

# ILCHESTER EARLY YEARS NEWSLETTER

13<sup>th</sup> February 2026

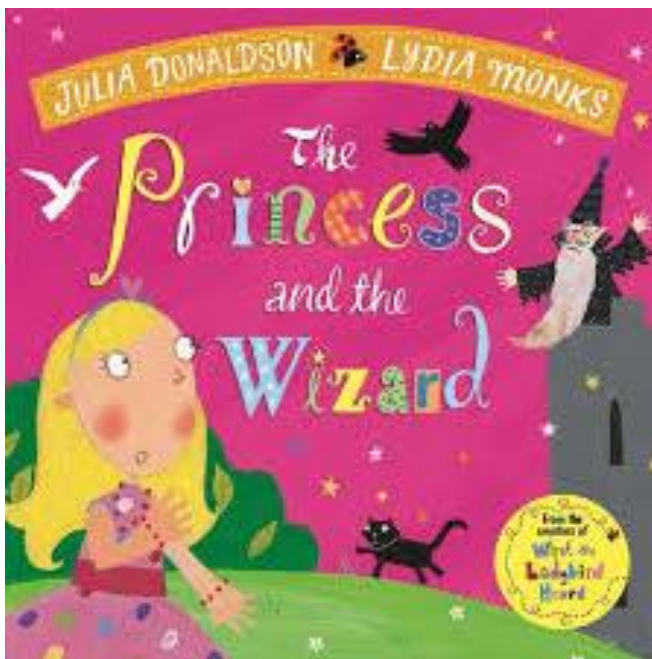


“Children learn as they play; most importantly, in play, children learn how to learn.”

~Fred Donaldson

## Tiggywinkles

This week in Tiggywinkles, the children enjoyed exploring *The Princess and the Wizard*, which inspired imaginative play, storytelling and thoughtful discussion. The story was extended through a range of activities, including small world play, story mapping and role play, helping children to retell events and develop their understanding of characters and narrative. Early maths skills were supported through hands on activities such as counting castle doors, exploring patterns, working with shapes and completing simple addition activities. Communication and language development was encouraged through group discussions, word building, letter writing and sharing ideas during story time. Sensory and creative play allowed the children to explore different textures and materials, including colour splodges, playdough and collage, supporting curiosity and creativity. Fine motor skills were strengthened through activities such as using tweezers, pipettes, threading, cutting and manipulating playdough, helping to build hand strength and control. The children also enjoyed creative activities such as making magic wands, masks, sound play for different characters and Valentine themed crafts.



Singing, daily nursery rhymes and outdoor play were enjoyed throughout the week, supporting physical development, confidence and teamwork, while encouraging independence and a love of learning.

## Nutkins

This week in Nutkins, the children explored the theme of heroes and adventures through the story of *Robin Hood* and a range of engaging, hands on activities. The children developed early maths skills by investigating floating and sinking, comparing heavy and light objects, recognising patterns and exploring numbers through practical games and puzzles.

Communication and language were supported through shared storytelling, group discussions, library visits and opportunities to ask and answer questions, helping the children to share ideas and build confidence when speaking. Sensory and small world play encouraged curiosity and imagination as the children explored woodland scenes, treasure trays and materials including sand, water, coins and shaving foam. Fine motor skills were strengthened through cutting, scooping, threading, using tweezers and collage work, supporting hand control and coordination. Creative activities such as designing treasure maps, creating lantern collages and painting allowed the children to express themselves and develop confidence in their creativity.

Singing, parachute games and active play were enjoyed throughout the week, supporting physical development, teamwork and confidence, while the children were encouraged to develop independence and a love of learning through play and exploration.

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## Puddleducks

This week in Puddleducks, the children enjoyed a range of activities inspired by Valentine's themes and hands on exploration. Early maths skills were developed through number hunts, hopscotch, matching games and shape hunts, helping children to recognise numbers, count with confidence and explore shapes in their environment. Creative and sensory experiences were a big focus, with opportunities to explore playdough, painting, drawing and collage while creating Valentine's cards and crafts. These activities supported self expression, creativity and fine motor development. Fine motor skills were further strengthened through peg activities, puzzles, scissor skills and large-scale drawing, building hand strength and coordination. Communication and language were encouraged through sharing stories, singing during song bag sessions and engaging in all the activities. Physical development and independence were supported through activities such as heart rescue games and daily routines including independent coat finding and putting on. Throughout the week, children were encouraged to explore, create and develop confidence through play, supporting their growing independence and enjoyment of learning.

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## Forest School

Please remember to bring in wellies and waterproof clothing for your child on Mondays for Forest School. This will allow them to stay comfortable and fully enjoy exploring, playing and learning outdoors in all weathers.

**Please don't put clothing in plastic bags, they are a suffocation hazard. Please only use your child's usual bag or a drawstring bag.**



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## Toilet Training

Toilet training can be very hard and stressful for many families. That's why we always signpost to ERIC for advice on how to manage toilet training and the best tips and tricks.

<https://eric.org.uk/potty-training/>

Week 1:  
How to spot the signs of readiness



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## Half Term

Just a reminder that today (Friday) is the last day of this half term. We hope you all have a lovely half term break and look forward to welcoming everyone back on Monday 23rd February for the start of the new half term.



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