



# UNDER THE OAK TREE

acorn half term 2 newsletter

OCTOBER AUTUMN ADVENTURES EDITION



## MESSAGE FROM LORNA



Hi everyone,

We have had a fantastic start to the school year and the past half term has been filled with lots of fun getting to know all of our new children. We are looking forward to celebrating the end of year holidays with you all including, Diwali, Halloween, Fireworks day and of course Christmas!

We are excited for all the fun to come!  
Lorna

## DATES FOR THE DIARY

### Stay and plays

Christmas - Friday 12<sup>th</sup> December

Mother's day - Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March

Father's day - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June

### Photography visits

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November

June 2026 - TBC

### School transition information evenings

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April

### Preschool graduation

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June

## CHRISTMAS DESIGNS

### 🎄 Christmas Designs Are Here! 🎄

Our children have been busy creating their wonderful Christmas artwork! Order forms have now gone home, and you can order their designs on a range of festive items — including mugs, baubles, coasters, cards, and more.

All orders are completed online, with a deadline of Monday 27th October at 12pm.



## 2026 LEAVER HOODIES

We're excited to offer leavers' hoodies as a wonderful keepsake for the children as they get ready for their next adventure!

Order forms were sent via Tapestry on 8th October. If you need a form emailed to you or a hard copy, please see Martha in the office.

✅ **Deadline:** Completed forms and payments must be returned by 31st October 2025.

Please note: We need a minimum of 12 orders to go ahead. Anyone missing the deadline can only order if another group of 12 is reached – so don't miss out! If you have any questions or need help with the form, just message us – we're happy to help!



M.B.



# LITTLE ACORNS

half term 2 newsletter

This term, we have been focusing on developing our gross motor skills, with a particular emphasis on taking steps, balancing, and building confidence in movement. It has been wonderful to see the children becoming more steady on their feet and eager to explore their environment with growing independence. We've also been immersing ourselves in the changing autumn season, taking full advantage of the opportunities it brings for learning and discovery. The children have enjoyed outdoor walks, visits to the nearby field, and exploring our local surroundings — observing the natural world with great curiosity. A particular highlight has been watching the colourful leaves fall from the trees (and their surprise when a few landed on them!).

Back in the room, the children have been busy getting creative, making Halloween-themed crafts including spooky ghosts, plump pumpkins, and wicked witches' hats. They loved using glue and exploring the texture of glitter as they sprinkled it to make their pictures sparkle.

We also had lots of fun baking spinach and cheese muffins — taking turns to add ingredients, mixing them together, and proudly taking them home once cooked. Alongside this, we've continued to enjoy a wide range of sensory play experiences, exploring different textures, movements, and materials that spark curiosity and support cognitive development.

It's been a busy, exciting term filled with exploration, creativity, and plenty of hands-on learning! ✨





# TINY ACORNS

half term 2 newsletter



What a wonderful time we've had!

It's been a lovely start to the season in the Tiny Acorns Room. Over the past few weeks, we've been busy building strong, nurturing bonds with all of the children, helping them feel happy, safe, and settled in their environment.

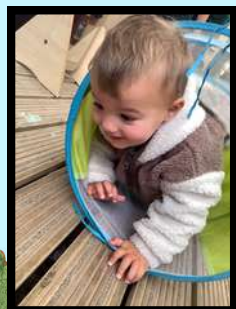
Now that everyone is feeling more at home and confident in their new routine, we've been focusing on supporting the children as they work towards their next developmental milestones. Each child is unique, and we've been tailoring activities to support their individual learning journeys.

This season, we've embraced all things autumnal! The babies have loved exploring a variety of themed sensory trays filled with textures, colours, and scents that capture the magic of autumn and Halloween. From seasonal leaves to knitted pumpkins, there's been so much to discover and enjoy.

We've also made the most of the beautiful autumn weather by getting out and about on regular walks. The children have enjoyed visiting local parks and spending time in nature, as well as a special trip to Stamford Library to enjoy some cosy story time sessions.

As we look ahead to the rest of the year, we're so excited to continue supporting the children as they grow, thrive, and explore the world around them.

