



Newsletter

January 2024

Enjoy our January newsletter which is packed full of photos, updates and news on all our busy adventures at Acorn!

Lorna

Dates For Your Diary

Half Term

12th -16th February

Gap in stretched funding

14th-16th February

Mothers Day Breakfast And Play

Friday 8th March

Nursery Rhyme Of The Month



The Nursery Rhyme of the month for January is "I had a little turtle"

I had a little turtle his name was tiny Tim.

I put him in the bathtub to see if he could swim.

He drank up all the water. He ate up all the soap.

Now he is ill with a bubble in his throat.

Bubble bubble bubble,

Bubble bubble bubble.

Bubble...Bubble ... Bubble.....Pop!

Speech And Language Tip Of The Month

Singing nursery rhymes is the perfect way to support babies and children with their language and vocabulary development.

Regular, repetitive singing helps babies and toddlers remember words. It is important to sing rhymes slowly so that babies and children can hear the words clearly and learn to join in.





Healthy Recipe Time!

Feta and Spinach Tarts

Ingredients:

- Non stick cooking spray
- 1 Sheet frozen puff pastry (thawed in refrigerator)
- 3/4 cup of mayonnaise
- 1 container crumbled feta cheese
- 1/2 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
- 1 Package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 2 cloves of garlic—minced
- 1/4 Teaspoons ground black pepper

Instructions

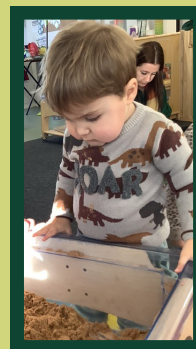
- Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F (180 degrees C).
- Spray cups of a mini muffin pan with non-stick cooking spray.
- Roll out the thawed but cold puff pastry sheet on a lightly floured surface into a rectangle using a rolling pin.
- Cut into 24 squares using a pizza cutter.
- Lightly press puff pastry squares into each cup of the prepared mini muffin pan and prick with the tines of a fork.
- Mix the mayonnaise , feta cheese, parmesan cheese, spinach, garlic and pepper into a bowl.
- Spoon feta spinach mixture evenly into the cups being careful not to overflow the cups.
- Bake in the oven until pastry is puffed and the corners are golden brown. 15 to 16 minuets.



0-3 Year Rooms

This month in Little Acorns we have done lots of exploring using our new 6 seater buggy to take all the children for lovely walks in the area. We have also been doing lots of exploring in our tuff tray, from jelly to light up ice cubes in water, and then real ice. We have used lots of senses to explore these such as touch and taste; the jelly was the best to taste !

This month in Super Seedlings the children have been challenging themselves with both risky play and problem solving. They have all been improving their balance and coordination by walking along our balance beams which has become a popular outside activity with the Super Seedlings children. The children have also been problem solving by completing different puzzles and opening locks. The children have all displayed a sense of achievement when they completed a task. It has been so lovely to see!





Preschool

Mighty Oaks have had a busy start to the new year exploring winter by looking at ice and the frost outside. We have also been creating lots of winter crafts such as winter ornaments, snowflakes and penguins. Maria has been expanding her planting and growing area and the children have been watching the plants and vegetables grow with interest. They have been helping by watering them and checking on their growing!

What a busy month January has been in Great Oaks. We've been luckily enough to have lots of new maths resources in our room and have been focusing on numbers, counting and lengths! The children have shown a massive interest in role playing and are always coming up with new games and ideas. To extend the children's play we've added some more real life resources to our home corner such as fresh fruit and vegetables as well as cereal and food boxes.

We celebrated National Storytelling week by reading all of our favourite stories and have explored different tuff trays themed round our favourite books!

We've also been focusing on name recognition in Great Oaks and we'd love for you carry this on at home with your child too!

A Message From Your Penco (Physical and Nutritional Coordinator)



Dance like nobody's watching!

During National story telling week, we chose some of our favourite stories and linked music and movement to them. It was super fun and great for our active learners, enable them to recall the story and the actions.

