



Newsletter January 2024

We hope you all had a lovely Christmas break and a good start to the new year.

We would like to thank everyone who gave us cards and gifts before the Christmas break.

We are looking forward to a busy and exciting 2024 at Small Steps!

Important Dates

- 11th – 22nd March – Key Person Evenings (more info below)
- Friday 28th March – Bank holiday, nursery closed.
- Monday 1st April – Friday 5th April – Easter holiday – nursery closed
- Monday 6th May – Bank holiday – nursery closed

Progress Updates

Key people will be completing a short progress update by the end of January for parents.

This will give a brief update on progress your child has made in the areas of learning and their next steps and how we can support these together.

Key Person Evenings

We will be holding Key person evenings on dates from 11th – 22nd March.

There will be sign up sheets on the Lending Library table in February for you to sign up with a day and time to speak with your key person.

In the meantime, if you have any concerns about your child's progress then please speak to your key person or Karen (SENCO) or Becca. We can always arrange a convenient time to speak with you as we know collection and drop-off times can be hectic!

We are learning in Butterflies ...

We will be exploring our senses with a focus on a different sense each week.

03/01/24 -Senses – sound
08/01/24 -Senses – touch
15/01/24 -Senses – sight
22/01/24 -Senses – taste and smell

We will then focus on different types of weather and have activities relating to these.

29/01/24 - Weather – snow and ice
05/02/24 -Weather – rain and wind
12/02/24 - Weather – Sun

For the remainder of February and in March, we will be looking at different sorts of animals and learning about the sounds they make and where they live.

We are learning in Bumble Bees

We will begin the year with the topic of Journeys and looking at different types of transport.

03/01/24 -Journeys – by car and bus
08/01/24 -Journeys – road safety
15/01/24 -Journeys – by train
22/01/24 -Journeys – by air
29/01/24 -Journeys – by water
05/02/24 -Journeys – Going on a bear hunt
12/02/24 -Journeys – Our world (and Chinese New Year)

We will then look at traditional fairy tales and nursery rhymes, which the children always really enjoy!

19/02/24 - Fairy Tales – The 3 little pigs
26/02/24 - Fairy Tales - Billy Goats Gruff
04/03/24 - Fairy Tales – Goldilocks and the 3 bears
11/03/24 - Fairy Tales – The Gingerbread man
18/03/24 - Fairy Tales – The Ugly Duckling
25/03/24 - Fairy Tales – Jack & beanstalk
08/04/24 - Nursery Rhymes week



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Staff Changes

We will be saying good-bye to Gemma at the end of January as she will be going on maternity leave. We wish her lots of luck as she gets ready for her new arrival. If Gemma is your keyperson you will receive a letter telling you who will be your new keyperson soon.

We welcomed Erin to Small Steps back in November. Erin is working in Bumble Bees room on a Monday and Tuesday. She has previously worked in nurseries leading Forest school sessions.

We also welcome Holly, who has joined the team this month. Holly will be based in Bumble Bees room everyday and has experience of working with adults with learning difficulties. We are sure you will meet them over the next few weeks.

Bumble Bees Dance Class

We have been continuing our link with Mini Professional Dance Academy and the children have enjoyed their classes with Miss Caitlin last term.

We will be swapping the groups around slightly to allow some children go, who have not been before. This may mean your child does not go this term but will go again in the summer term. If you do not want your child to go next term, then please let us know. We will be sending out permission forms and inviting some new children.



Illness

We just wanted to remind parents that if your child has any vomiting or diarrhoea then they will need to stay away from nursery for 48 hours after their last incident.

We can only give medication that is prescribed by a doctor for the child and they have had for 24 hours. Thank you

Can we please remind all parents that we are a nut free setting. Please do not give your children nuts or peanut butter spread. We also advice an ice pack if you have foods to keep cool.

The Lending Library

We have made some changes to the Lending Library at our front door. We have a new display unit for our books and parent information sheets.

We will also be introducing some home learning packs for you to borrow and use with your child at home. Please return these to the baskets when you have finished with them. Staff will check them regularly to replenish supplies in them if needed. We hope you find them helpful to use at home and practise some key skills.

Funding Changes

As you will have seen in the news the government offer for funded childcare is expanding over the next two years. This is expected to be rolled out in the following way:

From April 2024 - Up to 15 hours for eligible working families in England with a 2-year-old.

From September 2024 - Up to 15 hours for eligible working families in England with a child between 9 and 23 months old.

From September 2025 - Up to 30 hours for eligible working families in England with a child from 9 months old up to school age.

We would urge you to look at www.childcarechoices.gov.uk and register for their updates. They have lots of information about what you may be eligible for, including tax-free childcare.

You will also need to apply through this website for any funding you are entitled to in the future.

We have been provided with very little information from the County Council so far, so please bear with us on these changes.