Thank you for your continued support!,  
Elli, Chloe, Kerri, and Vicky 🍁🇨🇦🇬🇧





# SUPER SEEDLINGS

half term 2 newsletter



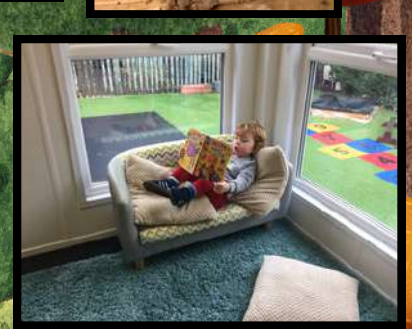
What a wonderful start to the new term!

It has been a new and exciting experience for all of us in our new room. The children have transitioned beautifully, and our brand-new starters have settled in so well — they are already very much a part of Super Seedlings. The children have loved exploring their new environment, with the home corner, book area, and the calm/sensory area proving to be particular favourites. These spaces provide wonderful opportunities for the children to develop their communication and language, imagination, early literacy, and social skills.

We've been on several autumn walks to the field, park, and conker tree, where we've enjoyed collecting conkers, acorns, and leaves. These experiences have encouraged the children to observe seasonal changes, develop their vocabulary, and engage in hands-on exploration of the natural world.

Back in our woodland area, the children have had so much fun making conker and acorn "soup" and taking part in autumn-themed activities. We've also created beautiful autumn crafts, using conkers to make pictures in warm autumn colours and even painting with sticks! These activities have supported their fine motor skills, creativity, and self-expression.

Over the next few months, we're really looking forward to celebrating Halloween, Bonfire Night, and Christmas with lots of fun, festive activities.





# MIGHTY OAKS

half term 2 newsletter

What a busy and exciting term we've had in Mighty Oaks!

It's been a pleasure getting to know each of you, supporting your transition into the new room, and learning more about your unique interests. You've all settled in so well, and it's been wonderful to see the friendships forming — not only between children, but also with the educators in the room.

This term, we've been learning all about recycling and took part in Recycling Week. We had meaningful conversations about the importance of looking after our planet and keeping it clean, especially for the animals we care about. The children shared thoughtful ideas about why recycling matters and how we can all help.

We also explored natural resources and the changing season. Pine cones, leaves, conkers, and all things autumn became the centre of our learning and play. The children loved getting hands-on with activities like conker rolling, nature hunts, and using tweezers to examine and sort their finds.

A special highlight has been the introduction of our 'Little Acorn' story sack, which is being sent home with each child in turn. This is a lovely opportunity for families to read together, have conversations about the story, and contribute to the shared book for the children to bring back and share with their friends.

As we reached the end of term, our focus turned to Halloween. We explored the signs and symbols of the season, shared what we might dress up as, and got creative with themed decorations and activities.

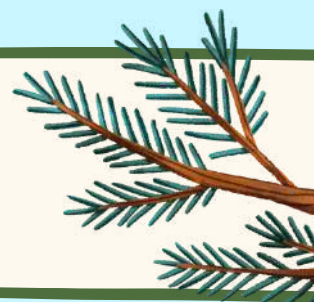
We're now looking forward to a fun-filled final term of the year, with exciting events ahead — from Halloween to Bonfire Night and of course, the magic of Christmas. We can't wait to make even more special memories together!





# GREAT OAKS

half term 2 newsletter



What a wonderful couple of months we've had in Great Oaks! We began September by warmly welcoming all of our children and families, and it's been fantastic to see new friendships forming and old ones rekindled.

Our Funergy sessions with Sally have started every Thursday, and the children have loved getting active and building their physical skills in such a fun way. We've also introduced Spanish sessions on Wednesday mornings, which have been a hit — the children are really enjoying learning new words and songs in a different language!

We've fully embraced the autumn season with a range of engaging sensory and creative activities. From exploring themed tuff trays filled with pumpkins, rice, and bats, to leaf printing, conker rolling, and apple stamping, the children have been hands-on with every element of autumn! We even created our very own Investigation Station, where children proudly added autumn treasures they had found at home or on walks.

To strengthen fine motor skills, we used elastic bands with pinecones and pumpkins — a fun challenge that the children really enjoyed! We also had a fantastic time celebrating Talk Like a Pirate Day! The children walked the plank (carefully avoiding the sharks!), made their own treasure maps with X marking the spot, and followed them around the field to find hidden treasure.

Space Week was out of this world! We created rockets using junk modelling and tested them outside to see if they could fly to the moon. We explored space-themed puzzles, made sparkly space playdough, and built rockets using magnets. One of the highlights was walking to the shop to buy Coke and Mentos — then watching our very own exploding rocket launch!

