

Oakengates Nursery School

Newsletter



19 December 2025. Autumn Term: Week 15

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we come to the end of a busy and exciting year, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on some of our highlights:

- A New Chapter: In February, we moved into our wonderful new building, creating an even better environment for your children to learn and thrive.
- Celebrating Success: Our recent Ofsted inspections were successful, recognising the hard work and dedication of our team.
- Growing Together: This year, we welcomed a new member of staff who has already made a fantastic contribution to our nursery community.

Thank you for your continued support throughout the year. We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We look forward to seeing you and your children in January for another exciting year of learning and fun.

Kind Regards,

Hannah Firmstone

Early Years Lead & SENCo

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY CLUB

Holiday Club Fun at Oakengates Nursery School!

We have an exciting two days before Christmas planned for our Holiday Club, filled with festive activities and creativity!



Stories We'll Enjoy:

The Night Before Christmas

What the Ladybird Heard at Christmas

Creative Crafts:

Christmas Angels

Baubles and Stars

Christmas Puddings

Reindeers



Festive Extras:

Christmas colouring, stencils, and special stampers

Outdoor fun with water and glitter painting

Playing What's the Time, Santa?

Indoor Activities:

Dance to Christmas music and show off your groovy moves

Stretch and relax with Elf Yoga

Sensory play with tinsel, baubles, woolly snowballs, and building a snowman

Games Galore:

Christmas Bingo and Lotto – listen out for those big shouts of “Bingo!”



We can't wait to celebrate the festive season together and make magical memories!



NEW YEAR HOLIDAY CLUB



January Fun at Oakengates Nursery School!

Friday 2nd January – National Science Fiction Day

We'll celebrate with lots of space-themed fun:

Stories We'll Enjoy:

Aliens Love Underpants

Creative Crafts:

Design a pair of pants for an alien and make aliens out of playdough

Outdoor Adventures:

Planet hopping and walking in space

Physical Fun:

Cosmic Kids Yoga in Space

Games:

Monster Bingo



Monday 5th January – Creative Masterpieces Day

Stories We'll Enjoy:

There's a Dinosaur in Your Book – an interactive story where children help along the way

Creative Crafts:

Children will create their own masterpiece using resources of their choice

Outdoor Adventures:

Cross the midline with Jack Hartmann

Sensory Play:

Get messy with shampoo, conditioner, and shaving foam in our sensory tray



WINTER WEATHER PLANNING



As we head towards the colder months and the weather begins to change, we want to reassure all families that we have clear plans in place to keep everyone safe.

Our caretaker Dillon will be on site early each morning and during icy or snowy conditions, making it a priority to clear and grit a safe path for children, families and staff to enter and exit the school and nursery. Keeping access routes safe is our first step in ensuring a smooth and secure start to the day.

Please also remember that we have a Nursery Closure Information page on our website. This outlines how we will communicate any closures or adjustments to the school day and is kept updated throughout the winter season. We encourage all parents and carers to familiarise themselves with this page so you know exactly where to look should any urgent announcements be required.

<https://www.oakengatesnurseryschool.co.uk/parents-area/useful-information/extraordinary-school-and-nursery-closure>

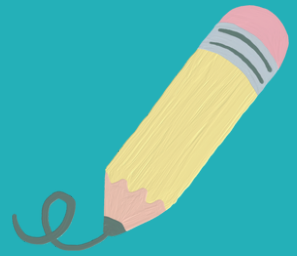
Thank you for your continued support in helping us keep our nursery community safe and informed.

Stay warm and take care!





THE BEST START IN LIFE



See what support
you could get



Juggling work, family life, and childcare can feel daunting at times. But when you know your child is happy, nurtured, and thriving in the care of dedicated professionals, everything feels a little easier. If you're an eligible working parent, you can get 30 hours childcare for your child from the term after they turn 9 months old up to school age.

The deadline to apply for your childcare code is 31 December to start using your childcare hours from 1 January.

