

# Spring Term Newsletter

After the busyness of Christmas, we start back at nursery in the New Year well rested after the break. It is in fact our team's favourite time of year because without seasonal distractions they can really focus on their relationships with the children and promoting the children's learning even more than usual.

## We like to move it, move it!

The sad rise of obesity in young children makes it more important than ever to focus on children's physical development. There are a number of factors causing this problem, with increased screen time being one of them, but parents and practitioners can work together to battle it. Of course, reducing screen time and improving a child's diet are two obvious ways to reduce childhood obesity. But it's also vital to think about how we encourage children to be active and what we can do to promote their physical development.

In the winter months it can seem more difficult to do physical activities with children, particularly very young ones. In the warmer weather we can do simpler things like walk to the shops or take them out on their bikes. They can play in the garden for longer and exploring outdoor areas like forests and parks is more comfortable for everyone. Of course, these activities aren't exclusive to the summer and we can still do these things when it's a bit chilly, but it is harder when it's very wet.

That's when we need to think outside the box and realise that physical activity isn't just for the outdoors. We of course have to consider safety inside if we are letting children get physical, but there are things you can do to promote movement at home. A few examples include: making an indoor obstacle course with tunnels and cushions that your child will love to crawl, jump and fall over. Turn on the music and get dancing or sing nursery rhymes standing up with lots of actions. You could play a game mimicking animal movements or do animal yoga (one to Google). You can play games like Simon Says or get your child to walk across the room balancing a beanbag on their head. None of these activities would be dangerous or too active for indoors, but they will get your child

moving.

It's also really important to think about how we model physical activity to our young children. If you decide to do any of these things at home with your child, do them enthusiastically! Do you spend a lot of time sitting down in front of your child? We are all tired, but it is wise to think about what perceptions your child might have of physical activity because of your own behaviour as a parent. In addition to this, how do you speak to your child? Do you find yourself saying things like 'sit down' or 'stay still' a lot? Of course, if you're trying to put their shoes on this is completely valid, but if you just want them to calm down because their energy is making you feel tired or irritated, perhaps this is something you need to check. Young children aren't very good at sitting down anyway and probably won't do as you ask! They are naturally very energetic little creatures who want to explore the world around them and see what their bodies can do. We should be encouraging them to do this and praising their abilities, so that they perceive physical movement to be a really good thing.

At nursery we are thinking about how we can be really good role models to the children when it comes to physical movement, both inside and outside. We will be doing some of the aforementioned activities indoors, among others, and trying to ensure the children don't perceive the staff members to be sitting down a lot of the time. In addition, with Emma Barham as our Outdoor Learning Co-Ordinator we have got lots of lovely ideas for keeping the children moving and entertained while they are in the garden, which also keeps them toasty warm in the colder weather.

Issue 16

February 2025

---

### Contents

- Physical development
- Nursery news
- Hatching chicks
- Portuguese lessons
- Ballet classes
- Napping at nursery
- Nursery closing time



## Nursery news

**Staffing:** This term we expect Lillie Lumbard and Martha Rose to become Level 2 qualified nursery practitioners as they finish their apprenticeships. Ava Donovan will be starting her apprenticeship course with us, having passed her probation in December.

### Dates for your Diary:

Tuesday 25th Feb—Ballet class starts

10th-15th March—France Week

**18th-21st April—Easter long weekend**

29th April- 9th May—Hatching chicks!



## Hatching chicks

Last spring we had a wonderful time hatching some duckling eggs and then looking after the ducklings for a week. Staff, children and parents alike were all very taken with our little fluffy friends. We were then very pleased to be able to rehome them to some friends with a big pond!

Given the success of last year's project, we will be hatching some eggs again this year, but this time we will be hatching chicks. We use a company called Incredible Eggs who provide us with the eggs, incubator, brooder and all necessary equipment. The eggs will arrive just after Easter on 29th April. After a day or two they should start hatching so some children will be able to watch them coming out of the eggs. Once they have hatched we move them into the brooder unit and the chicks will stay with us until 9th May. We will then return them to Incredible Eggs, but if anybody would like to re-home the chicks from 9th May, please get in touch.

Watching the eggs hatch and the tiny birds change over the 10 days is amazing for the staff and children. It is a very real

and exciting way to teach the children about growth and lifecycles, whilst being exceptionally cute and fun for everyone.

It is also a lovely opportunity to teach the children about caring for living things. The chicks need food, water and some light cleaning out, so involving the children in this teaches them to take responsibility for living things. They will also be able to handle the chicks under adult supervision, which will help them to understand the importance of being gentle and kind to vulnerable creatures.

We will do lots of activities about eggs, chickens and lifecycles during this time. We will also teach the children about why chickens are farmed and what happens to some chickens at the end of their lifecycles.

Incredible Eggs are poultry breeders who provide a local service to enthusiasts, hobbyists and smallholders and they never sell more eggs for hatching than they can accommodate on their farm. You can find more information about them on their website if you are interested.



