

Short Term Planning for March & April 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
11 <i>Dayle Annual Leave</i>	12	13	14 Over Two's Baking Cakes	15 Red Nose Day Over Two's Decorating Cakes, All Children & Staff wear red or superheroes.
18	19	20 Spring Equinox	21	22 Train Trip Teignmouth over 2's
25 SENCO Meeting Buckfast, Estelle 9.15 - 1pm	26	27	28 Early Years Funding Stops Over Easter	29 Good Friday
1 Easter Monday	2 <i>Lara Annual Leave. No Sadie</i>	3 <i>Jade & Lara Annual Leave. No Sadie</i>	4 <i>Jade & Lara Annual Leave. No Sadie</i>	5 <i>Jade & Lara Annual Leave. No Sadie</i>
8 <i>Klaudia, Angela & Estelle Annual Leave, No Sadie</i>	9 <i>Klaudia & Estelle Annual Leave, No Sadie</i>	10 <i>Klaudia, Angela & Estelle Annual Leave, No Sadie. Dayle on Level 4 Training</i>	11 <i>Klaudia, Angela & Estelle Annual Leave, No Sadie. Dayle on Level 4 Training</i>	12 <i>Estelle & Angela Annual Leave No Sadie</i>
15 Early Years Funding Restarts	16	17	18	19

As part of our ongoing working in Partnership with Parents. Parents can help us by regularly completing the "My Favourite Things In.... Have Been" pages and Parent Quick Note sections, remember the info which you supply helps us to specifically gear our plans towards the current interests and developmental needs of your own child. Please remember to read your child's Daily Diary or Communication Booklet each day and **initial and date at the top** so that we know you have done so. Any comments should be written in the Parent Quick Note sections please. Our focus over the next few weeks will be Transport with a particular focus on Train Stations. We have planned a whole host of activities for the children including just a few of the following items listed. All of which will nicely link into all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the remainder of the Spring Term. Watch out for those codes! Please note when your child's Keyworker is on Annual Leave or attending Training, this will mean that another member of staff will be completing your child's pages if they are away.



Grafton Childcare

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Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers

Sainsbury's Active Kids 2013 has been launched, our new banner and posters for 2013 are hung up on the fence outside for all to see.

Since being launched in 2005 over 49,000 organisations have benefited from a share of £123m worth of Active Kids equipment.

This year the scheme will run in stores, petrol stations and with online groceries between 30th January until the 22nd May 2013.

Last year we collected just over 2,500 vouchers which meant we were able to redeem them for an amazing array of equipment and toys for the children to use here. I must admit that the giant trunk we received last year along with an assortment of other bits and bobs were a huge hit with the children and are still in daily use here and looking almost as good as new, which goes to show what brilliant quality the resources are that we are able to receive via this scheme.

We have already been flicking through the 2013 catalogue and drawn up a wish list of items we would love to get this time if we manage to reach our target of Vouchers. We are aiming for two space hoppers and some sensory equipment for the under twos to explore with.

Any Sainsbury's vouchers you are able to collect would be very much appreciated. Please send them in to us in your child's Daily Diary or Communication Booklet folder and we shall whisk them away. If you could also ask your family, friends and work colleagues if they would feel able to collect for us if they are not already collecting for another school or nursery, we would be very grateful as would the children. The Tesco's Vouchers Scheme is starting later on in the year.

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Do you have your child's A4 Clear Plastic Homework Folder at home? If so please return it so that we can send home your child's next batch of Phonics & Maths Homework.





This Friday we shall be asking all of the staff and the children to come to Grafton dressed in either something red, as a Superhero or a Princess for the day. For which we shall be asking for just a £2 donation.

On the Thursday the older children will be baking a large batch of cupcakes and then those children who attend on the Friday will be decorating them with white icing and noses (cherries) to take home for you all to enjoy. We do hope as many of you as possible feel able to get involved with simple fundraising activity and enjoy eating the cakes at the end of the day. We have really enjoyed this week seeing lots of Red Nose Day bits and bobs which the children have brought it from home to share during our show and tell sessions, the giggling noses have been hilarious.