Many children's books encourage movement like dancing, walking, stomping, stretching and more. Exploring movement and getting active has many benefits to a child's overall physical

and mental health and can:

- increase a child's ability to focus
 - improve quality of sleep
 - help them regulate their emotions
 - strengthen their muscles
- refine coordination and dexterity



We all can dance, paint and sing if we aren't limited by our fear.

The early years are the prime time to explore our own way of moving and feeling good about it before we learn our interests and favourite music and dance styles. Never underestimate the value of your own physicality to respond, mirror or echo some of the movements your child is trying. You may teach them a thing or two!

Birth to 5

We have recently been inviting parents to attend parent evenings so that practitioners can offer feedback on their child's progress.

In this edition of our newsletter, we would like to provide some information on our assessment procedures and how these are informed by the Government.



The **early years foundation stage (EYFS)** sets standards for the learning, development and care of your child from birth to 5 years old. All schools and Ofsted-registered early years providers must follow the EYFS, including childminders, preschools, nurseries and school reception classes.

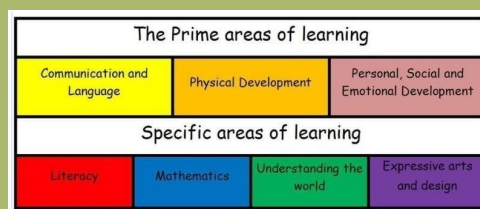
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>



Birth to Five Matters

Birth to 5 Matters is the non-statutory guidance that Acorn use to support their implementation of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, which sets out the legal requirements for delivering education for children from birth to 5 in England.

[Birth To 5 Matters - Guidance by the sector, for the sector](#)



The areas of learning and development

There are seven areas of learning and development that set out what providers must teach the children in their settings. All areas of learning and development are important and inter-connected. Three prime areas are particularly important for learning and forming relationships. They build a foundation for children to thrive and provide the basis for learning in all areas. These are the **prime areas**: • **Communication and language** • **Physical development** • **Personal, social and emotional development**. Providers must also support children in **four specific areas**, which help strengthen and develop the three prime areas, and ignite children's curiosity and enthusiasm. The specific areas are: • **Literacy** • **Mathematics** • **Understanding the world** • **Expressive arts and design**

[Overview - Characteristics of Effective Learning, and Areas of Learning and Development - Birth To 5 Matters](#)

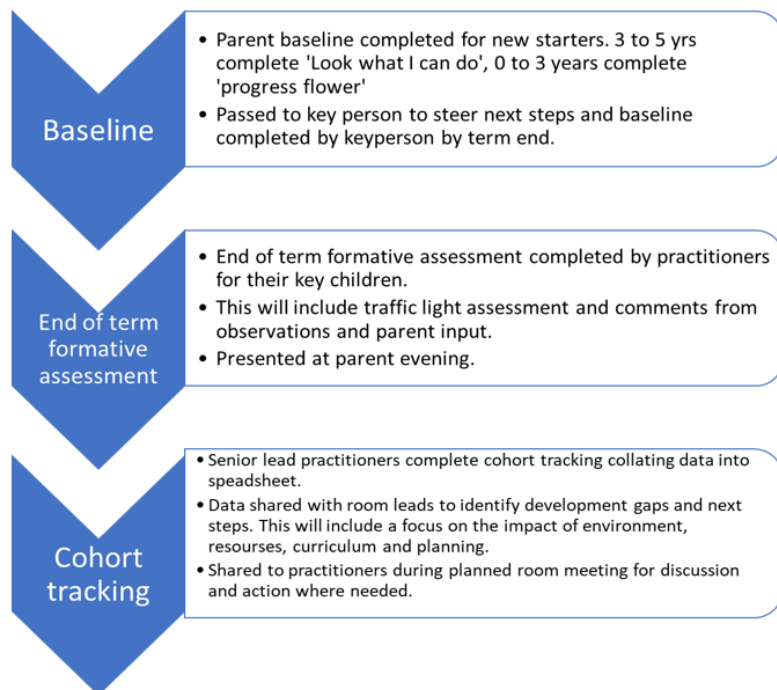
Birth to 5

Assessment

Assessment plays an important part in helping parents, carers and practitioners to recognise children's progress, understand their needs, and to plan activities and support.

