

The Wendy House Shingay

June Newsletter 2018



Outdoor plans update!

You may have already noticed that our plans to extend our outdoor provision are well underway. The children have all been very excited by the sight of diggers and Colin and Tom, our amazing grounds men who always work hard to make our plans a reality! The boardwalk, which extends out over one of the reed beds, is now finished and it really is fantastic. The Wildlife Watchers conservation cabin will be erected this week. This will be a wooden construction, which will nestle snugly against the hedgerow and will be a space where we can take all of the children to immerse them in nature, wildlife and the great outdoors. Wild flower seeds have been sown around the camp, which not only will look lovely but will also help to encourage wildlife and create more natural habitats.



As if this wasn't enough – there is more! Colin and Tom have created an amazing nature maze heading down to Wendy Wood, using all the four acres we have available to us. There are natural resting places and observation points along the way, as well as natural obstacles for the children to climb and walk along, allowing them to test their physical skills to the full. The nature maze will very much be an organic process and will be adapted and added to as we start to use the space and work out what works and what the children can benefit from. Eventually we will have a 'hide' so that the children can observe the many different birds (and other wildlife) up close. We also have plans to make a den in a separate wooded area.

We are super excited by all of this, as it's a major step forward in enabling the children to understand and appreciate their natural surroundings. Children at The Wendy House really are outdoor learners and we can't wait for them to get out there and explore even more! Everyone will get a chance to come and look to see for themselves the work that has been going on. We will advise parents when we will take them on a tour of the grounds.

Graduation party – date for your diary

The Sunflower's Graduation Party this year will be held on **Wednesday 18th July from 9.15 am – 12.15 pm**. Once again we will have the lovely animals from Ark Farm, which will include a pony for the children to ride.

The party is a celebration for the children who are leaving us to go to school, but all the Sunflowers are invited. If you have a Sunflower who doesn't usually attend on Wednesdays we would love them to come along and enjoy the fun. There is no charge for those that don't attend Wednesdays; all we ask is that you collect promptly. Please advise us as soon as you can if your child is able to come along so that we can arrange catering and staffing for the day. *All leaver's parents will be notified of Parent's Evening in due course.*



Around and about the Nursery



Bassingbourn students welcomed at The Wendy House

During May we held an Apprentice 'Taster Day' for students of Bassingbourn Village College. We hosted a lovely group of students who spent the day learning exactly what goes on in a Nursery. They all commented that they didn't realise just how much hard work goes into caring for children and were surprised at the qualification criteria and knowledge needed to work in our special field. The children absolutely loved having them here for the day, especially the Sunflowers who enjoyed telling the students what they like to do. A session in Wendy Wood was the highlight of the day for all the students. When asked what they enjoyed most about the day, it was lovely to hear one of the students say immediately 'Cuddles'. Hopefully we will see them again in a few years when they leave school!



It's Hola from Lisa

Following on from Michelle's 'Boot Camp', this month Lisa told the children about her love for all things Spanish.

She incorporated colours, language, food and gave a real flavour of the country she loves to visit so much. The children were all enthralled and Lisa's natural flair for entertainment ensured that the children gained a lot from 'travelling' to Spain with her! *Next month Annie's show and tell will be about her trip to Borneo and seeing the orangutans!*



.... and Hello to Hannah!

We would like to introduce everyone to the newest member of our team. Hannah is a Level 2 qualified Nursery Practitioner who will be training towards her Level 3 with us. She is currently working across the Nursery in all of the rooms as she gets to know the children. She will be assigned a permanent room in time and assigned key children. Hannah has already settled in exceptionally well and we are looking forward to her contribution to the Nursery as time goes on.



Chloe & Alfred

It was lovely to see Chloe and baby Alfred when they popped in to say hello to everyone. As we have had so many parents ask after Chloe and her new baby, here is a pic of her baby boy! Both are doing fantastically well. Chloe would like to thank everyone for the good wishes and lovely gifts and looks forward to seeing everyone soon.

A plea from the residents of Wendy

We have been asked by the local residents of Wendy to remind everyone of the 30 mph speed limit in the village, which we are happy to oblige. Residents in Wendy are asking local businesses to help in reminding drivers to slow down as they travel through their village. They want to make it safer for everyone, particularly the children, as there is an open play area and also for the school children who have to wait by the side of the road for their school bus. With no paving in the village these children are particularly vulnerable to speeding cars.

Please be mindful of the safety of others.

Digital Safety

Children now have access to a huge range of technology that, when used moderately and safely, can have a positive impact on their learning and development.

Following recent Child Protection training, we have identified online and technology safety as an area that we feel should be highlighted due to children's increasing use of smart phones, the Internet and mobile applications.



We have been working alongside The Vodafone Foundation to increase our own awareness and would like to share the charity's most recent publication '**Digital Parenting**' with you all – these will be handed out over the next week. The magazine has many helpful tips and advice for parents of children of all ages, which we hope you will find useful.

Bluebells

Our Bluebells enjoyed the warm spring weather of May.

