been helping each other to using the climbing equipment and to cross the wooden balance beam by holding each other's hands.
- Over the past couple of weeks, the children have had the excitement of a Christmas tree being delivered. It is taking pride of place and is being decorated each session with festive loose parts and decorations. The children have made beautiful Christmas cards for family and the local members of our community. We even had the opportunity to deliver them to the church at their coffee morning. It was lovely to see their confidence as they handed them to people in the community and they were extremely polite and we couldn't be prouder.



We wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year



Funding for Working Families

From April 2024, 15 hours of childcare support is available to working parents from the term after the child turns 9 months and 30 hours from the term after they turn 3. You can apply for this funding NOW at

www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Special Events

Christmas Party - Wednesday 18th of December

We would like to invite you to our annual Christmas party. Tickets are £3 per family and younger siblings are welcome. We have lots of activities planned including, games, dancing, singing and a grotto. We look forward to seeing you there.



Reminders

- Could we ask that you label your child's clothing, in particular coats, cardigans and jumpers.
- If your child is not in the process of toilet training, could we ask that they are provided with nappies rather than pullups.
- Lunch boxes - please try and keep treats to a minimum with a maximum of one.

Thank you!

Wishlist

We are looking for donations of boy's trousers age 2-3, 3-4 and 4.5. We are also asking for any gift bags and boxes, hamper baskets and used Christmas cards that you maybe throwing away after the Christmas period.



Tip of the Half Term

Christmas is fast approaching, we all have busy schedules with lots of change happening, making us feel over-stimulated.

What is over-stimulation? When a child (or adult) is swamped by more experiences, sensations, noise and activity than they can cope with. Here are some tips to help you and your child navigate through the Christmas period with excitement and joy:

- ***Maintain some routine**- Could you maintain your bedtime routine or other routines personal to your family over Christmas? Spend time each morning preparing your child for the day - where are you going? Who are you seeing?
- ***Give your child some control**- As adults we feel pressure to make Christmas 'perfect' and with this pressure we might take too much control and expect more from our children. Allow your child to have some control over how they interact with friends and family over Christmas. If your child doesn't feel like sitting with distant relatives, or if they feel shy greeting people, then that's ok. Be their voice and their advocate! Gift opening - if your child struggles with the pressure of opening gifts in front of others, that's fine! Talk to your child about gift opening and make a plan that suits everyone.
- ***Create a 'safe space'**- Take the time to set up a safe space for them in your home before visitors arrive - this could be their bedroom or a quiet nook in the living room. Talk to your child about what their safe space is for and how it is ok for them to retreat to their safe space if they are finding the festivities too loud or stressful.
- ***Provide familiar foods**- It's safe to say, food is a big part of Christmas! But for a lot of children, unfamiliar foods or changes in dinner time routines can feel stressful. Help to make mealtimes more inclusive for your child by including 'safe foods' alongside every meal.
- ***Your presence**- Dedicate some time at home together to explore your child's new toys and gifts, without distractions and visitors. Creating these pockets of times will provide you and your child with magical memories you will treasure!

We hope this helps bring some calm to your festive celebrations!

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 & 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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