

**Dates for diary**

Tuesday 10th December 3.20pm - 4.30pm Festive Fun!

Butterfly class Christmas plays:

Tuesday 17th December at 10 am

Wednesday 18th December at 1.30 pm

Ladybird class Festive family sing-along

Wednesday 18th December 10am

End of term Friday 20th December @3pm



Term 3 starts Tuesday 7th January 2025

INSET day 2nd June 2025

We have had a wonderful busy term as I am sure you have all seen from the class dojo and tapestry posts.

Our school is thriving and because of an increase in numbers we welcome some new members of staff to the team in January.

Sophie currently runs the after school care and is a practitioner at another nursery school. She will be moving to Wheatley Nursery full time in January to be a key person for the children moving up from the ladybird room. Sophie is also a Forest School leader so brings many skills to the team.

Katy and Fransesca also join the team as teaching assistants in ladybirds and butterflies.

From all the staff at Wheatley Nursery School we wish you a relaxing holiday time and a peaceful New Year and we will return on Tuesday the 7th January 2025.

Natalie  
Headteacher

**Developing a sense of self**



‘Once we believe in ourselves, we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight or any other experience that reveals the

**Butterfly class update**

We have been finding out about nocturnal animals and the children loved the dark area of the nursery that we created. They used torches to find lots of nocturnal animals and read books by torchlight in the reading den. There was a nocturnal animal hunt set up in the garden and the children had lots of fun finding the animals and ticking them off their sheets.



We have really enjoyed our topic of The Gingerbread man. The children especially enjoyed working together to make their own gingerbread men, measuring and mixing the ingredients before using tools to roll out the dough and cut their gingerbread man shape.

The props on the story shelf have been used to retell the story many times. We wondered why the gingerbread man didn't want to swim in the river and discovered that he came to a sticky end when placed in water. The children have been busy designing bridges to help him get across the river safely.

human spirit' - E.E. Cummings.

Who we are (personal), how we get along with others (social) and how we feel (emotional) are foundations that shape our lives. As we grow, we are continually developing our sense of self, as we weave a web of relationships and develop our understanding of ourself, others and the world.

Children's self-image and self-awareness, their emotional understanding and the quality of their relationships affect their self-confidence, their potential to experience joy, to be curious, to wonder, and to face problems, bounce back with resilience and their ability to think and learn.

Developing self-confidence and self-awareness

The development of social skills includes developing an understanding of who you are and of other people. Your child will learn that they are separate to other people and objects and that other people have different views and feelings. During their first five years, your child will develop social skills linked to their sense of self, their interactions with other children and their understanding of how other people behave. Whilst emphasis is often placed on 'getting along with others' or compromising when working as a group, and the skills of sharing or turn-taking, it is important your child holds on to their sense of self throughout this process. Sometimes your child may benefit from support to develop this self-confidence, for example, you may notice that your child may enjoy playing with a favourite toy but will relinquish this immediately when asked, or your child always takes the role of servant in the role play!

Self-confidence allows your child to 'hold on to themselves' and have confidence in their own opinions and views even if encountering others with opposing views. This might be through voicing a different opinion to others, negotiating with others to share an idea or persisting in demonstrating that their feelings are valid and should be accepted. Although we may be pleased to see our children exploring and testing these skills it can be difficult when their opinion differs from ours!

We all know that it can be difficult to think when we are lacking confidence or stressed and learning to recognise how you feel and to control these emotions is an important aspect of emotional development that impacts on learning. Children who find it difficult to regulate their emotions might find it difficult to focus and to learn.

Developing self-confidence and self-awareness enables children to develop healthy relationships, express their emotions and desires and become resilient, self-confident learners. It is good to know this is something that can be nurtured from birth.

As they grow, through watching how the people around them behave your preschooler will begin to understand what to do (or what is expected) in different social situations, for example, they may wave goodbye and say please and thank-you. Allowing your child autonomy and choice around how to greet family members or friends is important, for example, they may prefer to smile



#### The Nursery Gardening Team

We have a professional gardener coming in on a voluntary basis on Friday afternoon and the children have loved helping her with a variety of gardening jobs including planting bulbs, making a leaf compost bin and filling it with leaves, planting sweetpeas and taking cuttings to make new plants



from a distance, rather than give a hug to a relative. By allowing your child to make decisions about how to behave in these social situations you are giving them the understanding that they have choice around interaction, their body and touch.

It is also helpful to provide opportunities for choices during routines and play. For example, holding up two options to play with and asking, "Would you like teddy or ball?" and then continuing to verbalise this choice by saying, "You have chosen teddy." This can be extended to food and drinks, such as "Water or milk?" Using objects to support this, especially with younger children, is key, as it provides a visual prompt and context to your words and can support their understanding of the question. This affirms to your child that their opinions matter and gives them a sense of having agency over what happens to them and around them, from an early age.

Self-awareness helps children to be reflective and think about their actions and behaviour, as well as to step back and consider what others in their environment are experiencing. As they develop, your child will watch others and copy what they are doing, developing language and cognitive skills will support them further as they will engage in co-operative play with other children. Co-operative play involves negotiation, and adjustment through taking on board others' points of view and feelings in order to keep the momentum of the play going or to move towards a common goal or purpose.

