Bristol Childcare

The Priory Day Nursery

Late Summer Newsletter • August 2023

Need to know

Nursery Manager Justine Richardson
Deputy Manager Eloise Howells

Although we charge for all hours, whether attended or not, we are able to remove meal package charges for planned absences. We need 2 weeks notice of any absence. Meals will be charged for unplanned absences like sickness as we plan our catering needs 10 days in advance.

To ensure that we are correctly staffed at all times we ask that you adhere to your booked times. If you drop off early or pick up late, our staffing may not be adequate. To deter this, we charge if you pick up late or drop off early. Please also note that nursery will close at 6pm promptly. If your current hours need changing please speak to Justine.

Nice to know

All nursery policies are available for you to read on our website. To access them, you will need to login – please contact the nursery manager for details.

You can view our 4-week menu online at www.bristolchildcare.co.uk/meals/menus. Our cycle of Summer Menus started on 1st May, you can find them on our website.

You can contact Managing Director Saffia Bullock at any time via e-mail: saffia.bullock@bristolchildcare.co.uk

Bank Holiday Closures

Monday 28th August - Summer Bank Holiday

If you have any comments or feedback, please email us at: priory@bristolchildcare.co.uk

Welcome from Justine

We all hope you enjoyed the Graduation for our school leavers. It was a lovely afternoon and I am so pleased you could all make it. It is such a roller coaster of emotions for the children, sad to leave nursery but excited for their new and exciting start in Reception.
We wish them all good luck and if you are ever passing, please pop in and say hi!

As we all know the weather is so unpredictable, even in the summer months, so we have postponed our family picnic to Thursday 24th August 5-7pm. Fingers crossed the sun will be shining that day!

Over the next few weeks each room will be organising trips, either to local parks or on the bus to farms and museums. If you have any passes that you are happy for staff to borrow, please speak to your room leader, it would be much appreciated.

Shelley from Talking Tots has now finished for the summer. Many children have benefitted from her sessions through turn taking, story telling, building confidence and listening games. Hopefully we shall see her again for more sessions in January next year.

The library visits will continue once a month. The preschool children are really enjoying their stories with Margaret the librarian and it supports all the children with their communication and language.

It is also great to see the Lending Library being well used.

Lastly, I would just like to say on behalf of all the staff, thank you for all the gifts you have given, it has been much appreciated.

Justine

Update from Saffia Bullock, Managing Director

The time of year has come round again when we are starting to say goodbye to our school leavers – and to some families. How does time go so fast?

As a parent myself, I know the mix of anxiety and excitement that comes with these transitions – my children are now all in their late teens but I can remember so well the emotions of saying goodbye to them at their first day in primary school, and also watching them walk off alone to the bus stop, taking the big step of independence to their first day of secondary school. I find that as a parent, the days can sometimes feel long, but the years seem to fly by.

I hope that the move to primary school goes as well as it can for all of you and your children. Thank you for being part of our Bristol Childcare family.

For those of you staying with us, I'd like to introduce you to a new curriculum initiative – Playing with Sounds. This was the focus of our Cascade training on 6 July. It's a really exciting development of our Curriculum following some training our Curriculum Leads attended in January. The idea is to acknowledge how the skills for reading start in the baby room – with songs, rhymes and games. Rather than think specifically about phonics and learning to read, we are focussing on sounds – and "playing" with sounds – so that it's fun. This is how we ensure we build the blocks of learning every day.

It's also really important to acknowledge that all of our staff are educators – the building blocks of formal "reading and writing" education really do start in the baby room. We have produced a parent factsheet to support this, which you can read on the next two pages of this newsletter. I hope you find this interesting, and please ask the nursery staff all about this if you would like to find out more. We have some songs and rhymes that we will be using with the children, but really, anything you sing, read, play and do with your children around words and sounds really will help them learn, right from the very start.

Parent Feedback

We know that parents and carers find the views of other parents and carers helpful when choosing a nursery. We are listed on the website Day Nurseries. If you are able to leave a review we would really appreciate it – please click on this link and it should be easy!

https://www.daynurseries.co.uk/review-submit/6543218400

Thank you, your time sharing your feedback is much appreciated.