Transport - The Train Station

Friday will see the end of our recent Superheroes Topic, which pretty much all of the children have absolutely loved, it has been amazing seeing all of the various costumes and action figures which the children have worn or brought into Nursery to share with us and give real depth to our topic. Thank you parents for helping us to really focus on the children's current interest and develop this topic over the past few weeks, it's been great fun. Denise is now almost an expert on which superhero powers each super hero has! We really enjoyed converting our role-play area into a Superheroes den complete with Batmobile, the children loved it.

During this weeks staff meeting we discussed all of our key children's "My Favourite Things In.... Have Been" pages and Parent Quick Note sections, taken from their Daily Diaries and Communication Booklets and used this information to help us to specifically gear our plans towards the current interests and developmental needs of the children.

Our main topic over the next few weeks will be Transport but mostly Trains. We have now turned the role-play area into a Train Station, complete with Ticket Booth, Train, Thomas The Tank Engine no less and our Platform Cafe. Over the next few weeks we plan on taking the children over the new footbridge across the river by Newton Abbot Town Quay, Denise has already been across it three times doing risk assessments so we know it will be safe for the children.

But on Friday 22nd March we are planning to take all of the 2, 3 and 4 years olds to Teignmouth on the train on a little adventure. The plan is to catch the 9.39 from Newton Abbot which arrives in Teignmouth at 9.45. We shall be leaving Grafton promptly at 9.10 am to walk down to the station and get ourselves safely onto the correct platform ready for the arrival of our train. We shall be completing one of our outing permission slips in the front of your child's Daily Dairy or Communication Booklet for you to sign if you are

Playing and exploring	Active Learning	Creating and thinking critically
<p>How children engage in their play</p> <p>Finding out and exploring</p> <p>Observe -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are they curious? • Do they use their senses to explore? • How they tackle open ended activities • Their interests and learning styles <p>Playing with what they know</p> <p>Observe -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pretend and role play • How home and community life is represented during play • Do they act out experiences? 	<p>How children are motivated</p> <p>Being involved and concentrating</p> <p>Observe -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How they concentrate • The energy they put into their play • Whether they are easily distracted • How they focus on detail <p>Keeping trying</p> <p>Observe -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How they manage challenges • Whether they are adaptable • How they cope with set backs • The effort they put in <p>Enjoying achievements</p> <p>Observe -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they show pride in their success? • How they view the process (as well as the end result) • Whether they enjoy challenge 	<p>How children think</p> <p>Having their own ideas</p> <p>Observe -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they think of new things to do? • How do they solve problems? • How do they link to previous learning? • Can they find new ways to do things? <p>Making links</p> <p>Observe -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they spot patterns in experiences? • Can they guess/predict? • How do they test their ideas? • Are they aware of cause and effect? <p>Choosing ways to do things</p> <p>Observe -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How they plan and make decisions • Can they monitor their own learning? • Are they adaptable? • Can they review what they have done

Continuous provision and the characteristics

Continuous provision describes the resources we have which are offered to the children on a daily basis.

We might change our continuous provision around to meet a child's interest or changing needs, but generally continuous provision resources are always available.

Continuous provision resources might include :-

- * Treasure baskets - for the under two's
- * Heuristic play - for the over two's
- * Dolls and teddies
- * Mark making
- * Rhyme Times Sessions
- * Books and other reading materials etc.

It is good practice to observe children when they are independently using continuous provision resources, we often get our best observations during children's self chosen play because they are focused on their learning and keen to follow their own interests.

Linking CP and the Characteristics

Depending on how a child is playing we might see lots of characteristics during their games. For example, an observation might note -

- ☉ John is playing with the treasure basket - he is using all his senses (playing and exploring) and he is enthusiastically exploring his environment (active learning)
- ☉ Jane is choosing which musical instruments to play - she is concentrating very hard (active learning). She remembers that the cymbals make a big noise when they are banged together (playing and exploring).
- ☉ Jamal is talking about a puzzle he was doing at nursery. He tells his keyworker that it is similar to one he has at home (creating and thinking critically) and he is keen to see if he can do other similar ones we have here at nursery (playing and exploring).
- ☉ Katie is trying to move stones from the path to the tipper truck but the little spade will not carry enough. She looks around for a bucket and puts them in there with her hands - then transports them to where she wants them to go (creating and thinking critically).
- ☉ Harry is using open ended resources which encourage him to work things out for himself (creating and thinking critically) and very pleased with himself when he makes the toy work (active learning).

happy for your child to take part in our little adventure. If your child normally attends on a Friday but does not normally arrive until after 9.10am could we please ask that on Friday 22nd March they arrive by 9.10 am at the latest thank you. Sadly we won't be able to wait for any stragglers as we don't want to miss our train.

