

Self-care goes far beyond hygiene; it is the foundation of independence, confidence, and human dignity.

*María Montessori*

Dear Parents and Carers,  
Welcome to the wet, windy and sunny month of May! It has been lovely to be able spending more time outdoors and the children have enjoyed spending time with their friends and siblings from other rooms in the garden or Forest School. Our Pre school children have all received their school allocation and we are supporting this transition with books, discussions, resources and activities. This years Graduation will take place on 18<sup>th</sup> July, and all school leavers are welcome to attend. Further details will follow nearer the time.

### Nursery Events

20<sup>th</sup> May - Toddler Room Stay & Play  
21<sup>st</sup> May - Baby Room Stay & Play  
11<sup>th</sup> July - Nursery Summer Fayre

### Nursery Holidays/Closures

25.05.2026 – Spring Bank Holiday  
31.08.2026 – Late Summer Bank Holiday  
23.12.2026 – Nursery Closes for the Christmas  
Reopen – 4<sup>th</sup> January 2027

### **Staff Training Days 2026 –**

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2026**

### Staff News

The morning session of our April staff training day focused on universal key messages for "Understanding and supporting young children's behaviour," with a specific emphasis on sensory integration. It was led by Sharon and Sue from the Leeds Early Years Improvement Team. We discussed, amongst other things - realistic expectations of child development, the key person role, consistency from adults (role-modelling), clear and shared expectations, enabling environment and routines of the day. The session was thought provoking and staff came away with increased confidence to support different behaviours that we may see from our children. The afternoon session focused on Safeguarding and particularly Professional Curiosity.

Our training days are vital for staff development. They provide a valuable opportunity not only to share important information but also for colleagues from our three settings to gather and share best practices.

We hope you have all seen our wonderful Montessori Accreditation news on Tapestry - we are so delighted to achieved STAR Accreditation Status with Montessori Global Education (<https://montessori-globaleducation.org/star/accreditation/>).

### Safeguarding

Ursula, Ty and I are the Designated Safeguarding Leads at the nursery. If you have any questions, worries, concerns or need help and support please come and talk to us.

The government have updated their guidance on Safer Sleep in the wake of the death of Gigi Meehan. There will be updates to the Early Years Foundation Stage from September. We want to reassure you that all staff complete Safer Sleep Training and we ensure our sleep mats, coracles and bedding adhere to the safety standards required.

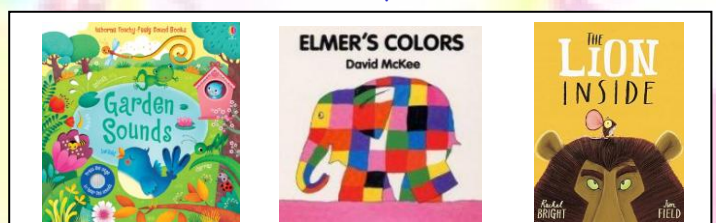
You can find more information on Safer Sleep here - NHS advice on Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) NHS and on safer sleep guidance is from The Lullaby Trust.

### Leeds Libraries - May

Leeds Lit Fest is back! Returning for its eighth year, the city's award-winning festival of words and thought will take place across a diverse range of the city's spaces and aims to bring together and help develop the city's literary scene, with writers, poets, and performers from the UK and beyond. [Find out more here.](#)

The Central Library refurbishment continues, with the new fiction and non-fiction area re-opening on the ground floor in June. The new children's library won't be ready until September, but it will be well worth the wait.

Favourite stories at nursery this month include:



**Babies** - this month the babies have enjoyed lots of spring activities. Sensory exploration has been enjoyed using various materials such as pastel coloured rice and feathers. The children take time to feel the different resources and let the rice fall through their fingers, the staff name the colours and how the materials feel, introducing new vocabulary to the children. We extended the colour exploration outside with a floating and sinking activity which fascinated the children as the blocks just would not go under the water! Our musical instrument treasure basket and song bag have been very popular this month, the children can access the basket themselves and explore the different sounds the instruments make. It is lovely to see them start babbling as they use them and start to move to the music they are making. The song bag has resources linked to familiar songs which the children choose and then everyone joins in. It has been lovely to spend time outside with the Toddlers on the decking and with some of the Pre school children across at Forest School, the babies love to explore the different environments and to be with the older children. These joint activities help with the transition to Toddlers as they get to know different staff and reconnect with their friends who moved from the baby room.



