



# Little Feet Newsletter

April – July 2021

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## *Nursery introduction and developments*

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As national lockdown begins to ease, hopefully for the last time, we are pleased to inform you that all the staff in nursery have now been offered the vaccination and have their dates booked or already had the first injection. There are a few staff members who are still considering their options around the vaccine, and that is their choice to do so, but to put minds at rest, we are now provided with lateral flow tests which all staff administer twice weekly to ensure they are not COVID positive and are limiting any possible spread.

Keep an eye out on our Facebook page to for any of the latest information. We have recently begun to share more information on individual rooms, the staff who work in the rooms, videos of the rooms and the resources within. This is due to the limited access parents now have in nursery. We have found them to be extremely popular and hope parents/carers are enjoying reading and seeing them all.

If you have a term-time (38-week) contract, could you please let the staff know if you require any sessions during school holidays.

We have now reintroduced our hot lunches to nursery using a company called Bellissimo from Monday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Thank you to all our parents/carers for their response and ordering from the menus. We are excited to be working with this company, and the children will enjoy some delicious food.

If your child is eligible for 2, 3, or 4-year funded hours, please see within the funding section of the newsletter how to apply. Nursery will then provide you with an FE1 contract to apply to the local authority for that funding. Please remember, your child is eligible the term after their birthday.

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## *Staffing*

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We have staff information in the entrance area for each room, and they are posted on tapestry too with all staff who work in that provision room. We also share with you a short bio from new starters to help you know who is in each room. Please say hello if you see a new face. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

As most of you will be aware Steph from Muggle Wumps is expecting her first baby. We are all extremely excited for this bundle of love to arrive, but it does mean we will lose Steph whilst on maternity leave. To ensure as much consistency as possible this mean Lauren will be moving over to Muggle Wumps from after the Easter holidays (w/c 19<sup>th</sup> April) with Amy Brown picking up the room leader role in Oompa Loompas. Amy is amid her Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) year, and it will allow her to gain experience within Oompa Loompas, whilst continuing to concentrate on her year gaining valuable teaching experience and delivering high-quality activities, along with taking on the responsibility of room leader. The rest of the Muggle Wump team will stay the same, and we know you will wish Steph all the best for her maternity leave. Any change is always challenging, but we are aiming to keep the disruption to a minimum whilst keeping experience, key workers, and relationships for children and parents with current staff.

## *Room feedback*

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### **GLOW WORMS**

In April/ May the Glow worms are going to be continuing with the 'Spring' topic, where the theme of growing will be resumed, with lots of colourful, fun and engaging activities. The children will be enjoying some spring role play activities such as: Easter photo booth where the children will be able to use the different props to represent Easter. We will take lots of pictures of the children in the Easter photo booth to upload to Tapestry so you can see the fun they will be having! We will also be having lots of exciting role play activities out such as: Cafe, fruit and vegetable shop and the garden centre.

We are going to be doing lots more messy activities! This will include colourful edible yoghurt painting, jelly and custard! We are going to be exploring fruit and vegetables where we will be doing some printing with real fruit and vegetables for our new display in our dining area. We will be doing biscuit decorating where the children can get involved and use their fine motor skills to decorate their own biscuits to take home. During snack times we are also going to be making fruit smoothies for the Glow worms to enjoy!

As we start to approach June, we will be starting a new topic 'Summer'. We will be enjoying water play and sensory activities including a variety of summer materials. We will be making summer themed sensory bottles for the children to explore. As it is Father's Day on 20th June, we will be getting creative to make Father's Day cards ready to take home. The Glow worms will be having lots of fun outside where we will be having out fun activities including water play.

In July we will be continuing with our Summer topic with the theme of 'At the Seaside' where we will be doing lots of activities in relation to this for example: building sandcastles and decorating our own ice cream! There will be a variety of role play and small world activities such as: the ice cream parlour, airport, travel agents and lots more!

We have started to send home our story bags and we would love to see some pictures/videos of these as your child's key worker can link these to development milestones.

We would like to thank you all once again for your continued support. We are always here via tapestry and in person should you need anything, we are always happy to help.

