



NEWSLETTER

April 2024

We hope you have all had a fantastic break over Easter.....and welcome back! We are well and truly back and enjoying ourselves here! This half term we are thrilled to welcome Daisy, Isabella, and Iylah to our Little Explorers family and after their settling in mornings last term welcome Wilbur and Oscar properly too. With the new role out of funded childcare for 2 year olds we are having lots of enquiries for new starters which is great news for us. Please continue to spread the word that we still have spaces available!

Last half term we looked at signs of spring and Easter. We also looked at our favourite books and stories. Thank you to everyone that came in for World Book Day and those who were free to join us for our Mother's Day afternoon Tea. We all loved having you, especially our Little Explorers! You might have noticed that we had a lady with a clipboard in that day, she was doing an observation on the setting as part of the government funded "Experts and Mentors programme". This is part of their Covid recovery scheme. She absolutely loved her afternoon with us and was very impressed with the setting as a whole and especially with the children and their interactions, behaviour and manners! As you, we are so proud of them all.

This term we are going to be looking at "Gardening and Healthy Eating", "Pets and Animals" and ending the half term with "Under the sea - water, water everywhere". We are hoping to have lots of visitors coming to see us....some with 4 legs....and some with none! If you have a pet that would like to come and visit the children for pet week, from Monday 29th April, please get in contact!

Staff....who are we and what do we do?! Our wonderful staff team doesn't just work 9am-3pm. We are all continually training and updating our knowledge. We are all passionate about the Early Years and all want Preschool to be the best learning environment for our children that it can be and that starts with qualified, experienced and dedicated staff. Last term staff have done the following:

"Updated Prevent duty training", "The 3 I's of planning (Intent, implementation and impact)" - All staff.
"Teaching children SMILE - Self-talk and positivity, Mindfulness and manners, Individual assertiveness, language of co-operation and kindness, Expressing emotions of self and others." - Laura. "Early Years SENCO Level 3" - Jordan. "Early Years Professional Development Programme" - Ruth. "The principles of SEN" - Claire. "Experts and Mentors programme" - Claire, Jasmine, Katie. "Paediatric First aid refresher" Claire and Jasmine. "Shropshire Council Termly Network meetings" - Laura and Jordan. "Shropshire Council Termly SEND Briefing" - Jordan and Claire. There are also the books and posts we read and podcasts we listen to daily too! Lots more planned and already booked for this term.

This term we have also put together some "Borrow Bags" that are hanging up in the entrance. Please feel free to take one of these at any point. Either grab one yourself or ask a member of staff to get you one. We will be adding more to the selection as well as adding to the bags as we go forward. Currently we have the following:
"Busy Bag" - A bag to entertain your child while you are out (for a meal, wedding, party etc). It includes colouring, playdoh, book, fidget toy and more. "Sleep tight Bag" - A bag to help you get your child into a good bedtime routine. It includes a Grow Clock (with instructions), nighttime bubble bath and a bedtime story. "Litter Picking Hero!" - Why not take a litter picker and bin bag with you on a walk and see how much you can find? Our Little Explorers love doing this!

And finally, please, if you haven't done already, please fill in and send back our feedback questionnaire and your child's "Update from home" form. Thank you!

Diary Dates

Wednesday 24th April @2.30pm - Share a book story time.

Monday 20th May 9am-9.30am - Stay and Play

End of half term: Friday 24th May

Start of second half of term: Monday 3rd June

School leavers sessions at school start every Wednesday at 1.30pm from Wednesday 5th June. More details to follow.

If you would like to find out about further help and support the Parenting Team offer please email Parenting.team@shropshire.gov.uk or call us on 01743 250950 All our services are free of charge to Shropshire Council residents.



PARENTING HELP AND SUPPORT LINE

available

Monday to Thursday from 9.30am to 4.30pm

and

Friday 9.30am to 3.30pm

You can contact the Parenting Help and Support Line by calling **01743 250950**

Parenthood can be extremely rewarding and enjoyable. It can also be demanding, frustrating and exhausting. The Parenting Team is here to help and support parents and carers to raise healthy, well-rounded children in a loving and stable environment.

