

St Swithin Street Newsletter Term 1 - August 2026

Welcome to Our Nursery Newsletter!

We hope you and your little ones are settling into the new term with excitement and joy. Welcome to all the new families who have joined us and those due to join us soon. Thank you and farewell to all the families and children who have now moved on to school—it has been a pleasure caring for your children. This term promises to be full of fun, learning, and celebrations as we come together as a nursery community. Here's a peek at what's been happening and what's to come this term!

Training

Caitlin McKechnie has successfully completed her SVQ 3 with Cairn Training. She has been working very hard and is already linking her learning to her everyday practice.

Laura Nicholson and Rachel Johnston have commenced their Level 4 Qualification with Cairn Training, and both staff members are excited for the new learning opportunities this will bring to their roles.

Staff continue to work their way through essential core training and take their learning into practice.

Staff Updates

We will be very sad to say goodbye to Jessica and Abi in the coming weeks. Both have been valued members of our team for the past couple of years and have continued to grow professionally during their time with us. We are excited for them as they move into promoted positions at our sister nursery, and we know they will keep in touch and visit us.

We are delighted to share that Laura Nicholson has been promoted to 2–3 Room Leader and will begin her new role on Monday 21st September. Laura has excelled throughout her time with us and is ready to take the next step in her childcare career. We are very excited to support all the staff in their next chapter.

Charity of the Year

We're thrilled to continue to raise money for our charity of the year at 'Friends of the Neonatal Unit', a charity that supports the Neonatal Unit Aberdeen Maternity hospital which cares for premature and sick babies. Charitable support for neonatal care in Aberdeen pre-dates the Neonatal Unit itself. FOTNU became part of the Archie Foundation family in 2016, raising funds for life saving equipment, staff training and direct family support such as accommodation and travel costs for babies born too soon or sick across the North of Scotland. They are now the leading charity for the new Baird Family Neonatal Hospital. The hospital is still under construction, and will include cutting edge research, drawing together several services which will include maternity, gynaecology, and neonatal.

So far, we have raised £220 from our Breakfast Roll Week, £382.05 from our Readathon sponsorship, £41.95 from our Easter Egg Competition, World cup sweepstake £160, Sports day Stalls £435, Sports Day Sponsorship £262, Readathon Late Sponsorship £20, bringing our total to **£1521!!** so a huge thank you for all your donations.

Throughout the year, we'll be organising activities to raise funds and awareness for this wonderful cause. Feel free to chat with staff about ways you can support, from bake sales to sponsored events, every contribution makes a difference!

Trips

This term our 3–5 group had a wonderful trip to Brechin Castle Centre, where the children enjoyed exploring the outdoor country park, including the fairy trail, play areas, sandpit, climbing structures and imaginative play spaces. The visit offered rich opportunities for learning beyond the nursery environment, supporting the children's confidence, independence and social skills as they travelled together, followed safety rules and shared new experiences with their



peers. The children developed their gross motor skills through climbing, balancing, running and active play, while the natural surroundings encouraged curiosity, observation and discussion about the world around them. Experiences such as these help children build resilience, practise problem-solving, extend their language through conversation and make meaningful connections between play, nature and real-life learning.



Trips can be a fantastic way to learn outside of the nursery and gives the children valuable experiences with their peers. As always, we create risk assessments along with the children, to allow them to navigate the expected risks that are involved when leaving the nursery, following the SIMOA rules when out and about and we often take our lovely purple elephant with us to remind us how to travel safely.

We have had several trips to the library and around the local community with our Toddler and Baby rooms, where the children have experienced traveling by bus, visiting local shops and using the amenities.



Pre-school and Toddlers have also had many adventurous trips to the local 'Wee Green Space' areas and have loved the outdoor learning opportunities.



Weather-Appropriate Clothing

As the days get cooler, please ensure your child comes dressed for autumnal fun! We want everyone to stay safe and comfortable while enjoying the change in seasons. If each child can have a hat and gloves to keep at nursery alongside waterproof trousers, this would be very appreciated.

Improvement Plans

Our 2025-2026 Improvement plans are now coming to an end. There have been many improvements through the academic year, and we are proud to have worked together alongside the families to ensure our visions came to light.