## Portuguese Lessons

We are very lucky to have somebody on our staff team who can teach the children Portuguese. Luiza Gibbon is from Brazil and Portuguese is her mother tongue. Luiza joined us in September and spends most of her time in the lower nursery rooms.

Each week Luiza teaches our upper nursery children some Portuguese. This rolls through the week on a different day so that all of the children get an opportunity to enjoy the lesson, regardless of the days they attend. Luiza spends about 15 minutes teaching the children Portuguese vocabulary. So far she has taught them basic numbers and colours, some letters of the alphabet,

animals and seasons.

She uses different methods to teach the children, such as painting, singing, rhyming and worksheets. This keeps the sessions engaging and fun for the children, which is especially important given their very young age.

It is lovely to be able to offer the children some exposure to another language and it goes well beyond the early years curriculum requirements. As well as teaching children a new language, which is beneficial in its own right, it also helps them to appreciate that not everybody is the same. The fact that Luiza can speak to them in another language helps them to understand why she sounds

different to them when she speaks English with her accent, and helps them to grasp the concept that different languages are spoken around the world.

*Luiza giving the Rabbits a Portuguese lesson.*



## Ballet classes

After the February half term we will be hosting a ballet class at Carousel on Tuesday mornings, run by Christina Marks School of Performing Arts. This class will be available to all children in the Rabbit and Pre-school rooms who attend nursery on a Tuesday. Parents have been emailed a letter from the dance school and can sign up using a link in the letter. This is a class that parents will need to pay for—it is £5.63 per lesson and all

monies go to the dance school.

The children really enjoyed the taster session they had recently, where they learned to plié and tell the difference between good toes and naughty toes! The boys and girls enjoyed the class equally and they even ran their own classes later on that afternoon! We hope the class will be a fun and effective way of encouraging the children's physical development whilst at the

same time allowing them to be creative and expressive. The teacher was very effective in teaching them ballet moves whilst managing their excitement and making the class fun and age-appropriate.

We hope to get a good take-up of the class, but will assess it's ongoing viability each half term, including the day on which we run the class.

## Napping at nursery

Children tend to drop their daytime nap between the ages of 2 and 3 years. We often find that once children move into our Rabbit room they begin to fight their nap (although some do so as early as the Hedgehog room). As children get older they naturally need less sleep, but once they are in the Rabbit Room they also see a lot of their friends go out into the garden after lunch. They are now old enough to understand that this is happening, and to feel that they would prefer to play outside instead of having a nap. We find that parents are sometimes reluctant to

allow their child to stop napping at nursery because they are worried this means the end of naps at home too. We don't find that this is necessarily true: many children won't nap at nursery, but will still nap at home where there are fewer distractions and no other children to play with. Children who refuse to nap after lunch here can disrupt our younger children who really need to sleep, so we do ask for your co-operation if we inform you that we are struggling to get your child to sleep at nursery and think it might be the end of naps here. Thank you.





## Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-school Ltd

32 Thynne Road, Billericay,  
Essex, CM11 2HH

Phone: 01277 632362

Mobile: 07436272259

Email: [info@carouselnursery.net](mailto:info@carouselnursery.net)

[www.carouselnursery.net](http://www.carouselnursery.net)

Early Learning for a Brighter Future



Carousel Day Nursery & Pre-school is a family run business, established in 1992. We are a small nursery that provides an excellent standard of education and care for children aged 3 months to five years. We are situated in a bungalow specially modified to create a home-from-home feel, in a quiet residential area of Billericay and can accommodate 31 children each day. Our nursery is separated into a Lower and Upper nursery and consists of four rooms—one for each age group: Ducklings (babies), Hedgehogs (toddlers), Rabbits (2-3 year olds) and pre-school Squirrels (3-5yrs). We also have a lovely outside area with a range of suitable equipment for the children to explore and develop their motor skills. At Carousel we are constantly striving to provide an excellent quality of education because we believe in the importance of early learning for a brighter future.

## Nursery closing time

Since September we have been closing at 18.30 every day. We ask parents to please remember this new closing time and stick to it, just as you used to stick to our old closing time. Our staff are only paid until 18.30 and want to go home after a long day. We try very hard to ensure our staff don't have to work beyond the end of their shift, but parents picking up late or staying after closing time is out of our control, and we therefore ask you to be mindful of this.

If you are going to pick up at 18.30 on the dot, please

do not expect a long handover. You will be given some brief details, and any conversations will have to wait until the next day. We know that some parents are friends with each other, but please do not use Carousel as a place for a social meet-up where you can have a chat, particularly if you are picking up at the very end of the day. Please remember that this is a workplace where our staff are busy caring for children or locking up at the end of the day. Please have any private conversations out on the driveway. Thank you.

**NOTICE FOR PARENTS: We would like to take this opportunity to politely remind parents that fees are due in advance on 1st of the month. Thank you.**