Our adventure continued with a bus trip to Burghley Park. We explored the beautiful grounds, climbed on the logs, enjoyed a snack, and even spotted some stunning deer before heading back just in time for lunch! We also took another bus trip to the library to help support the children's love of reading.

As Halloween approaches, we've started our spooky crafts — including making Frankensteins and decorating our own pumpkins. The children have shown so much creativity and enthusiasm for all things eerie and exciting!





# A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PANCO

Physical activity and nutritional co-ordinator

## A HEALTHY HALLOWEEN

The children are counting down the days until October 31<sup>st</sup>, are you ready for the sugar rush? Whether you're having a party with friends or trick-or-treating in the community, with a little creativity, you can find fun ways to include some healthy options in the mix.

- Having a healthy meal **BEFORE** your children go trick-or-treating can reduce their temptation to snack while walking or to overindulge because their tummies will be full.
- Choose or make a smaller collection container for your child. If you encourage kids to only take one sweet from each house, they'll be able to visit more houses in the neighbourhood.
- Get some exercise by making Halloween a fun family activity. Walk instead of driving kids from house to house. Set a goal of how many houses or streets you'll visit, or compete in teams to do as many as you can. Bring a bottle of water and a torch and wear comfortable shoes for walking.
- Check expiration dates and inspect all edibles before allowing children to eat them. Don't let children eat anything with questionable or unknown ingredients, especially if they have food allergies.
- Halloween can be a great time to talk with your children about moderation and making smart eating choices.

### For the party host

- Up the fright factor. Serve healthy snacks dressed up in the Halloween theme. There are lots of creative ideas being shared online at this time of year, such as banana ghosts, apple monster mouths and carrot witch fingers
- Play with food. Incorporate healthy foods into party activities, such as decorating oranges like jack-o'-lanterns and bobbing for apples.
- Keep 'em on their feet. Include plenty of physical activities, such as a zombie dance party, three-legged monster race, spider crawl, or pumpkin toss.
- Rethink the drink. Don't forget that cutting back on sugary treats includes soda and sugar-sweetened beverages. Offer water, or milk. Make a Halloween-themed punch from sparkling water and a splash of 100% orange juice, garnished with plenty of orange slices.

### Staying in? Consider Non-edible items for trick or treaters-

- Glow sticks or small glow-in-the-dark toys
- Bouncy balls
- Mini plush toys and wind-up toys
- Crayons and colouring books
- Stickers or stamps
- Temporary tattoos
- Bubbles
- Spider rings or vampire teeth
- Slime, putty or squishy toys
- Friendship bracelets



Be careful to avoid giving very small items that could be a choking hazard to little ones.



# ELKLAN

speech and language



## NURSERY RHYME



When all the cows were sleeping  
 And the sun had gone to bed  
 Up jumped the scarecrow  
 And this is what he said  
 ... I'm a dingle, dangle scarecrow  
 With a flippy, floppy hat  
 I can shake my hands like this  
 I can shake my feet like that  
 ... When all the hens were roosting  
 And the moon behind a cloud  
 Up jumped the scarecrow  
 And shouted very loud  
 ... I'm a dingle, dangle scarecrow  
 With a flippy, floppy hat  
 I can shake my hands like this  
 I can shake my feet like that  
 ... I'm a dingle, dangle scarecrow  
 With a flippy, floppy hat  
 I can shake my hands like this  
 I can shake my feet like that



## SPEECH AND LANGUAGE TIP

### PLAY AT AGE 2: BEGINNING OF SEQUENCED PLAY

- AROUND THE AGE OF 2, CHILDREN BEGIN TO LINK TWO OR MORE ACTIONS TOGETHER IN PLAY. FOR EXAMPLE, A CHILD MIGHT FEED A DOLL AND THEN PUT IT TO BED.
- THIS STAGE OFTEN COINCIDES WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY LINKING WORDS (E.G. "AND THEN").
- SEQUENCED PLAY GIVES INSIGHT INTO A CHILD'S UNDERSTANDING OF ROUTINES AND EVENTS IN THE WORLD AROUND THEM.
- SUPPORTING THIS DEVELOPMENT: ADULTS CAN MODEL SEQUENCE PLAY BY NARRATING STEPS, E.G., "FIRST WE PUT DOLLY IN HER PJAMAS, THEN WE CLEAN HER TEETH, AND THEN SHE GOES TO BED."

