DUCKLING NEWSLETTER
AUTUMN TWO 2026

OCTOBER 2026

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WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back Ducklings - we hope you have had a lovely October holiday week. We have missed you! We are really excited about all the exciting things we have planned this term. Mrs B, Mrs Husselbee, Mrs Wakefield and Mrs Barnes.

BELONGINGS

At the end of the session, children take everything home - leaving the coat peg clear for the afternoon or following morning children. Please label everything with your child's name as water bottles, coats and wellies are often the same and it can be tricky matching 30 pairs of shoes or wellies to their owner!

DIARY DATES

2nd November Back to school and nursery
30th November Christmas Craft Afternoon
30th November Christmas Movie Night
7th December Christmas Fayre - Townend
9th December Whole School Panto Trip - Mansfield Palace Theatre
10th December Christmas Jumper & Dinner Day
11th December Nursery Christmas Performance
18th December Break up for Christmas
4th January Welcome Back!

SETTLING IN

Some children settle quickly and happily head straight into Ducklings, while others may need a little more time and reassurance. Please don't worry, we are experienced in supporting children as they settle and will do this at their own pace. If you have any concerns, please talk to us. Together, we want your child to feel happy, safe and excited to come to nursery.

WELLY WEDNESDAY

Welly Wednesday will take place on alternate Wednesdays, either in the morning or afternoon. After the October break, I'll share a Tapestry post with the dates and whether each session is AM or PM. Children will be outdoors for the whole Welly Wednesday session. If your child stays all day, please send a spare set of dry clothes, shoes and a jacket, as they will need to change between sessions. Children attending only the AM or PM session can simply arrive dressed appropriately if Welly Wednesday falls during their session that week.

A TYPICAL NURSERY SESSION

A few parents have mentioned that it can sometimes be difficult to find out exactly what their child has been up to during a typical morning or afternoon session. We thought it would be helpful to give you a brief overview of our nursery routine to support conversations at home. It may also help with remembering some of our names, as we know you've all heard some interesting interpretations from the children!

You may already recognise some of the friendly faces that make up our nursery team. Mrs Husselbee works Monday, Tuesdays and alternate Wednesdays. Mrs Butler works alternate Wednesdays, Thursday and Fridays. Mrs Barnes is with us full time, while Mrs Wakefield joins us every day except Wednesday. On Wednesdays, Mrs Bowes steps in to support the children, and Mrs Smith is with us each day to help at lunchtime. You may also see other familiar faces from around the school, including Mrs Byrne, our Head of School, and Mrs Boswell, our Executive Headteacher, who regularly pop in to see what we have been learning.

Children arrive at nursery and begin each session outdoors. We spend time outside in all weather conditions, so please ensure your child is dressed appropriately. On arrival, children independently place their belongings on their peg before joining their friends.

Our outdoor environment provides many opportunities to develop gross motor skills, participate in group games and, most importantly, enjoy being active and immersed in nature. Children can explore water play, transport, construction, painting, climbing and digging, so it is not unusual for us to finish the session a little muddy, wet or messy after a busy morning or afternoon of learning!

As we move indoors, children will be supported to find their name card and Post it as part of our self-registration routine. Throughout this term, we will be helping children to recognise their own name using a range of strategies and activities. Once children are confident in recognising their name, we will begin introducing name tracing and early writing skills, modelling correct letter formation, pencil grip and writing position.

Each session includes a short carpet-time input linked to an area of the curriculum or a current interest within the group. During this time, we practise key skills, enjoy songs and rhymes, learn Makaton actions and occasionally revisit photographs and observations uploaded to Tapestry. We follow a familiar structure and routine, helping children to feel secure, engaged and confident in understanding what is expected of them.

We have recently introduced a number of key independence skills, including effective handwashing, self-selection of snack and the use of a range of utensils. Children are encouraged to tidy away their own utensils after snack, and later this term we will be introducing a washing-up station to enable children to take even greater responsibility for cleaning up after themselves.

The remainder of the session is spent exploring and learning through play. Shortly before home time, we come together to share a story, song or nursery rhyme and may spend time looking at what our friends have been doing both at nursery and at home through Tapestry.

FOCUS CHILD

At Ducklings, each child will enjoy being our Focus Child for a week. We will let you know the Friday before and invite you to share your thoughts and knowledge about your child. During their focus week, we take time to observe their play, interests, interactions and learning more closely. We then create a short summary celebrating their strengths and identifying any next steps, so that we can work together to support their continued development.

WATER BOTTLES

We've noticed that some children aren't drinking from their water bottles regularly, especially during the colder weather or after having milk during the session. To help us encourage children to stay hydrated, please send your child in with their water bottle in hand rather than tucked away in their bag. We keep all water bottles in an easily accessible trolly and will gently remind children to stop and have a drink throughout the day.

INDEPENDENCE

We will be focusing upon practising the 'flick trick' aka putting our coats on independently. We have already begun to introduce this and the children have been fantastic at doing this - but it would be great if you could continue to support this at home too. This term we are focusing on the independent personal skills of:

·Pulling trousers down when going to the toilet.
·Lifting skirts up when going to the toilet.
·Taking puddle suits off
·Pulling wellies off

We've noticed that often children leave going to the toilet to the very last moment - they're having way too much fun! So, improving our co-ordination when pulling down our trousers or lifting our skirt when toileting will hopefully reduce the number of accidents we experience. We'd appreciate your support with this at home.

LEARNING

Our exciting theme this term is Sparkles, Celebrations and Special Days. Together, we will explore the beauty of autumn through outdoor adventures and sensory experiences, and may even enjoy a tasty S'more! We will also discover and celebrate special festivals and traditions, including Diwali, Bonfire Night and Remembrance Day, helping children learn about the world around them.
Through Tapestry, you can share in your child's learning journey, celebrate their achievements, and stay up to date with newsletters, important dates and news.

ECAT

Every Child a Talker is an initiative that promotes children's speech and language development. As many of you already know, a weekly E.C.a.T letter is uploaded onto Tapestry every Monday evening.
E.C.a.T links to 'talking themes' shared over the week in Nursery and includes a story to share at home, a Nursery Rhyme or song and a Makaton sign. All these things support ducklings with their spoken language and encourage more general communication.

SNACK

To help us provide a healthy and varied daily snack for the children, we ask parents to voluntary contribute 50p per session. This equates to £2.50 per week for children attending either mornings or afternoons, and £5.00 per week for children attending full days. Contributions can be paid weekly or termly in cash and should be given to a member of the Nursery team in a named envelope so that we can keep an accurate record of payments. If you would like to opt out of this please let us know.

Thank you for your support.

FINAL NOTE

The whole Ducklings team has loved getting to know you and your children this term, and we look forward to continuing our journey together. If there is anything you would like to share at drop-off or collection, a member of the team will always be happy to have a quick chat. For anything that needs a little more time, please send me a message on Tapestry, contact me via Arbor, or call the school on 01773 872571.