

A warm welcome to the following children who have joined us recently:

Babybirds: Anna

Ladybirds: Nora, Marc and Poppy

Curriculum Planning:

The half-termly theme across the Nursery is 'animals'.

Activities to support the morning educational Pre School sessions:



Week beg.	Weekly focus	Phonic sounds revised	Suggestions for activities to carry out at home
20/02/2023	Birds & animals in Springtime	m, d	Go bird watching together. Fill or make a bird feeder. Can you see any birds in your garden or the surrounding area? What colours/ marks can you see on their feathers. Do you know the name of the birds you spot?
27/02/2023	Wild animals	g, o	Use spots or stripes to decorate a picture of a wild animal. Talk about how animals use camouflage.
06/03/2023	Sea animals	u, l	Draw around your hand and then decorate it to make a jellyfish. Write a number on each tentacle.
13/03/2023	Reptiles & Amphibians	f, b	Write down a number 1—10 then ask your child which number it is. Get them to jump like a frog the correct number of times repeat this with different numbers.
20/03/2023	Dinosaurs	j, z	Use junk materials, especially egg boxes to make a dinosaur. Use information books to name your dinosaur. Can your dinosaur jump, fly, run fast? Is it a carnivore or a herbivore?
27/03/2023	Easter Animals	w, v	Talk about where eggs come from. Hard boil an egg and decorate it or decorate egg shaped paper. What pattern/ design will you do?

How to help your child at home : Ideas of easy ways to support your child's learning for the younger rooms:

Animals	Doves	Starlings	Kingfishers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visit the farm/zoo or museum and look at all the animals eg Natural History Museum in-Tring. What animals can you see? Visit the library and find some animal books. Look at them together. Make the animal noises whilst pointing to each one. Does your child try to copy? Put animal toys in the water at bath time. Can they swim? Cut a dinosaur footprint out of a sponge. Get you child to press it in the paint then onto the paper to see the mark it makes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read stories where animals are the main characters. Use puppets to act out the story. Sing animal movement songs e.g 'Sleeping Bunnies / lions / crocodiles' Create an animal mask using a paper plate. Cut the eyes out for your child and let them decorate it. Can they move and sound like that animal? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go on a sound hunt. Close your eyes and listen for birds singing, dogs barking etc. Open your eyes – can you recall all the sounds? Look at a small selection of toy animals. Place them under a blanket and take turns removing one. When the blanket is removed can the other person guess which one is missing? Make a playdough animal and decorate with craft materials. Encourage your child to talk about what they have created .

Diary Dates

Thursday 2nd March	World Book day
Tuesday 14th & Thursday 16th March	Kingfisher & Pre school open mornings
Friday 17th March	Comic Relief Day
Friday 31st March	Term ends
Friday 7th April	Nursery closed (Good Friday)
Monday 10th April	Nursery closed (Easter Mon)
Thursday 17th April	Term re-starts
Monday 8th May	Nursery closed (King's coronation)

Comic Relief 17th March

Please come dressed in an animal costume. We will be collecting money for the Comic Relief charity and boxes for your cash donations will be in each room.

Fees from April

New fees are effective from the 1st April 2023. These are detailed in a separate document alongside this newsletter. Unlike many nurseries we have not had an interim increase—fees were last changed in April 2022. . New invoices for April will be issued after the 7th March.

Quality monitoring visit Thursday 2nd March.

We welcome back Jo Watkins, an Early years consultant for Herts for Learning for our annual quality monitoring visit.

The purpose of the visit is to review:

- how the setting meets the EYFS statutory requirements including safeguarding
- how the setting supports disadvantaged and vulnerable children, and those at risk of delay
- how leaders are monitoring the quality of provision in relation to the impact it has on children's learning and development
- how practitioners are promoting children's communication and language development.

Open mornings

Due to the positive feedback from parents that visited to see a typical session in November we are offering 2 further open mornings. The Kingfisher and Pre school parents are invited to join their child's room for some or all of the morning (9.15am—11.30am). Let the office know if you would like to book a place on one of the following:

Tuesday 14th March

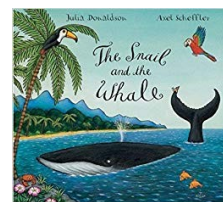
Thursday 16th March

Places are limited so as not to overwhelm the children. Please note siblings cannot be accommodated on these open mornings. Previously we have tried open mornings for Doves and Starlings but found it was too distressing for the children when their parents left.



