

# The Mulberry Bush Nursery

## December 2022 Newsletter

Dear All

Welcome to our December 2022 newsletter. Please find detailed below lots of information about what we have been doing at Nursery recently and any upcoming events for your diaries.

**Firstly, all the staff here at The Mulberry Bush Nursery would like to wish our families a Happy and Healthy Christmas and New Year.**

**Christmas Celebrations** – The children enjoyed numerous Christmas celebrations over the last month. Each individual room held their own Christmas Party, including dancing, party games, yummy treats and leaving with a little gift from Father Christmas!! The Buds children and their families enjoyed an evening Christmas workshop, the Babies and Berries has been postponed to January due to staff illness. The Children enjoyed a very yummy Christmas lunch cooked by our nursery cook, Rickie.

**School Places** - A little reminder that if your child is due to begin school in September 2023 you need to apply for their school place by the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2023.

**30 Hour Codes** – The next deadline for 30 hours applications are 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022 for parents with three- and four-year-old children who would like to access a 30-hour place from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023. We would encourage parents apply in plenty of time ahead of this date, in case HMRC requires additional information. If you have used funding before, please make sure you re-confirm your code to make sure this is valid, if you're new to this you will need to apply for a code.

**Help With Childcare costs** – The government have several funding options to help parents with childcare costs. Whether you have toddlers or teens, you could get support.

Are you entitled to...

- 2-year-old funding 15 hours
- 3- & 4-year-old funding 15 hours
- 3- & 4-year-old funding up to 30 hours
- Tax free childcare 0-11 years
- Tax Credits 0-15 years
- Universal Credits 0-15 years
- Childcare vouchers 0-15 years
- Support while you study

Please have a look at [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) which helps you to check what you may be entitled to and apply.

**Tax Free childcare account** – we would like to make you all aware of a government scheme aimed at working parents to open an account to use to pay your childcare from. Every £8 you enter into this account the government will add £2. For more information go to [www.childcarechoices.gov.uk](http://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk). Within this website you can also look at your eligibility for other childcare benefits.

**Winter Bugs** – It's that time of year when the lovely Winter Buds start doing the rounds!! We cannot stress enough how important it is that our child does not come into Nursery if they are feeling under the weather. With sickness and diarrhoea, it is 48 hours exclusion from their last bout of sickness and/or diarrhoea. We all completely understand that it can be hard when working to find childcare when your little one is poorly, however the more unwell children we have at Nursery the quicker it will spread to both other children and the staff. We thank you all in advance for your cooperation with this.

**Gifts** – All of the staff at The Mulberry Bush would like to say a big thank you for all of the very kind and generous gifts that we have received in the run up to Christmas.

**Named Clothing** – Please can we ask that you name your child's bags, coats, jumpers, shoes, and other clothing/belongings as we have a number of children with the same or very similar designs, and this will help minimize any mix ups.

**Car Park** – As you all know, the car park can at times can be a very busy place. Please take great care when entering and manoeuvring around the car park. Please can we also remind all families to queue from the slope, not the steps.

**Bad Weather** – Should severe weather conditions over the winter period force the nursery to close before the usual time of 6pm you will be contacted by the Office to make arrangements to collect your child/ren early. Should conditions be too hazardous to open the nursery we will send out an email to all parents who are able to be contacted in this way and telephone those whom we do not have an email address for. We will also endeavour to contact BBC Radio Suffolk and BBC Radio Norfolk who will read out and/or publish a list of school/nursery closures and out a message on our Facebook page.

**Cost of Living Crisis** – Please see the following link which has been sent through from Suffolk County Council. On there you will find many different ways which can help in families through the cost-of-living crisis from bills, food,

fuel, and lots more! <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/community-and-safety/communities/healthier/cost-of-living-support/help-for-households/>

**Online safety** - It's important to note that new challenges are arising on the internet all the time. Tempting for children of all ages, we advise to always use device settings & parental controls. Make sure you talk to your child about how they shouldn't do anything they are not comfortable with, online or offline. If they are unsure, encourage them to talk to you or another trusted adult. Not only will this give you an understanding of their online actions, but those honest and frequent conversations will encourage your child to feel confident to discuss issues and concerns they may have related to the online world. It's important for you, as a parent or carer, to be present while your children are online. This will give you a greater understanding of what they are doing on their devices, as well as providing you with the opportunity to discuss, support and stop certain activities that your child may be involved in, recognise any changes in your child's behaviour. As well as monitoring your child's activity [www.nationalonlinesafety.com](http://www.nationalonlinesafety.com) Twitter - @natonlinesafety Facebook - /National Online Safety Phone - 0800 368 8061 offer advice on helping parents to talk to their children about making safer decisions online.

