

St Swithin Street Newsletter Term 4 - April 2026

Welcome to Our Nursery Newsletter!

We hope you and your little ones are settling into the new term with excitement and joy. Welcome to all the new families who have joined us and those due to join us soon. This term promises to be full of fun, learning, and celebrations, as we come together as a nursery community. Here's a peek at what's been happening and what's to come this term!

Training

Caitlin McKechnie is continuing with her SVQ 3 with Cairn Training, and she is hoping to be completed this by the end of the term.

Staff continue to work their way through essential core training and take their learning into practice.

Charity of the Year

We're thrilled to continue to raise money for our Charity of the Year - **Friends of the Neonatal Unit**. The charity supports the Neonatal Unit at Aberdeen Maternity hospital which cares for premature and sick babies. Charitable support for neonatal care in Aberdeen pre-dates the Neonatal Unit itself. FOTNU become part of the Archie Foundation family in 2016, raising funds for life saving equipment, staff training and direct family support such as accommodation and travel costs for babies born too soon or sick across the North of Scotland. FOTNU are now the leading charity for the new Baird Family Neonatal Hospital. The hospital is still under construction, and will include cutting edge research, drawing together several services which will include maternity, gynaecology, and neonatal.

So far, we have raised £220 from our Breakfast Roll Week, £382.05 from our Readathon sponsorship, and £41.95 from our Easter Egg Competition, bringing a total to £644. Thank you for your continued support.

Throughout the year, we'll be organising activities to raise funds and awareness for this wonderful cause. Feel free to chat with staff about ways you can support, from bake sales to sponsored events, every contribution makes a difference!

Trips

This term our pre-school group had a wonderful trip to the Dundee Science Centre. Here we had ample opportunities to explore science, engage in role play, learn about the wider world around us, and just have lots of fun. As always, a highlight was the bus and our yummy, packed lunch that Andrena made for us! We had a great adventure and are already speaking about our next trip!



Toddlers had a fantastic time out at Dizzy Rascals, exploring the soft play, accessing the role play areas, having a good dance in the music area, and we even managed to convince the staff to have a bounce on the bouncy castle.



Trips are a fantastic way to learn outside of the nursery and gives children valuable experiences with their peers. As always, we create risk assessments with the children to allow them to navigate the expected risks that are involved when leaving the nursery. We follow the SIMOA rules when out and about and often take our lovely purple elephant with us to remind us how to travel safely.

Trips are always organised on different days throughout the year to ensure everyone gets at least one or more within each age group.

Weather-Appropriate Clothing

As the days get warmer, please ensure your child comes dressed for summer fun! Light layers, sun hats, and closed-toe shoes are perfect for outdoor play. The nursery will begin to apply suncream when necessary. We use factor 50 Nivea. If your child is not to use this, then we will require you to bring a suncream in (unopened). We want everyone to stay safe and comfortable while enjoying the sunshine.

Improvement Plans

Our 2025-2026 Improvement plans are now up and running and displayed in the hallway where you enter the nursery on the left-hand side. Our three improvement areas are detailed below:

1. Enhanced Learning and Developing Opportunities for Outdoor Learning
2. Nursery Audits and Evaluations
3. To support a more holistic environment for the children within the playrooms, extending loose parts, natural resources and reducing plastic.

We have begun collating evidence on our board for you to have a look at. Our garden has taken shape over the past couple of months and the extension to play has been well noticed by all. We hope to continue to extend the learning and development of the nursery with yourselves, so please let us know if there are any ideas or thoughts you can add to our plans.

We are continuing to add more opportunities to learn and develop outdoors, and we are excited to get out for our Wee Green Space visits.

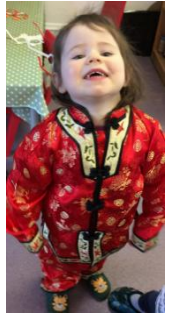
We are continuing to evaluate our environments and make relevant changes to support a more holistic environment, and we are always grateful to acquire more loose parts from home to extend opportunities in the nursery, especially lamps, kitchen utensils, buttons etc.

