

## Newsletter: Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2024



Dear Parents/Carers,

It has been uncharacteristically quiet in Pre-school this week... With so many children and adults affected by viruses, it has felt quite strange indeed. We have spent much of the week outdoors where possible, avoiding a number of activities that we felt could have spread germs and we have cleaned resources after use; we were so very sorry to have had to cancel our Song Time session on Thursday – it reminded everyone very much of Covid times. Nevertheless, we have enjoyed the time we have spent together and hope very much that our friends are now on the mend for plenty of festive fun.

We would like to end the year by saying a huge well done to our wonderful children, who have had a very busy, exciting and successful term, and an enormous thank you to our parents/carers for your support and trusting us to care for them. The staff and committee wish all of our families a very Merry Christmas and send our best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year; we look forward to seeing you all in 2025!

### Update

- **Reading:** There is consistent evidence that the level and quality of parental involvement in learning is linked to a child's communication, language, and literacy capabilities. Parents can support their children in a variety of ways, for example by asking questions or by linking the topic of the book to real-life examples:
  - **Tip 1:** Ask questions about the book. Parents can support their child by asking a range of questions about the book they are reading together. The 'five Ws'—who, what, where, when, and why—can provide useful question stems for parents. Parents should use a mixture of closed questions (which can be answered with a single word, or a small number of words) and open questions (which require a fuller response). Children might also be asked to summarise what has happened in the book or story so far, and to predict what will happen next.
  - **Tip 2:** Link reading to the real world. By talking about links between the book and real life, parents can make the story more interesting and help children develop their understanding of ideas in the book. For example, while reading about Cinderella going to the ball, a parent might discuss the similarities between a ball and a birthday party.
- **Wellbeing:** There has been much press in recent months about children's mental health. As part of our drive to support this we are going to include something each month in the newsletter about Health and Wellbeing. We hope you find this section useful. If there are any topics you would like us to find some helpful tips about, please let us know. From January, we will be following the 10 A Day for Mental Health, to help us to be healthy. How many of these can you do each day at home?



- You may find the following link has some useful information for parents of pre-schoolers with older siblings: Understanding why some children find it hard to attend school. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/education-and-families/schools/attendance-and-inclusion/ebsa/> Devon County Council are pleased to announce the launch of a new section on their website dedicated to helping families dealing with Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA). This initiative is part of Devon County Council's effort to support school attendance by providing timely and appropriate assistance. EBSA can be challenging for both children and their families. Many parents have shared their struggles in finding the right support. This new website aims to simplify this process by offering a better understanding of EBSA and

providing practical advice. The website includes useful tips for parents on how to support their children at home and outlines the support they can expect from schools. It is divided into sections catering to children who occasionally miss school, those who frequently miss school, and those who do not attend at all. This ensures that parents can find specific guidance tailored to their child's needs. They believe that collaborative efforts can significantly enhance the wellbeing and education of all children in Devon. You can visit the website using the link and they welcome your feedback.

- We have updated our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, our Intimate Care Policy and our Operation Encompass Statement. These can be found at <https://stocklandpreschool.co.uk/policies-and-procedures/safeguarding>.
- Safeguarding Information - Keeping under fives safe online:

## KEEPING UNDER FIVES SAFE ONLINE

**8 top tips** that you can put in place at home, to help keep your youngest children safe online.



### Enjoy going online together

The best way to keep your family safe online, and to understand your child's internet use, is to use technology and the internet together. Get to know how a game or device works by exploring it as a family and finding where the main settings and safety features are.



### Establish clear boundaries

In the same way that you set boundaries for most areas of your children's lives, establish your expectations with technology use and online activities. Creating a family agreement is a useful step, which might include time spent online, where and when devices can be used and what to do if they see something upsetting. You can find the Childnet Family Agreement at [www.childnet.com/have-a-conversation](http://www.childnet.com/have-a-conversation).



### Supervise your child's use

We recommend that you always supervise a young child when they are online as they may stumble across something which could worry, upset or confuse them. Since the internet can be accessed from a number of devices and many of these are portable, we would advise you to keep family and child devices in a busy part of your home e.g. the living room or kitchen. This makes it easier for you to be involved in their technology use and you are right there to answer any questions and help them.



### Consider the quality and quantity of online activities

Young children can be enthusiastic users of technology but try to encourage a healthy mix of online and offline activities. There are some strategies that can be used to help manage the time your child spends online, such as setting time limits or using time limiting tools, designating weekly times to use the internet together, or removing portable devices from your child's bedroom at night to avoid tiredness.



### Make use of parental tools

Make use of parental controls and filters which can be used on your home internet, devices, phone networks and online services such as Netflix and YouTube.

Visit the Parents' Guide to Technology on the UK Safer Internet Centre website to find out how to set up controls on a device [www.saferinternet.org.uk/parent-tech](http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/parent-tech).

Visit [www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls](http://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls) to find out how you can set up controls on your home internet, phone network and online services such as Netflix.

Parental controls will work best in combination with supervision and engagement to help your child understand how to stay safe online. As your child grows and develops, so do their online needs, therefore you may want to periodically review your parental controls to accommodate this.

Always remember to choose a strong password and do not share it with your child.



### Start the conversation early

It's important to begin the conversation about staying safe online as early as possible in order to establish positive behaviour and routines early in a child's life. The age that you should begin speaking to your child will differ between families but essentially as they start engaging with technology and the internet these conversations can and should begin. Try using the conversations below to help you with this.

