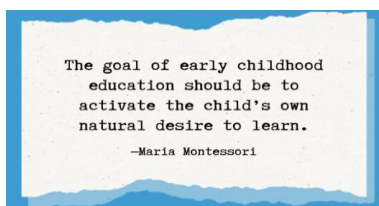


February / March 2026



## Dear Parents,

There have been lots of activities and fun in February and March! We have made the most of the weather and had a few walks out and about. The children have particularly enjoyed visiting the park and climbing on the equipment there.

The garden has been busy with clearing out flower and vegetable beds ready for new planting in April, puddle jumping, riding bikes, caring for the plants, building and climbing trees.

We have been caring for nature by feeding the birds, tending our indoor and outdoor plants and making sure that we look carefully at the many bugs and insects that the children regularly find. We have celebrated Chinese Lunar Year, Pancake Day, and talked about kindness, love and caring for St. Valentine's Day.

We have been using our senses to explore indoor and outdoor activities, with listening activities, matching sounds, listening to and naming sounds. As always, we have had lots of activities involving touch, but these are not only in our trays, but they also include how we feel and touch our resources to consider shape, size and weight. We have activities which compare textures and encourage identification of scents and smells as well as tasting and using our eyes.

At the start of February, we were visited by Montessori International as a part of our accreditation process and the assessor was able to easily identify how we embody the Montessori principles and use the Montessori approach to support children's development. We are expecting the report to be made available any day and will share this with you. We believe that being accredited to this organisation will support us in ensuring continuous development of our Montessori provision.

With this focus on the Montessori element of our nursery, I included information with January's newsletter about our Practical Life/ Activities for Everyday Living activities, what they are and how they support the children in becoming confident learners throughout their lives. This Month, I have included brief information about Sensorial activities at the end of this newsletter. I hope that you find it interesting and useful.

Our **Next Stay and Play session is on 13<sup>th</sup> of May 4.30pm to 5.30pm** and will focus on science and exploring. We also invite any parents who are due to start over the next couple of months to these sessions so that they can have a taste of some of our activities and have the chance to speak to staff and parents who already use the nursery.

## Staff Updates

We are pleased to welcome Olivia (yes - we now have two Olivias!) to the nursery. She has not worked with young children before, but is already building some lovely relationships with the children, and we look forward to supporting her with her qualification once she has settled in.

Millie also joined us in March. Millie brings some great experience, and we are looking forward to working with her.

We are sad that Dawn, our Evening Housekeeper/Cleaner left us in Marh. It has been great to have Dawn as a part of our team and we have definitely valued her work and support in keeping the nursery clean and safe for us all. Dawn

has secured more hours at her other job which means that she can work for one employer. Good Luck Dawn.

We have been successful in finding a replacement for Dawn in Wendy who is settling in well and we are looking forward to working with her.

I know that you all know Helen, our amazing chef who ensures that not only are the children fed, but that we have interesting and varied menus which adhere to NHS and EYFS guidelines. Helen has been supporting this across all three of our nurseries and has recently been promoted to Head Chef across the group.

## Nursery News

### Babies

We have been looking at and talking about colours a lot this month. The babies have been sorting and matching colours to help them to differentiate between them. We have also spent time in the garden – exploring and building and generally having fun!



Different colours and shapes made this activity attractive to the babies who engaged with gusto! This helped them to practice their gross motor skills with big paper and big movements. Plenty of opportunities to feel the paint on different objects as well as on the paper- including making footprints with the dinosaurs!



Colour activities included scooping and pouring. The trays are always attractive and interesting when they are presented to the children – here is a rare photo of a colour tray still looking like that! It doesn't last long but the skills that the children are gaining and the enjoyment and engagement certainly makes it all worthwhile.

the garden is the start of creating a love for nature and the outdoors. The leaves made crunching sounds and some of them were smooth. The children picked them up individually and also in fistfuls – depending upon the skills that they were developing. It is lovely to watch the children explore in the garden.



Exploring the leaves in

Water play is a favourite in babies and the children particularly love to sit in the tray and splash! This water play was an activity with floating flowers for the children to catch and pick up and explore. The water was tinted pink and the babies were squeezing and smelling the flowers.



The large bricks created great interest as the babies explored the main garden whilst it was quiet. They moved the bricks around and stacked them up. ...maybe next time they will find the 'cement' and add that to their plan.

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Oat trays allow the children to experience a different



texture and weight of materials. Here we used spoons and cups to scoop and pour, and we used our feet and hands to feel the texture of the oats as we poured from the spoon and into the cups.

Playdough helps to develop children's muscles as well as supporting children emotionally to squish and pull and stretch and pat the dough. They use different tools to roll and cut and press patterns.



The babies have enjoyed some lovely walks and trips to the park. They have enjoyed the chattery journey as well as having some time on the equipment.

