Bristol Childcare

The Court House Day Nursery

Early Summer Newsletter • May 2024

Need to know

Nursery Manager Katie Townsend
Deputy Manager Amelia Dann

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 Summer Menus start on 6th 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 6 May - Early May Bank Holiday
Monday 27 May - Spring Bank Holiday

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

Welcome from Katie

Hello Families,

We hope you have been enjoying 2024 so far. We are all looking forward to the warmer spring weather arriving.

So far this year we have celebrated World Kindness Day in February and World Book Day at the beginning of March. The children have also learnt about Easter. Throughout April it is National Pet Month. The children have been learning about what pets our peers and staff have and how to look after them. Josie has brought in her tortoise to share with the children, Maisie and Summer have brought in their dogs to meet the children.

The children have been enjoying our 'What's in the Bag?' activity with the staff and some have been recreating this within their play. Our bag is filled with props and pictures that relate to our core songs. These help children develop a love of language, broaden vocabulary, cultural capital and knowledge of the world and other people. The children take it in turns to pull out something from the bag, then everyone sings the song chosen. 'What's in the Bag' is a great way to get everyone involved in song time as the same songs are sung, the children learn them and start to join in very quickly.

In January we introduced our new core books, please see the poster for the list of core books. The children have really been loving learning the Makaton signs for ***Dear Zoo*** and ***The Colour Monster***. Below are the links of the stories we have done so far:

Dear Zoo - https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/o?q=dear+zoo+makaton&mid=9421DE9A9942F166345A9421DE9A9942F166345A&FORM=VIRE

Colours - https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/o?&q=colour+makaton&&mid=2E87473E21141D49B7432E87473E21141D49B743&&FORM=VRDGAR

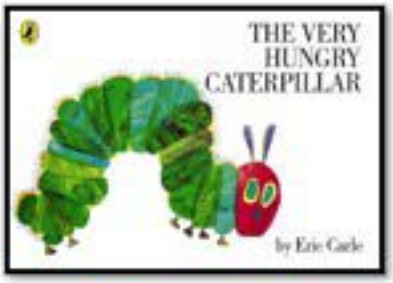
Feelings - https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/o?&q=feelings+makaton&&mid=E97CB70B701804BD5515E97CB70B701804BD5515&&FORM=VRDGAR

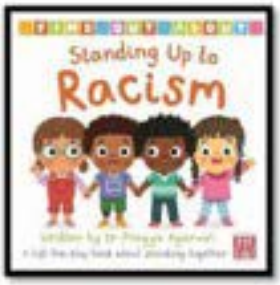
We will be saying goodbye to Hannah from the start of May 2024, she will be going on maternity leave and will welcome her back in the New Year.

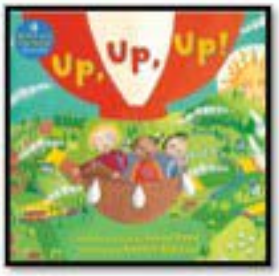
Katie

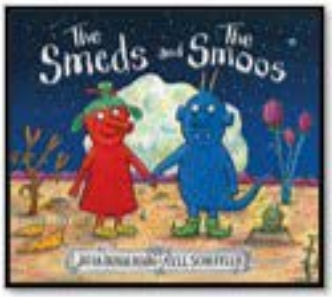
Dates for your Diary

Concept Photos Time slots will be arranged nearer the time for parents and children to come in if Friday is not your usual nursery day.	Friday 7th June, from 9:30am
Woodland Makery session	Wednesday 1st May