Thank you to all the families and staff that have completed a questionnaire. We are collating all the information and will use this to support our Improvement Plans for 2026-2027. So far it is likely that we will be covering;

1. Guidance of the Term – this is essentially for the staff to be supported through documentation and implementing the guidance into everyday nursery life.
2. Zoning within the playrooms – supporting staff to continue to take ownership of playroom areas and bring children's interests to life through engaging learning spaces.
3. Quality Assurance – Introducing a new Quality Assurance System for the leadership of the nursery, ensuring all staff are supported through their roles.

Learning Experiences throughout the Nursery

World Cup

All the children across the nursery, from our youngest babies to our pre-schoolers, enjoyed celebrating the World Cup as a wonderful celebration of the world. Through play, songs, stories and group activities, the children explored different countries, flags, languages and cultures, helping them to develop curiosity, respect and awareness of the wider world around them. Football-themed games also gave the children opportunities to learn simple rules, take turns, work as part of a team and practise their listening and coordination skills. It was lovely to see the children come together, share in the excitement and celebrate the many people, places and traditions that make our world so special.



Babies Activities/ Topics

Spring

In the 0-2 room, the children have been learning all about spring through simple, hands-on experiences, including planting seeds and helping to care for them as they grow. These activities have supported the children to begin developing an awareness of living things, noticing changes, exploring textures and taking part in gentle care routines such as watering and observing the plants. This interest in growth and care helped to create a lovely topic around babies, where the children learned about how we care for



babies through role play, stories, songs and nurturing activities. The experiences supported early language, curiosity, kindness and understanding as the children explored how living things, including plants, animals and people, need care to grow and thrive.

Colours

The 0–2 room have also been exploring colours through simple, playful activities, books and songs. The children have enjoyed naming and noticing different colours during everyday play, using resources, sensory experiences and creative activities to help extend their understanding. Stories and songs have supported early language development, while colour matching, sorting and looking for colours in the environment have encouraged curiosity and helped the children make meaningful links between their learning and play.



Books and Song Time



The 0–2 room have been loving book and song time, enjoying familiar stories, rhymes and songs as part of their daily routines.

We also had a lovely visit from Book Bug to the nursery, which helped to further support the babies' growing interest in books, songs and rhymes. The children enjoyed joining in with familiar songs, listening to stories and exploring the rhythm and repetition of language in a fun and engaging way. This special visit encouraged early communication, listening skills and a love of stories, while giving the babies another meaningful opportunity to enjoy shared reading and song time together.



Toddler Activities/ Topics

Nature



Our Toddlers have been busy exploring nature through planting and growing their own sunflowers, helping them to learn about caring for plants by watering them, and then patiently waiting and noticing changes over time. The children have also enjoyed looking after the caterpillars and observing the butterfly lifecycle, giving them opportunities to use simple language to describe what they could see, ask questions and develop their curiosity about living things. They also created a bug hotel and helped care for the minibeasts in the garden, learning to be gentle, respectful and curious when exploring small creatures in their natural environment. These experiences are especially valuable for the Toddler group as they support early science skills, responsibility, patience, fine motor development and a growing understanding of how we care for nature, plants and the world around us.



People who Help Us

The Toddlers have enjoyed learning about people who help us, looking at doctors, nurses, firefighters, police officers, dentists, postal workers and shop workers. Through stories, role play and simple discussions, the children have been developing their understanding of different jobs, how people help keep us safe and well, and how we can ask for help when we need it. This topic also gave the children opportunities to create lots of lovely art and craft work, including making emergency vehicles, designing badges, exploring uniforms and using mark making, paint, glue and collage materials to represent the people and places they had been learning about. These experiences support early language, imagination, social development and confidence in a fun and meaningful way. We even got to explore some of Andrena's utensils from the kitchen and wore her lovely hair nets!



Space Topic

The 2–3-year group have enjoyed exploring an exciting Space topic, learning about our world, the planets and the wider world around us. Through books, stories and simple research, the children

developed their curiosity as they looked at pictures of the Earth, the Moon, stars and different planets, sharing what they noticed and asking questions along the way. Art and craft activities gave them opportunities to express their ideas creatively, using paint, collage and mark making to create planets, rockets and starry skies. These experiences supported early language, imagination, fine motor skills and an awareness of



the world beyond nursery, helping the children make meaningful connections through play, creativity and discovery.