We loved The Hungry Caterpillar! Posting all the things that he ate on the way to becoming a beautiful butterfly.



### Home Learning

The children enjoy helping. You could ask them to bring you the blue (or any colour) tea towel or decide together what colour t-shirt to wear or to gather 3 things that are pink from around the house. This can be similar with shapes – 'can you drive the car in a circle?' there are so many shapes in the environment, encourage your children to look for them.

### Toddlers

Counting and numbers have been a focus this month with lots of counting and singing! Our sandpaper letters allow the children to use their senses to explore the shape of the numbers and begin to follow the lines. This supports integration of the shapes and numbers into memory. Many



of the children are beginning to recite the numbers and some are able to count matching one to one and some children are beginning simple addition. 'So there are three. What if we add one more?'



Water play takes many forms.



We have had puddle jumping which helps children to learn about nature and practice their gross motor skills of jumping and splashing. We have transferring water from one receptacle to another or floating flowers and petals and arranging them in the holes in a colander. We have had pouring water through tubes and chutes to see how water flows downhill and floating objects down the tubes by adding water. We have fished for love hearts on St. Valentine's Day and love the water both inside and indoors.



Farms and animals have been a great interest for the toddlers, and this has been supported by the lovely farm visits that some of you have posted on Tapestry. The children have been talking about animals that live on farms and those that live in the jungle. We have discussed what they eat and how they live. The children love to share their photos of trips out! This extends into different resource trays and other activities such as making and painting sheep!

## February / March 2026

### Home Learning

The children love being outside!

Ask them to listen to some of the sounds of birds, animals, motorbikes etc and encourage them to imitate them. You can also find interesting objects such as stones and pebbles or leaves/flowers on your outings. The children can bring these to nursery to show their friends and to tell everyone about their adventures!

### Pre school

Pre school have enjoyed getting outside more. They have been working in the nature garden – tidying and clearing as well as mixing and pouring in the mud kitchen.

We have been looking at numbers and letters and shapes in lots of different ways. Some children are getting to be quite expert and some of the children are just beginning to explore.

We have been looking at CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant) and again, some children are becoming confident with these and begun to sound out words and try to identify the letters.



Lots of our activities are helping children to develop their pre reading or writing skills. Cutting the shredding helps us to strengthen our hand muscles and to become more skilled with practice.

Tracing or following both the inside and outside of shapes helps to develop pencil control as well as develop mathematical language and predicting patterns develops mathematical confidence.

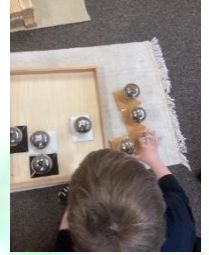


Science activities and experiments are always popular with the children as they predict an outcome and constantly test out a hypothesis. Working with magnets was fascinating for the children. Words such as 'attract' and repel were introduced and testing of lots of different materials and predicting whether they would be magnetic or not.



We have had quite a few walks out and a really lovely visit from a community police officer as we start to look at people who help us. (remember that if you have something interesting that you could share with the children – just let us know!!) The officer brought some pictures and also some stickers, which were a firm favourite. Trying on the helmet and heavy hi-vis and checking out the radio gave much excitement but the big police van!.... this was the icing on the cake. The children spoke about safety and one of the children asked the officer to take them home!

Listening carefully helps to discern different sounds in the environment. We can match the sounds and begin to develop our musical awareness. Through feeling, shaking and listening carefully, the children can match sounds and musical notes, and develop their skills in listening.



All things outside have been popular. A walk to the park or a trip to the café. The tractors and diggers, a year-round interest, the cherry blossom tree and lots of new construction activity.



Much of our equipment involves children using their senses.

Exploring and feeling the equipment, the size, weight and texture of objects help the information to be absorbed into our brain so that these are truly understood.

Fishing in jelly for example helps the children to feel and guess what the shapes and items are through feeling and touching.

Colour Box 3 supports the children in identifying small differences in colours and shades which the children order dark to light. They work together, compare, sort and order to make a lovely wheel. They can then look, check that there are no errors and rearrange any tiles which need moving. The pieces are lovely to handle. They are smooth and small hand sized!



### Home Learning

You could encourage the children to look for signs of spring in the environment. Send tapestry pictures of bugs or insects that they find so that we can identify them and look for them in our garden.

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### **Safeguarding**

Karen, Tina and Laura are the Designated Safeguarding Leads at the nursery, if you have any worries, concerns or need help and support please come and talk to us.

If your child has had a bump or fall etc at home, please remember to pass this on to staff so that we are aware.

Just a reminder.... Please do not have your phones out in any area of the nursery. This is part of our Safeguarding Policy, and it would be really helpful if you could complete any call before coming in to collect your child. Thank you



A recent change in the EYFS is our requirement to have an attendance policy. This has been introduced in response to a number of national incidents where had attendance been followed up, it is likely that there would have been a different outcome for children and families.