### **GRASSHOPPERS**

The grasshopper children have started to embrace our new topic spring at the start of April, we have planned craft, messy and small world activities with Easter and spring as a focus. The children have begun to take part in making Easter buns, cards and flower printing which will continue into the Easter holidays. We have noticed how excited the grasshopper children have been when taking part in baking activities and plan to include more activities like this over the next few months.

Towards the end of April and leading into May we will be talking to the children about insects and animals and have recently set up a fish tank with frogspawn in the room to give the children the opportunity to learn through first-hand experiences. The tank is accessible to all children and as the frogspawn develops the children can see for themselves the process of change. We have

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planned for small groups to go on a local walk when we are lucky enough to have froglets and allow the children to be really hands on in this process.

In June we will be changing to a summer topic and we will be carrying out craft and additional activities to prepare for Father's Day and include all children in making a card and a gift for their much-loved father figures or relatives. To promote our summer topic, we will be making colourful summer dancing ribbons, summer themed sensory bottles for our indoor and outdoor area and more messy activities including coloured sand and water play. We will be extending the children's learning through adding summer themes to our role play and small World area, campsite, seaside, ice cream parlour and Teddy bear's picnic.

We have started to send home our story box with lovely hand knitted characters, props and book, "three little pigs" this is being rotated weekly and we aim to ensure all children have a turn. The items are cleaned before being passed along and we would love to see photos/videos of the children and parents reading the story and listing any words or phrases used by the grasshopper children.

Thank you to all our parents for the lovely feedback on Facebook regarding the grasshopper room and staff and all those who post on tapestry to share at home events with the staff.

## OOMPA LOOMPAS

This month the Oompa Loompa's are learning about 'The World'. During this topic, the children will be exploring different countries and their cultures as well as our surrounding area. This will help to broaden the children's experiences, especially during this time when travelling has been limited. The Oompa Loompa's will have the opportunity to explore different cuisines from around the world with an opportunity for food tasting! In our mark making area, the children will be encouraged to take part in some flag painting. This will allow the children to explore creating different patterns, mixing colours, and practicing their fine motor skills. Throughout the topic the children will have the opportunity to explore different languages and greetings from a variety of countries. To end this topic, we will be having a 'Space Themed Week' where the children can explore being an astronaut in space. The Oompa Loompa's will be challenged to construct a 3D rocket using junk modelling materials whilst discussing the features it will need to be lived in. During this week the children will be encouraged to imagine what 'Space' would look like and use WOW words to describe what they may see.

In May we will be moving on to our topic of 'Growing'. During this topic the Oompa Loompa's will have the opportunity to learn how plants and animals grow. The children will be encouraged to closely look at how a caterpillar turns into a butterfly by looking after them in our classroom. We will then set them free in our playground and discuss how they have changed and grown over time. In the small world area, the Oompa Loompa's will have opportunities for practical learning, exploring the different stages of the plant growing process. The children will plant sunflower seeds and watch them grow. We will use this as a discussion point to learn about what plants need to survive and grow. In the mark making area the children will be encouraged to draw the different stages of growth for plants and animals. The Oompa Loompa's will be challenged to develop an understanding of how people grow and compare it to plants/animals.

Throughout June the Oompa Loompa's will be learning about 'Transport'. The children will be encouraged to recall their own observations and experiences of different vehicles and how they move. The Oompa Loompa's will have the opportunity to construct different models of transport using junk modelling materials and put them into practice outside in the playground. We will discuss the purpose of different transport vehicles and why we would use certain vehicles. The children will be encouraged to observe the different vehicles that they can see on Callywhite Lane, be challenged to identify their different shapes, and use WOW words to describe the different vehicles. The Oompa Loompa's will also be set the challenge of constructing a boat,

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then testing it to see whether it will float on water.

Moving on to July, the children will be learning all about 'Holidays'. The Oompa Loompa's will have the opportunity to discuss their own experiences and visually represent their own holidays with their loved ones. The children will be encouraged to discuss what they may take on their holiday and what they may not need to take. The Oompa Loompa's will be exploring different types of holidays and be encouraged to act these out in the role play area. We will learn about different holiday climates and what we would need to pack. The children can explore different textures, representing different types of holidays. At the end of the topic, we will conduct a research project to find out which type of holiday the Oompa Loompa's would enjoy the most.