You can also give your child strategies early on that they can use if something ever worries or upsets them online. These could include: switch the screen off, close the laptop, exit the website, or turn the iPad or phone over and come ask for help.



### Choose age appropriate apps and games

Gaming may be the very first way that your child encounters life online and there are lots of fantastic online games and apps to support their learning and development. When choosing a new game or app for your child the first thing to be aware of is the age rating. Much like films, games have age ratings too and these are determined by the game's content. PEGI (pegi.info) set these ratings along with content descriptors which indicate if a game contains things like violence, in app purchases or scenes of a sexual nature. Google Play and Windows Store apps are also rated by PEGI and the App Store has age ratings too.

You can also proactively find great age appropriate apps and games for young children to use by filtering by age at [www.common Sense Media.org](http://www.common Sense Media.org). Common Sense Media is a website which provides reviews and lots of useful information on games but they also cover films, apps, TV shows, websites, books, and music too. Reading online reviews of games from other parents' experiences is a really useful way to highlight potential safety issues like whether the game features inappropriate adverts or bad language.

Many games also offer in-app purchases which means spending real money on in-game features. You can turn off in-app purchases and protect them with a password. To find more information about how to do this visit [www.childnet.com/in-app-purchases](http://www.childnet.com/in-app-purchases).



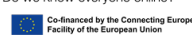
### Know where to report

Reports can be made to websites through their safety/help centres and moderation services. If you are worried or suspicious about someone who contacts your child online report them to CEOP ([www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)). For more information regarding reporting, visit our Need Help page in the parents and carers section of the Childnet website [www.childnet.com/parents-help](http://www.childnet.com/parents-help).

### Conversation starters for under 5s



- Q - What is your favourite thing to do on the iPad/tablet/my phone etc?
- Q - What is your favourite game/app and why do you like it?
- Q - Where do we use the iPad/tablet/games console and when can we use it?
- Q - What can you do if something online upsets you?
- Q - Who can help you with your favourite games and apps?
- Q - If a message appears on the screen, what should you do?
- Q - Who can go online? Do we know everyone online?



## Reminders

- From 7th January 2025 we will be accepting children from 18 months old; we would be grateful to you continuing to share this fantastic news with any parents/carers that you think may be interested in accessing this provision.
- From 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 Breakfast Club will be running Monday – Friday, 8.00 – 8.40.
- Is your child due to start school in September 2025? You can apply for your child's school place if they were born between the 1/9/2020 and the 31/08/2021. Remember to visit [www.devon.gov.uk/admissiononline](http://www.devon.gov.uk/admissiononline) to make your application and for more information.
- Thank you to all for embracing changes in routine this week, in the New Year we will be continuing with drop off and collection taking place at the gate to the Pre-school courtyard space to ensure that we are able to stay within ratio within the room/outdoor space.
- Reminders and adjustments to Key Workers for January 2025 will be emailed to you shortly and you will have an opportunity to meet with your child's Key Worker/s during the week commencing 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025.
- We are outside a lot and sometimes we get rather messy at preschool when using resources such as paint and water as part of our learning. Please can you ensure that your child/ren have plenty of warm, spare clothes in their bags as the weather gets even wetter and muddier, so that we can keep them clean and warm!
- You may be interested in following this link <https://www.devon.gov.uk/eyps/devon-family-hubs-monthly-newsletter-december-2024/> to access the Devon family hubs monthly newsletter for December 2024, which is packed full of interesting information including tips and resources for the festive period.
- Please do remember that I welcome any suggestions that you may have with regards to improving our offer. For example, is there anything that you would like to see us doing which currently is not in place? How do the hours suit your needs? I am keen to ensure that we support our families with the best provision possible.

## **Snaps**

Cleaning Norman and Pearl:  
*We made sure their tank was sparkling so that they stay healthy over Christmas!*



## **Timetable**

The staff are currently in the process of developing an exciting two year rolling programme to deliver our curriculum. This will be made available on our website in coming weeks.  
Planning for the Spring Term, as well as activities for the week commencing 6<sup>th</sup> January, will be shared with you in due course.

## **Dates for the Diary**

Inset Day: Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2025.  
Pre-school Returns: Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025.  
Parent Consultations: Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2025 and Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2025.  
February Half Term: 17<sup>th</sup> February 2025 - 21<sup>st</sup> February 2025.  
School Cross Country: Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025 (early finish/pick up).  
School Cross Country: Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025 (early finish/pick up).

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### **Contact Details**

Stockland Victory Hall, Stockland, Devon EX14 9EF. Phone: 01404 881450  
[info@stocklandpreschool.co.uk](mailto:info@stocklandpreschool.co.uk)

### **Safeguarding**

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please email [jemma@stocklandpreschool.co.uk](mailto:jemma@stocklandpreschool.co.uk). This inbox is monitored daily. Our Designated Safeguarding Lead is Jemma Harvey-Jones and our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Kelly Patch and Alice Hutter. Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy can be found online at: <https://stocklandpreschool.co.uk/policies-and-procedures/safeguarding>. If you have any concerns about the safety of a child you can either talk to our DSL or DDSL or you can phone Devon MASH on 01392 384964.

### **CORE COMMITTEE**

Christina Leppard - Committee Chair [chair@stocklandpreschool.co.uk](mailto:chair@stocklandpreschool.co.uk)  
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