Use the link below to check if you are eligible:

<https://beststartinlife.gov.uk/eligibility-checker/>

SEND NEWS

Dear Parent Carers,

Welcome to the December edition of our SEND Family Newsletter.

To support over the Christmas period we have developed a **Neurodiversity (ND)** friendly Christmas guide. We have also included an **update on ND in Telford and Wrekin** outlining some recent initiatives that offer local advice and support.

There is lots of useful advice and guidance for **mental health support** across all ages with the launch of a new 24/7 text service for people living in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. We've included a reminder about our 18-25yrs Calm Cafes and also Kooth mental health support for ages 11-19yrs.

We'd like to highlight our **Family Hubs** 0-2yrs offer, which continues to expand, bringing more accessible and inclusive support and activities for SEND families across Telford and Wrekin. This works alongside the wider and growing, '**Family Hubs Community Offer**' making it easier to access inclusive support and practical advice.

We have reattached the **PODS annual survey**, which gathers experiences of education, health, social care, and community services from SEND families. Your feedback is invaluable in guiding local services and ensuring your voices are heard. We hope you can take a few moments to share your views.

Thank you for staying connected with us; we look forward to continuing to support you and your family into the New Year.

Warm regards,
Laura Goodfellow
Service Delivery Manager for SEND

The latest **SEND newsletter** is now available. Click on the link below to access the page.

[SEND Family Newsletter - December 2025](#)

Short Breaks Newsletter

News, Updates and Activities for Children with Disabilities and their Families in Telford



November 2025

Festive Gardens SEND Evening

Step into the magic of the North Pole as the Chelsea and Maxell Gardens are transformed with sparkling lights, shimmering displays, and enchanting festive projections, creating a truly frosty wonderland.

Follow the trail and discover the charm of Santa's snowy homeland from twinkling ice caverns and candy cane forests to heart warming Christmas scenes brought to life with music, light, and a touch of festive magic. Keep your eyes peeled for cheeky elves, frosty friends, and perhaps even a glimpse of Santa himself.

Complete your North Pole adventure with a visit to the Made in Telford Christmas Market, ice skating at Telford Ice Rink, and some festive late night shopping at Telford Centre.

The trail is step free but there are gradual hills and mixed terrain so please bare this in mind if bringing a pushchair or if there is anyone with mobility issues in your party.

There is a SEND Friendly night on Thursday 18th December. You can find out more online at: www.ticketstelford.com/whats-on/family/festive-gardens-2025/5367/



Hoo Zoo Christmas SEND Session

Light up your winter with the Father Christmas Experience at Hoo Zoo & Dinosaur World. What to expect:

- Help the elves with a festive craft
- Travel through our Winter Wonderland and meet Father Christmas
- Every child receives a small gift
- Join Mrs Claus and the Head Elf for a singalong and storytime

Full-day admission to all animals and dinosaurs included (10am–6pm).

Prefer a calmer visit? Quiet Sessions every Wednesday & Thursday — no singalong and reduced noise.

You can find out more online at: www.hoo-zoo.com/event/santa-mrs-claus-festive-fun/

SEND Activities in the Community

Aside from iCan2, there are so many SEND activities in Telford and surrounding areas, many of which do not have specific eligibility criteria.

No matter what your child is interested in, it is likely that there is the opportunity for them to take part locally.

You can view a range of these activities on our Local Offer at: www.telfordsend.org.uk/homepage/16/activities_and_events

If you have any queries about the activities, please contact the activity provider directly.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY



**Congratulations
to
Baby Room**

for winning this week's Attendance Award with:

97% attendance.

**Establishing good attendance habits is so important for
school readiness.**





**Coming to nursery every day helps children build routines,
develop friendships, and make the most of every learning
opportunity.**

**Thank you for supporting your child's attendance – it really
makes a difference!**



KEY DATES



Date	Event
Friday 19 th December	End of the autumn term for term time children
Monday 22 nd - Tuesday 23 rd December	 Holiday Club
Wednesday 24 th December - Thursday 1 st January	Nursery is closed
Friday 2 nd January	 Holiday Club
Monday 5 th January	 Holiday Club
Tuesday 6 th January	Start of the Spring Term
Friday 9 th January	 Farm On Wheels Visit

SOCIAL MEDIA



Click on the image to access our facebook page.