If your child does not normally come to Grafton on a Friday and they would like to come with us to Teignmouth, they are very welcome to do so, however Mummy, Daddy or a Carer must come along as well and be responsible for them during our trip, so that we can maintain the correct ratios during the trip. Tickets for adults will cost £3.10. If you would like to come please let Denise know by Sunday 17th March so that she can book any extra train tickets as required.

Our day is very loosely planned, really depending on the weather and how the children are enjoying themselves, we really will be led by the children on the day. We hope if things are going well to eat a packed lunch in Teignmouth and head back home to catch either the 13.14, 13.29 or maybe even the 14.32 trains and should all be safely back at Grafton by 3 pm at the latest.

We ask that on that day that your child comes in something warm with a waterproof coat and wearing their welly boots if they don't already have some here at Grafton, with a set of spare clothes and Calpol in their bags.

If you have any old train tickets, resources or books about trains, which are not too precious and you would be happy for the children to use here at Grafton for a few weeks, we would be very happy to have a loan of them for a few weeks. However please don't send anything in which you would be sad if it were accidentally broken. Books about trains and dressing up costumes for train drivers or guards would be most welcome.

Staff Update

We are very pleased to let you all know that one of our mature students Julie Perry has now joined our staff team here at Grafton Childcare. She will be with us three days a week working with the under two's on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, we are looking for another person to join our expanding under two's team on Mondays and Thursdays, so if you know anybody who might be suitable do ask them to get in touch with us or they could download an application form from our website.

Some of you might be aware that sadly Klaudia Fronczak has been unwell since early February and is not due to return for some time. However we are very pleased to inform parents that we have appointed Angela Evely BEd Hons to join our team with the over two's and in the short term she will be Key Worker to all of Klaudia's children. Angela is delightful and has really jumped right in with all the activities which the children have been embarking on, it was lovely watching her getting stuck in today with all the two year olds who were helping to paint an assortment of large cardboard boxes red and getting covered in red paint herself whilst doing so. The boxes are going to become our own version of James from Thomas the Tank Engine fame.

Clothing and Belongings

Over the last month we have had to turn away three or four children at the door because they have either forgotten their child's Daily Diary or Communication Booklet, or their child's nursery bag.

Sadly we will not allow any children on the premises unless they arrive with these. We cannot allow the child to stay whilst you return to collect the forgotten items either. This is because sadly we have had in the past parent's say they were going home to collect the bag and bring it back, but never did. So in future we will not make any exceptions sorry.

It is very important that your child's bag is well stocked at all times, we had an incident recently where a child soiled one set of clothes and we had no spare ones left in their bag, so we had to telephone the parents to come and collect their child unnecessarily. We have had similar incidents where parents had not left any Calpol in their child's bag for us to use, the child then developed a slight temperature for which we would normally give them some Calpol to see if they recovered enough to stay at nursery. However on this occasion we had to send the child home because there was no Calpol or similar in the child's bag for us to use.

Please could you ensure that **ONLY** the following labelled items are kept in your child's bag. Sharpie Laundry Pens from WHSmiths are ideal for labelling things and much quicker than sewing on labels:-

- 1) Your child's Daily Diary or Communication Booklet in its very own zipped wallet with which you will be provided.
- 2) At least one complete change of clothes for your child, suitable for the current weather conditions. This might include extra layers in the Winter months, and t-shirts and shorts in the Summer. If your child is toilet training then we will need **AT LEAST** three pairs of trouser/leggings, pants/knickers and socks please.
- 3) Three disposable nappies, should your child arrive in a soiled nappy, or soil their nappy just before they leave. During the day we will use our own washable nappies and wipes on your child.
- 4) Bepanthen and or Metanium Nappy Care Ointment, remember we may only use ointments supplied by yourself.
- 5) A small plastic bag in which to place any soiled or wet clothing for you to take home and wash.
- 6) Suncream if you do not wish us to use Grafton Childcare's suncream on your child.
- 7) Coat, in Summer months a lightweight pack-a-mac style and in Winter a thicker warmer waterproof style, remember we do go out in ALL weather conditions even rain and snow!
- 8) 2-5 sachets of Calpol/Infant Suspension with your child's name written on them kept inside the zipped wallet please, remember we may only give your child Calpol

of whether or not they have made a picture!