Offering your child, the opportunity to meet with other children of different ages and engage in free play can support these developing skills. When conflicts arise, it can be tempting to jump in and sort them out, but sometimes stepping back and allowing a little more time might support your child to find a resolution themselves.

Your pre schooler might also begin to develop their own set of interests and be confident to express these to adults and their peers. It is helpful to encourage these interests and to engage in them, sometimes your child may become the 'expert' around a subject and know more about it than you! This helps support their growing sense of unique identity and self.

The development of personal, social and emotional skills will continue as children reach school age. Through strong foundations children will be confident to try new ideas and activities, and this confidence should be celebrated with them. Children will still want to share their achievements with their parents and familiar adults. It is also important to consider how language is used to celebrate achievements with children at this age, for instance, "Wow, I can see that you have been working hard on your counting," could be more effective than "You are so clever." The former celebrates their hard work over their natural abilities, and will continue to encourage them to keep on trying when learning new things and understanding concepts that they may find difficult.

### **Primary School Applications**





**For those moving onto Primary School in September 2025 please do not forget to apply for your child's school place by January 15th, through the link below.**

[Make an application to infant and primary school | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

### **Christmas Survival**



Christmas is an exciting time for children. Sometimes all the excitement can get a bit stressful for your child/ren. Christmas gives a wonderful opportunity for families to enjoy spending time together and to catch up with friends and extended family. It is also a very exciting time for children.

Sometimes all the excitement, visitors, special food and presents can get a bit stressful for your child/ren.

Here are a few tips for having a calm Christmas:

-Give your child lots of cuddles, attention and praise. During the busy Christmas season try to give them individual attention whenever you can. This will help them feel calm and secure over the busy period.

-Keep up your routine, as far as possible. Your child will find it reassuring if you try to keep to their normal mealtimes and bedtimes. Some children don't respond well to change. It may help if you explain what things will be different during your Christmas celebrations, such as who will be visiting and when you will open presents.

-Keeping to your bedtime routine can help ensure your child gets enough sleep. A lack of sleep can affect a child's mood and behaviour.

-Plan ahead. Try to avoid planning social visits and visitors back-to-back.

-Try to balance fun time and quiet time. Children can't always cope with too many new experiences, sensations, noise and activity all at once and may get over-stimulated or stressed. This may lead to more tears and children becoming more difficult to manage. Some children cope with lots of stimulation and excitement better than others. It can help over the Christmas period to give your child some time, every day to quietly play or rest.

-Presents. Don't expect or force your child to share their presents with other children as they aren't developmentally ready. It will take your child time to learn to share and this is normal.

### **Ladybird class update**

We are enjoying a fun filled term, we have explored a range of themes, including 'Nocturnal animals' 'Our own bedtime routine' 'Whatever Next by Jill Murphy' and are exploring 'Our senses'

The children are thoroughly enjoying singing and signing in preparation for our festive family sing-along! We are creating a lovely repertoire of songs and will be making our own shakers!





-Avoid threats relating to Father Christmas. It may be tempting to use Father Christmas as a way of encouraging good behaviour or punishing bad behaviour. It is best to avoid doing this. Young children don't have mature thinking skills and need to be able to link their behaviour directly with the outcome. Talk of Father Christmas and Christmas is too abstract for them and using these threats may make them feel anxious.

-Allow them (and you) some downtime... Screen time battles are common in households today and Christmas is indeed a time to spend together as a family. However, allow some quiet time during the day where young people can do their own thing. It might be that everyone wants to watch a film together and if so, great!

-Your attention is the most important gift. What our children want most is the attention of their parents, and sometimes bad behaviour is an attempt to get it. Sometimes, our attention over the Christmas period can be distracted as we worry about the specifics of providing for our children during this stressful time. Try to take time out to think about how you can make the day special simply through being present and taking an active interest in spending time with your children.

#### **Staff at Wheatley Nursery School**

**Head Teacher** - Natalie Wilson

**Teacher** - Judy Whittingham/Anne Marie Shenton

**Special Educational Needs Coordinator**- Natalie Wilson

#### **Early Years Professional**

Laura Ashmore (Butterfly room)

Beth Ind (Butterfly)

Anna Brand (Butterfly)

Louise Noble (Ladybird room)

Lucy Sheldon -Moncur (Ladybird)

Amanda Lyne (Ladybird)

#### **Teaching Assistants**

Sharon Butterfield

Sharon Slatter

Kayleigh Collins

Julie O'Day

Amber Hill

Keely Chatteris

Shalni Mashi

**Apprentice** - Daisy Pinkney

**Forest School After School Leader** - Sophie Naish

**Administrator** - Anna Harries

**Wheatley Nursery School Website:**

[www.wheatleynurseryschool.org](http://www.wheatleynurseryschool.org).





**NO NUTS  
NO SESAME  
SEEDS**



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Contact: 01865 598044 or [admin@wheatleynurseryschool.com](mailto:admin@wheatleynurseryschool.com)

