



Wee Rascals Too

December Newsletter 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

We are fast approaching the Christmas holidays and the end of Term 2. We have had many celebrations this term, including Halloween and Bonfire night which the children enjoyed, and throughout December, the children have loved the Christmas festive celebrations.

This term has seen some big changes in the nursery, and I must say everyone has adapted really well.

As the new Manager at Wee Rascals Too, I am delighted to have arrived, and have begun to settle in well to my new role. All of the staff, parents and children have been so welcoming and have made the transition so easy for me. I joined the nursery on the 17th of October, after working in the Victoria Street nursery for 10 years. I have gained lots of experience with all of the age groups, and look forwards to becoming fully immersed at Wee Rascals Too.

I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome all the new families to Wee Rascals Too. We hope everyone has settled in well to the nursery routine.

Recent Staff changes

Becca Baxter started on the 28th of November. She previously worked in a care home and is enjoying learning about child development and education. She works a Monday and Friday in the Cheeky Monkeys room, and a Tuesday in the Little Bunnies room.

Emma Wright is increasing her working days to include a Thursday in the Cheeky Monkey room.

Charity

So far, up to October, all of the Summers Nurseries have raised and donated to the following charities:- (Money donated will be used directly to help the Ukraine crisis).

We have donated £3263.10 to CAFOD, of which Wee Rascals Too raised £410. CAFOD is an international development charity and the official aid agency of the Catholic Church of England and Wales. They are part of one of the largest aid networks in the world, and through their global church network, they have the potential to reach everyone. CAFOD works through local experts in Ukraine and the surrounding areas, helping those fleeing conflict to survive. Donations will help local experts to keep providing food, water, healthcare, shelter/clothing and give counselling.

We have also donated £2402.85 to UNICEF, of which Wee Rascals Too raised £408.30. UNICEF is working tirelessly to keep children safe, remaining in Ukraine to reach the most vulnerable children and families. They work tirelessly at the borders of neighbouring countries, providing clean water, health care services and other critical support.

We will continue to fund raise for Ukraine up until the end of the year. Many thanks for your continued support.

On Wednesday the 23rd Of November, we had a pyjama day and invited all the staff and children to wear their cosy PJ's to nursery that day. We enjoyed some hot chocolate and marshmallows with our friends in the afternoon. Donations were collected and we raised an amazing £92.00. Thank you to everyone who made this possible!

This term's learning experiences:

The end of summer marked the start of a new season for us, as we welcomed autumn into our lives, with lots of colour changes, leaves falling and a change in temperature. Outdoor play becomes a whole new world of adventures as we make mud pies and slides, and collect water in our containers as it dripped from the rooftops.

Water measuring activities have been introduced into the garden over the autumn and winter months to expand numeracy outdoors. These activities are used by all of the rooms, introducing children to measuring, volume, numbers etc. We have also had lots of discussions about weather changes, and the children have enjoyed learning about cultural celebrations, including Halloween and Bon Fire night, which allowed for many art and craft opportunities, as well as discussions about how we keep ourselves safe through these activities.

Little Bunnies

The Little Bunnies started their term learning about the seaside. They made their own sandcastles and we talked about different experiences at the beach. Sand play allows children to learn about building and knocking down, and also helps to develop fine motor skills as they try to scoop up the sand into their buckets.

We continue to introduce colours to the children, providing activities where they have opportunities to learn the colour names.

This term, we focused on a specific colour each week and included it in our planned activities. We put yellow objects into the tuff tray for the children to explore, and the children also enjoyed painting with yellow. We used blue gloop and foam as a sensory activity, using our hands to squeeze and explore the different textures. We also used the colour green with playdough, learning how to roll, pull and pinch with our fine motor skills. Red colours were used during water play, with the children splashing and pushing down objects in the water, introducing early science, learning about weight.

Other activities this term included play with tractors, where the children rolled tractors through paint and created their own printing pictures. The children were able to dip and then push the tractors, watching for the results as they rolled over the paper.

October brought a whole host of Halloween activities. We went all out on our sensory experiences, using a range of foods such as beans, spaghetti and pasta in our messy tray, with the children discovering new textures and scents.

We carved a pumpkin and most of the children were very curious to look inside at the seeds and slimy texture, with some of the children not so keen to touch it at first. However, once they saw the staff doing it, most of the children were straight in with both hands at once, helping to pull it all out! For those who were not too keen, we were able to offer utensils so they could scoop out the inside.

We enjoyed a spooky Halloween party with music, dancing and party snacks. Some of us dressed up in our favourite outfits and the children were so proud to show them off to the other children and staff.

Cheeky Monkeys

We have had a 'busy' few months in the Cheeky Monkey room, welcoming through quite a few of the Little Bunnies. The movements have gone really well with all of the children settling easily and enjoying their new room.