To help us with this, we are in the process of producing some information sheets for parents about the revised EYFS and the characteristics of effective learning, explaining that we will be asking for their help to reflect on how their child learns so we can use it in our assessments and planning. These have been printed in previous newsletters.

Here is an idea of how it will all fit together on a summary form which can be shared with parents. Your comments will be encouraged and welcomed - if they do not write comments then we will note any comments made verbally and write them in ourselves.

Summary of my learning and development so far...		Date:
My name is:		My date of birth:
PSE Development - Prime Area Simon waits for a few moments while the needs of another child are being met	Physical Development - Prime Area	
C & L Development - Prime Area Simon talks to himself as he works out how to do the new jigsaw	Literacy - Specific Area	
Mathematics - Specific Area	Understanding the World - Specific Area	
Expressive Arts & Design - Specific Area	Interests & approach too learning - Characteristics of effective learning Simon is actively learning to manage situations where he is not first in the queue. Simon is creating and thinking critically; he embraces the challenge (active learning) and is willing to 'have a go' at something new (playing and exploring).	
Comments from parents		Date
Signature		Date

progressing and we will record this in each child's individual Record of Observed Outcomes you can look at your copy of the Areas of Learning and Development A Condensed Guide for Parents which you should have at home for more info.

For the revised EYFS we have thought how we could effectively show how a child is progressing if we only focus on one or two areas of learning and development at a time. Therefore, we have decided to split the Development Matters guidance into 2 sections -

- ◆ Birth to 2 years
- ◆ 2 to 5 years

Separating the Development Matters document into 2 sections will help us to better reflect the child's learning and development over time and will focus us on their achievements before, during and after we have written their 2 year progress check, see previous newsletter where these were explained.

Individual planning - we will note how we think the child can be supported to make progress in the future. Sometimes individual planning is about a child consolidating new skills...sometimes it is about moving the child on, using the Development Matters guidance to help change the learning environment, resources, relationships etc to better meet the child's individual needs. We will use the Themes of the EYFS to do this....

- ◆ Theme 1 - Unique child
- ◆ Theme 2 - Positive relationships
- ◆ Theme 3 - Enabling environments
- ◆ Theme 4 - Learning and development

Summary assessments - at least every 6 months we will write a summary assessment for each EYFS age child and our planned Next Steps. This assessment will be a short document which focuses on their achievements and strengths over the last few months and looks to the future. As part of the summary assessment we will reflect on the strategies the child is using to learn....the characteristics of the child's learning.

Working with parents - parents will be involved throughout the observation, assessment, planning and summary process. The revised EYFS strengthens the requirement to work closely with parents and to share information with them about....

- ◆ Their child's learning and development
- ◆ Activities their child might enjoy at home
- ◆ How we intend to support the child to move on in their learning
- ◆ How we are using the characteristics of learning during their time with us.

Part of what we need to be telling parents is that adults should value the processes children go through to learn - explaining that, for example, we see learning opportunities and creativity in their exploration of the glue, regardless

if it has been supplied by yourself.

- 9) We also need a pair of slippers and wellie boots which will be left here in your child's tray for them to use as needed these won't be sent home on a daily basis.
- 10) Please do not keep any adult purses or wallets, mobile telephones, coins, jewellery, small toys unsuitable for under 3's and adult medications, cigarettes and or matches in your child's bag as these pose a real safety concern for us here at Grafton Childcare.

Donations of Resources

Donations of toys and resources help us keep our costs down, so if you have any of the following items on hand and are willing to donate them, it would be greatly appreciated.

- Dressing up clothing child sized not old adult clothing, costumes, hats etc.
- Magazines that depict other cultures, old birthday cards etc.
- Paper of any kind, brown, white, coloured, waxed, foil, Spring colours would be very useful this month, etc.
- Crayons, water colour paints, or any misc. art supplies, such as fabric scraps, glitter, pipe cleaners, paper plates, etc.
- Any odd shaped boxes or packages, especially if you can get a dozen or so of the same size and shape, maybe from your place of work, we are very happy to help you recycle, these come in very handy for our junk modelling.
- Anything that you think we might find useful for arts and crafts, just ask if your not sure.

It is because of these generous donations that the children are able to create such wonderful masterpieces to be taken home and admired by one and all.