Admin Office Opening Hours



The office operates from Monday to Thursday, with opening hours from 7:30 AM to 3:45 PM.

On Fridays, the office closes earlier, at 1:00 PM. Should you need assistance or have any inquiries outside of these hours, you can call the out-of-hours phone on **07340 751171**.

This ensures that support or urgent matters can be attended to even when the office is closed.

The office will now be closed during the Christmas holidays and re-open on Tuesday 6th January.





FAMILY SUPPORT



Being a parent is one of the most difficult tasks there is; most families need support at times to help their children and young people thrive, and our ambition is for every family in our borough to receive the right help and the right time, with our community offer having a particular focus on providing advice and assistance at the earliest possible stage as and when challenges arise.

Our Family Hubs offer has expanded, and we are pleased to share the latest developments and opportunities available to families.

We offer daily drop-in sessions across Telford where families can access support without the need for referrals or pre-booked appointments. Parents and carers are very welcome to attend if they are looking for information, advice, support or guidance around any aspect of family life. Should our friendly practitioners not have an immediate answer, we will follow up with them promptly.

The drop-in locations and times are as follows:

Monday: Dawley Town Hall, 10:00am – 12:00noon

Tuesday: Silver Birch Family Hub, Sutton Hill / Hub on the Hill (alternate weeks) 10:00am – 12:00noon (term time)

Wednesday: Southwater Library (Children's Section), 09:30am – 12:00noon

Thursday: Arlestone Community Centre, Wellington, 10:00am – 12:00noon
The Hub, Newport, 10:00am – 12:00noon

Friday: Donnington Community Hub (Damson Family Hub), 9:30am – 11:30am



FAMILY SUPPORT



Safer sleep for babies

the
lullaby
trust

Things you can do



Always place your baby on their back to sleep



Keep your baby smoke free during pregnancy and after birth



Breastfeed your baby if possible



Place your baby to sleep in a separate cot or Moses basket in the same room as you for the first six months



Use a firm, flat, waterproof mattress in good condition

Things to avoid



Never sleep on a sofa or in an armchair with your baby



Don't sleep in the same bed as your baby if you smoke, drink or take drugs or if your baby was born prematurely or was of low birth weight



Avoid letting your baby get too hot
Don't cover your baby's face or head while sleeping or use loose bedding

Follow the advice for every sleep, day and night

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden and unexpected death of a baby for no obvious reason. Although we don't yet know how to completely prevent SIDS, we do know that following this advice significantly lowers the risk of it happening.

Talk to your midwife or health visitor if you have any questions or concerns, or contact us

☎ 020 7802 3200
✉ info@lullabytrust.org.uk
🌐 lullabytrust.org.uk



This leaflet was produced by The Lullaby Trust. The information was last updated in October 2024. Registered charity no. 262291. Company registration no. 01550683.



FAMILY SUPPORT



Button batteries can badly hurt or kill a small child if they swallow one



Look

around your home for button batteries. Think toys, lights, remote controls and more.



Check

for products with loose backs and button batteries that have dropped out.



Store

button batteries in a safe place, up high and out of your child's reach.



Dispose

of used button batteries as soon as you can. They are still unsafe.



Act

If you think your child may have swallowed a button battery, go straight to A&E or call an ambulance.



capt.org.uk

[@ChildAccidentPreventionTrust](https://www.facebook.com/ChildAccidentPreventionTrust)

[@capt_charity](https://www.instagram.com/capt_charity)

child accident
prevention trust

SAFE SLEEPING: TOP TIPS FOR NURSERIES

The impact of safe sleeping guidance is well documented. The Back to Sleep campaign, for example, was the first major initiative to inform parents and carers about placing babies on their backs to sleep; its launch in 1991 contributed to an 83% reduction in cases of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The Lullaby Trust reports, however, that SIDS continues to claim the lives of more than 160 babies in the UK each year. With an increasing number of babies in formal childcare, it's vital that early years professionals understand and adhere to safe sleeping guidelines.

