

Newsletter: Friday 28th March 2025



Dear Parents/Carers,

We are excited to share this week's Pre-school newsletter with you and we hope that this provides useful updates on setting activities, important announcements, upcoming events, and ways you can support your child's learning at home. As always, our goal is to keep you informed and engaged in your child's Pre-School journey.

What a busy week we have had again! Monday mornings are always 'go, go, go', and this week was no different, with the children asking Sharon to help them make playdough by 9.30am! They certainly kept her on her toes wanting to choose their own colours, resulting in a mixture of blues! Later in the day the children got busy preparing resources to make a farm shop for our courtyard and engaged in discussions about what produce they planned to buy and sell!



Welly Walk Wednesday: We went for rather a long walk this week and found all sorts of beautiful flowers, as well as cows and lambs in the fields!



We love Thursdays because it's our day to cook!



Baking in Pre-School is a fun, hands-on activity that offers numerous developmental and educational benefits. It engages the children in a creative and interactive learning experience while building essential life skills including:

Enhances Early Math Skills

- Measuring ingredients teaches counting, fractions, and volume.
- Understanding time through baking duration helps with sequencing and patience.

Develops Language & Communication

- Following a recipe encourages listening and comprehension.
- Naming ingredients and describing textures expand vocabulary.

Encourages Science Exploration

- Mixing and baking introduce basic chemistry concepts, like how heat changes ingredients.
- Observing cause and effect (e.g., dough rising) fosters curiosity.

Improves Fine Motor Skills

- Stirring, pouring, and kneading strengthen hand muscles and coordination.
- Using tools like rolling pins and cookie cutters enhances dexterity.

Promotes Social & Emotional Growth

- Working together teaches cooperation, patience, and turn-taking.
- Achieving a finished product builds confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

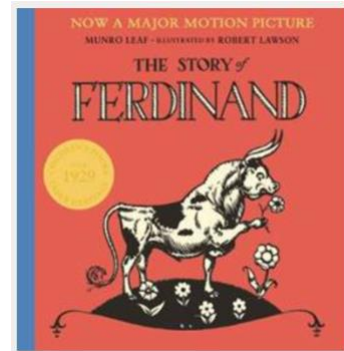
Encourages Healthy Eating Habits

- Learning about ingredients and making food from scratch fosters an interest in nutrition.
- Trying new flavours can promote a balanced diet.

Finally, we wanted to bring to your attention that we have become aware of some variations in the arrival and departure times of children to the those we have on record. While we understand that occasional delays or early pickups may happen, maintaining consistent timings helps us ensure the safety and smooth operation of our daily schedule. To support our staff in providing the best care and learning environment for all children, we kindly ask that you adhere to the drop-off and pick-up times as noted in our records. If there are any changes to your child's usual schedule, please inform us in advance so we can make the necessary arrangements. Similarly, if you think we may have the wrong times on our records, please do let us know. Thank you for your co-operation and support. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out.

Updates

- **Reading:** Book Recommendations: *The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf. The Story of Ferdinand by Munro Leaf is a timeless tale about a gentle bull named Ferdinand who prefers to sit peacefully and smell flowers rather than fight like the other bulls. Despite his great size and strength, he has no interest in bullfighting, but he is mistakenly chosen to face the Matador in Madrid. Originally published in the 1930s, the story carries a powerful message about being true to oneself and appreciating life's simple joys. Robert Lawson's expressive ink illustrations enhance the book's charm, making it a beautifully uplifting and enduring classic.



With our continuing focus on reading culture, we will continue to recommend books to our families, with a view to trying to widen pupils' interest in different genres and authors, supporting parents to know new authors and as ideas for gifts.

- **Devon Family Hub's monthly Newsletter for Parents and Carers:** The Devon Family Hub have released their March edition of their monthly newsletter for parents and carers! There is a lot of useful information and free webinars at <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/J3kwacCophbyN9tE>. This includes links to bite-sized information sessions on a range of topics and some amazing Podcasts, as well as information on how the Family Hubs service for Devon will be transitioning to a new service which will provide increased, targeted help to support families in the community.