### PLAY AT AGE 3: ROLE PLAY AND IMAGINATION

- THREE-YEAR-OLDS ENJOY ROLE PLAY, OFTEN DRESSING UP AS REAL-LIFE OR IMAGINARY CHARACTERS.
- THIS TYPE OF IMAGINATIVE PLAY ALLOWS CHILDREN TO EXPERIMENT WITH DIFFERENT ROLES AND EXPLORE FEELINGS.
- IT IS CRUCIAL FOR SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT, HELPING CHILDREN: UNDERSTAND OTHERS' PERSPECTIVES. EXPRESS AND MANAGE EMOTIONS. DEVELOP EMPATHY.

### PLAY AT AGE 4: COOPERATIVE AND SELF-DIRECTED PLAY

- BY AGE 4, CHILDREN ENGAGE IN A WIDE VARIETY OF SELF-DIRECTED AND INCREASINGLY COOPERATIVE PLAY WITH PEERS.
- THEIR PLAY BECOMES MORE COMPLEX AND SOCIALLY INTERACTIVE, INVOLVING: SHARED GOALS. TURN-TAKING. NEGOTIATION OF ROLES AND RULES.
- THIS STAGE PROVIDES RICH OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN TO: PRACTICE AND EXPAND LANGUAGE SKILLS. STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS. LEARN COLLABORATION AND PROBLEM-SOLVING.

## ELKLAN UPDATE

### Supporting Speech Development.

Many young children find comfort in dummies and baby bottles, and that's completely understandable. As children grow, we can support their speech and language by reducing how often these are used during the day.

Reducing dummies and bottles helps children to:

- 🎵 Practise making sounds and words
- 💬 Join in chats and play with others
- 👄 Develop healthy mouth and teeth patterns
- 📖 Build early language skills



⚠️ Elkkan suggests keeping dummies and bottles mainly for sleep times after 12 months and removing them before speaking to your child so they can copy sounds and words more easily.

📖 Another powerful way to support speech is through sharing books. Reading helps children learn new words, listen, and join in with sounds and stories.

To make this easier, we now have a Book Station at Acorn reception where families can borrow books to enjoy at home. Please feel welcome to take one and swap it when you're ready!

Together, these small steps help children grow into confident communicators.





# HEALTHY RECIPE

pumpkin soup

## INGREDIENTS



- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 onions
- finely chopped
- 1kg pumpkin
- or squash (try kabocha), peeled, deseeded and chopped into chunks
- 700ml vegetable stock
- or chicken stock
- 150ml double cream

### For the croutons

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 4 slices wholemeal seeded bread
- crusts removed
- handful pumpkin seeds



## DIRECTIONS



- Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a large saucepan, then gently cook 2 finely chopped onions for 5 mins, until soft but not coloured.
- Add 1kg pumpkin or squash, cut into chunks, to the pan, then carry on cooking for 8-10 mins, stirring occasionally until it starts to soften and turn golden.
- Pour 700ml vegetable or chicken stock into the pan and season with salt and pepper. Bring to the boil, then simmer for 10 mins until the squash is very soft.
- Pour 150ml double cream into the pan, bring back to the boil, then purée with a hand blender. For an extra-velvety consistency you can pour the soup through a fine sieve. The soup can now be frozen for up to 2 months.
- To make the croutons: cut 4 slices wholemeal seeded bread into small squares.
- Heat 2 tbsp olive oil in a frying pan, then fry the bread until it starts to become crisp.
- Add a handful of pumpkin seeds to the pan, then cook for a few mins more until they are toasted. These can be made a day ahead and stored in an airtight container.
- Reheat the soup if needed, taste for seasoning, then serve scattered with croutons and seeds and drizzled with more olive oil, if you want.



# PARENT PARTNERSHIP

updates and important information

## ATTENDANCE REMINDER

Just a gentle reminder to please let us know if your child won't be attending nursery for any reason. We have a duty of care to check on any unexplained absences as part of our safeguarding procedures.

Thank you for helping us keep all our children safe and accounted for ❤️



## HOT LUNCHES

A little reminder to please check that your child's hot lunch has been ordered each day. We've noticed an increase in children without orders, and although we'll always try to find them something, the kitchen may not have spare meals available.