Many of the children visited garden centres choosing brightly coloured flowers and plants for their homes and gardens. For others it was an ideal time to visit the seaside, parks and village fetes. Sophia started taking her first steps moving around the garden, painting pictures, painting herself and Mummy. Monty did lots of splashing in his paddling pool while enjoying his BBQ. Julian collected pebbles on Sheringham Beach. Angus ate pizza in the warm Italian sunshine with his family.

The month of May gave us lots of different themes for the children to experience.

Walk in the Woods Month

Julian enjoyed going to Norfolk and visiting lots of National Trust properties, walking in a bluebell wood and collecting sticks. As the weather this month has been warm and sunny it has given us the ideal opportunity to go for a walk around the Nursery grounds looking at the trees and flowers. Cora, Lily, Amilia, Angus and Ava sat under the trees looking at leaves and sticks while Julian, Jack, Sophia and Monty walked around holding Danielle's and Catelyn's hands. Lisa organised an activity for the children to make their very own branches to hang in the Bluebell room, scrunching, crumpling and sticking tissue paper leaves onto green card.

Plant Conservation Day

After visiting the allotment and seeing the new shoots growing in the raised beds, Danielle and Catelyn made a large felt board and lots of laminated flowers, vegetables and leaves, the children were encouraged to build a garden following simple gestures and single words enjoying an 'I can do' attitude, taking off and putting on the flowers.

Be kind to animals week

The children sat together in small groups looking at a pictures Sophia brought in of her dog Riley enjoying the sunshine in her garden. George and Callie brought in some lovely pictures of their cats Treacle and Tigger. They both did lots of pointing and babbling when looking at their cats. Ava's parents told us about seeing her friend's guinea pigs, watching them in the garden.

All the children played with the dogs, cats and rabbits in the small world tray filling and emptying the baskets. The children sat looking at laminated pictures of cats and dogs reaching in and pulling out the laminated pictures from the bookcase.

We have been looking at lots of colourful books with planes, diggers and farm animals, turning pages and using different sounds and noises when seeing recognisable pictures.

We offer the warmest of welcomes to Charlotte and Laurence who joined us this month and a sad 'see you through the gate' to Ava who is moving to the Poppy room.

PLEASE LET US KNOW OF ANY HOLIDAYS YOU MAY HAVE BOOKED – THANK YOU.

Poppies

We started off this month with the May Bank Holiday. All of the Poppies came in raring to go after a lovely long weekend. They had all got up to lots of exciting things over the weekend, especially outdoors as we have had lovely weather to play in. Robyn and Albert had a BBQ with their families and Ivy had a picnic in the park, so we have been pretending to have picnics ourselves at Nursery. Robyn loved saying “Yum yum” pretending to feed herself food with the spoon. The Poppies passed the food round to each other, pretending to scoop it out of the bowls.

Lots of the Poppies have been having fun at the park and trying out all the toys. Lola had lots of fun on the seesaw, so we have been using the seesaw at Nursery and singing “Row row”. Charlie loved saying “splash” and clapping his hands pretending to fall in the water. We have also been using the scooters as Violet has been going on her bike to the park. William pushed the scooter along saying “Weeeee” as he stood on it to go.

Spencer went to the beach and got to make sandcastles and lots of the Poppies have been playing in sandpits at parks so we have been doing lots of sand messy play in the garden, doing lots of digging and pouring of the sand. We also played with colourful sand where we got to move our hands in it and observe the marks left behind. Ivy moved her hand in the sand watching it leave marks and copied the adult saying “blue”.

William and Ivy went swimming at the weekends, so we have been getting messy with water play. All the Poppies splashed their hands in the water, laughing at the water going everywhere! Oliver picked up the fish in the water and said “fish” squishing it so it squirted water out of its mouth. Jacob splashed his hands in the water, giggling at it making ripples when he moved his hands.

May included ‘Be Kind to Animals Week’ so all the Poppies brought in pictures of their animals to show their friends. Lola brought in a picture of her on her horse when riding it and a picture of her big dog, which all her friends got excited about and clapped their hands. Albert brought in a picture of his next-door neighbour’s dog to show his friends and all the Poppies said “Woof woof” to the picture, pointing at it.

It has also been ‘Plant Conservation Day’ and ‘Walk in the Woods’ month, so we have been going to the allotment to water the plants and look at the flowers we can see there and on the way. All the Poppies picked up a watering can and walked around the allotment pouring them onto the soil. Charlie saw a bird and shouted “bird, bird”, pointing at it to show all his friends where it was. We have also been picking up leaves we find on the floor, to feel the different textures of them and use crayons to do tracing of them through the paper. All the Poppies have been practicing saying the word tree and watching the leaves fall off when the wind blows in the garden.

We welcome Ava to the Poppy room this month and wish Oliver and Robyn all the best as they move to the Daisy room.