Thank You

We would like to say a huge thank you again to the parent's of the following children:- Charlie, Sophie, Jasmine, Thea, Oscar, Kenzie, Lottie, George, Charlotte, Jacob, Lewis, George, Edward, who have donated Lego & Mega Blocks, Christmas Craft Items, Crayons, 2 Wooden Activity Cubes, Cupcake Fabric, Tissue Paper Paint & Pencils, Energy Monitor, Spring Card & Embellishments, carrier bags and junk modelling items.



We would also like to thank Kenzie & Oscar's Granddad who very kindly came and jet washed down our decking and steps for us, it was very much appreciated thank you.



Can we also thank our staff Zoe and Steve who kindly brought in some books on Trains, Train Tickets and an Engine Drivers hat for the children to use for our current topic on Trains.

New Toys & Resources

Since our last newsletter we have been busy adding new equipment and resources for the children to use here at Grafton, just this week we have taken delivery of a complete set of ToddleBoxes which serve the three prime areas:-

Physical Development

Which comes about through using the body! Young children learn about themselves and their environment through movement. They need adults who understand the role of action and create a movement-rich environment, full of suitable stimuli and challenges.

Personal, Social and Emotional Development

A one-year-old watching the world go by from the reassuring containment of a niche that just fits her size and shape, is developing the sense of self central to personal emotional development. Toddlers exploring a ToddleBox road together are learning the basics of social interaction and negotiation. Balance is responsible for a child knowing where he or she is in space. A sense of physical security and balance is entrained through movement.

Communication and Language

We need to set the scene for communication skills to develop and use the environment in an informed, meaningful way. Our ability to communicate verbally is something to celebrate - it's what makes us unique.

Right-way up or upside-down, these units create endless combinations for exploring. With one of each shape, this set is perfect for our group of under twos and their busybodies. We are hoping that tucked into the corner of the playroom or outside on dry days that these ToddleBoxes will become our toddlers favourite spaces. The Hill and Valley boxes present new terrain for children who have experienced only flat surfaces before. The Dodgem toddlebox even comes with a steering wheel, which was a massive hit yesterday when the toddlers explored the ToddleBoxes for the first time. The ToddleBoxes are part of a new range from Community Playthings and are beautifully made from solid birch.



individual needs.

Linking the characteristics to the areas of learning and development

There are 7 areas of learning and development in the revised EYFS and they all link very closely to the characteristics of effective learning.

How we link them will be reliant on our developing skills to use the characteristics effectively in our assessment and planning of children's learning and development. The EYFS tells us that using the characteristics effectively will raise outcomes for every child. This is all part of the 'preparing for school' ethos of the revised EYFS. By using the characteristics of learning in our work, we will be able to show evidence that we are providing learning experiences that meet children's needs and valuing the processes they go through as they play and learn.

Characteristics and the observation, assessment and planning cycle

The EYFS links the characteristics of learning to observation, assessment and individual (next steps) planning, asking us to consider how we ensure children's learning is observed and assessed so each child is offered appropriate opportunities to progress well.

We are not asked to summarise a child's characteristics of learning because we cannot do that - they are constantly evolving as the child grows and can be seen in adulthood as well as childhood. However, we are going to be expected to use the characteristics of learning to help us plan for a child's ongoing learning and development, noting how the processes they use to learn change as they mature. We have reflected on how the characteristics might be used in day-to-day practice and we are going to work with them in the following ways...

Observations - regularly written observations will help us to learn about the individual child and what he is saying and doing, what parents say is happening in his home and community life etc, the information you give us via the "My Favourite Things In... Have Been" pages and Parent Quick Note sections, helps us to specifically gear our plans towards the current interests and developmental needs of your own child. As part of our observations we will note how the child learns as well as what the child is learning.

For example, we might note a child has explored the messy tray, finding sensory resources to hold and stroke. The child might be motivated to learn because they are concentrating during the activity (active learning)...they might also be curious to touch and feel the resources, trying to work out what they do and how they work (playing and exploring).

We do not intend to do this with every observation as we think it will be too much, however we will do it occasionally....read on for more information.

Assessments - will help us focus on what the child knows and we will use the EYFS Development Matters guidance document to note how the child is

The Characteristics of Effective Early Learning

The characteristics of effective learning are part of the Development Matters guidance document that has been written alongside the EYFS (2012).