THE STARTING POSITION

Place babies on their back with their feet towards the bottom of the cot ('feet to foot') and restore them to this position if they roll onto their stomach. Children older than one year who can confidently roll onto their tummy or side can be allowed to do so – but should still be laid on their back to begin with.

INSIDE THE COT

Use lightweight, breathable blankets instead of duvets or weighted blankets. Sleeping bags must be the right size, so babies can't slip down inside. Don't cover faces, tuck bedding in or wrap it around them above the shoulders. Remove cot bumpers and extra items like pillows. Check comforters or soft toys for cords or loose parts.

HAVE A SAFE SLEEP POLICY

Introduce a 'safe sleep policy' in your setting and make it part of new staff's induction. Include information on safe sleep guidelines; hygiene; correct procedures; and guidance on following babies' sleep routines from home.

SLEEP POLICY

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

Sleep routines and practices may be a concern for some parents whose children are new to nursery. Share your sleep policy with them when discussing their routine at home during the settling-in period. The NHS' and the Lullaby Trust's guidance on safe sleeping may also be helpful to parents.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE

Babies often dribble during sleep, so consider giving each child their own bedding to maintain good hygiene and avoid cross contamination of any illnesses. Wash bedding and mattress toppers regularly. Wipe down waterproof mattresses with a child-safe cleaning or sterilising solution.

LAYING NOT SITTING

Avoid putting babies to sleep in an upright position, like a bouncer or car seat. Some buggies can be reclined to allow the baby to lie flat – but while the straps stop them falling out, they could also increase the risk of SIDS. If a baby falls asleep in a bouncer or buggy, move them to a cot or mattress so they're flat on their back again.

THE SLEEP ENVIRONMENT

Mattresses must be in excellent condition and the proper size for the cot. If using sleep mats, consider where to put them: not close to doors or radiators, or anywhere staff or children might step on or trip over a sleeping baby. Complete regular risk assessments of cots, mattresses and sleep areas to ensure safety standards are being maintained.

DUMMIES AND BOTTLES

Using dummies while sleeping may reduce the risk of SIDS – but always check with parents before offering a child a dummy. If the baby does sleep with a dummy, avoid using clips or chains as these pose a strangulation risk. Never allow a child to fall asleep with a bottle in their mouth.

REVIEW REGULARLY

Early years professionals must remain up to date with the latest safe sleeping guidance and research. Training staff, refreshing your own knowledge of safe sleep practices and frequently reviewing your setting's policies, procedures and risk assessments will help to maintain a safe environment.

FREQUENT CHECKS

Check each sleeping baby every 10–15 minutes to ensure they're breathing and not tangled in bedding. When babies are confirmed to be sleeping safely, document the time of the check and which staff member carried it out.

TEMPERATURE

The risk of SIDS is higher if babies get too hot: use a thermometer to help you maintain a safe temperature of 16–20°C. If using fans to cool a room, never point one directly at a baby. If it's too cold, use an extra layer of bedding instead of a hat, which may impede a baby's ability to regulate their temperature.

Meet Our Expert

LEYF (London Early Years Foundation) was formed as Westminster Health Society in 1903, a time of poverty and shockingly high infant mortality. Pre-dating the NHS, it promoted child welfare and family health – breaking new ground by offering professional childcare training, outreach and home visits, drop-in sessions and parenting classes.



The National College

Source: <https://www.lullabytrust.org.uk> | <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/caring-for-a-newborn/reduce-the-risk-of-sudden-infant-death-syndrome/> | https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1170108/EYFS_framework_from_September_2023.pdf



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Top Tips for Nurseries on Understanding EYFS REFORMS ON FOOD SAFETY AND NUTRITION

The upcoming EYFS reforms, set to take effect in September 2025, will introduce significant changes to food safety practices in early years settings. The reforms impact food handling, staff training, and allergen management, as well as nutritional requirements and menu development. As with all aspects of the EYFS, these changes are to ensure children's health and safety – but what do they mean for your setting?