**Toddlers** - our Toddler children have also been exploring sounds! They gathered different resources from the garden and make some lovely (!) music. The children listened carefully to the difference in sounds that the various materials made and they discussed if sounds were loud or quiet. The children have enjoyed time across at Forest School, exploring and handling natural resources with care and great interest. The children helped Jane making lunch by preparing herbs to go in a pie! They explored the texture and smell of the herbs before mixing them together very thoroughly - it definitely added to the tasty lunch the next day! The children always enjoy self-selecting activities from our Activities of Everyday Living shelves. They always notice when something new has been added and are developing their transferring skills using the different utensils and this supports self-serving at mealtimes. To celebrate World Earth Day on 22nd April we talked about the importance of picking up litter, caring for plants and recycling. We have had quite a lot of transitions to and from Toddlers this month and it has been lovely to see the children explore their new environments.



**Preschool** – construction has been a very big spark in Pre school this month. The children have used different resources such as wooden bricks and larger open-ended resources to create houses, vehicles and patterns. The children used good communication and critical thinking skills to decide how and where the pieces would best fit and made changes as they went along. We have been discussing self-care, and the children took part in a sensory based germ activity to discover the impact of handwashing! We had lots of discussions based on germs being invisible and how important it is to wash our hands as germs can cause us to feel poorly! We celebrated the festival of Vaisakhi, finding out why it is celebrated and some important symbols and the children chose to make some cards. We have also discussed healthy eating and the children helped to prepare pineapple and mango sorbets - preparing the fruit and adding it to the blender, they then added fresh strawberries or pineapple to their chosen sorbets - delicious!! We have added some new and exciting activities to our Activities of Everyday Living area too, including a hammering exercise! The children wore safety goggles as they hammered nails into pieces of wood. The children showed great concentration and good hand eye co-ordination connecting the hammer with the nails!



### Home Learning

Montessori self-care focuses on teaching children to identify and manage their own physical and hygiene needs. By using child-sized, accessible tools, children develop bodily autonomy, fine motor coordination, and confidence as they care for themselves independently.

Montessori focuses on breaking down daily routines into small, manageable steps so children can master them over time.

**Dressing & Undressing:** Encourage your child to pull off their own socks and pants before learning to put them on. Use the "coat flip" method to teach them how to put their jacket on independently.

**Handwashing & Face Wiping:** Set up a low basin or step stool near a mirror. Provide a small pitcher of water, a bar of soap, and a washcloth so they can learn to wash their own face and hands.

**Nose Wiping:** Place tissues and a designated bin at child-height. Practice the sequence: get a tissue, blow, throw it in the bin, and wash hands.

**Dental Care:** Provide a soft, child-sized toothbrush and a timer. Allow them to brush first, mimicking your routine, then offer gentle help to ensure a thorough clean.

Our children enjoy completing these routines and are so proud when they can do these things for themselves.

It would be lovely to see how they practice self-care at home – please do let us know on Tapestry.

### Funding for Childcare...

It is important that you go on to the Best Start in Life website to check your eligibility - you can use the link:- [beststartinlife.gov.uk](https://beststartinlife.gov.uk)

If your child attends another setting or childminder in addition to our nursery, please let us know and fill in their details on the Parent Declaration form.

**Everyone needs to revalidate their eligibility every three months to ensure funding continues.**

**Invoices and payments**

Could you please ensure that all new Government Tax Free Childcare, Tax Free Childcare Payments, Vouchers and Bank Payments are made by the **1st of the month**, in line with our terms and conditions.

If you are changing the way you pay, e.g. With the Tax-Free Childcare payments, please let our accounts team know as soon as possible, or by 15th of the month on [headoffice@yorkshiremontessorinursery.co.uk](mailto:headoffice@yorkshiremontessorinursery.co.uk) so we can locate your new payments quickly and easily. Thank you for your help.

Notice re payments after the 1st: Some payments have been increasingly irregular, such as Tax-Free Childcare, bank payments and voucher payments. Please check your account and payments, as you may need to specify the payment date for the 1st of a month.

A 'late payment charge' of £100.00 will be made where fees continue to be late.

**Illness**

We ask that you please respect our policy to reduce illness spreading and keep children out of nursery for 48 hrs after their last bout of sickness or diarrhoea. This is to help prevent everyone else catching it, including staff who offer the continual care valued by your child. If antibiotics are being used, we kindly ask that you keep your child away from nursery for the first 48 hrs following initial medication.

**Instagram & Facebook**

If you'd like to follow us on Instagram and facebook, we keep you up to date with lots of activities here and any other interests too. We are Yorkshire Montessori Nursery on Instagram, and on facebook at @yorksmontessori

You can contact us at the nursery on -

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Best wishes  
Christine

Here is a recipe for one of our favourite starters

**Cheese straws**

Roll out **1 ready to roll puff pastry**, and cut in half

Spread **150g of cream cheese** onto ½ of the pastry sheet

Place the other ½ pastry sheet on top of the cream cheese & press lightly cut into fingers

Bake at 200c for 10-15 minutes or until golden brown.

(freeze uncooked ones you don't need)

**Please send us some photos if you try out the recipe!**