Bristol Childcare

The Court House Day Nursery

Winter Newsletter • November 2023

Need to know

Nursery Manager Katie Townsend
Deputy Managers Jemima Radmore
Chloë Raines

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 Katie.

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 Winter Menus started on 30 October, 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

Nursery will close at 6pm on Friday 22nd December and reopen on Tuesday 2nd January 2024.

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

Welcome from Katie

Hello to all our families!

We can't believe that the summer has come to an end and we are now well and truly into the autumn months.

We have had a great summer and have spent lots of time playing outside enjoying the sunshine! We are all ready to see what the autumn brings. Please keep an eye out for conkers and pinecones on your walks.

We have had a busy September. As you may know we have been changing some of our environments and stepping away from plastic to bring a calmer, natural more authentic homely feel to our setting. Some of our team, along with Saffia and Matthew, have been in decorating our pre-school room, and we are working on our loose parts room within the pre-school.

Some of the best resources are found in our homes and this is where we need your help. We really want to capture and encourage children's imagination with open ended resources, sparking conversations, enhancing their learning and curiosity. The neutral colours also create a calming atmosphere to support their emotional needs. Do you have any of the following items you would like to donate that you no longer need or want, or were thinking about throwing away? Please let us know if you do, or have any other items similar. Thank you for all your continued support! Hats, fancy shoes/block heels, vintage/old style suitcase, typewriter, metal/wooden spoons, metal/wooden bowls, curtain rings, wicker/natural baskets, old off cuts of guttering, cable drums, faux/real plants large or small, wooden picture frames of any size, costume jewellery, clocks, mirrors, unique loose parts/materials/items, old tea sets, lamps, fairy lights, glass jars, tree stumps of any size, vinyl records, old CDs, DVDs "A 'loose parts' toy, is open-ended; children may use it in many ways and combine with other loose-parts through imagination and creativity. Nature, which excites all the senses, remains the richest source of loose parts." Richard Louv.

Thank you to those of you that have supported us with this and given things to add into our rooms already, we and the children love it!

The baby room have had their sleep room redecorated and throughout the winter we will be renovating across the nursery to brighten and refresh all the rooms.

Katie

Dates for your Diary

Concept Photography (details nearer the time)	Friday 3rd November
Children in Need Pyjama Day	Friday 17th November
Christmas Stay and Play (details nearer the time)	Friday 15th December
Christmas Dinner Day	Wednesday 20th December
End of term Pyjama Day	Friday 22nd December

Update from Saffia Bullock, Managing Director

Thank you to all the parents who stopped to chat to me at the parent drop-in session. It's so nice to meet parents face to face – and I hope that it's beneficial to you to have met me in person so that I'm no longer just a name in an email address!

It was great to talk to so many of you and to hear what is working for you and discuss your feedback. I have passed on your kind words and thanks to our amazing staff team. We have also taken on board your ideas and suggestions and have made an action plan to help us improve in these ways.

Please continue to feedback to us about what is working well, and ways we could improve, and if you feel able to leave feedback online, the link is here:

https://www.daynurseries.co.uk/review-submit/654321111190

Following the recent parent drop in, we are aware that parents would like to know more about the Government's 2-year-old offer for funding which will start in April 2024.

Unfortunately, we still don't know much more than you! The government has made headline announcements, but, we are all still waiting for more details on how this will be rolled out. Recently some of our team attended a Bristol City Council webinar about the new funding so we can share what we learnt there.

The local authorities are waiting for the guidance details from government. They use this to create their provider agreement – this agreement, the process and the funding rate, is different for each local authority. We sign up to the provider agreement and that forms the contract between us and the local authority for delivering the funded hours. Without that, we can't move any further forward.

Therefore, while there is still so much unknown, we cannot make our offer to you. We are starting to make plans based on the information available, but we can't offer funded hours to you when we don't know how this will work and what funding rate we are being offered. I'm very sorry that this is frustrating for many of you but this is out of our hands and we think it would be unhelpful and ineffective to design an offer which we might have to later amend.

The team from Bristol City Council told us that parents will be able to apply for the eligibility codes from January 2024, and we think that eligibility is going to be on the same basis as for the 3- and 4-year-old extended funding (i.e for working parents with an income threshold). The same process and form will also be used (this might be different for South Glos). For those of you new to this process, the funded hours offered are 570 hours per year which equals 15 hours per week over 38 school weeks. We "stretch" this to 12 hours per week, so that it's "year round"; this means funded hours are available for 47.5 weeks of the year at Bristol Childcare.

We hope that sharing what we know at this stage is helpful, and we will of course update you as soon as we are able.