Learning Experiences throughout the Nursery



Chinese New Year

The children enjoyed exploring Chinese New Year traditions, making colourful lanterns and tasting festive treats. We learned about the Year of the Horse and shared stories about how it is celebrated around the world. Our mini parades were a delight, with art, craft and music filling the nursery with excitement!



Eid Celebrations

This term, we celebrated Eid with crafts, music, and a wonderful sharing of stories and customs. Children created beautiful artwork and enjoyed learning about the importance of kindness and generosity.



Pancake Tuesday

Pancake Tuesday was a hit! Children whipped up their own pancake batter for Andrena to cook, learning about weights and measurements. The children engaged in multiple pancake-making role play activities, both within the indoor learning environment and outdoors. We talked about the tradition behind Shrove Tuesday and had lots of giggles along the way.

Easter Events

Our Easter celebrations featured egg hunts around the garden, creative crafts, and stories about the Easter story. The children enjoyed making bunny masks and decorating eggs. It was wonderful to see everyone's creativity and enthusiasm shine.



Stay and Play

During our recent Stay and Play sessions, parents were warmly invited into the nursery to explore and observe the variety of engaging activities available to the children. This provided families with a wonderful opportunity to see first-hand how learning happens through play, from creative arts and imaginative roleplay to hands-on counting and science experiments. Parents enjoyed joining in, sharing in their children's excitement, and gaining valuable insights into their daily experiences at nursery.



Baby Room

Transport

This term, the 0-2 room children have been exploring a transport topic. This has provided us with lots of learning opportunities. We have introduced a selection of transport-themed songs and rhymes, which the children have thoroughly enjoyed singing along to. These sessions have not only encouraged participation and confidence but have also supported listening and rhythm skills. We have noticed the children joining in with actions and even beginning to repeat some of the words, further boosting their language development.

In addition to structured activities, we have ensured that the environment is rich with opportunities for spontaneous play and exploration. By providing opportunities for children to make choices and follow their interests, we are fostering independence and encouraging them to develop important problem-solving skills. These experiences lay the groundwork for lifelong learning and support each child's individual growth.



Through play activities, children can develop their fine motor skills, for example, through art and craft opportunities and messy play, children can use paintbrushes and manipulate playdough. Using threading beads, they can further develop their hand-eye coordination. These activities encourage creativity and self-expression, allowing the children to explore different textures and materials in a fun and engaging way.

Local area adventures

We have consistently taken advantage of opportunities to walk throughout the local area and visit nearby parks. These outings provide valuable occasions to engage with nature and support the development of gross motor skills using park equipment.



Readathon

The children took part in a month long read-a-thon in March. This was to celebrate World Book Day. We read new stories to the children every day, and they were very excited with



all the new books, sitting contently, listening to all the new stories. We extended the learning for the babies with many activities to match and sort and create their own story boards.



Toddler Room

Animals

This term, the children have been exploring an exciting range of topics designed to spark curiosity. We've delved into the fascinating world of jungle animals, sea animals and mini beasts, encouraging



the children to learn about different creatures and their habitats through playful activities. The children have been for many minibeast hunts in the garden and they have been out for many walks around the community to find more interesting bugs along the way.



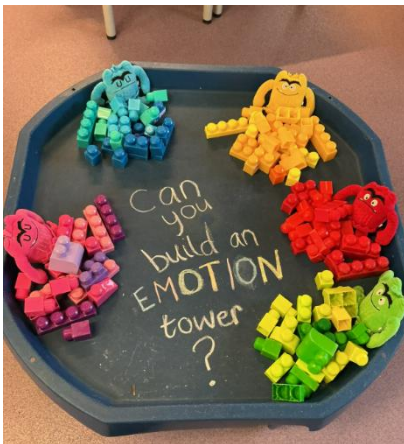
Walks and Road Safety



We have had a big focus on road safety this term and have remembered to take along our SIMOA elephant for lots of outings. To read more about how we support the learning of safety with the children click here: <https://hub.careinspectorate.com/how-we-support-improvement/quality-improvement-programmes-and-topics/keeping-children-safe/>

Emotions

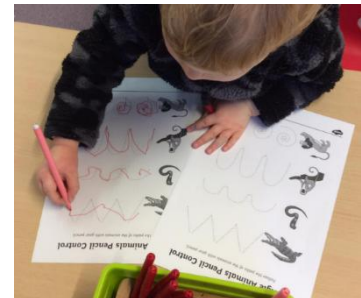
Supporting emotions has been another focus in the Toddler room, helping children to understand and express their emotions using the Colour Monster stories and activities. We have observed the children engaging with emotion-themed games and creative crafts, which encourage them to identify and talk about feelings such as happiness, sadness, and anger. Staff have also introduced group discussions after story time, allowing children to share their thoughts and connect with one another.