Reminders

- **URGENT - September 2025:** We emailed you recently about September sessions. As we look ahead and prepare for the new academic year, we want to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our families, while providing the best possible experience for your children. It is important to us that we are able to take into account your preferences, thus we would appreciate your input on session requirements for September. This will help us plan our staffing schedule to best meet the needs of our families. Please respond to our email by **Friday 4th April 2025**, so that we can finalise plans accordingly. Thank you.
- **Amazon Appeal:** We're asking if anyone would kindly like to donate an item to play with in our setting. The Pre-school have recently purchased some new outdoor storage, as well as some larger play items, which include a large water play tray and two exciting sensory tables. However, we are still lacking in smaller resources to use with this equipment, sand toys and books to support understanding our feelings (as well as our Reading Spine). We've set up an Amazon wish list; if you could/would like to purchase an item, it would make a big difference. It's a great way for other family members, friends and the local community to help out Stockland and Yarcombe Pre-school, if they should wish to. Please use this link: https://www.amazon.co.uk/hz/wishlist/ls/3Q9DCQ1HMQEXC?ref=wl_share and share with anyone who you think may be interested. Thank you.
- **Paperwork:** If you have not yet returned your progress updates, please could you do so as soon as possible – these are vital to us maintaining excellent links with families and delivering learning experiences that are individual to the needs and interests of the children.
- **Protecting staff well-being :** Should you wish to contact staff out of hours about your child or any Pre-school matters, please use the email addresses provided below, not personal phone numbers. Thank you.

- **Mental Health:** *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.*

Shared Decision Making

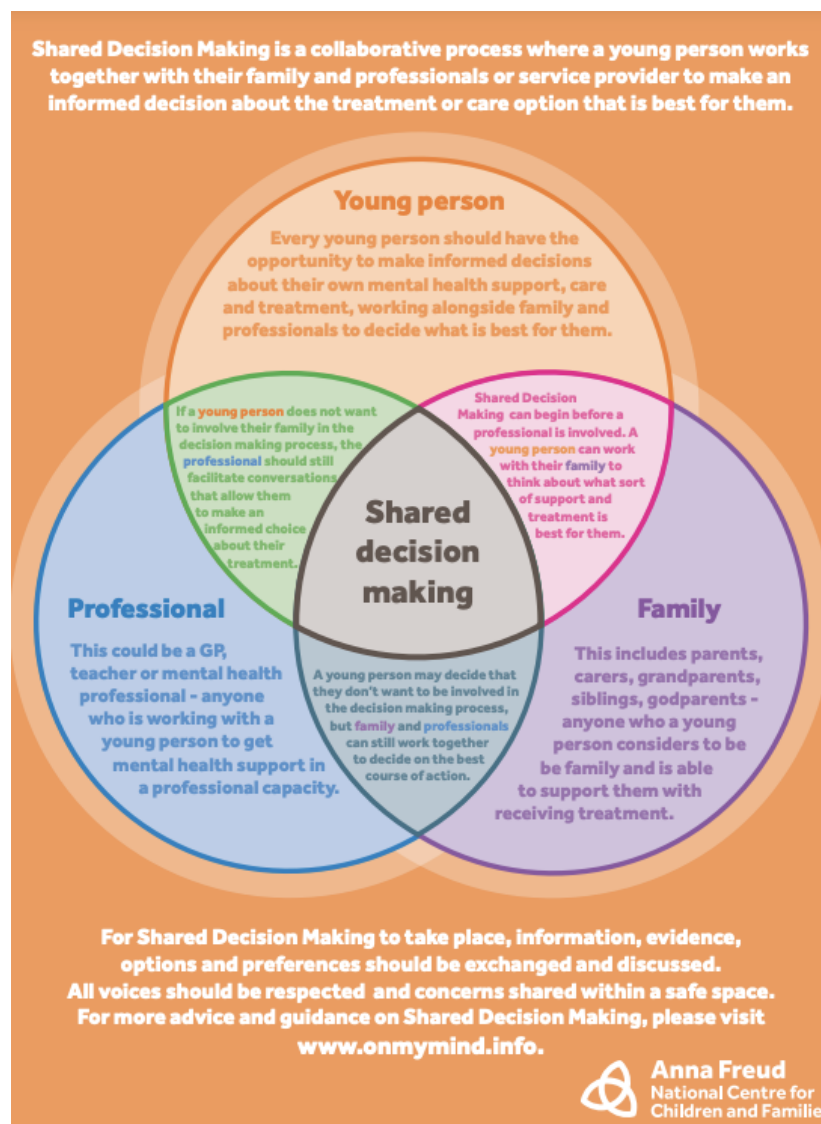
What is shared decision making?

