

Out of the Pot!

Paint Pots Nursery Newsletter **Winter 2024**

Welcome back to those of you returning for the new year and welcome to those of you who have started with us. We hope you all had the opportunity to spend time with loved ones over the holidays. Time is often quoted as the most precious gift we can give someone. It is a good time to pause and reflect on our priorities. Our children's early years fly by so fast. Consciously planning time in our schedules mean we have more chance of giving them our focused attention and making the most of our time together. It's heartwarming to witness our children's milestones, with each day adding a new chapter to their story and we should take the time this year to really appreciate our children for the special individuals that they are. As we embrace the opportunities the new year brings, let's continue nurturing their boundless curiosity, creativity, and joy for learning. Here's to a year filled with laughter, love and the magic of childhood!

A Healthy Start

As parents, we know how important it is to provide our children with nourishment and wholesome eating. It is never too early to encourage your children to have a balanced diet and introduce them to wholesome eating habits. At Paint Pots, we want to help make mealtime a joyful exploration of different tastes which is why we provide a variety of different meals and snacks for the children in our care. Teaching your children about the benefits of wholesome choices sets the foundation for a lifetime of well-being. Let's cultivate a love for healthy eating, fostering strong bodies and curious minds together.

Here are a few tips to help you to provide your children with a range of healthy snacks:

- Fruit and veg snacks are always the best choice for children's snacks, but if they are having packaged snacks, just remember to aim for a maximum of 2 a day.
- Many products also have traffic light labels on the front of packs, which can be a useful guide when choosing which ones to buy.
- Pick snacks with more greens and ambers on the label and cut down on snacks that show any reds.

Nuts and seeds:

- Nuts and seeds are a healthier snack, but they are high in energy, so remember to keep an eye on the amount you eat and don't give whole nuts to children under 5.

Make it fun:

- Offer your children a range of brightly coloured fruit and veg, cut into shapes, or draw funny faces on a banana or satsuma.

Dried fruit:

- Dried fruit counts towards your 5 A Day, but it can stick to teeth and could lead to painful tooth decay. Dried fruit should only be eaten at mealtimes to reduce the risk of tooth-decay.



Healthy snack ideas:

- Muffins with cream cheese and cucumber sticks.
- Yoghurt with mandarins.
- Toasted malt loaf with strawberries.
- Sugar snap peas with hummus.
- Sliced fruit with yoghurt dip.
- Mashed avocado and boiled egg.
- Cheesy oatcakes and tomatoes.
- Rice cakes with low fat cream cheese and cucumber.
- Hummus with veggie sticks.
- Boiled eggs and wholemeal toast.

Teaching children to navigate risk

Children are born explorers. As they navigate the world around them, it's essential to give them the freedom to explore whilst also equipping them with the skills required to keep themselves safe.

The process of understanding risks and learning to manage their own safety is a crucial aspect of child development that requires collaboration between parents and caregivers. **Giving children the ability to take risks is not about exposing them to unnecessary dangers but rather guiding them through age-appropriate risk management, ultimately nurturing self-reliance.**

Teaching children to understand and handle risk is a vital life skill and a required part of the Early Years Foundation Stage- the framework that we are inspected on- that echoes the risk management adults undertake daily. The goal is to instill these skills from an early age, ensuring that as children grow older, they become increasingly self-sufficient in assessing and navigating potential hazards.

How we handle risk at Paint Pots

Our approach to teaching risk management doesn't involve thrusting children into perilous situations. Instead, it necessitates a thoughtful and individualized risk assessment based on a child's age and stage of development. While we wouldn't hand a pair of adult scissors to a two-year-old to use unsupervised, what we would do is focus on understanding each child's capacity for recognising and dealing with risk. This understanding is rooted in the Characteristics of Effective Learning, recognising how each child learns and incorporating that knowledge into planning.

Part of this process involves considering the risk versus benefits of various activities planned for the children. For instance, while throwing sand could pose risks, the solution is not to eliminate the sand pit but to teach children not to throw sand through gentle interactions, consistent messages and modelling. The emphasis is on supervision and reminders, creating a carefully set up environment where the benefits of certain activities outweigh the risks.

Children are educated on practical aspects of risk, such as wearing wellies in the rain to jump in puddles, putting on shoes to protect their feet from spiky leaves and coats to go outside and are given the agency to be able to gain an understanding of risks and a desire to keep themselves

How we encourage children to manage risk

- Encouraging children to respect one another e.g. manners, kindness.
- Support children in solving their own conflicts with peers (Problem solving).
- Encouraging children to think of the consequences to their behaviour.
- Preschool children given responsibility to stay in their areas.
- Preschool children encouraged to tell adults when they need to leave the room e.g. visiting the toilet.
- Children aware of needing an adult to supervise them e.g. children can free-flow outside when an adult is outside.
- Allowing children to risk assess and take risks.
- Letting children know when it is their turn to have their nappy changed and talking through nappy changing routine with them.
- Encouraging children to communicate to team if they have hurt themselves. With children who are developing their speech and language this could be through Makaton.



Improvements

You may have seen a number of different renovations and improvements occurring at your Paint Pots over the last few months. Many of the children have been excited to see diggers, decorators, gardeners and builders hard at work. Here is a list of just some of the work that has been completed with more to come later in the year:

- **Drainage and artificial grass at two settings. New play equipment for the gardens.**
- **Old signage replaced or due to be replaced at all settings.**
- **Faster internet access at two settings with a wider range at three settings.**
- **Upgraded models of wireless printers.**
- **Painting and decorating at four settings.**

- **Tidying and beautifying front garden areas.**
- **Upgraded electronic tablets at a number of settings to improve picture quality.**
- **Old flooring replaced in staff and children's areas.**

There are more improvements planned throughout the rest of the year. Please do ask if you see some ongoing work and would like some more details.

Dates For Your Diary

- Chinese New Year 10th February (Year of the Dragon)
- Half term for preschool and term time only: **Closed Monday 12th – Friday 16th February 2024**
- St David's Day 1st March
- Easter Holidays for preschool and term time only: **Closed Wednesday 27th March- Monday 12th April 2024**
- Good Friday 29th March
- Easter Monday 1st April
- **Nursery and Preschool Inset Day Group closure 1st July 2024**
- Summer holidays closed for preschool and term time only: **Closed Wednesday 24th July- Friday 30th August.**