Your help makes a big difference — thank you for keeping those tummies full and happy! 😊



## TAPESTRY POSTS

We love hearing about the exciting things your children get up to outside nursery! Whether it's a trip to the park, a visit to the library, a creative activity at home, or even just a special moment, sharing updates and photos on Tapestry helps us bring their experiences into the nursery.

Talking about these experiences in the room not only promotes conversation but also supports language development, builds confidence in expressing ideas, and sparks curiosity and imagination. It's a wonderful way for us to connect with your child's interests and celebrate their achievements together.

So please keep the updates coming — we can't wait to see what you've been up to! 📷🌟



## WEATHER-READY CHILDREN

As the seasons change, we want to remind parents to bring children to nursery in weather-appropriate clothing.

Please ensure your child has:

- A coat or jacket for colder or wet days
- Wellies for puddle jumping or outdoor play
- Hats, scarves, and gloves when it's chilly
- Extra layers or spare clothes for messy activities



Dressing appropriately helps children stay comfortable and enjoy all our indoor and outdoor activities safely, no matter the weather!

Thank you for helping us keep the little ones happy, safe, and ready for adventure. ❤️

## COLLECTIONS

A friendly reminder to all parents: if someone else is collecting your child, please let a member of the team know in advance — either in person, via Tapestry, or by email.

For safeguarding reasons, we may ask for a password, and we kindly request that it is different each time. Please be aware that we will not release a child to someone we do not know or who does not have the correct password.

Thank you for helping us keep all children safe!



## FREE FIRST AID TRAINING

We're excited to share that the Children's Centre is offering a free Paediatric First Aid training session for parents on Monday 11th November. This is a fantastic opportunity to learn essential skills for keeping little ones safe and confident in handling emergencies.



## THANK YOU, PARENTS!

We just wanted to say a big thank you to all our parents for supporting our Healthy Eating Policy. It's been fantastic to see so many colourful, balanced, and nutritious lunchboxes coming in — the children are loving them! ❤️ Your support makes a big difference in helping the little ones develop healthy habits and enjoy their mealtimes. 🌟





# STAFF SHOUT OUT'S

*from parents and fellow staff*



A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS TAKEN THE TIME TO SHARE STAFF SHOUT-OUTS – YOUR APPRECIATION REALLY BRIGHTENS OUR TEAM'S DAY! WE LOVE HEARING FROM YOU, SO PLEASE KEEP THEM COMING.

MILLIE - ALWAYS SO FRIENDLY WITH PARENTS AND CHILDREN. LEAVING A LASTING IMPRESSION



KATIE - SO THOUGHTFUL AND ATTENTIVE. SENDING LITTLE EXTRA MESSAGES AND PHOTOS WHILST MY CHILD IS BACK AFTER AN ILLNESS. IT HAS BEEN REALLY COMFORTING!



ELLI - FOR SETTING UP LOVELY ACTIVITIES IN HER ROOM AND ALWAYS SUPPORTING AND REASSURING HER ROOM STAFF



AMY - SHE ALWAYS KNOWS HOW TO CONNECT WITH THE CHILDREN AND HELP NURTURE THEIR LOVE FOR COMING TO NURSERY

DONNA - FANTASTIC JOB WITH ISLA'S WHEELCHAIR SUPPORTING STAFF AND KEEPING ACORN RUNNING SMOOTHLY



MARIE - LOVELY FEEDBACK FROM OUR EYST ON HOW WELL SHE SUPPORTS THE SEN CHILDREN IN HER ROOM. HER NEW CHILDREN HAVE SETTLED WONDERFULLY AND HAS FORMED LOVELY BONDS WITH THEM.

DAKOTA - YOU ARE ALWAYS HAPPY TO LISTEN TO ANY CONCERNS AND HAVE BEEN A BIG HELP WITH THE ROOM TRANSITIONS



VICKI - MY CHILD ADORES HER COMPANY. HE STARTED SAYING HER NAME IN A FEW DAYS AND THEY HAVE CREATED A SWEET BOND.

KERRI - WHEN MY CHILD STAYS LATE I HAVE SEEN HOW GENTLY YOU HOLD HIM ON YOUR LAP WHEN HE IS TIRED AND SLEPT. IT'S SUCH A KIND AND COMFORTING GESTURE