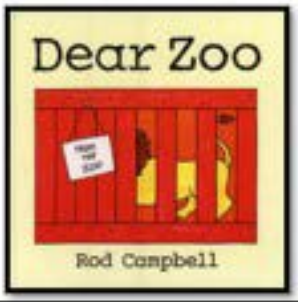


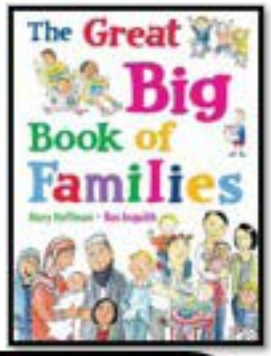




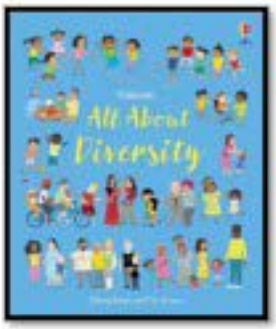


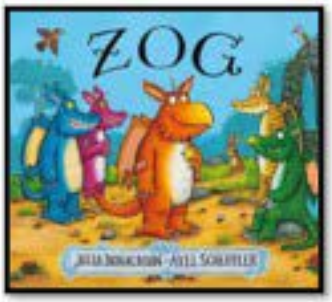
Core Books





These are chosen to help broaden the scope of children's understanding of the world and other people. They are there to support the children in developing a love of language, broaden their vocabulary, cultural capital and knowledge of the world and other people, and to help them understand a range of concepts. Not all the books are provided for all rooms, the books chosen help show progression in a child's vocabulary and understanding.





Update from Saffia Bullock, Managing Director

Welcome to all the new families that have joined us. I know that some of the babies are taking time to settle, and I know that the staff are working hard with you to make the transition as smooth as possible. We do understand how difficult it can be for you and your children when starting nursery; do please talk to us about what else we can do to help with this. We are constantly reflecting on what we can do to help everyone prepare on what is a really big life change.

It's so nice to finally see some sunshine – and the children be able to be outside enjoying the gardens for longer periods. We are delighted that we are welcoming Elise from Woodland Makery back for a Springtime session on Wednesday 1st May. Elise will be running a Forest School session, focusing on using tools safely, and insects. The children will have the opportunity to go insect hunting, use a saw and drill to make an insect; a hammer to experiment with the ancient Japanese form of bashing flowers and foliage called Hapa Zome and some forest school cooking using foraged plants that Elise will bring in. You can find out about Elise and her work at www.woodlandmakery.com.

There has been lots in the media about screen time with children and the impacts this can have – especially on speech and language and engagement with others.

I thought this article was really helpful. ***Nursery World*** is the industry magazine that we use so it's helpful for us all to read this perspective.

https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/features/article/all-about-screen-time

Please let me know if you struggle to access the article and we can provide you with a copy. I thought this paragraph was particularly interesting:

"Rather than what screen time actually does to a child, Kidron believes the biggest risk is what children are missing out on while they are watching screens. 'So if for early years you think about the most important events and experiences for a child – walking, running, playing, responding, fine motor skills associated with drawing or doing physical puzzles and games, emotional development as they build understanding of others in the room, the relationships, their behaviours and the signals, visual, audio and movement, that they send; all of these things are not available on screen, and so for the most part, screen time is in the way of very important development opportunities,' she explains."

Update from Saffia Bullock, Managing Director

At the end of the article is this list of advice for parents:

Consultant paediatricians Dr Sanjiv Nichani and Dr Samantha Jones have developed 'five-a-day' practical tips, based on research from Leicester Children's Hospital and University Hospitals of Leicester, to help parents manage children's screen time and instil healthy habits from an early age. Their advice for children aged from birth to five years old is:

1. Screen time from birth to 24 months – There should be no screen time for children until they are 18 to 24 months, except for video chatting. Try to keep your phone out of sight when you're not FaceTiming with Granny.

2. Screen time for two- to five-year-olds – Children aged two to five years old should get an hour or less of screen time per day. So, rather than just teeing up Peppa on your iPad, encourage them to participate in real-life play that contributes to their overall development, including motor skills and talking skills.

3. Bigger screens are better – If you think your child is ready to play a digital game, then opt for a larger screen such as a tablet or computer screen, as these cause less visual stress than a phone.

4. Avoid using a digital device to settle your child – Try to resist the temptation to hand your phone to your toddler if they start to fuss. While this may offer you short-term relief, it inhibits their ability to interact with the environment and people around them.

5. Sleep hygiene – 'Sleep hygiene' is a term used for healthy habits and behaviours that help support a good night's sleep. Under-fives shouldn't use a screen at least two hours before bedtime, to aid their natural sleep pattern. Build a calming bedtime routine that involves snuggling up for stories, rather than sitting in front of the TV.

