

# Westwards Nursery

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Dear Parents/Carers,

This newsletter aims to update you on the current interests, activities, and learning within the rainbow room. Within the nursery we work towards the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) framework which is used nationally from the ages of birth to 5 years. We will refer to this, illustrating how our daily practice and activities link to this, as well as how you can support your child's learning and development at home. Please note, from September 2021 the EYFS changed. There are 2 new frameworks, known as Birth to Five Matters, and Development Matters. Both frameworks will be used across the nursery. These frameworks are illustrated briefly below.

The 'in the moment' style of planning, used as a whole in the nursery, is child focused and requires adapting environmental provision 'in the moment', in other words as soon as an apparent or reoccurring interest becomes known within play. A particular area of play may for example have resources added to it in order to meet such interests; this results in greater engagement and consequently the children's learning and brain development is increased.

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Birth to Five matters supports practitioners with the statutory responsibilities required within the EYFS areas of learning and development, supporting them in helping the children to make progress towards the Early learning goals.

<https://www.birthto5matters.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Birthto5Matters-download.pdf>

Development Matters offers a view to how children develop and learn, supporting staff's professional judgement. The document helps to build a curriculum that will build on the children's strengths while meeting their needs.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/100744/6/6.7534\\_DfE\\_Development\\_Matters\\_Report\\_and\\_illustrations\\_web](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100744/6/6.7534_DfE_Development_Matters_Report_and_illustrations_web)

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Summer Term Dates...see  
end for more info!

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## April

2<sup>nd</sup> – International Children's book day

10<sup>th</sup> – Siblings Day

15<sup>th</sup> – Good Friday (Nursery Shut but lots of easter crafts and activities beforehand).

17<sup>th</sup> - Easter Sunday

22<sup>nd</sup> – Earth Day

23<sup>rd</sup> – St George's Day

25<sup>th</sup> – World Penguin Day

30<sup>th</sup> – International Jazz Day

## **Prime Areas of Learning.**

Up to the age of three, there are three prime areas that are fundamental to a child's learning and development.

### **Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**

We love to see the formation of friendships develop in the rainbow room. It is in this age group that the children begin to play much more closely together and invite others into their play. This particularly happens with imaginative play and role-play ideas, playing alongside others and following each other lead to develop the play further.

We support the development of imagination and social play through role-play and different types of every day play, incorporating different occasions into this where possible. An example was on Pancake Day when we created a role-play area which included pans, flour, and toppings of fruit. During this play conversations were initiated amongst the children about making pancakes at home; the children discussed with practitioners and each other how to make pancakes and what to put onto the tops of their pancakes. In addition, celebrating Chinese New Year early in the year promoted a discussion about different types of food. A role-play activity often initiated by the children is Doctors. Such activity actively encourages the children to play alongside each other and to form play based on the ideas and the conversation of the other children. Dolls are a big interest in the rainbow room. Such role-play is great for emotional development; the children often imitate observed behaviors in their play, such as rocking their dolls to sleep, which additionally demonstrates social awareness and response.

Every morning the rainbow room have a small group time together where we encourage the children to name and identify each of their peers in turn. Makaton signs are also used for the first letter of each child's and practitioner's names. Each child is asked if they can name the child who is sat next to them; we believe that this encourages and promotes peer awareness, as well as skills such as turn-taking and communication development.

We actively encourage and promote independence in the rainbow room. At mealtimes, the children are provided with the opportunity to help set the table for lunch, serve their own meal, pour themselves a drink, as well as clean their own hands and faces following lunch. Being involved in such daily routines enables a sense of ownership and also promotes a recognition of important British Values; for example, sitting together with friends at the table for mealtimes and having a variety of different discussions.

Encourage and get involved in role play at home as this is a valuable part of developing social and emotional skills. Maybe create an area your child is interested in, it can be somewhere you have visited like a shop, the doctors etc.