You can download the Development Matters guidance document from the www.foundationyears.org.uk website.

According to the revised EYFS there are 3 Characteristics of Effective Learning which are detailed in EYFS 2012 requirement 1.10 which states,

In planning and guiding children's activities, practitioners must reflect on the different ways that children learn and reflect these in their practice. The three characteristics of effective teaching and learning are:

- ◆ **Playing and exploring** - children investigate and experience things, and 'have a go';
- ◆ **Active learning** - children concentrate and keep on trying if they encounter difficulties, and enjoy achievements; and
- ◆ **Creating and thinking critically** - children have and develop their own ideas, make links between ideas, and develop strategies for doing things.

Note that the requirement states practitioners **MUST** reflect on the ways children learn and use them to enhance their practice. This means that it is a requirement to use the characteristics as part of our delivery of the EYFS.

What do the characteristics mean?

The characteristics are **not** outcomes like the Development Matters statements - a child does not achieve a characteristic. Instead they are asking us to make judgements about **how** a child learns (not what a child learns). Understanding how a child learns will help us to plan appropriate learning outcomes for the child in the future.

The characteristics are the process a child goes through during their learning and development journey.

The characteristics of effective learning must be used alongside the 7 areas of learning and development and are seen as ways we can support children to become effective lifelong learners.

When might the characteristics be used?

There are 2 main options -

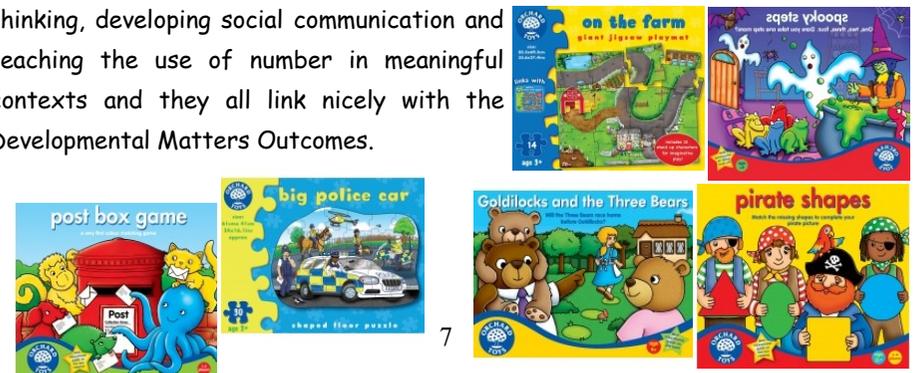
- ◆ We can look for characteristics of effective learning when we write every observation...while we can see the benefits of this as far as learning what the characteristics mean and how to use them we think this option will tie a lot of us in knots.
- ◆ We can use the characteristics when we are writing our regular Next Steps and assessments of a child's learning. However, to fully appreciate the progress a child is making in their learning and development we feel it is important to regularly look at what and how they are learning.

We intend to link children's learning to the characteristics so then we can start writing our observations, assessments and planning, tweaking it to ensure it reflects each child's

Last month we had to purchase a 5 litre bottle of Bubble Fluid for our bubble machine as we have been getting through our bubbles at a rate of knots so have found a cheaper supply than buying it in tiny bottles. We bought a couple of Superhero Costumes, Capes and Masks to support of Superheroes Topic which has just finished but now have added these to our continuous provision.

Calvin Gay our lovely Electrician has been in and upgraded the lighting in our Playroom and Dinning-rooms for the children. He also added some more sockets by the conservatory door so that we can plug in our two new Digital Photo Frames which are now placed on the white cupboard by the conservatory. We plan on using these most days to display photos of activities which the children have been engaged in during the week. We would of loved to pop this up on our website but understand that some parents may have concerns about the security of doing so, so hope that you will agree that this is a lovely way of your being able to get a real feel about the many and varied activities which the children all carry out here. We intend to wipe the memory cards regularly, so will not be saving the photos for any period of time. If any parent wants a copy of a particular photo they have seen we are very happy to email you copies but you need to ask a.s.a.p. before they have been deleted!