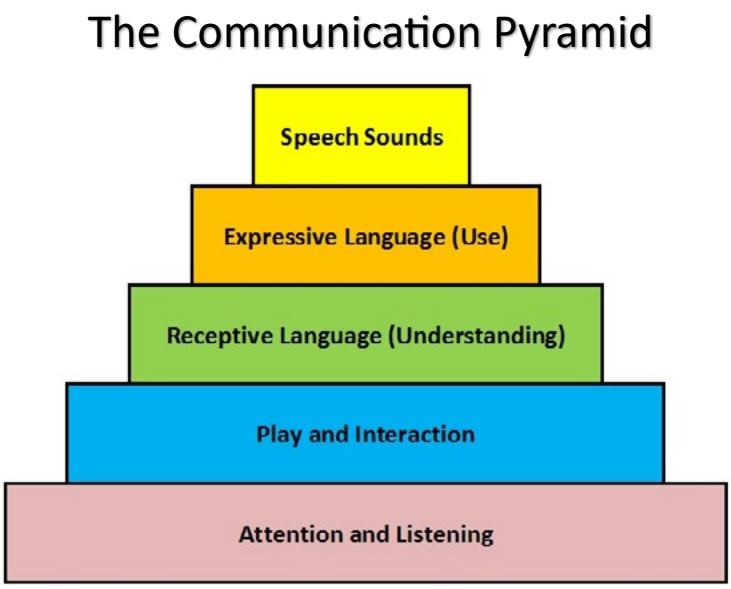
Saffia

Bristol Childcare

Playing with sounds

We attended 'What comes before phonics?' training led by the Bristol Early Years Communication, Language & Literacy specialist. From this, we have gathered a bank of resources and skills which can be used with children from the Baby Room, through to Twos Room, and then extended and developed in Preschool.

What comes before phonics? As practitioners and parents/carers we need to know - what do our children need to learn before we can start to think about teaching them phonics?



What does this mean? Phonics teaching and learning needs to sit upon firm foundations. The Communication Pyramid above shows us the process of how we do this.

The first vital step is to develop skills in attention and listening, and so we focus mostly on this throughout each child's journey at nursery.

What is Attention and Listening? Attention and listening are foundation skills to the rest of children's development. Good attention and listening skills help children develop their social skills, tune in and understand language, follow instructions, learn to communicate and listen to speech sounds. We support children to develop these skills to enable them to learn new things when they go to school. We do this when we carry out our large movement activities and small group times. We know that children need lots of repetition to embed their learning.

What we do at Nursery: We encourage and support children to develop phonological awareness. This is the foundation of learning to read– learning to play with sounds they hear around them in their environment and the language they use to communicate when playing and learning.

It's all about our provision: We enable children to experience lots of different resources and activities to help them develop their early literacy skills.

Examples of these are:

This is done throughout a child's nursery journey, in the Baby Room, Twos Room and through to Preschool.

Phonics:

Phonics is a method of teaching children to read by matching the sound (phoneme) to the written letter (grapheme). Although we do not actively teach phonics, we ensure practitioners are trained in the correct way to carry out phonics teaching. This is to make sure that if a child is showing signs of being ready to take that next step in blending letter and sounds together, it is being taught properly and correctly from the start.

What is Systematic Synthetic Phonics? This is an approach which teaches children to recognise letters (graphemes) and their associated sounds (phonemes) in a particular order.

The guidance states that schools must follow the Synthetic, Systematic and Phonetic Scheme validated by the Department of Education. This means that our job as Early Years Practitioners is to lay down the foundations displayed in the Communication Pyramid above (Attention & Listening, and Play & Interaction) to give children those skills to learn phonics and Systematic Synthetic Phonics which, in school, will develop into their reading and writing skills.

If you have any questions or would like to know more, please speak to the nursery Curriculum Leads: Justine Richardson and Kerry Rosewarne.

Babies

We would like to welcome our new friends joining Baby Room, Noah, Oliver, Valia, Thomas and Sulaiman! If you have any questions about anything, please speak with your key person.

Recently, we have evaluated the room and have decided to remove the sand pit and replace it with our dark den. We have observed that the babies enjoy exploring with different colours and lights using our torches and fibre optic lights and seeing what shapes and patterns they can make with them. Through this interest, the adults have been modelling lots of language around colours and shapes.

