



Worple Road, Epsom, Surrey KT18 7AA

Registered Charity 1155711

May 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

What we have been doing!

Please find below an overview of some of the fun and learning we have enjoyed this half term!



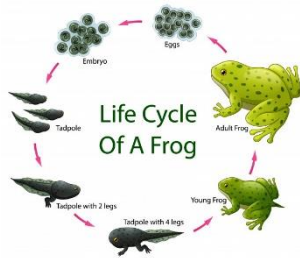
Ramadan and EID

To start the half term, the children enjoyed learning about Ramadan and Eid. During our morning group time, children explored objects, such as a hijab, prayer mat, prayer beads, moon, and star symbol. We talked about the objects and how they are used. Some of the children made their own moon and star or paper lantern which was a great opportunity to practise cutting with scissors! We shared our story book – Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns, and the children thought about the importance of helping others as we discussed the purpose of fasting and giving to others. We hope our families enjoyed their own Eid celebrations!



St George's Day

We all enjoyed the story of St George and the dragon and we thought about England and had a look at the English flag. We love to talk about Britain, so that the children can think about where they live. This is also a great opportunity to talk about other countries our children and staff are familiar with. We were treated to a lovely Chinese song this half term by one of our morning children and one of our team, Angela, remembers the song well from her own childhood!



Life Cycles

We are all excited by our recent delivery of stick insect eggs! The children have had a look at the eggs, and we are eagerly waiting for them to hatch. We have been thinking about other life cycles including caterpillars. Some of the children had a go at making their own wriggly, caterpillar by cutting different size circles and attaching them with split pins. We have all enjoyed dancing to the butterfly song and practising our counting skills by joining in with The Very Hungry Caterpillar story using our props. After half term we will revisit lifecycles when our real caterpillars arrive.



Occupations and Families

During the last part of this half term, we have been thinking about the different jobs people do and differences between ourselves. The children have enjoyed making their own dough and using the dough mats to make the different parts of emergency services vehicles. Children have enjoyed dressing up and using the props to become builders, police officers, doctors, and hairdressers during their imaginative play. Saira brought in lots of paper bags which the children used to junk model into the different types of homes people live in. Some of the children enjoyed making a home together with a huge cardboard box!

Phonics, Rhyme, and alliteration

At Pre-School, we always provide lots of activities which support children to develop an awareness and understanding of phonics, rhyme, and alliteration. During our circle time and group times, we share Jolly Phonics with the older children. We have found that the Jolly Phonics songs are a great introduction to phonics which appeal to younger children ensuring they hear the correct sounds. As a foundation to phonics, we provide listening and attention activities for our younger children such as 'What's in the Box'. We use musical instruments and other objects so children practise listening and distinguishing between sounds.

Sound discrimination games

A link to a fantastic resource.

Sound discrimination games are part of stage 1 phonics and will support your child to develop listening and attention skills and begin to distinguish between different types of sounds.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills/zbc4y9q>

Link to the Jolly Phonics songs <https://youtu.be/yVvry9jpVjl>

(Please note that these links are from external providers and should be accessed with parental supervision).

During story time, we regularly share rhyming stories and ensure that the children start to notice when words sound the same. We talk about rhyme and alliteration although these concepts can become very confusing for children. It is so important that the children enjoy their learning, and we never spend too long 'teaching' concepts. By providing plenty of opportunities to join in with stories, games, and rhymes the children will naturally develop an understanding and begin to distinguish between the two concepts.

Rhyme – words sound the same – cat, bat, mat.

Alliteration – words begin with the same initial letter sound – cute, cuddly cat.

Focus on transitions!

As the older children get ready to leave us for their new school and our younger children prepare for morning sessions or longer days, we are beginning to talk about some of these changes with them. During our group sessions, we will talk about the expectations at school such as to show good sitting and listening and all the amazing things they are going to learn.

This can become a very anxious time for the children, and it is important that we do not add to their anxieties but help them to talk and express themselves. Our persona doll Yusef is always on hand to help with this task, and he will be joining our morning sessions regularly throughout the summer term to talk about his own anxieties. Yusef is a special doll. We treat him as a real boy and the children learn to treat him as though he is one of their friends. We find the children always feel much better about their own worries and problems when they discover that Yusef has these problems too! Our younger children have not met Yusef yet, but he will be joining them at the end of term to introduce himself and to talk about summer holidays and returning to Pre-School in September in the mornings.

During normal times, we would often expect reception teachers to visit Pre-School. Unfortunately, this is very unlikely due to the current restrictions. We will send transition summaries to receiving schools and the schools will all have their own set of arrangements for new starters which we always endeavour to accommodate.

During the last week of term, all our leavers will receive a summary of their learning and development according to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Each family will also receive a memory stick containing their child's Learning Journey (from Tapestry) to keep.

Next half term



Parent meetings

Next half term, our morning families will receive a phone appointment to speak with their key person. This is a short catch up meeting. If you have a concern and require a longer appointment, please let us know. Phone appointments for Wendy's afternoon children will take place next half term.

Lunch / Snack Bags



Please can all parents wash their child's lunch / snack bag inside and outside. Some may even be able to go through the washing machine. Thank you!

If your child is unwell.....

Please do not send your child to pre-school if they are unwell. Some of our children have low immunity and catch things easily. Please also continue to follow the guidelines by arranging for your child to have a full PCR test (not a rapid lateral-flow test) if they are showing any of the main symptoms of COVID e.g. a new continuous cough, a higher than normal temperature or loss of sense of taste / smell. Your child should not be at pre-school if they are showing any of these symptoms.

End of term party

Our last day of term is Tuesday 20th July 2021. Due to the current restrictions, which apply to all early years settings, it is unlikely that we will hold our normal end of year event. Instead, all children will be invited to join us for a party on this day (unfortunately it is very unlikely that parents will be able to attend too). We intend to organise two parties for our morning and afternoon children. Further details will follow later in the summer term.

During June and July we are looking forward to the following celebrations and events.

12th June The Queen's official birthday

20th June Father's Day

24th June – Visit from Zoolab with their wriggly roadshow (morning children only)

20th July – End of term and Party Day!

Please let us know if there are any celebrations or events that you would like us to celebrate or introduce the children to.

Have a lovely half term break in the sun! We look forward to seeing you back at Pre-School on Monday 7th June!

Kind regards

Hayley & St Martin's Pre-School Team

Useful links

The Samaritans – support with ‘whatever you are going through’:

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

Crisis – for those faced with homelessness:

<https://www.crisis.org.uk/>

Citizens Advice – for information and advice for all. Currently updated with latest Coronavirus information.

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

NHS – For all the latest medical advice and guidance – including Coronavirus (COVID-19)

<https://www.nhs.uk/>

Eric - for help with potty training

<https://www.eric.org.uk/>

Family Information Service – useful local information relating to services for children and families living in Surrey.

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/families>

SEND Local Offer – Online hub for 0-25 year olds with Special Educational Needs or a Disability

<https://www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk/kb5/surrey/localoffer/home.page>

NSPCC – Safeguarding and child protection. Find information here regarding COVID-19 and returning to school.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/>