

# ILCHESTER EARLY YEARS NEWSLETTER

20<sup>th</sup> March 2026



“Play gives children the chance to practise what they are learning.”

~Fred Rogers



## Tiggywinkles

This week in Tiggywinkles, the children explored a range of engaging activities that supported their curiosity, creativity and understanding of the world around them. The children enjoyed small world and sensory play with a jungle theme, using animals, masks and natural materials to create their own imaginative scenarios and develop their language and storytelling skills. The children developed their early mathematical skills through activities such as exploring first, next and last, recognising shapes, spotting patterns and talking about more and less. Games like “I spy” and practical activities helped to build confidence in recognising numbers, patterns and differences in a fun and meaningful way. Creative activities provided opportunities for the children to express themselves and explore different materials. The children enjoyed painting, making jungle pictures, using ear buds for detailed artwork and taking part in themed craft activities. They also explored celebrations through creative experiences, encouraging discussion and awareness of different cultures. Fine motor skills were supported through activities such as threading, dough disco and mark making, helping to strengthen hand muscles and coordination. The children also practised using tools and materials with increasing control and confidence.

## Nutkins

This week in Nutkins, the children have been exploring the story of *The Gingerbread Man*. They enjoyed listening to the story and joining in with repeated phrases, helping to build their confidence in communication and storytelling. The children took part in a range of hands-on activities linked to the theme. They enjoyed making their own gingerbread men, exploring ingredients and talking about what they were doing, which supported their understanding of the world as well as their language skills. The children also had great fun making their own playdough, carefully measuring and weighing ingredients, developing early maths skills such as counting and

comparing. Fine motor development was a key focus this week, with the children taking part in a variety of activities to strengthen their hand muscles and coordination. These included shaping, rolling and manipulating dough, as well as using different tools and materials to create their own designs. Throughout the week, the children explored, created and learned through play, building independence, confidence and a love of learning in a fun and engaging environment.

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## Puddleducks

This week in Puddleducks, the children have been exploring the story of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*. They enjoyed listening to the story and joining in with familiar parts, helping to build their confidence in storytelling and communication. The children took part in a range of activities inspired by the story. They explored balancing and movement, using their bodies and equipment to cross “bridges” just like the goats, supporting their physical development and coordination. These activities also encouraged problem solving and perseverance. Early maths skills were developed through counting, comparing sizes and exploring concepts such as big, medium and small. The children used practical resources to help them understand these ideas in a fun and meaningful way. Role play was a big focus this week, with the children acting out the story and taking turns to be the goats and the troll. This supported their imagination, social skills and language development as they worked together to retell the story. Throughout the week the children enjoyed learning through play, building confidence, independence and a love of learning in a fun and engaging environment.

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## Toys at Pre-School

To help prepare the children for their transition to school, we kindly ask that toys are not brought into Pre-School from home. This helps the children focus on the activities and resources available in the setting and supports them in developing independence and responsibility, similar to expectations in school.

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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



## 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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[www.ilchestercommunityprimary.com](http://www.ilchestercommunityprimary.com)

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