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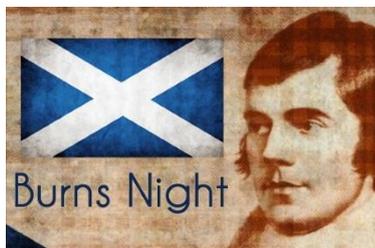
February 2022

Dear Parents/Carers

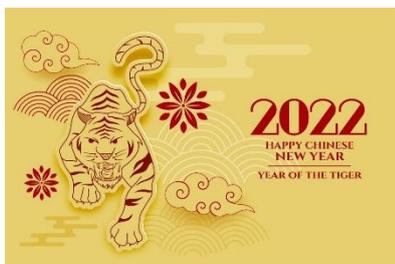
Please find below an overview for this half term.



The children started the term with a little science. Using lard, cones and seeds, the morning children made bird feeders. This was a lovely sensory activity, building fine motor skills as the children used their hands to squeeze and push all the ingredients into place. We hope that the feeders were appreciated by our local feathered friends. Experiments with ice followed. The children filled containers and placed objects in with the water. Predictions were made and, the following day, lots of fun was had, watching, and bashing ice as it melted.



The children enjoyed listening to the bagpipes and joined in with some Scottish style dancing. In the messy tray, the children explored changing quantities and practised using their fine motor skills by using different tools to fill containers with porridge oats. Lots of children enjoyed looking at tartan and making tartan with strips of paper. This led to lots of creative ways to use the paper strips!



Burns nights was quickly followed by Chinese New Year. We decorated the pre-school and practised using chop sticks and other tools to pick up the pom poms hidden in rice. Many of the children enjoyed the sensory experience of mixing rice into shaving foam whilst practising new vocabulary to describe the changing texture and smells. Angela treated the morning children by using her first language to lead a group activity, which introduced the children to the animals of the Chinese Zodiac. The children made a

Chinese Dragon and joined in with the dragon dance, playing musical instruments along to our Chinese music.



We have ended the half term by thinking about those we love and care for and how the heart symbol has a meaning – love.



As many of you will already know, we have said goodbye to Saira and Victoria this half term. Saira and Victoria are both embarking on new and exciting opportunities at other local schools. We hope you will all join us in wishing them success and happiness for the future. Our amazing deputy manager Wendy is stepping back from this role from after half term, although we are pleased to let you know that she will remain with us as a supply member of our team. We will look forward to seeing her for lots of fun, as and when staff cover is needed.

Next term

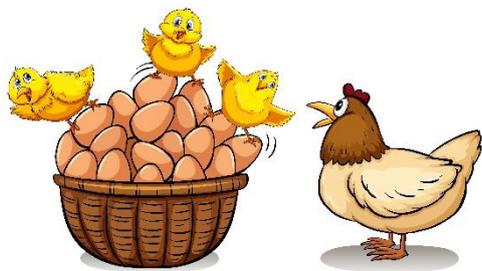


Parent meetings

Due to the number of children and staff isolating this half term, we were unable to conduct appointments as planned. Thank you to our afternoon families for your patience. Many of you have now had the chance to speak to your child's key person.

Next half term all our morning parents/carers will receive an appointment time to speak with their key person. Where afternoon children have been allocated a new key person, you will receive an appointment for a meeting during the next half term.

Please keep an eye out for an email with your appointment.



Living Eggs

We are looking forward to another delivery of chick eggs on Monday 14th March! We are hopeful that some of the chicks will hatch whilst the children are present, so the children can watch and enjoy this experience. The eggs will be numbered, and the children can enjoy guessing which number will hatch first. As the chicks grow stronger, every child will have the chance to touch or hold the chicks. We will watch and talk about how quickly they grow, watching the feathers on their wings begin to grow too. The chicks will leave us on Friday 25th March 2022. Please be assured that the chickens are all relocated to free-range farms/homes in the local area by “Living Eggs” the company who provide the service. If you look after chickens already, or know someone who does, and would be interested in giving some of them a home, please let us know.

Next half term we are looking forward to lots of celebrations and events.

1st March - St David's Day

We will look at the map of the UK and include activities related to St David, Wales, daffodils and the Welsh language and culture.

1st March - Shrove Tuesday

We will share activities linked to the celebration and make, flip, and taste our own pancakes!

3rd March - World Book Day

We will invite you all to bring in a favourite story and children are invited to dress up as a favourite story book character.

17th March - St Patrick's Day

We will look at the map of the UK and include activities related to St Patrick, Ireland, clover, and the Irish language culture.

18th March - Red Nose Day

We will join in with the celebration by wearing our noses and sharing some jokes and thinking about why we need to raise money for those who are less fortunate than us.

23rd March – Wild Science Visit (afternoon children)

An animal education and therapy experience for young children.

27th March - Mothering Sunday

The children will think about their families and the people who look after them.

17th April - Easter Sunday

We will share activities linked to the festival including an Easter Egg hut!

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

Recycling

One of our parents is recycling crisp packets for us and we are teaching the children about the need to recycle and look after the planet. The children are going to make their own recycling bin for crisp packets, so if your child would like to bring in any clean crisp packets to post in the bin, please do!

Finally, we hope you all have a restful half term, and we look forward to seeing the children back at pre-school week beginning Monday 21st February 2022!

Kind regards

St Martin's Pre-School Team

Useful links

Epsom Foodbank – essential emergency service for people unable to afford food.

[Epsom and Ewell Foodbank | Helping Local People in Crisis](#)

Home-Start – a local community network of trained volunteers and expert support helping families with young children through their challenging times.

[Home-Start 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>

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/>

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/>

I Can – communication charity.

[I CAN, the children's communication charity](#)