SAFER EATING



The reforms introduce new requirements for safer eating practices. It's advisable to address each area of food safety in your setting's policies and demonstrate that appropriate actions have been taken for each. Some changes directly affect your kitchen, while others focus on mealtime supervision and staff training, such as on allergens, allergies and nutrition.

ALLERGY MANAGEMENT



The proposed changes enhance allergy and anaphylaxis management in early years settings, requiring robust policies that identify children with allergies and address their needs. Staff training is essential to recognise allergic reactions and anaphylaxis – it should also cover emergency responses and adrenaline auto-injector (AAI) use. Anaphylaxis UK advocates for a comprehensive allergy awareness approach across the entire setting, promoting safety for all children.

INDIVIDUAL HEALTHCARE PLANS



As part of the reforms, settings will be required to have an individual healthcare plan (IHP) for each child with a known allergy. IHPs must clearly outline the child's specific allergen(s), their allergy symptoms, an emergency response plan, and their emergency contacts.

EMERGENCY PREPARATION



Settings should maintain spare AAIs for emergencies and conduct regular drills to review their procedures. Continuous staff training is vital, ensuring they can recognise anaphylaxis symptoms and properly administer AAIs. Settings may choose any government-approved training body that meets the standards for paediatric first aid, as there's no mandatory provider. This flexibility allows for tailored training that suits each setting's particular needs.

INTRODUCTION OF SOLID FOODS



The reforms place greater focus on the introduction and preparation of solid foods, requiring an individualised approach based on each child's developmental stage rather than just their age. Ongoing discussions with parents are crucial to understanding each child's readiness for solid foods, keeping both parties informed about the types of food at home and in the setting.

CHOKING PREVENTION MEASURES



Children must always be within sight and earshot of staff when eating in order to prevent choking incidents. Staff should monitor children for signs of distress and worrisome eating habits, ensuring they document any choking incidents to help them recognise patterns. A valid paediatric first aid certificate is a requirement for adequate meal supervision. Additionally, settings must follow specific kitchen safety practices to minimise choking risks and manage allergens effectively.

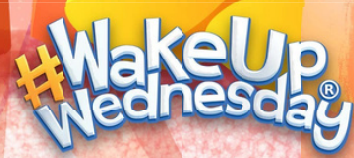
NUTRITIONAL AWARENESS



The changes to early years nutrition help settings understand the importance of menu planning for childhood development. Menus should support development, feature food items that enhance brain function and immunity, and include a colourful, balanced variety of foods. The reforms prioritise cultural relevance and require snacks that provide 10% of a child's daily energy needs. The changes also address health trends, choking awareness, allergy management, and the long-term impact of nutrition on children's development.

Meet Our Expert

Louise Mercieca is a nutritional therapist and award-winning author dedicated to educating people on the link between food and health. As an early years nutrition consultant, she helps nurseries and catering providers with menu development and staff training on nutrition for child development.



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Source: <https://www.tosf.org.uk/>

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FAMILY SUPPORT



**Check out the Better Health,
Healthier families website!**



This useful website has food facts,
recipes, activities and information of
children's weight.

**[HTTPS://WWW.NHS.UK/HEALTHIER-
FAMILIES/](https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/)**

Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin
Dental Advice Line

Do you have an
urgent dental
problem or need
dental advice?

Are you looking
for an NHS
dentist for
routine care?

Monday to Friday
0800-2100

01743 237916

Shropshire Community Health **NHS**

**Telford Public Health Nursing
Service
Healthy you, Healthy Future**

Telephone Number
0333 358 3328

Text 07520 619 053

School nurse 07520 619 051

Follow on twitter

@ShropPHNurse

Open 9am-4.30pm
excluding bank holidays



Parents Opening Doors
'Together we can make a difference'
<https://www.podstelford.org/>