

UNDER THE OAK TREE

acorn half termly newsletter

DECEMBER FESTIVE CHEER EDITION



MESSAGE FROM LORNA



Dear Families,

Welcome to our latest newsletter! It's been a joyful term at Acorn Childcare Centre, full of laughter, learning, and wonderful memories. We love seeing the children explore, grow, and enjoy their time with us each day. As we approach the festive season, we want to wish all of our families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for being part of our nursery community and for your continued support. We look forward to sharing more exciting moments with you in the year ahead!

Lorna

Merry Christmas



DATES FOR THE DIARY

Stay and plays
 Mother's day - Friday 13th March
 Father's day - Friday 19th June

Photography visits
 June 2026 - TBC

School transition information evenings

Wednesday 22nd April



Preschool graduation
 Saturday 27th June



Update to Development Tracking in Preschool

Across the nursery, we currently use the Birth to Five Matters framework to observe and track children's development. To better align with local schools and to support a smooth transition into Reception, our preschool room will now be using the Development Matters framework.

Development Matters is the framework used in schools within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). Introducing this in preschool will help children become familiar with the learning approach used in school, supporting confidence and continuity as they move on.

This change applies only to the preschool room. All other rooms will continue to use Birth to Five Matters. Day-to-day practice will remain play-based, child-centred, and tailored to each child's individual needs and interests.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss your child's development, please speak to a member of the team.



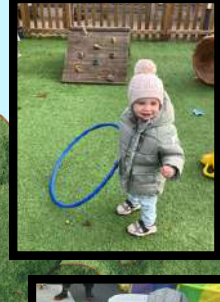


LITTLE ACORNS

This half term has been full of exciting learning, growth and celebration for our babies, and we are incredibly proud of everything they have achieved. We have enjoyed celebrating a range of special occasions including Halloween, Bonfire Night, Remembrance Day and Christmas. The children loved exploring spooky jelly, feeling its texture and practising colour names, creating firework paintings using forks and their palmar grasp, and making poppies with lollipop sticks and cake cases.

Christmas brought many magical learning opportunities, such as making reindeer soup, exploring hot chocolate gloop, creating winter villages and train play scenes, preparing reindeer food, and making beautiful handmade cards and gifts for families. These activities supported sensory exploration, imaginative play, fine motor development, and an early understanding of seasonal traditions.

Throughout the term, the children have made fantastic progress in speech and language, enjoying daily singing during circle time, including festive favourites, with some babies saying their first words, others extending their vocabulary, and even a few repeating words in Spanish – much to the delight of our Spanish teacher Eva. We have also been strengthening both fine and gross motor skills through a wide range of creative and physical experiences, with some children reaching the wonderful milestone of taking their very first steps. Alongside this, we have seen lovely progress in personal, social and emotional development as babies form strong bonds with staff, build friendships with one another, recognise names, show excitement when friends arrive, and begin to share toys and space, demonstrating early empathy and cooperation. It has truly been a special term filled with festive fun, confidence, and independence, and we thank you for your continued support as we nurture and celebrate each child's individual development journey.





TINY ACORNS

The Tiny Acorns have had a wonderfully festive few weeks, filled with excitement, exploration, and plenty of Christmas cheer! Our children have embraced the season through a range of enriching activities, all designed to spark curiosity, creativity, and joy.

One of our highlights was a magical winter walk into town, where the children were delighted to see the beautiful Stamford Christmas tree twinkling in the square. The walk brought plenty of opportunities for communication about lights, colours, and the changing seasons.

We also enjoyed a special visit to the library, where the children listened to a selection of Christmas stories. They were captivated by the cosy atmosphere and loved joining in with familiar festive tales.

Back in the Tiny Acorns room, the children have been busy exploring a variety of Christmas-themed crafts and sensory experiences. From sparkly creations to festive card and decoration making, and sensory trays, the room has been alive with imagination and hands-on fun. These activities have supported the children's creativity, fine motor skills, and early communication.

It has been a truly magical time in Tiny Acorns, and we look forward to even more exciting adventures as we move through the season.





SUPER SEEDLINGS



This past term we have been very busy, with lots of exciting events and celebrations. We have enjoyed celebrating Halloween, Bonfire Night, Children in Need, and of course Christmas.

For Halloween, we practised our fine motor skills by cutting spooky spaghetti and using tweezers to pick up scary spiders. We also enjoyed making our own pumpkins.

During the Christmas period, we have been busy making gifts and cards for our families. The children have had lots of fun taking part in Christmas activities, including making snowmen, writing their own Christmas cards, and learning new Christmas songs.