As you are aware, our safeguarding policy already meant that if we are expecting you to bring your child, and you do not arrive or contact the nursery by 10am, we will give you a quick call to check that everything is okay. There will be no change to this other than we do now need to record the calls to confirm that you have been contacted. Please do your best to let us know when your child will not be attending.

A copy of the attendance policy can be found on Tapestry.

There is also some additional guidance on safe sleep which I will update you on once a couple of points have been clarified for us. As you are aware, all our staff undergo safe sleep training at least annually and we keep up to date with current practice. The changes are coming through more changes to the EYFS and regulation.

### **Illness**

We ask, in line with our policies, that any child who has sickness or diarrhoea does not attend nursery for a clear 48 hrs after their last 'episode'.

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 dose.

### **Immunisations**

As you will be aware there is some national concern around the increase in infectious diseases such as measles. As a part of this we will be updating our immunisation records by re completing the immunisation forms that were initially completed when your child came to the nursery.

If you would like to find out more about immunisations and the current concerns, there are QR code links in the nursery entrances.

### **Parking and drop off reminder.....**

As you are all aware, there are some times in the day when the area outside the front of the nursery can become quite congested. To keep all of us safe, the area is a one-way- drop off area. Please drive as far towards the exit as you can and if you are dropping your child off or picking up, please try to keep your time parked on the area to a minimum. If you know that you will be more than a couple of minutes, please park on the road (please avoid the neighbours driveways!) or across by the church. This means that more people can benefit from using the drop off area and no-one needs to reverse out onto the busy road. Thank you for supporting with this and helping to keep everyone safe.

### **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://www.beststartinlife.gov.uk)

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

**Please let nursery have your code as soon as you receive it.**

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You can contact us at the nursery on [strensall@yorkshiremontessorinursery.co.uk](mailto:strensall@yorkshiremontessorinursery.co.uk) and Allison at Head Office on [headoffice@yorkshiremontessorinursery.co.uk](mailto:headoffice@yorkshiremontessorinursery.co.uk)

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more about what we get up to! Follow the links below.

[Facebook](#)

[Instagram](#)

### **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.

### **Nursery Holidays/Closures**

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> May – Bank Holiday  
Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May – Spring Bank Holiday  
Monday 31<sup>st</sup> August- Summer Bank Holiday

Christmas Closure –  
Nursery Closes on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2026 and reopens on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2027

Staff Training days (Nursery Closed)  
Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2026

Best wishes,  
Karen

**February / March 2026**

## **What are Montessori Sensorial Activities and why do we use these in our nursery?**

In our nursery, you may see children carefully building towers, matching colours, feeling different textures, or listening closely to compare sounds. These activities are part of Montessori Sensorial learning — materials designed to help children explore and understand the world through their senses.

Young children naturally learn by seeing, touching, hearing, smelling and tasting. Sensorial materials help them organise and make sense of these experiences in a clear and meaningful way.

What children gain from them:

### **Refining the Senses**

Sensorial materials help children notice small differences in the world around them. Through these activities they learn to explore:

- Different colours and shades
- Sizes and dimensions
- Textures and surfaces
- Sounds and tones
- Weights and smells

This helps children become more observant and aware of their environment.

### **Developing Thinking Skills**

Many sensorial activities involve sorting, matching and grading materials. Children learn to:

- Compare objects
- Identify similarities and differences
- Recognise patterns and sequences

These experiences support early mathematical thinking and problem solving.

### **Strengthening Concentration**

Montessori sensorial materials are carefully designed to encourage deep focus. Children are able to:

- Work independently
- Repeat an activity many times
- Concentrate for longer periods

Over time, this builds the strong concentration needed for future learning.

### **Preparing for Mathematics and Language**

Sensorial materials help children understand concepts such as:

- Big and small
- Thick and thin
- Loud and soft
- Light and heavy

These early experiences prepare children for later learning in mathematics, language and science.

**February / March 2026**

**Learning Through Hands On Exploration**

Children learn best by doing. Sensorial materials allow them to explore ideas using their hands and senses before they encounter them in more abstract learning later on.