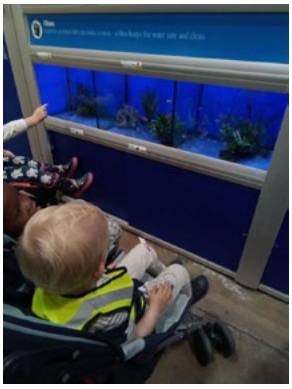
We now have a new sand pit in our garden. The babies enjoy playing in the sand pit, by scooping and pouring the sand using our sand pit toys. They love to hide their feet in the sand and then find them again!

If you are able to share any light up toys or sensory toys for our dark den, please speak to a member of staff.

Twos

Recently twos went on a trip to explore the different animals in our local area. We all walked down to Pets at Home to look at the household pets of bunnies and fish. We had lots of conversations about the different coloured fish we could see.

After this we ventured over to The Reptile Zone where we saw crocodiles, snakes, and iguanas. The children were very interested in the different animals and had no fear in getting up close to them. The children were imitating the sounds the animals would make, such as "snap snap" for a crocodile and "ssssss" for the snakes.



We have also been focusing on our emotions in the Twos room. At the age of two children are really starting to understand and express their emotions. We have created a 'feelings area' within the room to help support the children. We use the colour monster book alongside our feelings spoons to help children understand their emotions. We have also included mirrors so the children can see their facial expressions. A lovely quote that we like to reflect on when thinking about children's feelings is…

"When little people are overwhelmed by big emotions, it is our job to share our calm. Not join their chaos".
L. R. Knost

Preschool

It's that time of year again when we start saying goodbye to some of our children leaving for 'big school'. We have had so many amazing memories and moments over the years, and it is always a sad time, but also an exciting time for the children to start their new adventures and create lots more wonderful memories.

Thank you so much to everyone that came to celebrate the children for their graduation. We had the best time and we are very proud of each and every one of them and are privileged to have been on their journeys with them. Well done Pre-School!

We have recently visited St Werburghs City Farm where the children were able to feed the goats, brush the pigs, say hello to the chickens and meet a baby chick. We were also very lucky to find one of the unicorns from the trail at the farm.

The children were able to absorb so much from this trip from learning about road safety, our local environment, how to look after the animals and just being captivated in awe and wonder as we walked through the forest up to the highest hill to have our picnic and take a moment listening to nature around us.

Date Slice

To make approximately 12 slices

Ingredients:

225g stoned, chopped dates
125ml orange juice (enough to cover the dates)
110g wholemeal flour
1 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
110g rolled oats
150g sugar
110g butter or dairy free spread
Pinch of salt

Thank you to Nicky from Head Office who adapted this recipe from large nursery numbers, and tried it out at home.

Method:

Heat the oven to 180°

Grease and line the base of a 20cm square tin, so the depth of mixture is approximately 4cm.

Put chopped dates in a pan and cover with orange juice. Bring to the boil, simmer until dates are cooked and juice is absorbed. Leave to cool.

Sift the flour, bicarbonate of soda, cinnamon and salt. Add oats and sugar. Mix in spread until breadcrumbs. Press half into the tin. Spread the date mixture on top. Crumble over the rest of the oat mixture. Bake for 25-30 minutes until brown. Cool in tin and cut into squares.

Information shared regarding Universal Credit

We have been asked to share this information with you.

The financial support that is available to parents to help with the cost of childcare is increasing. From 28 June 2023 eligible working parents claiming Universal Credit will be able to receive more financial help with their childcare costs, and additional financial support with upfront payments when moving into paid work or increasing their working hours.

The maximum amount per month that can now be claimed is £951 (up from £646). For two or more children, the maximum amount per month that now be claimed is £1,630 (up from £1,108). This is a 47% increase!

Additionally, for the first time, parents can get help to cover the costs of the first month's childcare when they enter work (or significantly increase their hours), rather than a payment in arrears. Parents on Universal Credit can claim up to 85% of their childcare costs back before their next month's bill, meaning they should have the money to pay one month in advance going forward!

To qualify for help with childcare costs from Universal credit, a parent must be;

- A single parent and working.
- A couple and both of you are working.
- A couple and one of you is working and the other is unable to work as they have limited capability for work, or is caring for a disabled person, or is temporarily away from home.

The childcare costs element can be included regardless of how many hours you work. However, the childcare costs payable will be related to the number of hours you work.

For more information go to Understanding Universal Credit - Children and childcare.

Please visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk for further information.