**Oral Health** – Oral health is so important to all of us, and it is so important to get start talking about the importance of looking after our teeth and gums from a very early age. There are many ways we can help our little ones look after their teeth and gums such as, signing children up to a Dentist as early as possible, limiting the amount of sugar in their diet and ensuring they brush their teeth twice a day.

The recommended sugar intake for under 5's is six teaspoons (25 grams) daily. There are many swaps and/or changes we can make to help our little ones. Please see link to see what healthy swaps can be made - <https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-food-swaps/>

## **Room News**

**Babies** – We've been having lots of fun since our last update! We've introduced a weekly walk alternating days, so everyone gets to get out and about exploring the beautiful area around us, listening to the birds seeing some animals and tractors! and we've absolutely loved getting in our puddle suits and wellies and jumping in those puddles, some of us even went for a little swim! But we soon dried up in the warm nursery. Even the staff have enjoyed splashing in the muddy puddles with the children which they love to see! A couple of favourite activities have been exploring our new glow sticks in the dark with our themed week for Bonfire Night with firework noises in the background and lots of opportunities for language "bang, pop, boom "and painting using a trigger bottle to build those hand muscles! We have also introduced some real plants for our babies to help look after to water and watch them grow, they enhance the space in the room and it's a great talking opportunity and to learn about the world around us encouraging looking after something else. We're encouraging

lots of independence in the baby room whenever possible and encouraging the babies to help tidy and set up activities too, they love being involved in the process which is a great learning opportunity about how things work and where they come from or how things are made, laying foundations for making links about the world around them. The babies loved making their own orange juice using the squeezers and tasting it too comparing between shop bought juice and freshly squeezed by us and also exploring dried oranges! We are finishing off the year with Christmas crafts and presents, we had a fabulous party last week! There will be lots of messy play to get stuck into too. Upon our return in January, we have lots to look forward to as we learn about Chinese New Year, a music week is coming up and we shall be going to space! We all wish you a very merry Christmas from Your baby room Team

**Buds** – Wow, the weeks have flown by and its nearly Christmas already!! We have had lots of festive activities to enjoy including our Christmas party and we loved seeing some of your at our Christmas Workshop!

These past months, although having sped by, have been jam packed with lots and lots of fun activities.

'Owl Babies' was our first book of the week, the children absolutely loved this book, some of them reciting parts of the story themselves by the end of the week! We made some cute owl pictures using feathers and even recreated our very own owls nest collecting leaves and twigs and feathers outside.

We continued lots of outdoor exploration throughout our Autumn topic as well, creating pictures with things we found outside, exploring natural items in playdough, and getting out and about for walks.

The Buds love getting wet and messy both inside and out, we've embraced the wet weather by going out puddle jumping on a number of occasions and have done some large-scale paintings on big cardboard boxes and long rolls of paper, we've used paint rollers and giant brushes to engage the muscles in our arms, shoulders and core working lots on our gross motor skills.

In November, we celebrated Bonfire Night with edible sparklers, glittery paintings, and some firework yoga (complete with firework sound effects)! We also began giving out our new song bags during nursery rhyme week; (unfortunately there are a lot of children and only a few bags so it may take a little while for you to receive these), thank you to those of you who have posted photos of you enjoying the bags at home, any feedback is greatly appreciated.

Our Princes and Princesses topic was a big hit with the Buds, our large cardboard castle encouraged lots of role play and the small world play with castles have been enjoyed lots too.

We'd really love to have your family photos to go on our display board; not just to decorate our walls with but this is a great talking point and often encourages even the quieter, more reluctant children to express excitement on seeing familiar faces.

Abbie and the Buds team

**Berries** – We have had a busy few months in the Berries, celebrating different festivals and having lots of fun. For Halloween the children enjoyed making

spiders and pumpkins decorations to hang up, we carved pumpkins which the children loved, they used the insides to play with and make potions with, we also made Halloween biscuits to enjoy for snack. We then celebrated bonfire night, the children loved making fireworks pictures with coloured sand, splatter painting, making catherine wheels, we talked about fire safety and watched some firework displays on the interactive board. We then learnt about space, the children enjoyed making the different planets to put on a wall display in the correct order and we learnt a bit about each planet, we also watched the moon landing and a shooting star on the interactive board, we also learnt a space sing which the children loved. Over the last couple of weeks, we have been getting ready for Christmas, the children enjoyed helping to decorate the Christmas tree, taking turns to put on the baubles and making snowflakes, bells, candy canes and paper chains toting around the room. We have started making Christmas cards, decorating tree decorations, and doing some lovely Christmas pictures. The children have enjoyed learning Christmas carols and listening to Christmas stories. Last week we had great fun at our Christmas parties, playing pass the parcel, musical bumps and statues, dancing and having a party snack with sausage rolls and party rings. We look forward to the new year and hearing all about the children's Christmas and what they got up to. Merry Christmas from all the Berries staff.