World Book Day Thursday 2nd March

Join the staff and come to nursery dressed as a character from your favourite book. Please bring in your favourite book to show us and take part in a day of book related activities. Dressing up will be purely for fun, with no competition. Everyone will receive a £1 book voucher that can be used in part exchange for a book your child chooses.



Staffing update

Michelle Gee is now based as a keyworker in the Starling room. She leads Dani Ritchie and Nuwangi Jayasundara. Nuwangi holds a BA honours in Educational Science and Psychology and is currently studying a Masters in Education. Olivia Oakman, (Sarah Gee's (pre school room leader's) daughter) has been working in Starlings on an ad hoc basis.

We welcome back Moira Prentice who 'retired' in 2020 after working at Ladybirds for 16 years. She is missing the children and staff at Ladybirds so is coming back for 2 mornings a week (Tuesdays and Wednesdays) starting next month. She will be based in the Starlings

Workplace nursery schemes

You may not be aware that some employers operate 'workplace nursery schemes'.

Through these, parents are entitled to 100% tax relief and 100% NI relief off your **total** annual nursery fees. The full cost of your nursery fees is deducted from your salary. This is a significant saving for many employees in comparison to the maximum tax relief which can be obtained through Childcare Voucher provision. Some schemes release additional funding to the nursery.

Key details about the scheme:

For HMRC to be happy that the benefit is compliant and tax and NI savings can be made, there are a few points that need to be adhered to:

- The benefit must run over a set period of time and there must be a partnership between the nursery and the parents employer. This partnership is facilitated by a company such as 'Enjoy Benefits' who organise the contract paperwork, confirm fees payable to the nursery and the amount of any additional funding. Further information here:

<https://www.enjoybenefits.co.uk/staff-benefits-savings/workplace-nursery-benefit/>

- The employer must 'partially or fully fund' the chosen nursery during the contract. Work-place schemes invoice the employer for the fees and then transfer the money into the nursery account at the beginning of every month.
- There are meetings which must be held between the company organising the benefit, the nursery and the parent. Currently, meetings are held at the beginning of the contract, usually by telephone. This is to discuss and agree on how we would like to spend the additional funding within the nursery.

Currently there are several families at Ladybirds using such schemes. 'Enjoy Benefits' have proved easy to work with. Consider asking your employer if they operate workplace nursery schemes. To be clear, we cannot do this for you—it has to come from your employer.

Tennis taster Wednesday 1st March

Batchwood tennis coaches will be running sessions for Pre school and Kingfishers to improve the children's hand and eye co-ordination and ball skills.



Borrowed clothes

All children should have a drawstring bag with their own spare clothes on their peg. This includes pants and socks. Occasionally we need to lend children items from our spare clothes box. Please return these promptly to nursery once washed. If you pop them in your child's drawstring bag please let a member of staff know they are there.

Song bag

Kingfishers and fun focus regularly enjoy pulling items out of a bag and singing songs linked to our half termly theme ie 'Animals'. So you can join in with your children please find attached a leaflet with the song words.



Term dates & additional bank holiday

Please find attached term dates for the remainder of this academic year and new dates from September 2023-2024. Please note the nursery will be closed for the King's coronation on Monday 8th May 2023.

Parent feedback

We welcome any feedback about any aspect of Ladybirds Nursery from parents. Please talk to us or e mail your responses to admin@ladybirdsnursery.com.

Compliments/Suggestions/Concerns:

Tax free childcare

Many of you are already aware of the benefits of the tax free childcare scheme. Essentially TFCC is for working parents, including self-employed, who meet eligibility criteria. For every £8 a parent pays into an online account the government will add an extra £2 up to £2000 per child, per year. To see the full details and eligibility go to www.childcarechoices.gov.uk

Two year old development review.

Please see below a link from Public Health highlighting the importance of families attending the two year old developmental review when invited to do so.



The development review assesses a child's development and identifies any additional support that the child may need. This works in conjunction with assessments we make at nursery.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nCgpFvk57Yg>