## MUGGLE WUMPS

In the Muggle Wump room our current topic is 'Growing', which the children have already thrown themselves into. We have been incredibly lucky to acquire some frogspawn for the children to observe as they grow and develop through their life cycle. The children have helped build a habitat for them from logs and leaves to large stones. We will also be doing some planting within the classroom, learning what is needed for things to grow. The children will then learn the stages of plant growth, looking closely at what factors/environments are better for them to grow in. We are so excited to also be taking part in some home learning/competitions as the children will be growing their own sun flowers at home. The Muggle Wumps will have to observe and measure their sunflower closely and learn firsthand what is important for flowers to grow healthily.

In May the Muggle Wumps will be looking at 'Transport'. We will be focusing on the different types of transport we see every day, creating tallies of what modes of transport they use to get to nursery. We will also spend our time looking at other forms of transport we may not use very often, discussing why we might use them and our experiences with them. The Muggle Wumps will also have the chance to create their own modes of transport with our junk modelling activities in the art area. We will get the children to think about what shapes and colours are needed to represent them also look closely at all the details from doors/windows to buttons the vehicle may have.

During June the Muggle Wumps will be exploring the world in our topic 'All Around the World'. We will be taking a closer look at certain countries, discussing their culture, language and even getting to try some of their foods. The children will also be taking part in some physical activities, creating crafts that reflect different cultures/countries and learning dances/movements which these countries take part in. During this topic we will also be looking closely at our world map, pointing out where these different countries are and looking up how long it may take us to get there on the internet. We will be comparing these distances for each country from the UK and commenting on how we might travel there.

Then in July the Muggle Wumps will be taking part in our topic 'Holidays'. Here the children will get to talk about their own experiences on holiday. We will be taking part in show and tell where the children will have chance to show off and talk about pictures/post cards, souvenirs, and other memorable items from their holidays. We cannot wait to hear all about it!

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## *Library and Chatterboxes*

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All our rooms now have their own library, but we still need more children to be accessing the provision and chatter boxes as this is a vital part of your child's development. You can join for a

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one-off payment of £3. Once a member, you can change your child's book with them each week. We also have 'Chatter box library' which has boxes of activities in for you to take home and do with your child. We are also advising that you spend at least 5 minutes a day looking at a story with your child. We now have some handmade story sacks, courtesy of Steph, that you can take home with your child. There is 'Dear Zoo', 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', 'The Three Little Pigs', 'Jack and the beanstalk' and many more to come. These are excellent for extending your child's imagination and memory skills as they can retell the story their own way using the knitted toys as props. We would love to see some of these being signed out and used with the children and do not hesitate to upload any pictures of videos to tapestry, the staff are always interested in seeing what the children have been up to.

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## *Tapestry*

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To access your child's account online, you need to go to [tapestryjournal.com](http://tapestryjournal.com). If you use tapestry through an app on your phone, you will also need to make sure you have the updated version. Please remember, to access your child learning journey in full, you need to visit tapestry online. The reports that are done **do not** show up on your app. Any problems, please ask a member of staff. **We still need to see more contributions from parents** with photos and observations from home. These can be of anything you want e.g., if your child achieves something new, days out, family occasions etc. We can then use them to feed into the planning and activities to deliver at nursery. After reading your child's observations or reports, could you please add some feedback/comments. There is a box at the bottom for parent comments and a like button too!

With some of our recent changes, Tapestry has now become even more important for parents to check and be involved with. We are no longer giving out paper copies of accidents, medication, or incidents, but these are now all logged on the portal. We need parents to ensure they acknowledge they have read and understood the information we have shared.

If your log in has expired, please let us know, we will happily reactivate for you.

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## *Uniform*

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If you would like to order any uniform for your child just ask in your room or the office, we can either email you an order form, or you can complete your order with us directly. Please note payment by BACS is preferred, or we can add the amount onto your monthly invoice should that be preferable.