Throughout the term, the Super Seedlings have shown a growing interest in using their problem-solving skills particularly when completing puzzles. They also loved playing with the leaves in the garden, throwing them into the air and exploring their surroundings.

Another firm favourite has been the sorting bears - so much so that we had to buy some more! The children enjoy collecting them in containers, lining them up, sorting them by colour, and using them in vehicles. They show so much creativity and imagination in their play.

The Super Seedling's team would like to wish all of our Super Seedlings and their families a very Happy Christmas and New Year. We hope you all have an amazing time.





MIGHTY OAKS



What a busy and exciting term it has been in Mighty Oaks!

We have thoroughly enjoyed learning all about road safety during National Road Safety Week. The children took part in a range of engaging activities focused on stop, look, and listen, learning when it is safe to cross the road and what each colour of the traffic lights means. We were very lucky to welcome our school lollipop lady, who spoke to us about staying safe near roads. The children also made their own traffic lights and enjoyed lots of car role play, helping them to confidently model road safety through their play.

We were proud to support Children in Need, raising money by taking part in a different physical challenge each day. These activities supported the children's physical development while encouraging perseverance and confidence. We learned about Pudsey, why we raise money, and enjoyed creative activities such as Pudsey rice play and designing our very own Pudsey masks.

We also celebrated Thanksgiving, where the children enjoyed making delicious flower pastries and decorating colourful turkeys while learning about gratitude and thankfulness.

And of course, we have been very busy with all things Christmas! We embraced the festive and winter spirit with a wide range of Christmas- and winter-themed activities. From decorating the room and writing our own Christmas cards to creating lots of festive crafts, exploring winter animal tuff trays, making number snowmen, listening to Christmas stories, and singing seasonal songs, the children truly immersed themselves in the celebrations. We finished the term with our lovely Christmas Stay and Play, where we enjoyed welcoming families into our room to celebrate together.

We hope you all have a wonderful break, a lovely Christmas, and a very happy New Year.

Thank you for your continued support throughout such a wonderful year. We can't wait to see what 2026 has in store for Mighty Oaks!





GREAT OAKS

This term has been very busy and full of exciting learning experiences. We began by celebrating Bonfire Night, where the children created their own fireworks using glitter sensory tuff trays and enjoyed salt painting to design bright, colourful firework pictures.

Next, we celebrated Nursery Rhyme Week, taking part in lots of fun activities based around our favourite rhymes. The children acted out nursery rhymes, practised their cutting skills to create stars, and made Humpty Dumpty—then worked together to help fix him by sticking him back together again. We also explored a variety of sensory tuff trays throughout the week.

As we moved into the festive season, our Christmas celebrations began. The children made lots of glittery artwork, prepared food for the reindeer ready for Christmas Eve, and noticed that Santa's beard was getting very long—so they practised their cutting skills by giving it a trim! We enjoyed making yummy-smelling playdough, including ginger, which was used to create gingerbread men. In our Christmas sensory tuff tray, we explored our senses using oranges, cinnamon sticks, and water, discovering all the wonderful festive smells. We have also loved singing Christmas songs and sharing festive stories together.

We were delighted to welcome families into the nursery for our Stay and Play afternoon. It was a lovely opportunity to spend time together, see families enjoying activities with their children, and create special memories.

Thank you all very much for your continued support. We hope you have a wonderful Christmas and look forward to welcoming you back in the new year.





A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PANCO

physical activity and nutritional co-ordinator

The holiday season can challenge routines and tempt us into unhealthy habits, here are some healthy top tips to keep you on the right track over the Christmas period-

Meal prep- Plan a few healthy snacks to support better choices when hunger strikes. Offer fun colourful platters with fruits and vegetables as festive snacks

Wait 10 minutes- between helping yourself to seconds or deserts this gives your body time to communicate with your brain to tell you if you are full.

Festive vegetables- Be mindful of festive vegetables they can be loaded with sugar from honey etc or fat from cheese, have smaller portions, consider smaller plates.

Enjoy winter fruits- like clementines and oranges

Spend time in nature- Aim to spend at least 15 minutes outdoors each day, fresh air is great! For a longer break visit the park or take a stroll into town.

Connect with someone- Arrange to meet with friends or family, pick up the phone, or send a text.

Do something you enjoy- Set aside time each day to do something you enjoy, it could be reading or crafts or listening to your favourite music.

Reduce screen time- Let the children help in the kitchen

Focus on making memories- Play games or read stories, introduce new healthy traditions.