I hope this is helpful to you. I think we are all learning how to live in this new digital era, which is so different to how many of us grew up. There are so many advantages to technology, but I think it's important to recognise the problems as well, and how pervasive screens can impact on the youngest children.

I felt very honoured to receive so many cards, gifts, cakes and messages from across Bristol Childcare for my 50th birthday. Sarah's cake was delicious as well as beautiful and I loved the drawings the pre-school children did of me and my party after they discussed it was my birthday! Childrens' creativity and imagination is always worth celebrating.

Saffia

Baby Room

Between the transition from Winter to Spring, we have been exploring sand and water in the Baby Room amongst seasonal tuff trays. We have recently introduced a play table with removable trays – making sand and water play much more fun and accessible with the 'in the moment' approach. This means that we have had babies point to the tray to show an interest for grown ups to remove the lid and begin to play.

A firm favourite in the Baby Room has been washing the role play dolls in the trays, as we have added bubbles, bath time toys for tipping and pouring, as well as role play babies and cloths. The children used the cloths to wash their babies and then removed them to be dried with a towel. Between this, we spoke about measurements as we used cups to fill and pour. This came under the EYFS area of mathematics as we looked at shape, space, and measure – using positional language to support this. Words used such as 'full', 'empty', 'pour', 'up' etc. This was also great for the children to understand sequencing.

Between water play, we have been manipulating sand. The children have particularly enjoyed incorporating role play into this by making sand ice creams with the cups and scoop. We began filling the cups with dry sand to see it pour through and talk about the effect, then added water to see how this changed the consistency of the sand – adding an early science element into our play. With this, we used spades to fill the cups to make castles. As some children are into role play, we role played opening up an ice cream shop! The children were able to mirror words of significant importance in regard to temperature and flavours. We also used vehicles in the sand to look at marks in between all of the roleplay fun!

With all of this, we have used our table and tuff tray to explore Spring animals and objects and also spent some time in the nursery sensory room.

Two's Room

The Two's Room really enjoyed World Book Week. We explored many of our core books including ***The Big Book of Families***, where the children used the little people to tell their peers who is in their family. We talked about what pets we had and about our grandparents too. We also looked at ***Ten Little Fingers and Ten Little Toes***, where we carried out role play with babies and used our world map mat to talk about other countries in the world.

We talked about our feelings using the story of ***The Colour Monster*** and carried out colour sorting, along with exploring our story sack.

We practised our fine motor skills through threading with ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar*** story. The children enjoyed making their own necklaces and then matching the food to the pictures in the story.

On World Book Day the children came in dressed as their favourite book character and we enjoyed reading each other's stories as a group together.

We really value promoting the interest of our curriculum focus Stories, Songs and Rhymes into children's play and this definitely sparked our children's interest further!

In the Two's Room we have been focusing on Speech and Language and Listening and Attention skills. We have been carrying out various activities to help promote this, such as 'What's in the Bag?' 'Bucket Time' which is a listening and attention activity and group activities based on mouth formation, such as animal sounds and general silly sounds to promote those speech sounds.

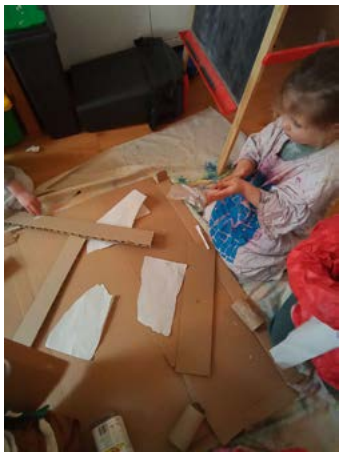
If you would like to know more about how you can support your child at home with their speech and language development please take a look at this link which gives some great ideas and things you can do in your everyday routine.

https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/toddler/learning-to-talk/learning-to-talk-2-to-3-years/

If you have any questions please do come and speak to the Two's Room Leader, Jemima.