The uniform comes in sizes 1-2 yrs, 3-4 yrs and 5-6 yrs. Orders are placed every term. The order forms need to be in by the last day of term and will be here in time for the new term. We would like to encourage all the pre-school to wear the uniform as it will help them to take another steppingstone in preparing them for their transition to school.

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## *Woodland Group*

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We normally run two Woodland groups each week, splitting our numbers to make sure all the children get out into the woods and enjoy the outdoor learning. We will inform parents through tapestry when we will be taking the children and share the photos of our activities.

A copy of the planning can be requested by tapestry should you wish to see the activities the children participate in.

\*Please remember to send suitable clothing and footwear for your child or it may not be suitable or safe for them to participate. We do still go into the woods if the weather is slightly inclement.

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## *Forthcoming Events at Nursery/Dates for your diary*

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### **PARENTS EVENING 17<sup>TH</sup> TO 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY 2021**

Our least parent's evening was held over a week as we trialed telephoning our parents at an agreed time to discuss their child's learning and development due to the restrictions. It was a huge success and we had almost 100% uptake on the calls. We found parents preferred this as it meant they did not have to leave their child at home whilst attending nursery for a physical appointment but could relax in the comfort of their home and discuss with their key worker. We will be continuing this theme for our next parents evening and it will be held from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> to Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May.

### **PHOTOGRAPHER 8<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2021**

Due to the restrictions, we were not able to have the photographer into nursery last year meaning lots of parents did not get their annual keepsake from nursery of their child/ren. This year we are happy to inform you all we will be having the photographer in on July 8<sup>th</sup> for the day. To keep movement around nursery to a minimum we will be setting up in the reception area. Children will come for their photographs there and if you have older or younger siblings, we will welcome them for the photographs too. If you would like your child to be changed into a specific outfit for the photograph, we will, as normal change them prior to being photographed.

### **MUGGLE WUMPS GRADUATION SATURDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> JULY 2021**

Last year we held our graduation outdoors due to the virus restrictions, the weather was extremely kind, and the event went well. At that time, we were not able to offer refreshments, but we are hoping this year to repeat the outdoor event, but with a little extra for parents/carers and children. We will be starting the ceremony at 10:30, there will be an opportunity for you to photograph your child in their mortar board and receiving their certificate. We have over 60 children leaving Little Feet this year, so it will be a busy event!

### **SUMMER FAYRE SATURDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2021 (PROVISIONAL DATE)**

We have planned provisionally to host our Summer Fayre on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> August from 11am – 2pm. This is in obedience until we have received the lockdown restrictions and authority to hold

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the event. Put this in your diary, as it's a day we love to share with all our children and families and one that is normally so well attended with lots of fun, games and food!

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## *Phone numbers and Email addresses*

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Could you inform nursery of any change in your contact details, this is for both emails and phone numbers please in case we need to contact you or for any nursery correspondence.

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## *Fees*

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Invoices are issued on the week prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of the following month. Please may we remind you that fees need to be paid by **10<sup>th</sup>** of each month to avoid late charges.

If your child is on a term time contract (38-weeks), please make sure you inform the office what hours they will be attending in the holidays.

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## *General reminders*

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It is important your child has a spare set of clothes for nursery and that all clothes are labeled with their names to avoid things being lost or misplaced.

Can we also remind parents/carer that we need adequate notice to be able to book children in for extra hours or session as it affects the ratios of staff to children, and we cannot always accommodate them but will always try our best to do so. We require 48 hours-notice to cancel any extra session booked or you will still be charged, along with 4 weeks-notice to make any changes to your child's contract.

Please can you make sure that your child is not dropped off earlier or picked up later than their booked session as this has an impact on the staff ratios. Any child collected late or dropped off early will be issued with a late/early payment charge.

As the weather is very unpredictable, can you please make sure you send suitable clothing for your child, especially for outdoors and that **all** items are clothing and shoes/wellies are clearly labeled with your child's name.