The children enjoy participating in activities which develop their physical skills, using obstacle courses to develop their balance. Outside, they have also been practising jumping with two feet together, especially enjoying this in the rain, having a fantastic time jumping in and out of the puddles! The children also enjoyed using the hula hoops and chasing bubbles.

We all enjoyed learning about the Queen this year, and the children coloured a lovely rainbow picture in celebration of her life. We followed this up with a threading activity, where everyone created wonderful patterns, making lovely jewels just like Queen Elizabeth wore.

The children had song time with the use of some new coloured-in wooden spoons. Each child picks a spoon that represents the song. One of the favourites with the Cheeky Monkeys is "Eyes, Nose, Cheeky, Cheeky Chin" and of course the old classic "Ba Ba Black Sheep".

During Halloween, we had a pumpkin in our water tray, which allowed the children to explore the smells and textures, and during a discussion, one of the children mentioned that lemons smell, so we decided to make potions with lemon and lime. The children also used parts of the pumpkin to do a fun printing activity with a variety of different coloured paints.

In September the Cheeky Monkeys visited 'Play Town' in Inverurie, and it was a great adventure to mark the re-introduction of our trips out with the nursery environment. The children were delighted to be on the bus, pointing to lots of different things on the way, such as animals, cars and other buses!

'Play Town' offered the children lots of role play, such as kitchen play, fire engines, a building site and the coffee shop! The children were able to move around freely and expand their imaginative play, and they enjoyed lots of interactive play! Whilst there, they enjoyed a picnic snack of fruit and pancakes.

Busy Bees

The Busy Bees learned about transport, creating their own tracks for various types of transport. In the garden, children used chalk lines to draw junctions, roundabouts, and stop and go signs. We also discussed road safety.

After seeing a crane behind the garden fence, the children got creative, building their own crane using the large building blocks. They also made an obstacle course with the "train tunnels".

The children participated in colour mixing, working as a team to predict which new colour would be formed. The staff spoke about colours in sunlight and light reflections, sparking a discussion about shadows.

We used various shapes and objects to create colour matching activities, as well as introducing 3D shape recognition. This allowed for individual and group explorations, and invited teamwork and sharing ideas.

After testing the fire alarm, we decided to explore fire engines and fire fighters, talking about what they do and why. The children made their own fire helmets and collages. We created our own 'pretend' fire in the tough tray and we used water spray bottles to extinguish it.

The "Colour Monster" story book has been a favourite with the children this term, which aims to encourage children to discuss their feelings, and this has been a great success!

The children enjoyed a late summer trip to Haddo House, where we went for a walk around the grounds, and they all loved feeding the ducks with the duck food we bought! We also visited the park and were able to explore the swings, chutes and climbing frames, before heading to the café to get some juice and a cake.

Our next trip was to the Macduff Aquarium, which was a great success! We saw tiny fish and great BIG fish that were almost twice the size of the children. We learnt about how to care for the fish, what kind of food they eat and how they lay eggs, and we got to feel some real mermaid purses, which holds the eggs inside.

After our tour, we had a lovely picnic lunch on the bus and then headed back inside to watch the divers feeding the fish. The children loved watching this as some of the fish jumped up and we got splashed.

The children also learnt all about pollution on the beaches and sea- they were very aware that they needed to pick up litter and bin any rubbish we have.

Holidays

We would kindly ask that you let us know about any planned future holidays your child may have to allow us to plan appropriately.

Outdoor Clothing

As we are now fully into winter, with many colder days, could we please ask that you update your child's bag to ensure that they have plenty of spare clothes which are suitable for the colder days.

Please place your child's clothes in the main section of the bag, with any pants/socks placed in the front pocket as it makes these items easier to locate when required.

Can you please also ensure that your child has appropriate outdoor items such as wellies, thicker waterproofs, as well as hats and gloves etc for those colder days. Please also make sure that all of your child's clothing is clearly labelled with their name to help prevent clothes being mixed up or lost.

Parental Questionnaires

Many thanks to everyone who completed a parental questionnaire. We are in the process of going through them, and will get back to you during January to give feedback.

Dates

The pre-schoolers thoroughly enjoyed their trip to see Peter Pan at His Majesty's Theatre in Aberdeen on the 13th of December, with lots of pantomime fun had by all!

Dates for the last week of term are as follows below:-

Monday 19th December - Busy Bee Nativity at Kintore Parish Church

Wednesday 21st Decmber - Christmas parties

Thursday 22nd December - Ante pre-school trip to BA Stores

Christmas Closure - The Nursery Closes at 6pm on Friday 23rd December 2022 and re-opens on Monday 9th January 2023 at 7:30am.

Wishing you all a merry Christmas and a Happy New Year when it comes.

Kind regards

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