

February Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers

January was a busy and enjoyable month, with the children highly engaged by our different themes. Hopefully the children have shared lots of interesting facts about polar animals, birds, trees and space! As you will know, we have been working hard on independence and self-help skills. Well done to all those children who are now able to put on their own coats and to do up their own zips! What a great achievement!

We have had a great time over the past few weeks developing our gross motor skills, teamwork and turn taking in our PlayBall sessions! Thank you to Scott and Emily who have made the sessions so fun!



A great big thank you to all the kind volunteers that came on Wednesday to help the children plant a tree in support of the One Million Trees project. It was fantastic to see the children so happy being out in nature and our school grounds looking clean and tidy from the litter pick. Thank you also to Aodhan O'Kane from the Belfast Hills Partnership for supplying the variety of trees.

Our Term 2 parent/carer consultation meetings will take place on Tuesday 6th, Wednesday 7th or Thursday 8th of February and the Class Teachers will look forward to meeting with you then. On these three days the children will finish at 11am and no school lunches will be served. If you would prefer a telephone meeting please let your class teacher know in advance. Term 2 Reports will be shared at the parent meeting.



Nursery will be celebrating World Book Day on Thursday 7th March with a range of engaging literacy activities and a visit from Performing Starz on Friday 8th March who will bring stories to life with the use of her puppets!. The children are also invited to dress as their favourite book character on Thursday 7th and donate to the charity Book Aid. If you would be willing to come into Nursery and share your favourite story with a small group of children between 8.30-9am on Thursday 7th of March, please sign up using the sheet available on your child's classroom door from Monday of that week.

Themes

This month we will be completing mini-topics on Lunar New Year and Love and feelings. There are lots of resources and activities on our 'Home Learning' tab on the website that you can use at home.

We will continue to learn about shapes, learning their names and counting the number of sides and corners of each shape. The children will also be working on learning to recognise their names, without the aid of their photos. Please support your child at home with this so they get used to recognising their name independently.

Safer Internet Day

Safer Internet Day will take place on Tuesday 6th February and throughout this month, we will be raising awareness of how to use the internet safely in Nursery. Please find enclosed our information leaflets which may be useful when helping your child learn how to stay safe online.

Important documents for parents/carers relating to e-safety are attached to this email. Please scan the QR code for our school policy. All our policies are available on the schools website at: <https://www.knockbredanursery.co.uk/>



Shared Education

Our friends from St. Bernard's Preschool are hosting us over at the Parish centre on Thursday 29th February for a day full of Arts and Play.

Phonics

While helping your child recognise their own name you may wish to introduce the letter names and sounds. We would encourage you to use the rhyme "This is the and it makes the sound." For example the letter A "This is the A (Ay) and it makes the a (ah) sound."

Alphablocks on CBeebies is a great way to introduce letter sounds and names.

More information can be found here:

<https://literacytrust.org.uk/information/what-is-literacy/what-phonics>



Free games:

<https://letters-and-sounds.com/index.php/phase-2-games/>



Rights Respecting Schools Update

As you know, this year Knockbreda Nursery School is working towards achieving the Rights Respecting Schools' Gold Award.

On Thursday 8th February, we will welcome our Rights Respecting School Assessor, Niki McQuillan from UNICEF, to conduct our one-day Gold Assessment. Niki McQuillan will meet with pupils, staff and Governors to discuss our Rights Respecting School curriculum as she assesses our progression from our current Silver Award to Gold Award.

We want to thank the parents that attended the presentation on Wednesday 31st of January, and we would like to invite you to join us on Thursday 8th February at 8.40am to give your views about our Rights Respecting journey to Niki. Signing sheets will be available on Monday 5th February.

What is this award?

Gold: Rights Respecting

Comes after Silver: Rights Aware, and Bronze: Rights Committed.





The Gold award is granted by UNICEF UK to schools that have fully embedded children's rights throughout the school in its policies, practice and ethos, as outlined in the RRSA Strands and Outcomes.

To achieve Gold: Rights Respecting, schools will be assessed by a Unicef UK RRSA assessor who will look at the whole school's rights respecting journey.

At Knockbreda Nursery School we are aiming for:

1. **Teaching and Learning about rights:** The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is made known to children, young people and adults who use this shared understanding to work for improved child well-being, school improvement, global justice and sustainable living.. The children take part on weekly Rights Respecting Circle Time sessions, looking at a new article each week.
2. **Teaching and Learning through rights:** Children, young people and adults collaborate to develop and maintain a school community based on equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation; this includes learning and teaching in a way that respects the rights of both educators and learners and promotes well-being. Staff aims to ensure a rights respecting approach to conflict resolution in the classroom.
3. **Teaching and Learning for rights:** Children are empowered to enjoy and exercise their rights and to promote the rights of others locally and globally. Duty bearers are accountable for ensuring that children experience their rights. Staff uses children's ideas to develop the provision. Children are able to take part in charity days allowing them to understand their position as global citizens.

The children at Knockbreda Nursery School know the ABCDE of rights and can sing their Rights Respecting Code!