If your child is booked in for breakfast, can you please make sure your child is at nursery **no later than 8.20am** as we are finding a lot of children are coming in at 8.30-9.00am and still requiring breakfast. This has a huge impact on the start of the day as the rooms cannot begin their activities until children have finished eating and we therefore lose out of important parts of their nursery day.

## *Footwear*

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Where possible, can you send your child to nursery with shoes that either slip on or fasten with Velcro. This helps the children become more independent by putting their own shoes on and makes getting ready to go outside more quickly so we have more time for outdoor play.

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## *Toys*

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We are finding that a lot of children are now bringing toys to nursery. This can cause problems between the children and toys are getting lost or broken. If your child comes to nursery with a toy, we are asking for them to be left in their bags to hopefully eliminate this problem.

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## *Lost Property*

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We amass a huge amount of lost property in nursery, some of which is labelled, and we can direct it to its rightful owner, whilst other items do not appear to have a home. At the end of each term, we will take articles to the charity shop, or, in some cases dispose of them altogether, so please ask if you have missing items.

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## *Safeguarding*

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Can you please inform nursery if your child will be absent for sickness and/or holidays? If your child does not attend their usual session and we do not receive a phone call or email to let us know why then we have a duty of care to ring you and ascertain their whereabouts and safety.

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## *Illness and Medication*

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Please can you make sure that if your child has been sick or had diarrhea that they do not return to nursery **until 48 hours after** the last bout of sickness/diarrhea. Any child returning before this time will not be allowed to stay.

If your child is prescribed antibiotics, they need to have been administered for **48 hours before** they can return to nursery.

- Children taking prescribed medication must be well enough to attend the setting.
- Only medication prescribed by a doctor (or other medically qualified person) is administered. It must be in-date and prescribed for the current condition (medicines containing aspirin will only be given if prescribed by a doctor).

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- NB Children's paracetamol (un-prescribed) is administered only for children with the verbal consent of the parents in the case of a high temperature. This is to prevent febrile convulsion and where a parent or named person is on their way to collect the child.
- Children's prescribed medicines are stored in their original containers, are clearly labelled and are inaccessible to the children.
- Parents give prior written permission for the administration of medication. The staff receiving the medication must ask the parent to sign a consent form stating the following information. No medication may be given without these details being provided:

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## *NEG funding*

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Applying for NEG funding can be confusing with uncertainty as to whether you are eligible. We have put below some information that will help you. If you require any further information, please ask at nursery, or contact the numbers below for Derbyshire County Council.

### **2 YEAR FREE CHILDCARE EXPLAINED**

Families on a low income or on certain benefits can now get up to 15 hours of free childcare a week for their 2-year-olds, see below for the information on eligibility and applying.

### **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**

Working families with a household income of less than £16,190 a year and receiving Working Tax Credits or Child Tax Credits.

Families in receipt of one or more of the following benefits:

- Income Support
- Income-based job seeker's allowance
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI

### **WHAT WILL MY CHILD GET?**

Your child is entitled to up to 15 hours of free childcare per week during term time (38 weeks). We will allow you to take fewer hours a week but stretched across the year. You can choose either option if your early years education provider can meet your needs.

### **WHEN IS MY CHILD ELIGIBLE?**

Your child will be entitled to the free place from the term following their second birthday:

- if your child was born between 1 January and 31 March you are entitled to a free place from the start of the summer term - which starts after Easter

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- if your child was born between 1 April and 31 August you are entitled to the place from the start of the autumn term in September
- if your child was born between 1 September and 31 December you are entitled to a free place from the start of the spring term in January

## WHERE CAN MY CHILD ATTEND?

We have signed an agreement with Derbyshire County Council to deliver early years education for two-year-olds.

## HOW DO I APPLY FOR THE FUNDING?

You can apply by completing the [online form](#) or call us tel: 01629 539316 or 01629 539317 or 01629 539319 and we'll let you know if you qualify.

We will need the following information:

- National Insurance Number
- child's name
- child's date of birth

If you qualify you will receive a funding approval letter which you can bring to Little Feet and we will work with you to accommodate your hours.