Shared decision making (SDM) is a collaborative process where a young person works together with their family and professionals/service provider to make an informed decision about the treatment or care option that is best for them. For Shared decision making to take place, information, evidence, options and preferences should be exchanged and discussed. All voices should be respected and concerns shared within a safe space.

Why is it important?

Shared decision making is recognised as a person-centred approach to improving health care quality. It ensures young people and their families get a voice and decisions are made with the young person's best interest at heart. Studies show that involving service users in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) care and treatment decisions is associated with improved health outcomes and higher satisfaction with services.

For further information and top tips visit: <https://www.annafreud.org/resources/children-and-young-peoples-wellbeing/shared-decision-making/>.



- **Safeguarding:** Online Safety poster below

Online safety tips for parents of pre-school children 0-5 Year Olds

internetmatters.org

Set boundaries
It's never too early to start setting rules about when and for how long your child can use devices and start to introduce the subject of internet safety at the same time. Encourage children to use devices in a shared spaces like a lounge or kitchen. Make sure to keep other devices out of reach and use passwords so they can't go online without asking you first. It's also a good idea to have tech-free mealtimes and not to allow children to have devices in their bedrooms at this age.

Explore together
Set your homepage to a child-friendly site such as CBeebies and give them a user account which only allows access to sites and apps you've chosen.

Help them learn through games
Games are a great way for young children to explore the internet and learn about the world around them. Choose a variety of safe and educational online games and apps to play with your child so that you'll feel more comfortable with them exploring. Make use of websites and platforms designed specifically for pre-schoolers like CBeebies, YouTube Kids, Nick Jr, and use app ratings and reviews in the app store to check app suitability.

22% of parents of 3-4-year-olds don't think their child has a good balance between screen time and other activities
*Source: Ofcom Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2022

Checklist: Put yourself in control
Make use of parental controls available on your home broadband and any internet-enabled devices. You can find out how at your broadband provider's website or by visiting internetmatters.org.

Search safely
Use safe search engines such as oviggle.org.uk or kids-search.com. Safe search settings can also be activated on Google and other search engines as well as YouTube and it is possible to lock these so that they can't be inadvertently removed. You can find out more by visiting the Google Safety Centre. Once you've put all of these controls in place have a browse and search for a few things to see what your children might see, if they were to do the same. Remember that voice-activated search works really well now.

Know this stuff matters, but don't know where to turn?
Internet Matters is a free online resource for every parent in the UK. We'll show you the best ways to protect your children online - with information, advice and support on all the big online safety issues.

Scan below or visit internetmatters.org for more advice

QR code and social media links for Internet Matters.

- **Health & Safety:** Following advice from EDDC's Environmental Health Technical Officer, please add a cool pack to your child's lunch box to ensure that perishable foods stay safe to eat in our warm room.

- **School Readiness:** Developing independence in preparation for school.

