



Dear Parents,

Welcome back, we hope you had a lovely break!

This term we will be using the theme **Spring and Growth** to address the various areas within our pre-school curriculum. Please take a look at the *Planning Web* in the lobby and on our website <http://www.littlepippins.org.uk/>

Each term there will be a core selection of story and information books chosen primarily for pleasure but also to support the ideas we are trying to develop in all areas of the revised EYFS curriculum. There is a list below in case you want to follow these up with trips to the library.

Communication and language and Literacy We will continue to offer play-based activities that encourage children to recognise signs and words and to begin to mark-make for a purpose. These will include book making, creating stories and making signs for the pre-school. As our topic is about growth, children will be encouraged to talk about what we need to make our bodies grow and to keep them well. We plan to look at non-fiction books – *My Body*, *A Day in the Life of a Nurse* and *A Day in the Life of a Doctor*. Children will be given the opportunity to talk about experiences of going to the doctor's surgery, the hospital or the dentist and to talk about people who care for us – nurses, doctors, care workers etc. If you are involved in any of these professions please let us know as it would be lovely if you could come in and talk about your job. We will also be looking at two traditional tales to support our work on plant growth. These are *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *The Enormous Turnip*.

Phonics

We hope you have had fun over the holidays finding words that start with the sounds 's', 'a' and 't'. This term we will recap the sounds and then look at 'p' and 'i'. Listen out for the new songs!

Personal, social and emotional development We will continue to explore feelings and emotions and will re-visit concepts such as *turn-taking*, *being kind* and *how does it feel when...?* We will also discuss appropriate ways for the children to indicate their displeasure, '*Stop – I don't like that!*' – rather than resorting to physical action. We will use puppets and stories to cover subjects such as hand washing and dressing skills and will continue to spend time talking about taking care of our bodies, healthy food and the effect exercise has on us.

Mathematical development The children will use non-standard measuring units to measure plant growth, their own height and foot size. Some of the older children will be encouraged to record these measurements.

Understanding the world We will spend time discussing spring and new growth. Children will be able to grow seeds, cress and beans and will be able to explore why some seeds grow and others don't. We are going to lots of planting in the garden so if you have any spare bags of compost, seeds such as carrots, beans, cress, onion sets, herb or heather plants we would love them. We also need yoghurt pots to make cress heads.

We will relate discussions around the seeds growing to what children need to make their bodies grow and stay well. Children will also be encouraged to use role-play – for example *The Enormous Turnip* – to explore forces (*push* and *pull*).

Physical development As well as our usual *Active Kidz* and garden activities there will be opportunities for children to re-enact *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *The Enormous Turnip*. Children will be encouraged to use fine motor skills to pick up, plant and tend seedlings.

Expressive art and design

The children will be given the opportunity to look carefully at plants and flowers and to 'have a go' at drawing or painting them. We will also experiment with different types of printing – butterfly, string, foot and hand prints. We hope to produce some artwork for a *Jack and the Beanstalk* display and we will also be making Easter cards and chocolate nests.

There will be an **Easter Bonnet competition** and parade on the last Thursday of this term. We will have an AM and PM parade so that everyone can take part. More info to follow soon. All bonnets should be the **children's own work** and will be judged accordingly.

We thought it would nice for the children to learn some new spring time songs. Here are the words so you can join in at home.

Little Daisy (sung to I'm a little teapot)

I'm a little daisy
Tall and slim
Here are my petals
Here is my stem
When the sun comes up
And the rain comes down
I grow, grow, grow- up from the ground!

Scarecrow song

Scarecrow, scarecrow turn around
Scarecrow, scarecrow touch the ground
Scarecrow, scarecrow reach up high
Scarecrow, scarecrow touch the sky
Scarecrow, scarecrow bend down low
Scarecrow, scarecrow touch your toes

Parental help

We look forward to having parents in to help again this term. We appreciate that many of you work or have younger children to care for. However, if you are free to help either on a regular basis or just occasionally, we would be delighted to see you. We would also be happy to have the support of grandparents and carers. There is a list of dates on the whiteboard outside. We will also be arranging a grounds day soon where we encourage families to come in and help with a few jobs around the garden. We would particularly like parents to sign up and come and read favourite children's story during our book week (29th February - 5th March) – ideally dressed in costume! We had a fabulous response last year and the children really enjoyed all the story telling.

Outside activities

We play outside in all weathers so please make sure your child has boots. We are going to be doing lots of messy play with the new mud kitchen, builders yard and gardening this term.

Learning Journals

On the radiator top by the kitchen you will find your child's individual *Learning Journal* which is compiled by your child's key person in collaboration with you and your child. As your child's most important and prime educator we value your input. For example a note of the first time your child fastens his/her shoes, dresses unaided or rides his/her bike without stabilisers are all useful contributions. Please feel free to access your child's journal at any time whilst respecting the privacy of other children's *Learning Journals*. There are slips to fill in on the whiteboard by the front door and a pocket on the display board above the *Learning Journal's* for your contributions. You may also email contributions to manager.pippins@btinternet.com

Lunchboxes/Drink bottles

Please make sure lunchboxes and bottles are named and that bottles go home each day. Don't forget we promote a healthy food policy.

Lunch time at Pippins is very social. The children sit around the table with a member of staff. They support and encourage them to eat their lunch. If your child hasn't eaten very much a member of staff will speak to you at the end of the day or you will find a note in the lunch box. We do not put half eaten yoghurts and sandwiches back in lunch boxes.

Snacks

We have sufficient breadsticks and crackers to last us until the end of this term. However, we would appreciate plain gluten free popcorn or rice cakes so that we can offer a choice.

Independent cooking

We would appreciate donations gluten-free plain/self-raising flour, butter, icing sugar, caster sugar, eggs and cake cases.

Please recycle unwanted materials by bringing them in to enhance the following areas...

Box modelling/creative work (clean and gluten free)

Small cartons and kitchen roll tubes

Clean small size Actimel drink containers

Yoghurt pots

Straws

Cotton wool

Mark-making

Old calendars

Diaries

Note books

Post its

Envelopes

Postcards

Other unwanted items of stationery

Books and Stories

Non-Fiction

A Day in the Life of a Doctor – Heather Adamson

A Day in the Life of a Nurse – Carole Watson

Fiction

The Very Hungry Caterpillar – Eric Carle

Oliver's Vegetables – Vivian French

Jasper's Beanstalk – Nick Butterworth and Mick Inkpen

Traditional Tales

The Enormous Turnip

Jack and the Beanstalk

Holidays and other absences

Please complete a Holiday form (available in the lobby) giving us as much notice as possible if you will be taking your child out of pre-school for a day out, appointment or holiday. We are frequently asked if a child can attend an extra session as a one-off or emergency and we like to be able to accommodate such requests if we can but, as we are full, we can only do this if we know in advance that a child will be absent. Thank you.

Dates for your diary

Thursday 3rd March 2016 – World Book Day (sign up to read a book from 29th February - 4th March)

Monday 7th March 2016 - 8pm Committee meeting – all parents welcome

Thursday 24th March 2016 – Easter Bonnet Parade – all parents welcome (max 2 per child)

Thursday 24th March 2016 – last day of term

25th March to 9th April 2016 – April Holiday

Amy, Vicky and the team