



Welcome to the spring edition of our newsletter.

Everyone seems glad to greet the beginning of spring with longer days and the bright warming colours of daffodils, snow drops and crocuses. In the nursery we are busy preparing for our spring activities and settling in children who have recently joined us.



The New Year has been an extremely busy time for **kidsunlimited**, with the introduction of items such as Welcome Packs for all new starters and the new **kidsunlimited** clothing range. From last month, families have been able to purchase branded clothing such as jumpers, polo shirts, fleeces, coats, hats and gloves, supplied by Simply Schoolwear, from the **kidsunlimited** website 'Parent Information / Uniforms' page. The ability to have clothing specifically for the nursery which is good quality and easy to wear, and arrives already labelled with your child's name, is intended to make your lives a little easier.

In our spring edition newsletter we have opened a discussion about reward charts and asking do they really work? We also feature an article on the benefits of owning a pet as so many of our settings now have pets of their own, from guinea pigs to rabbits and fish.

Our latest nursery at Esher opened on Monday 28th February after a very busy and successful 'open week'. Other new nursery developments for 2011 include Sale, Reigate and Maidstone. All of these projects are progressing well and are due to open later this year. We are also thrilled to announce another **kidsunlimited** nursery for the University of Oxford, which will be joining the existing three University sites at the end of summer.

I do hope you will enjoy reading this newsletter. If you have any topics that you would like us to address in future newsletters please email marketing@kidsunlimited.co.uk.

Rosamund Marshall
CEO

Nursery news



Summerfields

Just singing in the rain..!

The children at Summerfields nursery have embraced going out in all weathers and enjoyed playing, dancing and singing in the rain over the last few weeks. Below is a quote from Hwaa Irfan, which they thought was very appropriate:

Children Need the Outdoors Like Earth Needs Rain!

“The one thing that modernity and wealth cannot replace for growing children is the outdoors. Children need the outdoors physically, psychologically, spiritually, and intellectually – these aspects of development and well-being cannot be replaced by the Internet and video games.” by Hwaa Irfan

Chinese New Year

Every year the majority of nurseries take part in annual celebrations from a variety of different faiths, and this year has started with no exception. Many sites have enjoyed celebrating the Chinese New Year, lots of activities took place as they welcomed in the Year of the Rabbit.

kidsunlimited Tytherington created their own 3D dragon from junk modeling materials, as well as masks and puppets.

kidsunlimited Waterways got involved in lots of activities to celebrate the event, they turned their play area into a Chinese restaurant where the children enjoyed trying to use chopsticks and sampling noodles, rice and prawn crackers. They had great fun making Chinese soup in the water tray using bean sprouts and stir-fry vegetables. The children have also worked together to create a fantastic Chinese dragon and then took this out into the garden to do some dragon dancing! One of the parents came to talk to the children about how Chinese New Year is celebrated and to show some traditional Chinese clothes.

kidsunlimited Total Fitness Under 2's enjoyed exploring Chinese colours with coloured noodle play, dressing up, listening to Chinese music and making firecrackers from junk modeling. Over 2's enjoyed dressing up, eating noodles with chopsticks, Chinese music, using Chinese calligraphy brushes to do Chinese writing, and looking at Chinese objects.



More nursery news

Beckenham

This winter **kidsunlimited** Beckenham has made the most of the indoor activities, whilst it's been raining outside.

They explored construction with their stickle bricks by putting them together and creating models.

They also worked with texture by dribbling glue onto leaves then adding glitter to give that extra sparkle. Children also built a treasure box, which they explored with their hands and observed the different textures inside.



North Cheam



As part of the story telling week, pre-school children at North Cheam have enjoyed listening to, telling and acting out the Gruffalo story. They created a 3D Gruffalo out of papier mache and made a life size Gruffalo and Mouse.



They used tissue paper and card board to make the Fox, the Owl and the Snake.

The children particularly enjoyed acting out the story in the Gruffalo cave, which they created in the role play area.

Countess of Chester

Countess of Chester recently took part in 'Tu B Shevat', which is a Jewish tree planting festival.

The pre-school children celebrated the festival by planting an apple tree in the garden.

They will care for the tree throughout the year and it will also be used in activities relating to 'growth', 'caring for the environment' and 'healthy eating'.



More nursery news

Pancake run at Regent's Place

The children from **kidsunlimited** Regent's Place cooked pancakes and challenged the staff from the Virgin Active gym next door to a fun run to celebrate Shrove Tuesday. They especially enjoyed weighing the ingredients, mixing the batter and most importantly eating them as well as beating the gym!



Highbury is heading for a record!