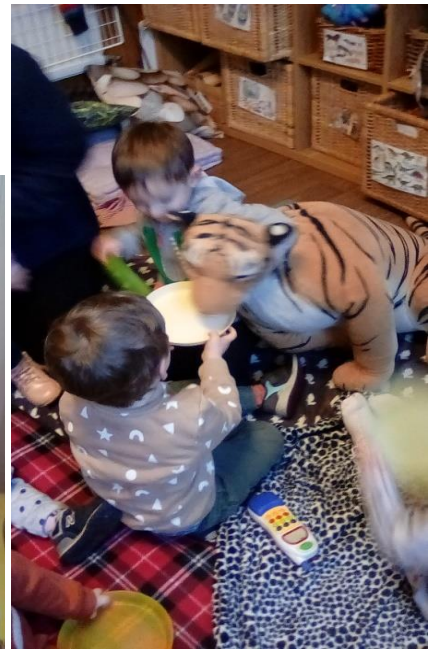
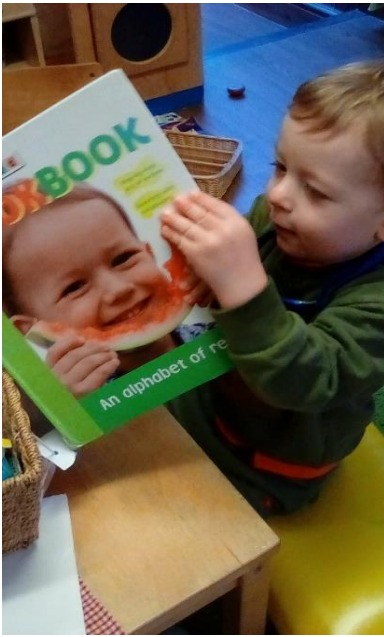




### **Communication and Language:**

We actively promote books in the rainbow room and look at these with the children consistently throughout the day. Books are used both on a one-to-one basis as well as part of a group. It is often books that form the beginning of the children's current interests in the rainbow room. For example, our two most recent display boards this year have been focused on books of interest and choice. These have included 'The Tiger Who Came To Tea' and 'Little Rabbit Foo Foo'. The repetitive words in such books allow the children to be engaged in these stories through being involved and anticipating what might happen next. To maintain an interest in books, activities have linked to these. Examples include art and craft activities such as painting, role-play, and visiting local attractions such as the Museum; Charnwood Museum recently had a 'The Tiger Who Came To Tea' display which the rainbow room frequently visited in relation to this book and topic of interest. With Rabbit books and songs, these have been able to be linked to Easter, as well as again with role-play activities such as dressing up and wearing Easter Bonnets.

Makaton is used by practitioners consistently throughout the day to support communication development, and the rainbow room enjoy daily group singing time, which supports speech, language, as well as social development. The use of Social Communication Groups has recently been re-introduced into daily practice in the rainbow room; the children take it in turns to be part of a small group session of a variety of different short games and songs, each aimed at promoting an understanding of turn-taking as well as support towards essential communication skills such as listening and attention.



### **Physical Development:**

A real interest currently within the rainbow room is using scissors. A supervised activity which is great for the development of fine motor skills and in terms of supporting the early development of muscles in the hand. Through modelling the use of these, independence is also promoted. Mark-making using a variety of different tools, chalks, crayons, paint brushes for example, all support the development of such skills too, as well as hand-eye coordination control.

The rainbow room make regular trips to the local park. The children walk, run, and freely explore the outdoor environment; we strongly believe that being active in nature boosts a positive sense of well-being, as well as a sense of confidence in all areas of their physical development.

We incorporate all types of play into the outdoor area. Our outdoor mud kitchen is a great example; we have recently added sand and real cereal into this area, alongside a variety of utensils to develop a sense of baking/cooking and real-life home experiences. This is the case with both our indoor and outdoor home corner. We provide multiple sensory experiences which are great for the development of fine motor skills; recently, exploring foam allows the children to squeeze this between their hands, and the children often have a go at using the bottle to spray their own foam, which again supports the development of these essential muscles when pressing down on the bottle.

In addition, we bring nature inside; recent examples include Blossom, growing Seeds, tree branches, real plants, and even live Tadpoles! This 'Hygge' approach to the environment not only supports an awareness of the ever-changing seasons, but also enables a sense of calm and in turn supports positive well-being.

This is also the case with our recently renovated 'cosy area', which includes new additions such as fairy lights which add to relaxation. Relaxation is also supported through music; every day before lunch time soothing music is played and the children are asked if they would like to lie down to relax and listen to this before the next part of the day begins.

The rainbow room love music! We have recently begun a new initiative to incorporate much more physical movement into our daily singing times; singing nursery rhymes and moving around the room to carry out the different actions for each song for example! We have also created lots of resources that support physical movement; for example, we recently created large pieces of ribbon that we use for dancing, each child has some ribbon and moves these around up into the air and however they wish to, to create their own large movements in response to the music. Action songs, such as 'Mrs Bunny' and 'Peter Rabbit' are also a favourite in the rainbow room; we recently created a large display board on different Rabbit songs and books too due to this current interest.

Try various music and movement sessions at home to develop muscles and core strength. Lots of silly style dancing is always a hit!