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Daisies

In the Daisy room this month we have been exploring our natural environment, through 'Walk in the Woods' Month. All the Daisies got to experience a walk down to our lovely Wendy Wood to have a look and see how amazing a wood space can be. We sat down and listened to the birds tweeting and chirping in the trees and laid down on our backs to look at the clouds, enjoying the natural sounds and shapes around us. The Daisies learnt about the different trees we have in our grounds. We found a pear tree, a silver birch and of course our big willow trees near the pond. Feeling the different tree trunks and looking closely at the differences in leaves from each tree gave the Daisies lots to talk about. We all listened to what trees do for us and animals and especially how we need to be kind to them to support them to grow. This tied in nicely to us celebrating 'Plant Conservation Day'. As a group we are growing runner beans in our room through clear pockets so we can see the roots and plant grow. We learnt that plants need water, food and sunlight to grow healthy and strong.

The sunny weekends aided the Daisies interest in plants and how we care for them with many of our new budding gardeners spending time with their families out in their gardens, caring for their plants and animals. Ayla moved some flowerpots in her garden and seemed surprised to find lots of frogs seeking shelter!

It was also 'Be Kind to Animals' week and some of the Daisies brought in photos of their animal companions in to show everyone. The animals ranged from dogs, cats and rabbits. Beatrix beamed with pride when she showed everyone her dog, Ruffles. She talked through how she walks him with her family and we all spoke about how important it is that dogs get exercised. Zoe showed us a photo of her rabbit, Hamish, in his run getting his own exercise and we spoke about how important it was that rabbits have an outdoor run as well as a safe, quiet space. The Daisies all listened about how we care for animals in and out of our homes. We opened up a walk-in veterinary clinic where the children could bring their animals and talk through how to keep them happy and healthy.

The Daisies interests this month have been focused around experiencing different activities out and about in the glorious weather we have been enjoying. Rory and Annika both had trips to waterways, experiencing time on a boat and a punt. The Daisies were amazed when we shared their tales of what they both came across on the water. Ducks seemed to be very popular on both trips so in the room we made a water play tray adding ducks and boats for us to recreate what they had seen.

This month we welcome Oliver and Robyn to the Daisy room - we hope you enjoy your time with us! We say a fond farewell to Max, Ayla and Lochlan who are moving through to the Sunflower room.

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Sunflowers

The month of May brought us lots of new activities and themes to explore and of course lots of sunshine!

Many of the Sunflowers have been spending time in their gardens, weeding, planting vegetables and seeds. The Sunflowers have been on many visits to the allotment where they have been helping to water our growing produce. We were all very excited when planting our own sunflowers, which we are carefully watering each day and waiting for them to grow – will they grow as tall as last year?! Lauren has been reading us 'A seed in need' and this has been helping us to understand the life cycle of a plant.

The month of May saw the Sunflowers talking about how we are kind and care for animals. The children sat together and looked at the pictures we had brought in of our pets and it was lovely to hear the children tell funny stories about pets. We met Thomas's cat, Toby; Matthew's cat, Flash; Erin's Rabbit, Hamish; Eleanor's dog, Sherbet; Maisie's friend's dog, Harley; Etta's cat, Marnie; Annabel's cat, Missy; Ben's chickens and Charlotte told us lots of stories about her guinea pigs, Bob and Jell.

Eleanor visited a race track with her family and saw lots of different racing cars. The Sunflowers designed their own racing cars using different sized paper sheets. Tina brought in some magazines of racing cars and the children sat in small groups and cut out their favourite cars - monster trucks were a favourite! Some excellent cutting skills were observed. The Sunflowers wanted to know what noises the racing cars made as well as other types of vehicles and alongside an adult the children listened to different vehicle sounds and matched them to the right vehicles.

As part of our work for 'Plant Conservation Day', Lauren brought in a variety of plant cuttings for us to look at and these included buddleia, blossom, daisies, peonies, bluebells and honey suckle. The children used magnifying glasses and all of their senses to get a closer look at the flowers. The children each had a turn smelling the flowers and adding a flower to the pictogram chart to identify which was their favourite flower. The peony was the most popular as it "smells like perfume". At the craft table the children used a variety of tools including lollipop sticks, and paint brushes to create our own interpretations of the flowers. The Sunflowers enjoyed going on a scavenger hunt around the Nursery grounds looking for buttercups, daisies, dandelions and bark. They enjoyed walking around the grass maze observing and listening to all the bugs and insects that live in the long grass!

The Sunflowers have been on many walks around the Nursery grounds and to the woods. We have enjoyed sitting together having snack and talking about all the different trees and sounds we can hear in the woods. We used our senses to feel the bark and had a go at creating our own bark rubbings. We each had a go at measuring the trees by putting our arms around them and giving them a hug – we all thought this was really funny. Some of the trees were too big to fit our arms round so we joined up with our peers to make a ring around the tree. One of the trees needed three sunflowers to fit round!

The month of June sees us welcome Lochlan, Ayla and Max to the Sunflower room – we hope you have lots of fun with us and get your wellingtons ready for Wendy Wood!

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