Pre-school Activities/ Topics

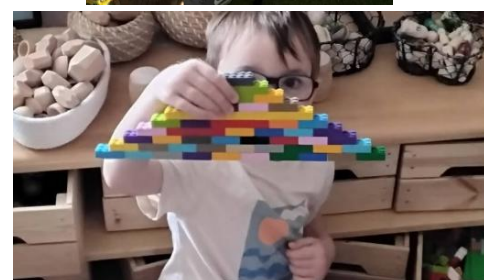
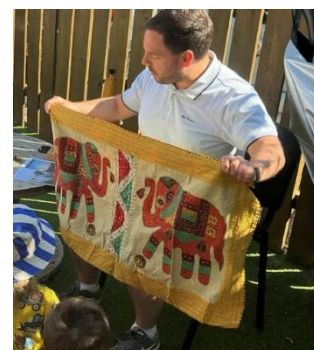
Spring

Our 3–5 room have been enjoying hands-on learning experiences linked to springtime, exploring changes in the natural world through animals, plants and weather. The children have been planting seeds, caring for growing plants, observing seasonal changes outdoors and talking about what plants need to grow. They have also been learning about animals and new life in spring, helping to build curiosity, vocabulary and an understanding of the world around them. Weather discussions and outdoor play have encouraged the children to notice sunshine, rain, wind and changing temperatures, supporting their observational skills while making meaningful connections through real-life experiences. Throughout the topic, there have been lots of valuable numeracy opportunities, helping the children develop early mathematics skills within the Curriculum for Excellence. The children have been counting seeds, comparing plant heights, sorting natural materials, discussing size and shape, measuring growth over time and using mathematical language such as more, less, taller, shorter, full and empty during their play and investigations.



7 Wonders of the World

Following on from the children's interest in the World Cup and learning about different countries, the 3–5 room began exploring the 7 Wonders of the World. This supported lots of curiosity, discussion and discovery as the children looked at amazing landmarks, talked about where they are in the world and shared their own ideas and questions. The children used books, pictures, maps and creative activities to extend their learning, helping them build an awareness of different places, cultures and environments. They also extended their use of technology to support their investigations, using digital resources to look more closely at the wonders of the world, explore images, compare landmarks and ask further questions about what they discovered. We were also very lucky to welcome a parent into nursery who shared stories and showed us some interesting items from his trip to India, giving the children a meaningful real-life connection to their learning and



encouraging them to ask questions, listen carefully and celebrate the wider world around us.

School Transition

As part of supporting the children to get ready for school, the 3–5 room have been taking part in a range of transition experiences to help build confidence, independence and familiarity with school routines. The children have enjoyed visits from schoolteachers, giving them opportunities to ask questions, share their thoughts and begin making connections with new adults they may meet as they move on to Primary 1. We have also provided school dressing-up opportunities, encouraging the children to explore uniforms, school bags and classroom-style role play in a fun and relaxed way. Homework-style tasks have supported the children to practise listening, responsibility, early literacy and numeracy skills at home and in nursery, helping to strengthen the link between families, nursery and school.

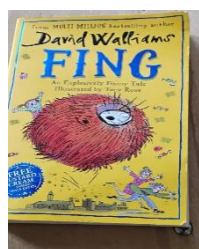


The children gave a fantastic performance at their Graduation, filling the garden with smiles, confidence and pride. It was wonderful to see how much they have grown throughout their time at nursery, as they sang, took part, and celebrated this special milestone together. Their performance was a lovely way to mark the end of their



nursery journey, and gave families and staff a very special moment to remember as the children prepare for their exciting move on to school

Other exciting Pre-school Moments



The pre-school children have also been extending their literacy experiences through the introduction of chapter books, and they are loving the opportunity to engage with longer stories over time. This has encouraged the children to listen carefully, recall key events, discuss characters and predict what might happen next, helping to build their attention, imagination and early comprehension skills.



They have also had opportunities to learn to sew using hessian and thread, developing their fine motor control, concentration and perseverance as they created their own pieces. The children



have shown great pride in their finished creations, celebrating their new skills and sharing their work with others.

Dates for the Diary

Friday 30th October 5:30pm-7pm – Halloween Extravaganza Family Fun Day

W/C 16/11/26 and 23/11/26 – Parent Interviews

Tuesday 8th December – Panto for pre-school children (those going to school August 2027)

Wednesday 9th December – Christmas Lunch

Thursday 10th December – Christmas Parties for all children

Tuesday 22nd December 6pm – Nursery closes for Christmas and re-opens again on Wednesday the 6th of January at 7.30pm

- Nativity and other trips TBC

Kind Regards

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