Do you have any questions around your child's development and parenting?

Why not call our Parenting Help and Support Line where one of our trained Parenting Practitioners will be ready to listen.

(Please note the Parenting Help and Support Line will not operate on Bank Holidays)

If you have concerns about a child's safety or well-being, please call **First Point of Contact 0345 678 9021**

Spring Into St George's Day coming soon!

The popular Spring Into St. George's Day event returns this year on Sunday 21 April at Telford Town Park.



The event will be the first in the 2024 event programme for Telford & Wrekin Council.

There will be a welcome return from the Knights of Nottingham who will once again be showcasing their jousting skills and entertaining the crowds with jousting tournaments. Also appearing on the day will be Roar Martial Arts, stage shows from Animal Guyz and Exotic Zoo, model boats on

the lake and the usual host of entertaining walkabouts – look out for the new Herdwick sheep!

The free family-fun day will run from 11am to 4pm and includes a host of hands on activities from axe throwing and archery to circus skills, a range of food and drink vendors, a marquee with local organisations and businesses showcasing their goods and have-a-go activities. Visitors can meet the alpacas whilst keeping an eye out for the dragon.

Councillor Carolyn Healy (Lab), Telford & Wrekin Council's Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Green Spaces, Heritage and Leisure said:

"We know how important these free events are to the local community as well as attracting regional visitors to the Town Park. The St. George's Day event is a great way for the community to get together, get involved and enjoy free entertainment."

Childcare Choices



Supporting families with childcare costs

childcarechoices.gov.uk

HM Government

Your Handy Guide to Cultivating Healthy Screen Use in Children



Tips on healthy screen use for your family!



Manage Your Child's Screen Use

- Consider the needs of your child when setting boundaries of screen use as a family. Discuss with your older child where necessary.
- Have a plan that balances screen use with other activities.

Model Healthy Media Habits

- Review your own media habits.
- Encourage daily 'screen-free' times, especially during family meals or when interacting with one another.

Encourage Meaningful Screen Use

- Discuss with your child about what he/she is viewing.
- Prioritise active screen use that engages your child over passive screen use that does not require him/her to think or interact.

0 to 18 months



- Discourage any screen use (unless it is for interactive video chatting) because the early years are a critical period for your child's brain development.

AVOID...

- ✗ Background screen use (i.e. having devices turned on in the background even when your child is not watching them)

1.5 to 6 years



- If your child is aged between 1.5 to 3 years, try to limit screen use to less than one hour a day.
- Carefully choose age-appropriate and educational content for your child.
- Watch media together with your child, and talk to your child about the content to keep him/her engaged

AVOID...

- ✗ Screen use during mealtimes and one hour before bedtime
- ✗ Background and passive screen use (i.e. screen use without thought, interaction or learning)

7 to 12 years



- Discuss with your child and create a timetable that strikes a healthy balance between screen use and other activities such as school work, physical exercise and sleep.
- Have discussions about harmful influences of online activities with your child. Take appropriate steps if your child has difficulty regulating screen use.

AVOID...

- ✗ Screen use during mealtimes and one hour before bedtime



Laura Furniss – Manager

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mental Health Lead. GDPR Officer

Qualifications:

CACHE Level 3 diploma – Early Years Educator
Safeguarding
Paediatric First Aid
Food Hygiene

"I joined Little Explorers in September 2020 as an early years assistant. I became deputy manager in 2022 and then manager in 2023. I am so proud of our setting, the staff and most of all our children. All children have the right to quality education, and I strongly believe this starts with early years. Before joining Little Explorers I was a childminder based in my home, and loved every minute of it. My child used to attend a childminding setting when he was younger, and he would come home so happy and always holding an artistic masterpiece he was so proud of. It was then that I decided to train and go into the early years sector myself and haven't looked back. Our brains grow faster in the first five years than at any other time in our lives, and I get to be a part of creating an environment and curriculum that supports the best outcomes for our children. I am passionate about safeguarding children and attend regular safeguarding and Early Help briefings along with being a safeguarding link parent governor at my own child's school. In my own time I enjoy playing netball, cricket, pilates and running with friends. I enjoy being outside and going on walks with my own children and husband. I am probably happiest of all camping in the woods or at the beach (although being curled up, in front of the fire, with a good book would also be up there on the happiest scale!)"