Encouraging Independence in Pre-schoolers

Helping children develop independence is an important part of their growth and confidence. At preschool, we encourage children to complete simple tasks on their own, make choices, and take responsibility for their belongings. Developing independence helps children build self-esteem, problem-solving skills, and resilience, which are essential for future learning and life experiences.

How We Foster Independence at Pre-school:

- ✓ Encouraging children to tidy up after activities
- ✓ Teaching them to dress themselves (zippers, buttons, and shoes)
- ✓ Allowing them to make simple choices (snack options, activities)
- ✓ Supporting them in following routines and completing small tasks

How You Can Help at Home:

- Give your child small responsibilities, like setting the table or packing their bag
- Encourage them to try things on their own before offering help
- Praise their efforts to build confidence
- Establish daily routines to create a sense of security and responsibility

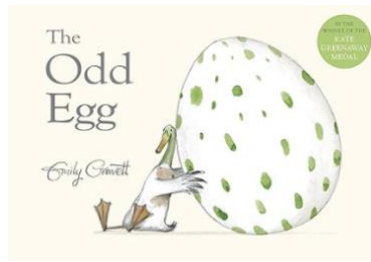
By promoting independence, we are helping children become confident, capable learners who are ready for future challenges!

Please see previous newsletters on the website for further links to mental health support, safeguarding and online safety, as well as school readiness.

Timetable

Make It Monday:

- Introducing our key texts for the week *The Odd Egg* by Emily Gravett and *We're going on an Egg Hunt* by Martha Mumford.
- Animals that come from eggs.
- Making Easter cards.
- Designing an Easter egg.
- Planting seeds.
- Preparing our flower bed.



Tinkering Tuesday:

- Repeating patterns.
- Making chocolate Easter nests!
- Making sun catchers.

Welly Walk Wednesday & PE with Mr Murnane:

- Welly Walk to see Reverend Julie for Easter session.
- Continuing from last week (as we ended up on all sorts of other adventures instead!)
 - Looking at flowers/painting: Georges Seurat (pointillism), Georgia O'Keefe (water colour flowers).
 - Finding Spring photos! After hunting for photographs we will be talking about where they were hidden and describing what we can see using the new vocabulary that we have been learning!



Thinking Thursday:

- Weekly cooking.
- Visiting church for the retelling of the Easter story - the Primary School performance of 'The Donkey's Tale'.

Fresh Air Friday:

- Fresh Air Friday – Easter Hunt!

Dates for the Diary

- Easter with Reverend Julie: Wednesday 2nd April 2025.
- Toddler Group - Easter: Friday 4th April 2025.
- Last Day of Spring Term: Friday 4th April 2025.
- Summer Term Begins/Return To School: Tuesday 22nd April 2025.
- Bank Holiday: Monday 5th May 2025 – Pre-school closed.
- Half Term: Monday 26th May 2025 – Friday 30th May 2025.
- Sports Day: Monday 30th June 2025.
- Parent Consultations: Monday 7th July 2025 and Thursday 10th July 2025.
- Last Day of Summer Term: Tuesday 22nd July 2025.

Contact Details

Stockland Victory Hall, Stockland, Devon EX14 9EF. Phone: 01404 881450
info@stocklandpreschool.co.uk

Safeguarding

If you have any safeguarding concerns, please email 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
Pippa Salter – Vice Chair, Secretary and Safeguarding vicechair@stocklandpreschool.co.uk
Emily Foxwell – Treasurer treasurer@stocklandpreschool.co.uk

STAFF

Jemma Harvey-Jones – Manager, SENDCo and DSL jemma@stocklandpreschool.co.uk
Sam Steward - Deputy Manager sam.s@stocklandpreschool.co.uk
Kelly Patch - Deputy Safeguarding Lead kelly.p@stocklandpreschool.co.uk

To contact any other members of our team please email the info@stocklandpreschool.co.uk account and your queries will be forwarded appropriately.

Thank you for being a part of our Pre-school family. If you have any questions or suggestions, feel free to reach out.