Learning through play is always promoted to support the children's wellbeing.

Fine Motor Skills

Children have loved engaging in threading, cutting and building activities, which helps to develop fine motor skills, and strengthen little hands and fingers. They have also been participating in many drawing activities which help them to focus on pencil control and develop drawing skills.



Numeracy

Our numeracy focus has seen the children counting and recognising numbers from 1 to 10, laying the foundation for confident early maths through many play activities.



Pre-school Room

Winter

On our return to nursery at the start of term, we were welcomed with a lot of snow. Although challenging for us, this was a great learning base for the children who were fascinated to learn how snow forms during cold weather, and we talked about how the temperature needs to be just right for snowflakes to appear. We then explored what happens when the weather warms up and snow begins to melt, observing how it turns into water and disappears from the ground. This led to many conversations about the effects of weather on our surroundings, deepening the children's understanding of seasonal changes and encouraging them to notice how the environment transforms throughout the year.



Space Topic

Upon returning, our pre-schoolers chose an exciting topic, learning all about space! We learnt about the Sun, Moon, stars, and planets, integrating the topic into various areas of learning, which included reading stories about astronauts and planets. We shared different facts we already knew about the planets, and the children added to their knowledge through fact books from the local library and the resource centre.



Throughout, the children expanded their literacy skills, continuing to practice their writing, helping each other form words linked to the topic.

To build on their enthusiasm, we introduced a fun planet and counting activity to help the children recognise numbers whilst learning about the solar system. For example, we counted 5,4,3,2,1 before the rocket blast off, supporting early mathematics throughout the topic.



Readathon Month

To further encourage a love of reading among our pre-schoolers, we participated in our sponsored readathon for March. Each week, the children discovered books by new authors, sharing stories and exploring a variety of genres and themes together. Activities such as these not only enhances children's literacy skills but also introduces them to a wider world of imagination, sparking discussions and creative play inspired by the stories they read.

In addition to reading stories, we encouraged the children to act out scenes from their favourite books, using roleplay to bring characters and events to life. Through this imaginative play, children practised counting, sorting, and sharing props, deepening their numeracy skills in a playful context. For example, they were able to count out animals for the story, 'A Squash and a Squeeze', turning stories into interactive maths adventures.



To broaden their horizons even further, we began to weave simple words and phrases from modern languages into our story-based activities, learning to say greetings to each other in different languages during roleplay, with the children delighting in exploring the sounds and meanings of new words, which encourages children to understand diversity and the world around them.



French Classes

We are delighted to announce that Isabel from La Jolie Ronde will be attending the nursery every Tuesday morning during term time to teach French to the 4-5 years pre-school children. (i.e. those children who will be starting school in August this year).

At the start of the school year in August, children who will be going to school in August 2027 will then get the opportunity to attend classes. Isabel teaches the children French in a fun and exciting way, with various songs, stories, role play and games throughout the activities.

Dates for the Diary

Tuesday 16th June all day in nursery – Family Photo Day / Graduation Photos

Saturday 27th June 9:30am-11:30am – Sports Day

Tuesday 30th June 5:30pm onwards – Parents Night

Saturday 1st June 9:30am – Preschool (children going to school only) Graduation

Friday 30th October 5:30pm-7pm – Halloween Extravaganza

- The nursery will close on Tuesday the 22nd of December 2026 at 6pm for the 2-week Christmas holiday break, and re-open on Wednesday the 6th of January 2027 at 7.30am.

We continue to have Laura from Flashdance visit the pre-school room us every Thursday afternoon during term time.

Kind Regards

Erin Horne

Nursery Manager

stswithinstreet@summersnurseries.com

01224 209966