Children, parents and nursery staff from Highbury nursery attempted to enter the Guinness Book of Records by having the most people sing the nursery rhyme "Head, shoulders, knees and toes". On Tuesday 1st March everyone gathered in the former Arsenal football stadium at Highbury to raise money through this event for the Chatter Box Challenge, a children's charity for children with speech and language difficulties. Amongst the 15,000 taking part were Dionne Cole and her three year old son Jaivan Oseni, who said: "We had a really good time. My son enjoyed the singing."



New menus at kidsunlimited nurseries



kidsunlimited has recently introduced new nursery menus, to continue to ensure your child is offered a nutritionally balanced diet while at nursery. The new menus are in accordance with the Food Standards Agency Report, the Caroline Walker Trust guidelines, Eating Well for Under 5s, and the LACORS and Ofsted reports in 2010.

Each weekly menu offers the right balance of nutrients for each age group and new recipes can be regularly introduced and incorporated into the analysis to ensure the correct balance is maintained.

We appreciate that a nutritious menu is not going to benefit your child if it isn't attractive, tasty and appealing to eat, and a team of our chefs and cooks have worked together to ensure these menus include meals that the children will recognise and enjoy, whilst also tempting them to explore new foods and inspire them towards a healthy approach to food for life.

We look forward to receiving your views on our new menu. Please do not hesitate to speak to your nursery manger if you have specific queries regarding your child's meals or diet at the nursery.



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Meal One	Crisp chicken with Chilli Cheese Mashed potato Carrot with milk Milk	English stuffing and hen Carrot with milk Spinach Milk	Crisp chicken with Chilli Cheese Fruit vegetable sticks Carrot with milk Milk	Roasted finger chicken with grapes Milk Carrot with milk	Roast with hen Mashed fish potato Carrot with milk Milk
Meal Two	Roast beef Mashed potatoes Cabbage Baked apple with custard	Vegetable curry with coconut Bacon rice Fresh cranberry and raisin Custard	Mashed potato with peas Pasta Cauliflower Ice-cream with custard Vegetable cocktail	Fresh chicken Carrots Baked new potatoes Bacon cooked	Roast Biscuits Milk pudding with raisins
Vegetarian Alternative	Beef lasagne			Roast beef	Chicken and potato pie
Meal 3	Salmon fillet with potato Pumpkin roasted with milk Milk	Baked potato with cheese Apple and date triangles Milk	Sandwich platter Milk with fruit yoghurt Milk	Fruit and cereal bars Pasta salad Milk jelly Milk	Polenta Whigpans with fruit and vegetable sticks Chocolate banana Milk

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Unpublished Menu / Week One / January 2011

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Meal One	Roast with hen Milk Carrot with milk Milk	Green chicken and veg cheese Mashed fish Milk	Roasted finger chicken with grapes Milk Carrot with milk	Mashed fish potato Carrot with milk Milk	Roast Biscuits Milk pudding with raisins
Meal Two	Crisp chicken with Chilli Cheese Mashed potato Carrot with milk Milk	English stuffing and hen Carrot with milk Spinach Milk	Crisp chicken with Chilli Cheese Fruit vegetable sticks Carrot with milk Milk	Roasted finger chicken with grapes Milk Carrot with milk	Roast with hen Mashed fish potato Carrot with milk Milk
Vegetarian Alternative	Beef lasagne			Roast beef	Chicken and potato pie
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Parent tips

What are the benefits of having pets?

Children often have a very impulsive natural love for animals, and the relationship can often forge one of their most fond childhood memories. Some **kids**unlimited nurseries have pets, and they are included as part of their educational programme.

What are the advantages of having a pet in a childcare setting?

- Independence - exercising choice, within reason.
- Responsibility - grooming, feeding and exercising.
- Creativity and imagination - make believe and role plays.
- Disposition and attitudes - develop a kind, caring attitude towards both animals and people, helping children to build a strong and significant bond.
- Bereavement - as sad as it sounds, the loss of a pet is a less distressing way for a child to learn how to cope, manage and experience grief and helps to set a basic understanding of what a death means.
- Cognitive Development - babies enjoy the sensory aspects of animals. They see the pretty bird, hear the cat's meow, and pet the soft dog. Toddlers can also learn the names and shapes of different animals, and the noises each one makes.

Are you considering having a family pet?