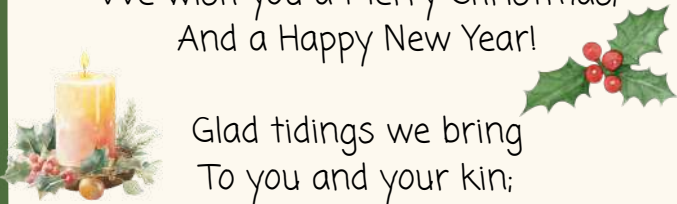


ELKLAN

speech and language

NURSERY RHYME (SONG)

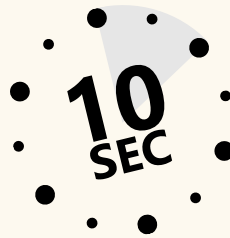
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year!



Glad tidings we bring
To you and your kin;
We wish you a merry Christmas
And a Happy New Year!

We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
We wish you a Merry Christmas,
And a Happy New Year!

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE TIP



When talking to your child, try to leave a 10-second pause after you speak. This gives them time to process what you've said and think about their response. Waiting helps build confidence and encourages your child to communicate in their own time.

ELKLAN UPDATE

Stories and rhymes are a wonderful way to support children's imagination and language development. This winter poem is for you to enjoy together at home. As you read, please add your child's name where you see (Child's Name) – hearing their own name helps children stay engaged and join in. Pause, repeat favourite lines and add actions to make it fun. Even a few minutes of shared story time makes a big difference ♥



❄️ THE WINTER MAGIC OF (CHILD'S NAME) ❄️

ONE WINTER NIGHT, STARS SHINING BRIGHT,
(CHILD'S NAME) LOOKED OUTSIDE – OH WHAT A SIGHT!
❄️ (POINT TO THE WINDOW)



SOFT WHITE SNOW LAY ON THE GROUND,
ALL WAS QUIET, NOT A SOUND.
❄️ (FINGER TO LIPS – "SHH")



HAT ON HEAD AND SCARF ON TIGHT,
(CHILD'S NAME) FELT WARM AND JUST RIGHT.
❄️ (TAP HEAD, WRAP ARMS LIKE A SCARF)

STEP BY STEP, WITH BOOTS SO SMALL,
CRUNCH, CRUNCH, CRUNCH – (CHILD'S NAME) HEARD IT ALL.
❄️ (MARCH ON THE SPOT)

SNOWFLAKES TWIRLED AND DANCED WITH GLEE,
ROUND AND ROUND (CHILD'S NAME), ONE, TWO, THREE!
❄️ (TWIRL HANDS IN THE AIR)



THE WINTER BREEZE WENT WHOOSH AND SAID,
"HELLO, (CHILD'S NAME)," ABOVE THEIR HEAD.
❄️ (BLOW GENTLY / WAVE)



TREES STOOD STILL, THE WORLD FELT KIND,
WINTER MAGIC – CALM AND BRIGHT.
❄️ (BIG CALM HUG)



HOME AT LAST, SO WARM AND SNUG,
MAGIC STAYED WITH EVERY HUG.
❄️ (PRETEND TO SPRINKLE "MAGIC" WITH HANDS IN THE AIR)

FOR WINTER MAGIC, SOFT AND TRUE,
IS WAITING THERE FOR ME AND YOU.
❄️ (POINT TO ADULT, THEN CHILD) ♥❄️





HEALTHY RECIPE

low sugar christmas biscuits

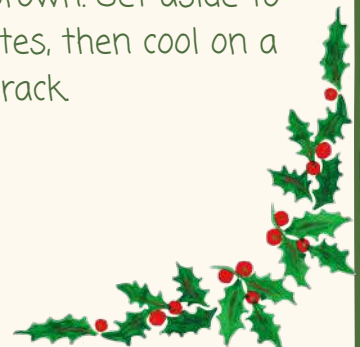
INGREDIENTS

- 100g/3½oz unsalted butter, softened
- 60g/2¼oz soft coconut sugar
- 1 free-range egg
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 275g/9¾oz plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp finely chopped candied peel



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/160C Fan/Gas 4. Line a baking tray with greaseproof paper.
2. Cream the butter and sugar together in a bowl until pale, light and fluffy. Crack in the egg and add the vanilla extract, then beat again.
3. Mix in the flour, cinnamon and candied peel until the mixture comes together as a dough.
4. Roll the dough out on a lightly floured work surface to a thickness of 1cm/½in.
5. Using biscuit cutters or a glass, cut biscuits out of the dough and carefully place onto the baking tray. To make into Christmas tree decorations, carefully make a hole in the top of the biscuit using a straw.
6. Bake the biscuits for 8-10 minutes until deep golden-brown. Set aside to harden for 5 minutes, then cool on a wire rack.