When a particular interest is noted, practitioners record observations and ‘wow’ moments on each child, based upon their individual play. We would love to know about your child’s ‘wow’ moments at home, as well as their interests. Your child’s ‘focus child’ week will enable all practitioners to focus on your child’s particular interests. Being aware of your child’s current interests and engaging with them within their play when necessary, may further support learning and development; sharing such ideas and interactions with practitioners at nursery will allow us to continue to provide enabling environments and provision which are individually engaging for all children.

The rainbow room has an email address which you can send any photos or information to directly.

[westwardsrainbow@btconnect.com](mailto:westwardsrainbow@btconnect.com)

Please keep sharing your wonderful observations from home on Tapestry too, we love to see those uploads!!

Thank you!

We hope that all our term-time children have a lovely Easter break,

Emily, Chrystal, Cheryl, Mags, and Katherine

#### **Upcoming Events Spring Term:**

##### **April**

2<sup>nd</sup> April – International Children’s book day – Talk about favourite stories and the structure.

10<sup>th</sup> April – Siblings Day – Create pictures for our siblings (or those who are special to us in our family if no siblings).

15<sup>th</sup> – Good Friday (Nursery Shut but lots of easter crafts and activities beforehand).

17<sup>th</sup> \_Easter – Easter Sunday is the most important day of the year for Christians who celebrate Jesus rising from the dead and defeating evil forever.

Make Easter cards. Easter baskets for Easter egg hunts around the garden or local park.

Enjoy all of your chocolate eggs!

22<sup>nd</sup> April – Earth Day - Raise awareness of the environmental issues which we face. Discuss our planet and ways we can protect it – polluted water play operation clean up.

23<sup>rd</sup> April – St George’s Day – Talk about the event and why it is special plus creative activities.

25<sup>th</sup> April – World Penguin Day – Watch videos and discuss penguins, Hatch penguin ice eggs and sensory play.

30<sup>th</sup> April – International Jazz Day – Introducing the children to Jazz music and discussing the instruments used.

## **May**

1<sup>st</sup> – May Day – Spring activities and maypole dancing/flags

2<sup>nd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> of May – National sun awareness month – Sun activities and talking about the dangers of the sun.

2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> May – Eid, discuss the celebration and different beliefs

5<sup>th</sup> May – Europe day – Look at the different countries, Flags, looking at the globe

12<sup>th</sup> May – International nurses’ day – role play, dress up, discussions

18<sup>th</sup> May - Numeracy Day – lots of maths activities.

20<sup>th</sup> May – World bee day – honey on toast, bee crafts and tuff trays

23<sup>rd</sup> May – World Turtle Day - looking at videos, turtle small world.

25<sup>th</sup> May – Africa day – Baking, traditions.

28<sup>th</sup> May – Elmer Day – Elephant activities

29<sup>th</sup> May – National biscuit day – make and decorate own biscuits.

## **June**

1<sup>st</sup> June – World milk day – Looking at the process of how milk is made, milk a cow activity (Gloves), milkshakes.

2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> June – Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday

2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> June – Queen’s platinum jubilee weekend – celebrating the queen, cards, crowns.

5<sup>th</sup> June – World environment day - How we can look after our planet.

6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> June – Bike Week – using the bikes, obstacles, parking

8<sup>th</sup> – World Ocean Day – Water play. Sea animals. Face painting. Ocean books, Tuff trays, Ocean discussions

19<sup>th</sup> June – Father’s Day Make cards. Invite dads into nursery to read stories

21<sup>st</sup> June – Make music day – musical instruments, experiencing different types of music jazz, classical etc.

21<sup>st</sup> June – Summer begins – Summer crafts

27<sup>th</sup> June – 10<sup>th</sup> July – Wimbledon fortnight – Visit the tennis courts, strawberries and cream.



## **July**

4<sup>th</sup> July – Independence Day

The day the US secured independence from the British Empire after the Revolutionary War. Celebrate with hot dogs, beach parties, baseball games.

7<sup>th</sup> July - End of term party – TBC depending on restrictions

Ice cream van and inflatable garden party.

8<sup>th</sup> July – End of Term!

30<sup>th</sup> July – International Friends Day

Circle time – songs & hugs. Make a card for your friend.

## **August**

4<sup>th</sup> August - International Owl Awareness Day

Celebrate one of the most iconic bird species and raise awareness to their plight in the wild and what we can all do to help protect them

8<sup>th</sup> August – International cat day – celebrate your furry friend

10<sup>th</sup> August – World Lion Day. To raise Lion conservation awareness.

Lion stories and activities – stamping/printing/footprints etc.

11<sup>th</sup> August – Farmers’ Market visit TBC

Mid - End August - Wise Owls Graduation Party – date tbc