We have also taken delivery of seven beautiful games and puzzles from Orchard Toys many of you will be aware that we have a vast range of puzzles and games here which the children use on a daily basis. But it is lovely to add some new ones to our stocks so that the children can chop and change which ones they want to use each day. All of the puzzles and games help the children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world, promote manual dexterity and teaches matching skills. They also encourage observation, whilst also promoting shape and colour recognition as well as encouraging observation and strategic thinking, developing social communication and teaching the use of number in meaningful contexts and they all link nicely with the Developmental Matters Outcomes.



Feedback from our Parent's Open Mornings

These were held on the 19th & 26th January, when 38 sets of parents came along and had a good look around the setting at what has changed over the past few months and took a peek at all of our lovely new resources and equipment.

They also had the opportunity to look at their child's individual Learning Journals and chat to either Sadie, Estelle or Denise about the progress their children are making here at Grafton Childcare.

We were delighted that so many of you took this opportunity to come along so that we could share with you all of the wonderful things your children have been doing and get a snapshot of some of the exciting things we have planned.

The feedback we gained from the Parent's Open Mornings was very favourable and we thank you for all of your candid comments which were really useful, it was lovely to be able to feedback your lovely positive views about what your children are doing here at Grafton to your children's keyworkers.

You might like to pop a note now into you diaries as we plan on holding two more Parent's Open Mornings on Saturday the 13th and 20th July, which is a little way off we know, but some parents were not able to attend on this occasion as they said we had not given them enough notice for which we apologise. So we are giving you lots of advance warning so try and keep at least one of those mornings free so that you can pop along with your children. We will send out details of appointments slots for you to book in June.

Big Ones Doorbell

As many of you have already noticed we have just installed a doorbell on the wooden post next door, this is for the children to use in the mornings once Mummy, Daddy or Carers have signed them in over the Little Ones side.

We have done this because in the mornings the children do not go over to the Big Ones side until around 8.15 - 8.30 once the staff have carried out their daily risk assessments and set up the first activities of the day for the children.

Once they go over the children and staff will be sat down in the classroom enjoying their usual Circle Time activities and they often can't hear children or parent's knocking on the door. So we thought that probably installing a doorbell, which we would like you to encourage the children to use themselves would avoid children standing at the door for a few minutes wondering if they have been heard or not! They do need to push firmly on the bell to make it work.

At the end of the day could you please come to the main conservatory door as normal and we will use our walkie talkies to ask a member of the Big Ones staff to bring your child to the door as at present, thank you.



Gastroenteritis

During the past month a number of children who attend Grafton Childcare have a suffered a bout of Gastroenteritis. If your child should display symptoms such as vomiting and or diarrhoea please respect the fact that we will not be able to care for your child until a minimum of 48 hours have lapsed since the last symptoms where noted.

Could we just remind you what our policy is when children attend with vomiting and or diarrhoea, the following statement can also be found in your copy of our Childminding Handbook and Prospectus:-

"Due to Ofsted regulations and Health Protection Agency guidance we are not permitted to provide childcare for babies and children who are unwell, because we are required to not only think of the Health & Safety of your child but also all other children and staff here at Grafton Childcare.

If your child should become unwell whilst in our care i.e. vomiting and or diarrhoea then you will be contacted to arrange a speedy collection of your child Any child who has presented with the symptoms of vomiting & diarrhoea will not be readmitted on the premises for a minimum of 48 HOURS and full childcare fees will still be payable for your child's place in their absence. If you are ever in any doubt about whether or not we can care for your child because you think he/she might be unwell. Then please telephone us beforehand explaining their symptoms and we will let you know whether we are willing to admit your child on that particular day having considered which other children we will be caring for and what impact this might have on school drop offs and picks ups outings etc. Please don't turn up with a potentially infectious child and expect us to make a snap decision on the doorstep.

We maintain very high levels of hygiene and cleanliness here at Grafton Childcare and encourage the children and babies to cleanse their hands frequently and hope that you will encourage them to do the same at home, after toileting, playing outside, handling pets, and blowing and wiping noses etc. We try to encourage the children from a very young age to develop the skills to wipe their own noses and bottoms once they use the toilet independently. We hope that you can appreciate that it is not appropriate for the staff to be following your child to the toilet on every occasion and that between the ages of three and four that the children need to be encouraged to develop their own personal toileting skills. Although we will of course encourage and assist, those who might need a little gentle guidance. When the children wash their hands we encourage them to sing the words to Row Row Your Boat, whilst soaping their hands. At the end of the song their hands should be clean enough for them to be able rinse off the dirty soap.