PARENT PARTNERSHIP

updates and important information



STAY AND PLAY

What a wonderful time we had at our Christmas Stay and Play! It was lovely to welcome so many families into the nursery and see the children enjoying festive activities, singing, and sharing their creativity.

A big thank you to all the parents and carers who attended—your support and participation made the day extra special. Seeing the children so happy and engaged reminds us why we love what we do. We hope you enjoyed it as much as we did!



Our Approach to Confidentiality

We understand how important it is for families to feel confident that their personal information is handled safely and respectfully. At our nursery, all information relating to children and families is treated as confidential and managed in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and data protection legislation.

Information we hold may include registration details, medical or dietary needs, and records relating to your child's learning, development, and wellbeing. This information is stored securely and is only accessed by authorised staff who need it to support your child. Information is not shared with external agencies without parental consent unless required for safeguarding or legal reasons.

We encourage parents and carers to read our full Confidentiality Policy, which can be found on our website under the Policies section.

If you have any questions, please speak to a member of the team.

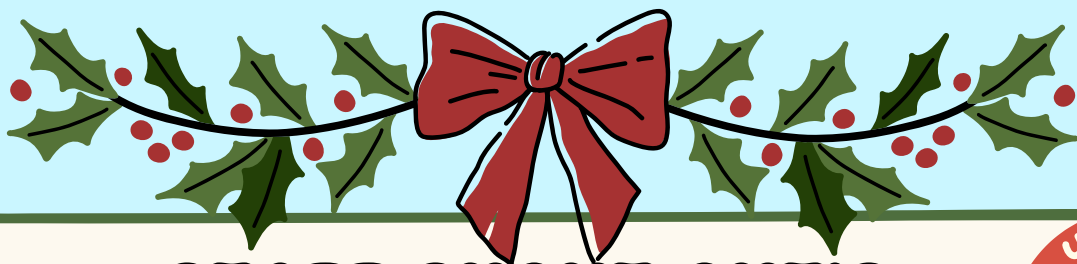
Share your Acorn Story!

We're updating our nursery website and would love to include parent testimonials. Your words help other families see what makes Acorn Childcare Centre so special! If you'd like to share a few sentences, you could tell us:

- What you love most about Acorn
- What your child enjoys doing
- How you've seen your child grow
- How you feel about our care and learning environment

How to share: Email your testimonial to ENQUIRIES@ACORNCHILDCARECENTRE.CO.UK - a few sentences is perfect! By sending your testimonial, you give us permission to feature it on our website. Thank you for helping us showcase the Acorn experience!





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.

LARA

SHE'S ALWAYS WILLING TO HELP IN ANY WAY AND TOOK THE ROLE OF CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER FOR THE TEAM!



YOU'VE SUPPORTED OUR GIRL IN SO MANY AREAS, SUPER FUN & ALWAYS A BIG SMILE IN THE MORNING

EMILY



FOR ALL THE SUPPORT AND HELP WITH OUR LITTLE GIRL WE APPRECIATE EVERYTHING YOU DO DAY TO DAY AS WELL AS THE REFERRALS

GOES ABOVE AND BEYOND FOR MY SON WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS

MARIE



ALWAYS GREETED WITH A HAPPY SMILE AND ALWAYS TAKES THE TIME TO LISTEN TO ALL I SAY. THIS DOESN'T GO UNNOTICED. FEEDBACK IS PRECISE AND A DELIGHT TO HEAR ABOUT OUR BOYS DAY!



KATIE

FOR ALWAYS OFFERING SUPPORT WHEN NEEDED WITHOUT BEING ASKED. YOU HAVE BEEN A GREAT HELP

SARAH



EME

MILLIE

FOR ALWAYS BEING SO CHEERFUL AND HAPPY AT DROP OFFS. IT MAKES SUCH A DIFFERENCE TO MY LITTLE GIRL



YOU GAVE MY DAUGHTER SUCH LOVELY CUDDLES WHEN SHE WAS SAD.

DONNA



FOR ALL THE SUPPORT AND HELP WITH OUR LITTLE GIRL WE APPRECIATE EVERYTHING YOU DO DAY TO DAY AS WELL AS THE REFERRALS

ELLEN

YOU'RE VERY PASSIONATE, AND ENERGETIC AT WHAT YOU DO



DAKOTA

YOU ALWAYS PROVIDE A WARM, FRIENDLY WELCOME IN THE MORNINGS. OUR BOY IS HAPPY TO SEE YOU AND YOU ALWAYS LET HIM KNOW WHAT YOU'LL BE DOING THAT DAY AS HE WALKS IN. THANK YOU - I THINK WE BOTH FIND THIS COMFORTING.