## FIFTEEN HOURS OF FREE CHILDCARE FOR 2, 3- AND 4-YEAR-OLD EXPLAINED

In Derbyshire, all families are entitled to up to 570 hours of free early education from the term following a child's third birthday. Free early education funding only applies until a child either starts school reception after the child's fourth birthday or reaches compulsory school age (the term following the child's fifth birthday). Where a parent chooses to defer their child's school place and their child is of compulsory school age, the free early education funding will not continue at the parents chosen provider. Some families are also entitled to up to 15 hours' free childcare a week for their 2-year-old if they are on low incomes or certain benefits.

Little Feet will 'stretch' the funding over 52 weeks. This lowers the number of hours but offers yearlong attendance.

## WHEN CHILDREN ARE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE NURSERY EDUCATION

If your child's birthday is 1 January to 31 March - first term eligible is Easter (term 5).

If your child's birthday is 1 April to 31 August - first term eligible is September (term 1).

If your child's birthday is 1 September to 31 December - first term eligible is January (term 3).

## APPLYING FOR FREE NURSERY EDUCATION

Once you know what there is in your area, contact providers to find out what they offer. When you have chosen a provider, they will ask you to complete any necessary forms and then notify us so that we can process the payments. Remember to contact us well before your child becomes

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eligible, so your application is completed, and you have received notification you will be receiving the funding.

## **30 FREE HOURS 3 AND 4-YEAR-OLD EXPLAINED**

Since September 2017 many working families have been able to get up to 30 hours of funded childcare a week. This extra free childcare, which is worth around £2,280 per year, aims to help working families by reducing the cost of childcare and will support more parents into work or to work more hours if they want to.

## **ELIGIBILITY FOR 30 HOURS FUNDED CHILDCARE**

To be eligible families must meet the following criteria:

- both parents must be working (or the sole parent in a single parent family)
- each parent must have a weekly income equivalent to 16 hours at national minimum or living wage.
- neither parent has an income of more than £100,000 per year

Parents do not necessarily need to work 16 hours a week, but earnings must be equal to 16 hours of work per week at the national minimum wage. This includes parents on zero hours contracts who meet the criteria.

### **[View the current minimum wage rates.](#)**

Families where one parent does not work (or neither parent works) will not usually be eligible. In some circumstances a family may be eligible where both parents are employed but one (or both parents) is temporarily away from the workplace on maternity or paternity leave, adoption leave or statutory sick pay or where one parent is employed, and one parent has substantial caring responsibilities or is disabled or incapacitated. These are both based on receipt of specific benefits. Eligibility will be assessed by Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

If you meet the eligibility criteria you should be able to take up a place if:

- you have a valid eligibility code from HMRC.
- it is the term after your child's third birthday, or later until the child reaches compulsory school age.
- you received your code from HMRC prior to the term in which you would like your child to start their 30 hours place.

Do not forget even if you are not entitled to the 30 hours extended entitlement your child will still be entitled to the universal 15 hours of free early education. If eligible your child will qualify for the funded early years education until they are in a reception class or reach compulsory school age.

Thank you for your continued support, we hope you have a fantastic term, we are all excited about the remainder of the year.

Little Feet Nursery team

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## **TERM TIME & GRANT TERMS 2020-2021**

**SEPT 1<sup>ST</sup>- OCT 23<sup>RD</sup>**

**NOV 2<sup>ND</sup> – DEC 18<sup>TH</sup>**

**JAN 4<sup>TH</sup> – FEB 12<sup>TH</sup>**

**FEB 22<sup>ND</sup>– APR 2<sup>ND</sup>**

**APR 19<sup>TH</sup> – MAY 28<sup>TH</sup>**

**JUN 7<sup>TH</sup> – JULY 22<sup>ND</sup>**

## **BANK HOLIDAYS 2020-2021**

**DEC 25<sup>TH</sup> & 26<sup>TH</sup>**

**JAN 1<sup>ST</sup>**

**APRIL 2<sup>ND</sup> & 5<sup>TH</sup>**

**MAY 3<sup>RD</sup>**

**MAY 31<sup>ST</sup>**

**AUG 30<sup>TH</sup>**

**DEC 27<sup>TH</sup> & 28<sup>TH</sup>**