Assessment should not involve long breaks from interaction with children or require excessive paperwork. When assessing whether an individual child is at the expected level of development, practitioners should draw on their knowledge of the child and their own expert professional judgement. Practitioners should keep parents and/or carers up to date on their child's progress and development and address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals.

Acorn Assessment schedule



Note: at any point during the assessments, practitioners should consult with the SENDco (this can also be our speech and language specialist) where learning gaps cause concern, and additional support for the child is identified.

Ongoing assessment

Ongoing assessment (also known as formative assessment) is an integral part of the learning and development process. It involves practitioners understanding children's interests and what they know and can do, and then shaping teaching and learning experiences for each child reflecting that knowledge. In their interactions with children, practitioners should make and act on their own day-to-day observations about children's progress and observations that parents and carers share.

In planning and guiding what children learn, practitioners reflect on the different rates at which children are developing and adjust their practice appropriately. We use the three characteristics of effective teaching and learning which are: • **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go'. • **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements. • **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

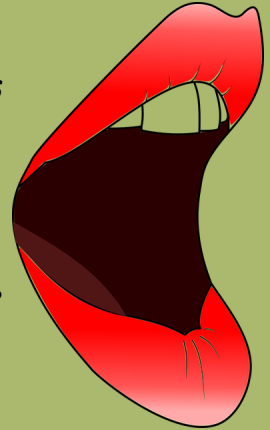


Oral Motor Skills

Hello I am Maria, the lead Communication Practitioner for the 3-5 building. I am excited to introduce practical 'Oral Motor Skills' exercises in our newsletter to help enhance your child's speech.

Tongue Exercise — *place jam, yogurt, or pudding on the corners of your child's mouth and ask them to lick it. Mirrors can be helpful if your child finds it challenging.*

Lip and Cheek Exercise — *Sip liquids through a straw. To make it more fun, try thicker textures like milkshakes or fruit purees.*



Update



This month our 3-5 Lead Hollie Roper, has begun her maternity leave.

We will miss Hollie for the time she is away and wish her good luck with her baby. We expect lots of visits and cuddles!



Sally Woods, our baby room leader, will be covering for Hollie whilst she is on maternity leave. She is looking forward to meeting all our preschool families and supporting the 3-5 year staff team.



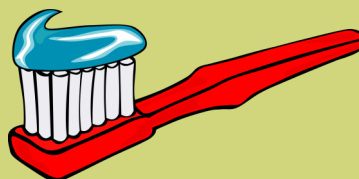
Covering for Sally as baby room Leader is Emily Large, our Deputy SENDCo. Emily has been in the baby room since November to give her plenty of time to get to know the children and their families.

A Message From Community Dental Services



Did you know that sugar free fizzy drinks are still harmful to our teeth?

Community
Dental
Services



Sugar-free drinks can be acidic. Adding fizz or bubbles raises the acidity in any drink and increases the risk of dental erosion overtime.



Swapping the fizz for plain water or milk will help to reduce the risk of damage to our teeth and save money! So make your home a fizz free zone!



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Did you know...?



Community
Dental
Services

Your beloved can of classic Coca-Cola packs a whopping 34.98g of sugar? That's almost 7 teaspoons of the sweet stuff, which is the most an 11-year old to an adult should have in a day!



Saying Goodbye to fizzy drinks can reduce the Risk of Dental Decay

Opting for safe alternatives like water and milk can make a big difference in maintaining healthy teeth.



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Employee Of The Month

January's Employee of the month is Sally.

Sally was voted employee of the month for her willingness to step into any room and help out. Supporting staff whenever she can and stepping into her new role with enthusiasm.



ACORN CHILDCARE CENTRE
From Little Acorns to Mighty Oaks



www.acornchildcarecentre.co.uk