Pre-school

The children in pre-school have become super interested in building and creating. They have loved using lots of different ways to do this. One of these ways was junk modelling. The baby room had some cardboard and boxes left over from some of the things they had bought. We have seen lots of amazing creations from the pre-school children, from cars and planes to unicorns! The children have such magnificent imaginations and are able to talk about the things they have created. It's so amazing to see their ideas come to life.



April is National Pet Month! To celebrate this we had some little visitors. Josie brought her tortoise, Dr Pepper, to visit. The children really enjoyed exploring Dr Pepper and all had the chance to stroke him gently. The children all took turns to ask Josie questions about tortoises and we even learned a new Makaton sign for tortoise.

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Summer also brought her beautiful 10 year old cockapoo, Betsy, in to see us. In small groups the children took turns to meet Betsy and gently stroke her on the head. Betsy was very calm and excited whilst meeting the pre-school children, she's an absolute dream! Some of the children asked Summer questions about Betsy. For example, one of the children asked 'Does Betsy like visiting the pet shop to have her hair cut?'

It's been so lovely having these pets visit us and the children showing real interest in this and asking questions. Expanding on from this we have been encouraging the children to bring in their pets and the children have been bringing in their really cute soft toy pets to tell us all about the animal and how it lives.

Pre-school continued

We had such a fun filled week in pre-school celebrating World Book Day with activities such as a sensory filled tuff tray based on the story ***The Smeds and The Smoos***, ***The Tiger Who Came to Tea*** creative activities, ***The Very Hungry Caterpillar*** activity where the children made their own caterpillars from pipe cleaners and threading beads, plus so many other fun creative activities. We also read our core book stories and books that the pre-school children brought in from home.

The pre-school had a visit from Isaac's dad, Tim. Tim came to teach us about why some people celebrate Easter. He told us about some of the things we might see at Easter time and what Christians believe in. He read us the Easter Story and some of us had the objects that came up in the story. We talked about how the people might have felt in the key times in the book, using a feelings card Tim gave us. Some of us used the Makaton signs we knew for the feelings we talked about.

Spotlight on our cook

Our cook here at The Court House is Sarah. Sarah has worked for us for nearly three years.

We asked Sarah a few questions about herself.

What did you do before working for Bristol Childcare?

Before Bristol Childcare I was the Head Chef at Lloyds Bank in central Bristol. There were two sites feeding approximately 2,000 people each day. It was very busy and quite stressful!

What do you enjoy most about working at The Court House?

The staff and the children. Plus I live really close to The Court House, so can walk to work - and stay in bed as long as possible every morning!

What is your favourite Bristol Childcare recipe?

I think it has to be the sweet potato, chickpea and spinach curry. I really enjoy making the homemade naan breads.

Here is Sarah's favourite recipe, with quantities adapted to suit a family of four.

Sweet potato, chickpea and spinach curry

2 large sweet potatoes diced
1 onion
115g bag spinach
1 tsp curry powder
½ tsp chilli powder
1 clove of garlic
400g tin of chickpeas, drained
400g chopped tomatoes
500ml vegetable stock

Fry together onions and garlic
Add curry and chilli powder.
Add chopped sweet potatoes and chickpeas.
Add stock and chopped tomatoes.
Simmer (approx. 2 hours).
Add chopped spinach a few minutes before serving

Online courses for families

We have been asked to share this with all our families by the Bristol City Early Years Team

The new Family Hub's virtual offer has launched with a new package of online learning that's available for free, for every parent and carer in Bristol.

Parents and carers can access a range of online courses to help them understand their children's feelings better and how they can best support their children through the years as they develop and grow. The courses cover a range of topics to support parents and carers through all stages of a child's development including:

· Pregnancy and post-pregnancy support
· How to understand your child or teenager's mental health
· Help for understanding relationships
· Support for children with additional needs

The courses have been developed by the Solihull Approach, alongside the NHS, health experts and parents too. The Family Hub's mission in Bristol is for every parent in Bristol to complete these courses – the learning is for everyone, not only for when you are struggling.

Parents and carers can access the courses through this link:

https://www.bristol.gov.uk/bristol-family-hubs/parenting-courses