Jordan Morris – Deputy Manager

Designated Safeguarding Deputy
SENCO

Qualifications:

CACHE Level 3 diploma in Early Years education
Paediatric First Aid
Safeguarding
Food Hygiene

"I am very happy and proud to be Deputy Manager at Little Explorers Preschool. My passion has always been to help children develop in a loving, nurturing, and exciting way. I am also a very happy mummy to two children aged 5 and 9. I have worked at Little Explorers since 2020 and love every minute. I was previously a childminder which fitted in perfectly to allow me to look after my two children and gave me experiences of working with children of all ages. When I am not at work my hobbies are very much based around my children. We love to go swimming, bake, spend time in the garden and look after our two dogs, Fifi and Bella."



Ruth Garbett – Early Years Assistant.

Health and Safety & Fire Safety Officer

Qualifications:

NVQ Level 3
Paediatric First Aid
Safeguarding
Food Hygiene

"I started working in early years back in 2014, completing my level2 apprenticeship. I then joined the Little Explorers team in 2016 where I then completed my level 3 qualification in early years. I find myself very lucky to be part of such an enthusiastic and caring team. I recently got married to Paul and we have a beautiful little girl. We also live at home with our two cats! In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my lovely family, reading, crochet, wine and music festivals."



Staff Pic - Claire.jpg

Claire Jones – Early Years Assistant.

SENCO.

Qualifications:

Level 3 diploma - Skillsfirst Early Years Educator
Paediatric First Aid
Safeguarding
Food Hygiene

"I joined Little Explorers in January 2024. My children attended here when they were younger, and whilst pursuing an early years career, I always hoped that I would work at Little Explorers one day. I previously worked at a setting in Bridgnorth working across the rooms from babies to pre-school. I'm very excited to be joining the team here. In my spare time I enjoy family time with my children, gardening and going to music concerts. Quirky facts...Our pets include a cat, a panther crab called Captain Hook and a rainbow crab called Harry. I also gained my black belt in Karate at the age of 11!"



Katie Moulson – Apprentice

Qualifications:

TQUK Level 2 in introducing Caring for Children
Safeguarding
Food Hygiene

"I started volunteering at Little Explorers in 2018 and started employment in 2022. I am currently doing my level 2 Apprenticeship and love of doing creative activities for the children and watching them progress and learn. I am very lucky to be a part of the amazing Little Explorer's team. On my day off I run the local baby group, voluntarily, which I have so much passion for and enjoy organising and planning different activities and craft for the children and parents to enjoy. In my spare time I love spending time with my family and going on walks and days out. I often spend time with my niece and nephews, they're a big part of my life. My hobbies are reading, cooking, walking my dogs and gardening."



Jasmine Whalley – Volunteer Apprentice

Qualifications:

BA Honors degree in Fine Art Painting
Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
Safeguarding
Food Hygiene

"I am a mum of two with a passion for teaching, learning and creativity. I recently started volunteering and working towards my level 3 in early years after being inspired by the amazing team at Little Explorers Pre-school. I was introduced to the team when my older son attended back in 2021, I was impressed on how lovely the staff are and the positive impact they had on my son. I was an art lecturer at a college in Lancashire after receiving my Bachelors degree in fine art and my PGCE in the adult learning sector. I enjoyed teaching at the college but being around younger children and learning how important their early development was felt like a sector I wanted to be in. I love making learning fun, creative while putting a smile to peoples face and working with the amazing team at Little Explorers allows me to do that. My home life is busy but I wouldn't have it any other way. I live on a Hill Farm with my husband, two sons, 500 breeding ewes, 8 tups, two dogs, and a cat. As a family we love being outdoors which is a good thing because at the weekends we are feeding the animals and making these jobs a fun learning opportunity. When we do need a well deserved break we stick to the outdoors and go camping. I love outdoor adventures with my family and we don't let a little mud or rain stop us."