It is recommended that families conduct some initial research before deciding which animal will be best suited to your family and home. There are serious considerations to take into account when thinking about having a pet in your family. All pets come with responsibilities and you should consider the implications on your family life for the following areas:

- Finance
- Time
- Commitment
- Handling – ensure your chosen pet will be comfortable with being handled
- Holidays
- Space

Ease of care

Things that should be avoided and explained to your child(ren):

- Allowing children to handle pets by themselves.
- Allowing your child to shout at or hit your pet – they must learn to show consideration for the pet by imitating your behaviour.
- Bothering your pet when it is resting, sleeping, eating or playing alone with a toy - explain that pets need 'private' time too.
- Letting animals lick faces - it might be nice to have 'kisses', but when you consider what animals keep clean by licking, it is not a good idea to let them lick your face as well.

Following these few simple rules will enable your child to build a lasting, loving relationship with their pet. A child who learns to care for an animal and treat it kindly and with patience, will have invaluable training in learning how to treat people the same way.

What do the letters EYFS stand for?

The letters stand for Early Years Foundation Stage.

Do all nurseries have to follow EYFS?

Yes. The EYFS was introduced in September 2008 and it is mandatory for all schools and early years providers in Ofsted registered settings attended by young children.

EYFS ensures that whatever setting parents choose, they can be confident that their child will receive a quality experience that supports their development and learning.

The EYFS is based around four themes, each of which is linked to an important principle:

A Unique Child:

Every child is a competent learner from birth who can be resilient, capable, confident and self-assured.

Positive Relationships:

Children learn to be strong and independent from a base of loving and secure relationships with parents and/or a key person.

Enabling Environments:

The environment plays a key role in supporting and extending children's development and learning.

Learning and Development:

Children develop and learn in different ways and at different rates and all areas of Learning and Development are equally important and inter-connected.

How does EYFS benefit my child(ren)?

All practitioners within a nursery setting should look carefully at the children in their care, consider their needs, their interests, and their stages of development and use all of this information to help plan a challenging and enjoyable experience across all six areas of Learning and Development.

Those six areas are:

- Personal, Social & Emotional Development
- Communication, Language & Literacy
- Problem Solving, Reasoning & Numeracy
- Knowledge & Understanding of the World
- Physical Development
- Creative Development

Each of the areas is equally important and depends on each other to support a rounded approach to a child's development. All the areas must be delivered through planned, purposeful play, with a balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Parent tips (continued)



Rewards and recognition - do reward charts work?

Like most aspects of childcare there are arguments for and against reward charts.

The best form of recognition and reward for any child is praise and attention from the significant people in their lives. This is because praise and attention develop a child's sense of self worth, confidence in their abilities and therefore a sense of pleasure and achievement, all of which are more profound and longer lasting than treats, toys or stickers.

Tina Bruce (1996) in Ten Principles of Early Education states:

'Reward systems are very short-term and do not work in the long-term'.

However it is not necessarily true that reward charts and stickers have no value, they do in some instances. They have been found to be most effective when used in one-to-one situations in a child's own home for supporting such things as potty/toilet training, tidying toys etc. In **kidsunlimited** nurseries they are not used as a form of reward unless a parent specifically asks for them. There are many reasons for this. In nursery we have a commitment to supporting children's Personal, Social and Emotional development.

This requirement is outlined in the Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. It states:

'Children must be provided with experiences and support which will help them to develop a positive sense of themselves and others; respect for others, social skills; and a positive disposition to learn. Providers must ensure support for children's emotional well-being to help them to know themselves and what they can do'.

To achieve a positive sense of self we feel it is important that a child does something because the achievement is valued for itself, not for what they may get out of it e.g. a sticker. This applies to both personal achievements such as potty / toilet training or joining with others to tidy their environment, care for toys etc. A meaningful acknowledgement from an adult whether verbally (specific praise) or a physical acknowledgement (a beaming smile, a hug, clapping hands) will demonstrate very clearly the adult approval for what has been achieved and build on self esteem and confidence.

A sticker however is something that is the same to all children and does not acknowledge their individual efforts in achieving a goal or indeed making a choice. Take an example of two children, one of whom has helped tidy a role play area for the first time and one who always helps to tidy. They have both done very well but the effort for the first child is much greater than the second, a sticker does not acknowledge their personal achievement, whereas praise will.

Finally, use of reward charts can be inconsistent in a nursery setting, due to many different factors. This in itself will reduce their effectiveness, whereas praise from an adult, because of its personal nature and immediacy, is much more likely to be consistent and meaningful.

'Quality education is about three things: the child, the context in which learning takes place, and the knowledge and understanding which the child develops and learns'

(Ten principles of early childhood education - Bruce 1996).

Don't miss out

In the future we'd like to send out electronic versions of our newsletter to ensure you always receive your copy. Please email your address to us at marketing@kidsunlimited.co.uk, telling us your child's name and nursery or fill in the form below and return to your nursery.

Name:

Nursery:

Child's name:

Email address: