



Term 4 Letter February 2018



Dear Parents and Carers,

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 attached, which is also displayed in the lobby and on our website <http://www.littlepippins.org.uk>. We also display a weekly play menu on the whiteboard by the entrance that outlines the activities we plan to do that week.

Parent Feedback

A big thank you to everyone who took the time to respond to our questionnaire. The feedback is really important to help us to continue to improve. Your comments were amazing, thank you! We will send a separate review around of the results.

Communication and language and Literacy

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. You can also borrow books from our own new lending library.

Did you know that reading with your child for just ten minutes a day can help:

- reading attainment and writing ability for reading
- text comprehension and grammar
- breadth of vocabulary
- positive reading attitudes, which are linked to achievement in reading
- greater self-confidence as a reader

Source: National Literacy Trust

Throughout the term 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, *Jack and the Beanstalk* and *The Enormous Turnip*.

The children are able to access mark making throughout the whole pre-school. Within the home corner they can write down telephone messages or write lists. In the garden they can use paintbrushes and water to mark-make on the patio. In the builders yard they can use the checklists to count and draw what they are going to build.

Phonics

This term we will continue to learn our sounds, songs and actions. The actions we use not only help the children to remember the sounds but also improve their gross motor skills which in turn helps their fine motor skills. We look at initial sounds in our names and what the letters look like. We will use sounds tubs and games with the older children.

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.

We will be encouraging the children to independently put on their shoes and coats so it is important that they wear shoes and clothes they are able to put on and off themselves.

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. We will use the song '5 little ducks go swimming one day' to look at 'one more' and 'one less'. We link maths into everything that we do for example when children are playing in the builders yard we will count the bricks and look at the shapes we make. In the role play hairdressers the children will have a till so they can experience money, count hair brushes and look at the clock for number recognition and basic time telling.

Understanding the world

This term is very exciting as we will be watching our own caterpillars turn into butterflies and visit the lambs at the farm.

We will look at lifecycles, using pasta to recreate the lifecycle of a butterfly. 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 do 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. We will be planting wheat and hope to be able to make flour.

Physical development

As well as our usual Active Kidz and garden activities there will be opportunities for the children to take part in Boogie Beats movement and dance sessions where they re-enact stories such as Jack and the Beanstalk and other stories.

Children will be encouraged to use fine motor skills to pick up, plant and tend seedlings. They will get the opportunity to improve their cutting skills by cutting out the elements of the life cycle and story boards for Jack and the Beanstalk.

Expressive art and design

The children will be given the opportunity to look carefully at plants and flowers and to 'have a go' at painting sunflowers and printing butterflies. We will also experiment with different types of printing – using natural items from the garden, our hands and cars to make tracks. We will also be making Mothers day cards, Easter cards and chocolate nests.

School Readiness

You may have heard on the news the new focus on getting children ready for school. This is something that we have always taken great pride in at Pippins but now we want to work more closely with you as parents to make the transition to school a great success. Here are just a few of things children going up to school should be able to do.

- ✓ Between the ages of four and five, children should be prepared to be separated from their parent or main carer.
- ✓ Children should be able to clearly demonstrate their ability to listen and follow age appropriate instructions
- ✓ Children should show an interest in a variety of subjects, paying attention to the subject or activity they are taking part in
- ✓ Children should have enough of a range of vocabulary and language to express their needs, feelings, thoughts or ideas
- ✓ Children should be able to identify themselves by name, age, state factors in their life, name family members etc...
- ✓ To be able to interact in an age appropriate way with another child or adult
- ✓ Children should be able to interact, share and play, taking responsibility for their actions, understanding repercussions for their actions
- ✓ Focus on and also show interest in the work they are undertaking
- ✓ To be able to observe, notice, discuss and ask questions about their environment and experiences
- ✓ To be able to engage with books, have some understanding of words and language
- ✓ Respond to boundary setting
- ✓ Vocalise their needs such as toileting, thirst, hunger, illness etc...

We will work along with you, your child and your child's new school to ensure they have a happy and successful transition. The parents' evening in March will give you the opportunity to speak to your child's key worker to discuss this further.

Easter Egg hunt & Stay and Play

There will be two Easter Egg Hunt and stay and play mornings - Tuesday 27th and Thursday 29th March - where everyone will be invited. Parents are welcome to join their children in the hunt for some Easter eggs and have fun with Easter crafts.

Parental help

We look forward to having parents in to help again this term. We ask every family to help at least once per term however, we appreciate that many of you work or have younger children to care for. If you are free to help in session either on a regular basis or just occasionally, we would be delighted to see you; it really does help us having another adult to read stories or do crafts with the children. We would also be happy to have the support of grandparents and carers. There is a list of dates on the whiteboard outside the door so please sign up to help.

There are many other ways you can help and one opportunity later this term will be a grounds day where we encourage families to come in on a Saturday 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 (26th February – 2nd 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 mud kitchen, builders yard and gardening this term.

Learning Journals - Tapestry

Don't forget to login to your child's online learning journal. 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.

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 so no sweets please. Lunchtime 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. **Please make sure grapes, baby tomatoes and olives are cut in half lengthways.**

Snacks

We have sufficient breadsticks and crackers to last us until the end of this term. However, we would appreciate popcorn, rice cakes or cheese so that we can offer a choice. The children also love trying different types of fruit and vegetables like melon, Kiwi, celery etc.

Independent cooking

We would appreciate donations of chocolate, cornflakes, chocolate eggs and cake cases. The children will also have a go at making their own sandwiches so keep an eye on the white board for ingredients that we need.

Box modelling

We would love to recycle your unwanted materials and enhance our box modelling and creative areas. Please bring in any:

Clean yoghurt pots, small boxes, lids, kitchen roll tubes, cotton wool, straws, fabric offcuts, wallpaper and any other exciting things you may find.

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 some sessions are full, we can only do this if we know in advance that a child will be absent.

Drop off and Collection times

Please remember that our sessions start promptly with group time and late arrivals do disrupt the flow of the session. If you are going to be 5 minutes late arriving for drop off or pick up time, please could you let us know. Session times are 9.15-11.45am and 12.30 – 3.00pm. Please note we do now charge a late collection fee for repeated lateness.

Dates for your diary

Monday 19th Feb – First day of term

Saturday 24th February – Winter Ball

Monday 26th Feb – Friday 2nd March - Book week please come and read a story

Thursday 1st March – World Book Day

Tuesday 13th March (pm)– visiting the lambs

Tuesday 20th and/or 22nd March (to be confirmed)– Parents’ evening for school leavers only

Saturday 24th March – Spring Garden Tidying day – Parents, children and grandparents welcome

Monday 26th March - 8pm Committee meeting – all parents welcome

Tuesday 27th & Thursday 29th March – Easter Egg Hunt & Stay and play

Thursday 29th March – last day of term - finish at 3.00pm

Monday 16th April 2017 – New term starts

Please note a change to the last day of the summer term, we will finish on Monday 23rd July at 3pm.

We look forward to another term working with you and your children

Amy and the team