Update from Saffia Bullock, Managing Director

Lastly, as you will all no doubt be aware, we are very proud of our cooks and the nutritious fresh cooked meals they serve every day. We always miss them when they are on holiday, so we were very grateful when, a few years ago, we were introduced to Mini Meals who we have been working with ever since. Mini Meals has recently been given some awards and it's great to be able to share this with you so that you can feel reassured that we are providing the best meals we can, even when our cooks are away!

Bristol Eating Better Gold

We're helping our customers to be SUGAR SMART

Awarded to

Mini Meals Catering Ltd

Unit 7, Emery Road, Birchills Trading Estate,
Brislington, Bristol, BS4 5PE

Achieving 45 out of 45 possible Bristol Eating Better Early Years Award actions, designed to increase the availability of healthy food and promote sustainability.
This includes actions to help early years settings become Sugar Smart.

Valid until
15th September 2025

Bristol City Council
Public Health

Bristol Eating Better is a Bristol City Council Initiative

Saffia

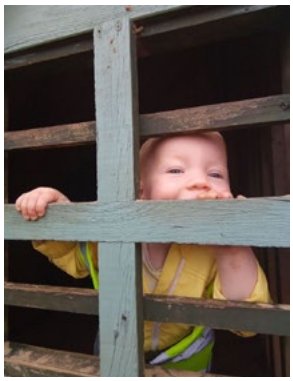
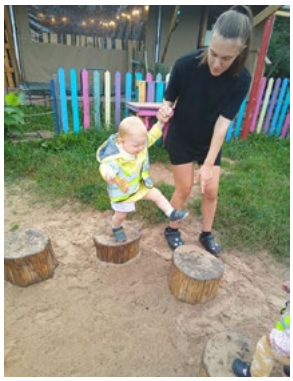
Baby Room

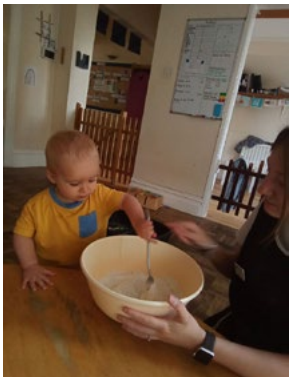
What a fun summer we have had here in the Baby Room - from playing in the garden, to being out and about - we have certainly been busy (and trying to keep cool!)

In the Baby Room, we have been focussing on 'Understanding the world' through communication and language. We have done this by discussing the make up of resources - such as playdough. The children were more engaged with the play dough when having seen the process of this come together. We took this opportunity to discuss the measurements of the ingredients and where they have come from. For example, 'we have half of a cup of water' or 'we have flour, which is grown on farms and milled from wheat'. The children took it in turns to add and mix ingredients and when it came together, participated in some 'Dough Disco' with Chloe H - you can find this on YouTube if you want to give this a go at home. It's great for motor muscle development!

We have also used water play and ice play as we cooled ourselves down. The children particularly enjoyed ice play as we used plastic hammers to attempt to break the animals out of the ice. This was great for those teething too - and the ice lollies followed during the heatwave!

Our new tuff tray has been filled daily with fun. Dinosaurs and astronauts have been a hit amongst our autumnal themes. We have also had a few outings to our local parks. Our favourite is near Paignton Square, local to Knowle Park Primary School, as it is always quiet - giving us first dibs of equipment! The children enjoy the independence of using the equipment as it is low, being close to their height. We love how open this space is and the children enjoy being able to run freely on the grass in the gated area - paying attention to environmental print, changes, and objects. We also spent some time in Redcatch Community Gardens as it was very quiet when the children started back at school. We practised our balancing on the log pegs and also built many sandcastles, just as we have done in the garden sandpit recently. We hope to be out in the garden a little bit longer before the weather changes (again!)...



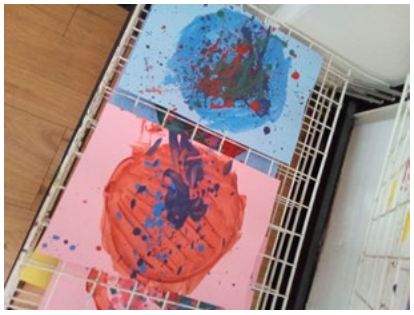
Two's Room

The Twos have been really into painting and getting messy lately, so we have been taking our creativity outside and did some painting using our feet! The children really enjoyed paddling in the paint trays and comparing the sizes of their footprints. We then paddled and washed our feet in the water tray, which not only cleaned our feet but helped us cool down in the hot sunshine!

Sarah had some green beans which she gave to the Twos to explore. We used scissors and child safe knives to cut open the beans and we found beans inside! We extended this by comparing the sizes of the beans and talked about whether they are beanstalk beans. Most of the children said no and told the grown ups they were very silly!

