

FAMILY NEWS

WINTER 2024



Dear Parents and Carers,

As we wrap up an exciting few months at Jane's Lane, I'd like to reflect on the wonderful activities and experiences we've shared recently.

Our celebrations started with some spooky fun! Halloween was filled with laughter and excitement as the children dressed in their favourite costumes explored sensory play with pumpkins and danced to cheerful Halloween tunes. The week's highlight was our Pumpkin Painting Party with families, where we came together as a community to enjoy the festive spirit.

We love learning about the diverse festivals celebrated around the world. This month, we embraced Diwali's vibrant colours and joy, the Festival of Lights. The children, from our babies to preschoolers, decorated divas, created colourful rangoli patterns and explored the themes of kindness, light, and togetherness. The nursery was filled with creativity and bright smiles!

We also took time to mark Remembrance Day gently and age-appropriately. The children crafted paper poppies and listened to peaceful stories about kindness, bravery, and gratitude. These thoughtful activities helped them understand the importance of remembering and appreciating those who have made sacrifices for us.

We're thrilled to share some exciting news about our outdoor space. A brand-new mud kitchen has been added to our garden! The children have been delighted by this addition, using their imaginations to create "mud pies," "leaf soups," and even experimenting with leftover pumpkins to make magical potions. This hands-on play has been fantastic for their sensory development, creativity, and teamwork as they collaborated in their new outdoor kitchen.

Thank you for your continued support and for joining our nursery community. It has been a joy watching your children learn, play, and grow together over the past few weeks. We look forward to many more exciting experiences in the weeks to come!

Lucy

Dates for your diary

Holidays and Closures:

- December 25th- January 1st Nursery is closed

Other:

- 7th December - Join us for our Christmas Fayre Open Day!

Don't forget to follow our Social Media:

 [/littleexplorersnurseryandpreschool](https://www.facebook.com/littleexplorersnurseryandpreschool)



The Baby Snug

These past months have been filled with festive, fun, and engaging activities that brought plenty of smiles and giggles from our babies. Our nursery was transformed into a colourful, not-so-spooky space where the babies explored Halloween-themed sensory play. They had a great time diving into the pumpkins we provided and decorating them with various paints. These activities sparked their curiosity while helping to develop their fine motor skills and sensory awareness.

The babies also enjoyed dressing up in adorable costumes and participating in a gentle Halloween pumpkin painting event. Seeing them dressed as cute pumpkins and little superheroes was beautiful, spreading joy with every giggle and clap! Families joined in the fun, making the event even more special.

Continue at home

Set up a painting station with washable paints. You can give your baby a small, soft brush or let them explore with their hands. Babies can enjoy feeling the textures, and watching the colours mix will stimulate their sensory development.

The Toddler Den

These past few weeks, we have gently introduced the concepts of remembrance and gratitude in ways that are both age-appropriate and meaningful for our little ones. Through storytelling and simple discussions, the children learned about kindness, bravery, and the importance of remembering those who help keep us safe.

We read beautifully illustrated books that conveyed themes of peace, friendship, and caring for one another, which sparked thoughtful conversations among the children. Our creative sessions were filled with bright colours as the toddlers made their poppy crafts using pompoms, tissue paper, and lolly sticks. These poppies are now proudly displayed in our nursery, serving as a beautiful reminder of our love and appreciation.

We also took a quiet moment outdoors, where the children participated in a gentle circle time, listening to the sounds of nature and appreciating the peace around us. This simple activity helped the children understand the importance of remembering and being thankful in their special way.

Continue at home

Create a gratitude tree. Use a branch or twigs and place it in a pot. Cut out leaf shapes from coloured paper and write or draw something you and each family member are thankful for on each leaf. Add a new leaf each day.

The Pre-School Study

We are excited to share the beautiful experiences our preschoolers had while celebrating Diwali at the nursery! Our pre-school study has been filled with vibrant colours, festive music, and joyful learning as the children immersed themselves in activities centred around this special festival.

Through engaging stories and interactive discussions, the children explored the significance of Diwali. They learned about the festival of lights, its traditions, and the values of gratitude, kindness, and togetherness that it celebrates.

In our creative sessions, the children made their own diva lamps, which they proudly took home to share with their families. They also enjoyed making colourful rangoli patterns using sand and coloured rice, which allowed them to explore their creativity while developing fine motor skills.

Our cooking club added to the festivities with delicious Diwali-inspired treats! The children enjoyed making smoothies and brownies and learning new ingredients and flavours.

Continue at home

Involve your child in the kitchen by making simple Diwali-inspired snacks, such as smoothies. You can use fruits like mango, banana, and berries, along with a bit of yogurt or coconut milk for a creamy base. Let your child choose and add the fruits into the blender, helping them practice measuring and pouring.

Recipe of the Month

SPICED APPLE CAKE

INGREDIENTS:

- Oil
- 750g Bramley cooking apples, cored and thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 250g self-raising flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 2 large eggs
- 50g demerara sugar
- 200ml semi-skimmed milk
- 100ml sunflower oil



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/Fan 170°C/Gas 5, then line a 23cm spring clip cake tin with baking parchment. Mist the base and sides with oil.
2. Put the apple slices in a bowl and toss with the lemon juice and zest.
3. Mix the flour, baking powder, cinnamon and spice in a large mixing bowl.
4. In a separate bowl, whisk the eggs with the 50g of sugar, the milk and sunflower oil.
5. Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients, stirring lightly until combined – use the whisk to break up any stubborn lumps.
6. Toss the lemony apples through the cake batter until evenly mixed and pour the mixture into the prepared tin.
7. Bake the cake in the centre of the oven for 1 hour until it is well risen and golden on top. Test the cake by inserting a skewer into the centre – it should slide easily through the apples in the middle and come out clean.
8. Leave the cake to cool for 10 minutes before removing it from the tin and carefully peeling off the baking parchment.

Recent Training

Over the last three months, our Manager, Lucy, has started her special needs co-ordinator training and is enjoying learning about the local offer available to our parents, which she is very excited to share with our families soon. Lucy has also undergone her first aid training and ensures that the team practices the latest guidance to keep our babies, children, and staff safe.

Our new Deputy, Lily, has recently completed her Designated Safeguarding Training. This will develop our team's knowledge as she works closely with our practitioners, further developing our safeguarding practice.

Our baby room practitioner, Maddy, has been continuing her training by working closely alongside an expert baby room leader from our nursery family.

Jo, our Chef, has also completed her safeguarding refresher course to ensure her knowledge is current and reflects the latest guidance and policies.

Colleague Spotlight

We would like to give a shoutout to Jenny, a new member of our team who is working with our Toddlers. She has really blossomed into her role and is a great asset to our team by bringing all of her valuable knowledge and experience to our team. Well done, Jenny!

