



Cookham Nursery School Newsletter Autumn Two 2025

The Children's Learning

Thank you to the parents and carers who were able to join us for 'Stay and Play' on Wednesday. We could see how proud the children were to show you the Nursery environment and the activities and resources that we use here.

We have attached a pamphlet to this Newsletter, which gives you information about Communication and Language at Cookham Nursery School. It is an overview of the importance of this Prime Area and how we teach and the children learn.



You will have seen how we have books everywhere to promote a love of stories and reading. We have a huge variety of pens and pencils and all sorts of paper, notebooks, clipboards and diaries to encourage mark-making and early writing.

We use Maths everywhere to talk about number and spatial reasoning; resources and activities to develop gross and fine motor skills, a creative area for painting, drawing and building models, a woodwork bench, a quiet corner...not to mention the large outdoor area to develop our physical skills and risk taking.



The overarching principle is to maintain an outstanding environment that inspires talk, conversations and interactions with friends and adults, building characteristics in children that help them to learn and develop throughout their lives.

There are lots of photos of the sessions in the foyer.

Our Learning this week and next...

This week, the children explored a wide range of exciting learning experiences across all areas of development.

During Number activities, we practised subitising numbers 1 to 3 and discovered how larger numbers are made up of smaller groups, using metal nuts. This is a way to experience how other things can be subitised other than just counters.

Through rhythm and sound play with claves, we practised using our listening skills while engaging with the story of *The Gingerbread Man*. We also introduced *The Three Little Pigs* to support understanding of story structure, characters, and plot.

Social skills were nurtured through a story about party excitement, helping children reflect on emotions and calming strategies.

Seasonal changes were a big focus too—children noticed signs of Autumn and created leaf rubbings. We considered nature over time, thinking back to Summer and forward to Winter.

We also enjoyed woodwork activities, using hammers safely, and explored spatial language during Group Time and through our bike route! It's been a rich and joyful week of discovery!

It is essential that we repeat and practise in order to embed critical knowledge and skills. Therefore, next week we will practise instantly recognising small quantities with a handful of metal nuts - seeing numbers in different arrangements. We will continue to understand rhythm, volume, and tempo using the story *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*. Storytelling continues with the expressive retelling of *The Three Little Pigs*, using actions and voices to build confidence and language skills. Biba (our Persona Doll) returns with a problem about inclusion, encouraging children to think about fairness for all. Outdoors, we will learn about wildlife habitats and what animals need to feel safe and welcome in our garden.

The importance of being outdoors...

With the weather changing and the magic of Winter around the corner, it reminded me of some amazing training that the teachers received last year. Here is some of the research showing why being outdoors is such an essential part of child development.

1. Indoor pollution is worse than outdoors.
2. Children's stress levels reduce.
3. It's better for children's eye development.
4. Children get some Vitamin D.
5. It will help children sleep.
6. It will get children moving.
7. It will improve children's attention and memory.
8. Children will have more energy.
9. Children feel happier.
10. It will boost children's immune systems.

Illness however is inevitable at this time of year. A reminder that your child needs to stay off school for 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea. This supports all children and teachers to stay as well as we can!

Dates for your diary

School Applications: Open now until the 15th January 2026

Friday 5th December - Shooting Star Theatre Company perform 'Search for Santa!' Your child will have been invited to the afternoon performance at 1pm if they do not attend Nursery on Fridays.

Friday 19th December at 11:45am - Term ends

The staff return on Monday 5th January for staff training, home visits and new children visits.

Thursday 8th January - Term starts for all children.

Friday 13th Feb - Half Term holidays.

How we will share your child's learning and development at Cookham Nursery School



Settling In The First Few Weeks...

Following our initial phone calls, home visits and Nursery visits, the children's start dates are staggered so that each child has 1:1 time with their Key Person. We will share a 'settling in' sheet with photos about what they've been exploring and enjoying. We will gather information to understand your child's starting points. This will guide how we plan our curriculum, environment, and activities to support their learning.

Adult-Led Time

During each session the children will gather as a group or individually for some adult-led learning as well as a daily story and singing session.

Emails

Our '**Weekly Update**' is emailed with an explanation of the children's learning during both free flow and Group Times. We share ideas for how you can support your child at home to complement the learning at school. Our monthly **Newsletters** will be emailed and show you a snap shot of the learning alongside other important information. These are both available on our website.

Learning Journey Folder

Your child's folder and sketch books will illustrate their learning journey through the year. We will add photos of special events and 'wow' moments. They will also contain a selection of your child's creations and mark making.

Come and Play

Each term parents and carers are invited into the Nursery to join their child to play and learn together, focussed on a particular area of the Curriculum.

Progress Discussions

We track and monitor children's progress against our curriculum goals and the statutory framework as well as check their speech and language development.

Each term your child's key person will meet with you to talk about their progress. We want to hear about how they are learning and developing at home so that we can work in partnership.

Curriculum

Our teams have designed and planned a progressive curriculum full of rich and challenging activities and experiences designed to spark the children's curiosity, engage them and encourage deep learning and thinking. It promotes a balance of child-led, play based learning and adult-initiated activities in our indoor and outdoor environments. We value each child's interests and strengths, using them to inform our teaching while recognising children as capable learners. Parental involvement and a supportive home setting are crucial for every child's growth.

Our ambitious curriculum goals set out the key skills, concepts and attitudes we want children to learn.

Environment

Our learning environment both inside and outside is planned for children's development across the Curriculum. The resources are accessible to support each child's own enquiry, curiosity and independence. Each day the adults set the environment up based on the interests, fascinations and learning from the previous day. Resources and displays are designed to develop skills, knowledge and vocabulary.

End of year leavers chat

If your child is leaving to go to school, we finish the year by having a meeting with you to celebrate your child's development in each area of our curriculum and provide you with an end of year photo summary.