Preschool

Preschool had so much fun during Space Week! We participated in lots of different space themed activities. We used the black tuff tray to draw the planets of our solar system with black and multi coloured rice on top as outer space. The children had to search through space to find the planets! We read lots of stories about space during our circle times like Astro Girl and The Darkest Hour. During these circle times the children were intrigued to learn more about the planets. So we learnt the names of the planets in our solar system. We had lots of creative activities during the week like colouring our own solar systems and splat painting our very own planets! We also decorated our own space themed cakes for us all to enjoy!

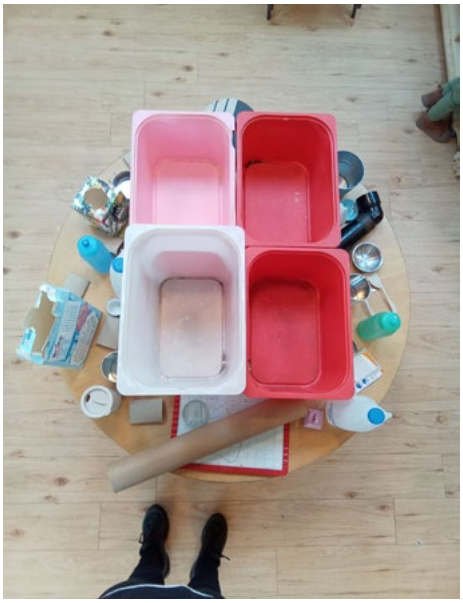


We are delighted to announce that from November, Ben from uSports will be back for another term! Ben will be running multi-sports sessions on Thursday mornings, from 10am until 11am, in pre-school, so that the children will be able to experience a range of rugby, tennis, athletics and dance. The sessions with Ben were hugely popular with the pre-schoolers last time so we are looking forward to sharing this experience with a new group of children. It's wonderful watching the children learn and grow from these sessions, and we hope you enjoy the photos we share through ParentZone and online. Here is an introduction from Ben.

I'm Ben and I am a sports coach working for uSports. After spending 6 weeks at The Court house in June and July, I am delighted to be back again in November and December doing weekly multi-sports sessions. The sessions for the pre-school children will introduce them to the basic fundamental skills needed to play a wide range of sports, including football, rugby, athletics and yoga. The children will be given the opportunity to develop their agility, balance, coordination and speed with fun and engaging activities. Our sessions are often themed to engage the children. For example: 'on the farm,' 'animals' 'superheroes' or 'cars.' This makes the sessions enjoyable for the children, while the activities are challenging enough to really develop their movement skills. They will also improve their social skills, such as listening, following instructions and turn-taking. I look forward to working with the children and I hope they get a lot out of the sessions.
www.u-sports.co.uk/bristol

Recycling Week

We recently took part in Recycling Week. We organised lots of recycling related activities. Learning about what we can and can't recycle - plastic, metal, cardboard/paper and glass. Trish also taught us a recycling song and we sent out a Moment to parents of everybody singing! We've read lots stories during circle time and everybody, including the grown ups, came in to nursery dressed in green on Friday!



The Woodland Makery

We are excited to be offering a Winter Woodland Session with Elise from The Woodland Makery. This will be on Thursday 18 January 2024 and will include children across all of the rooms.

Here is an introduction from Elise.

Elise from The Woodland Makery at The Court House on Thursday 18 January 2024

Hello! My name is Elise and I run a Forest School in Bristol. I'm very excited to say I am going to be visiting you at The Court House Day Nursery on Thursday 18 January 2024 from 9.30am until 12pm, for a Winter Woodland Session. We will be learning about British Birds through fun and games and making a bird feeder to take home. We will also be doing a fire safety demonstration then cooking some s'mores and drinking some hot chocolate.

Please could your child come in outdoor clothing: long trousers/leggings, warm clothes and have extra layers like coats and hats as the weather is unpredictable at this time of year! I look forward to seeing your little ones soon!

www.woodlandmakery.com (or find me on Facebook or Instagram search: Woodland Makery)

Pork Meatballs with Butter Beans

To serve a family of 4

Ingredients

For the meatballs
400g minced pork
1 onion, diced

For the red pesto
3 roasted red peppers (from a jar, or roast your own)
1 tbsp oil
1 clove of garlic
1 handful of basil

For the sauce
1 tin butter beans (400g)
1 onion
1 clove of garlic
1 carton passata
Red pesto - above
Vegetable stock - 1 cube with 300ml of water

Method:

Mix minced pork with onion and roll into golf ball sized balls. Brown in frying pan set aside.
Make red pesto by whizzing basil, olive oil, garlic and roasted red peppers together.
Sauté onion and garlic in large pan. Add pesto and passata and water with veg stock.
Cook meatballs in sauce.
Add butter beans and simmer until cooked.
Serve with roasted sweet potato.