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February 2023

Dear Parents/Carers

Please find an overview for this half term.

We have re-arranged our indoor environment to make some improvements, to make the whiteboard more visual and to introduce an ICT area to the setting. The whiteboard has come in very handy, as we have been modelling how to write the letter of the week and the number of the week. We are following the Read Write Inc program followed in most Surrey schools, and in particular the Learning Set 1.

A parent guide is available for you to look at by following the link [Parent guide to Read Write Inc. Phonics - Oxford Owl](#) and there are some useful videos for parents too.

We have been introducing children to other languages spoken by our community. So far, we have had a story read in Spanish by Suzie and two parents visited us to read to our children in Turkish. We have covered the topics of winter, winter animals, Frozen, emotions, The Elves and the Shoemaker, The Three Little Pigs, Gruffalo and Chinese New Year this half term.



During Chinese New Year Angela came to pre-school in traditional Chinese dress and taught us how she celebrates the Chinese New Year, how to count to ten in Chinese and played us Chinese music on her ukulele. We created Chinese dragons, made lanterns, made Chinese flags, using red and yellow, learned how to write Chinese numbers, and ordered the animals 1-12 in the Chinese zodiac.

We painted with the animals, as well as listened and danced to Chinese music. We had a story about how the Chinese zodiac was formed and watched two short videos on CBeebies, where a little girl explained the Chinese traditions, such as giving money in red envelopes and cleaning of the home. These short videos can be seen through the link <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/watch/chinese-new-year>



At the beginning of term we introduced a feelings wall where the children can record how they are feeling and have been talking to the children about our emotions and how we and others might feel. We have ended the half term by thinking about those we love and care for and how the heart symbol has a meaning, love.

Online Safety

National Online Safety recently sent out some tips for keeping under 5's safe online, which is attached below. More information can be found by visiting their website www.nationalonlinesafety.com

ONLINE SAFETY FOR UNDER 5s
10 Top Tips for Parents and Carers

According to Ofcom's most recent research, a significant proportion of children are already online by the time they start school, with 75% of 5-year-olds owning their own mobile phone and 60% using messaging platforms. As becoming familiar with technology is generally encouraged in younger children – and has been essential for education during the pandemic – it's crucial that trusted adults recognise both the benefits and the risks of infants and toddlers using digital devices. We've compiled our top tips to help the under-5s start their online safety journey.

- USE DEVICES TOGETHER**
This lets you monitor what content your child is using the device for. It also provides the reassurance that an adult is always watching, which is well to ask you open links, and so on.
- ACTIVATE PARENTAL CONTROLS**
Most digital devices have built-in parental controls that can limit the type of content children access by age. It's important to make sure you know how to use them. It's a good idea to explore which controls the device has and when you're together.
- MANAGE SCREEN TIME**
This can be tricky, especially if your child is interested in a certain video, app or game. Try to agree an amount of screen time and get parental control of the device when they go without devices.
- TALK ABOUT BEING SAFE ONLINE**
Just like we teach children about being safe in the real world, we need to make sure they know about being safe online. Use simple, age-appropriate language to talk to them about staying safe online. Encourage them to tell you if they see anything that makes them feel uncomfortable or unsure about what they're seeing.
- SET A GOOD EXAMPLE**
Children often learn by watching and copying. If you're using a mobile device, you're showing your child how to use it. You're also showing them how to use it responsibly. Let them see you modelling good online behavior and encouraging them to do the same.
- BLOCK IN-APP PURCHASES**
If your child uses a device that's linked to a payment method (such as a bank card), it can be easy for them to make purchases. It's important to make sure you know how to stop them from accidentally spending money on your device.
- CHOOSE SAFE APPS AND SITES**
There are some fantastic apps and websites that are specifically designed to be safe for children. Always check the age rating and read the reviews before allowing your child to use it.
- INVOLVE THE FAMILY**
If your partner has better skills, it's often best that they help you set up the device. It's important to get everyone's input. (It's important to get everyone's input.) Encourage them to help you set up the device and to help you set up the device.
- IF IN DOUBT, ASK**
The easiest way to find out what your child is doing online is to ask them. If you're unsure, ask them to show you. If you're unsure, ask them to show you. If you're unsure, ask them to show you.
- SUPPORT CREATIVE & ACTIVE PLAY**
Physical and creative activities are important for children's learning, and there are plenty of ways to incorporate technology into this. In addition, you could encourage games that require critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Try to encourage your child to use technology in a way that supports their learning and development.

Meet Our Expert
 Nicola Davies, Managing Professional Development and Technical Support at National Online Safety, London. She has been working in IT for many and early years practitioners both in the UK and overseas for the past 10 years.

National Online Safety
 #WakeUpWednesday

www.nationalonlinesafety.com | @nationalonlinesafety

Tax Free Childcare

A [support guide on Tax-Free Childcare](#) for parents. Please do research Tax-Free Childcare, which the government introduced to replace the childcare voucher scheme. The pre-school accepts payments for fees, uniform and contributions using tax-free childcare and there are tax savings for families using this scheme.

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



Parent meetings

These have been arranged for the first two weeks of the next half term. You will have received an email with your appointment time.

Individual Photos

The photographer will be visiting us to take individual photos of the children 8th and 9th March.

21st February – Shrove Tuesday

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

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.

2nd March - World Book Day

Children are invited to bring in a favourite story and to dress up as a favourite story book character.

3rd March – Zoolab will visit our morning children with their wriggly road show! This normally includes a menagerie of mammals, insects, amphibians, and arachnids. All morning children are welcome to attend this day, even if Friday is not their normal session.

Week beginning 13th March – the children will all take part in our sponsored bounce. Children will take turns to bounce on our trampoline, while the number of bounces are counted! We will send home sponsorship forms, and hope that you and your families will support our fundraising event!

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.

17th 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.

19th March - Mothering Sunday

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

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, we return on Monday 20th September.

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](#)

National Online Safety

[About Us | National Online Safety](#)