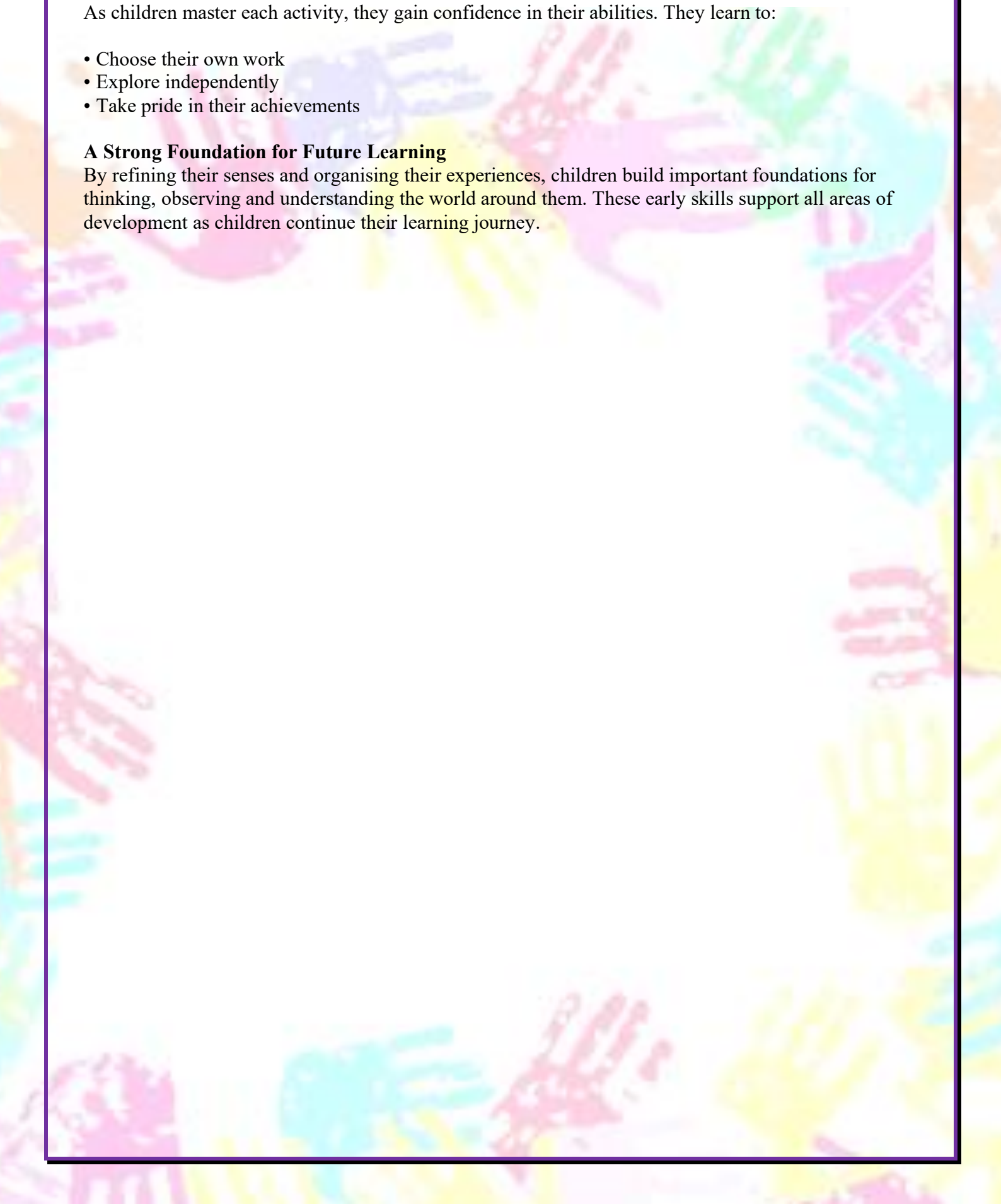
**Building Confidence and Independence**

As children master each activity, they gain confidence in their abilities. They learn to:

- Choose their own work
- Explore independently
- Take pride in their achievements

**A Strong Foundation for Future Learning**











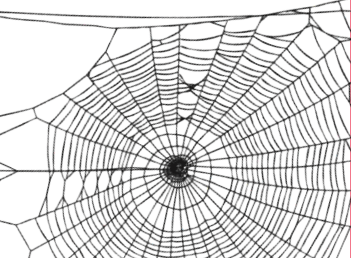





By refining their senses and organising their experiences, children build important foundations for thinking, observing and understanding the world around them. These early skills support all areas of development as children continue their learning journey.



# SPRING SCAVENGER HUNT

Look around for these spring items and animals. When you spot one, take a photograph and tick it off your list.

Who can find them all?

<p>Something Yellow</p> 	<p>A spring flower</p> 	<p>A bird</p> 	<p>Something red</p> 
<p>A flying insect</p> 	<p>A nest</p> 	<p>3 different shaped leaves</p> 	<p>Buds on a tree</p> 
<p>A new plant poking through the soil</p> 	<p>Something that crawls</p> 	<p>A spider web</p> 	<p>Something that smells nice</p> 
<p>Something bumpy</p> 	<p>A puddle</p> 	<p>A feather</p> 	<p>Animal tracks or footprints</p> 

# Spring Hunt Checklist



**nest**



**bird**



**blossom**



**insect**



**buds**



**flowers**



**daffodil**



**seedlings**



**green  
leaf**

Can you draw any other spring items that you see on your walk?