 <p>Aa</p> <p>Rights are for All children (extend arms on a circular)</p>	 <p>Bb</p> <p>Rights are there at Birth (Pretend to rock baby)</p>	 <p>Cc</p> <p>Rights Cannot be taken away (shake head no as you pretend to throw something away)</p>	 <p>Dd</p> <p>Rights Do Not have to be earnt (shake head and finger saying no)</p>	 <p>Ee</p> <p>All rights are Equally important (move both hands up and down facing upwards as if making scales)</p>
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Cash for Clobber

Our clothing bank at the main entrance is available all year for continuing to recycle unwanted fabric items including reusable clothing, shoes, curtains, towels, sheets and blankets.

Important information

- Nursery will close for half-term on Friday 9th February at 11am - school lunches will not be served on this date. Half-term takes place from Monday 12th February until Friday 16th February 2024. School will reopen as normal on **Monday 19th February 2024.**
- A reminder that our drop off window is **8.30-8.40am.** After this time the doors will be closed and you will need to ring the bell and wait until 9am when a member of staff will open the door. Our teaching time starts at 8.45am prompt with our Welcome Time session in the Quiet Room.

Children's Mental Health Week



This year, Children's Mental Health Week is from 5th-9th February 2024. In our circle time sessions we will focus on our feelings and developing our coping strategies to deal with different situations.

More information and support can be found here:
<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/>

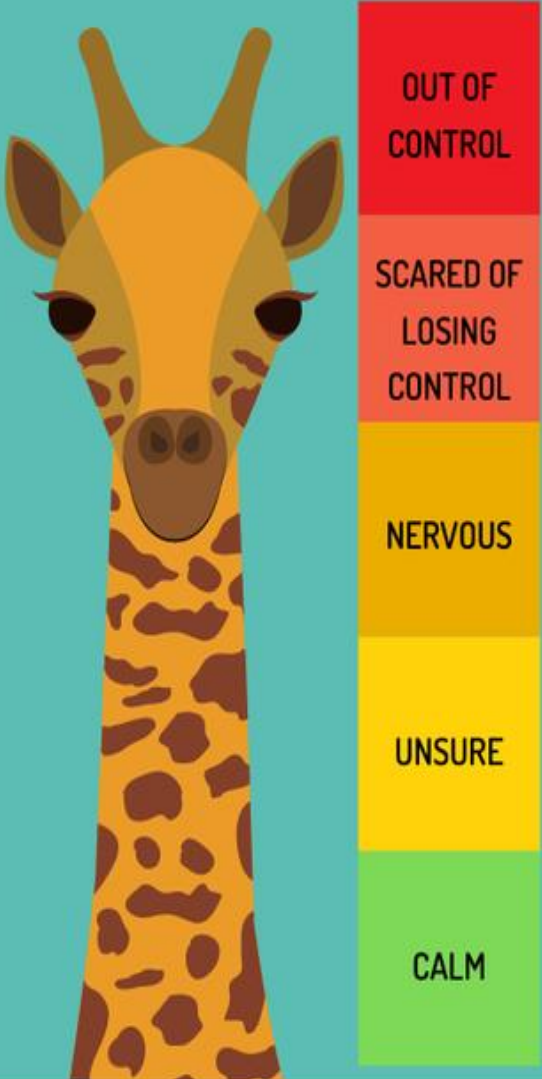


And here: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers>



In this Newsletter we have included some ideas which may help your child to better understand the emotions they are experiencing and to make sense of the changes in their feelings.

THE STRESS RELIEF GIRAFFE



OUT OF CONTROL

SCARED OF LOSING CONTROL


NERVOUS

UNSURE

CALM

WHAT YOUR CHILD CAN DO:

- Calm breathing exercises
- Use visualisation meditation techniques
- Body tightening exercises (progressive muscle relaxation)
- Sigh to become fully present in the moment
- Practice music therapy
- Change location / surroundings
- Use a stress ball / fidget toy
- Give themselves a 10-second hug to boost their mood
- Colour, draw, write, craft, etc.
- Practice positive self-talk / words of affirmation
- Exercise
- Go outside
- Play
- Hydrate with water





THE EMOTIONAL CUP

Some ways that children deal with having an empty cup:

- Steal from other people's cups
- Misbehave to get your attention and show that they need a refill
- Seem to have bottomless cups, or need constant 'topping off'
- Can't sit still for refills or actively refuse them
- Bounce off the walls when they approach 'empty'
- Think they have to fight or compete for every refill

What fills a child's cup:

- Play
- Friendship
- One-on-one time
- Love and affection
- Connection
- Succeeding
- Doing what they love



What empties a child's cup:

- Stress and strain
- Rejection by peers
- Loneliness and isolation
- Yelling and punishment
- Failing
- Fatigue
- Doing what they hate



10 Things to Say instead of Stop Crying



1. It's ok to be sad

2. This is really hard for you

3. I'm here with you

4. Tell me about it

5. I hear you

6. That was really scary, sad, etc.

7. I will help you work it out

8. I'm listening

9. I hear that you need space.

I want to be here for you.

I'll stay close so you can find me when you're ready.

10. It doesn't feel fair



STRUCTURE & ROUTINE

When things are uncertain, this leads to anxiety. Young people with Speech, Language & Communication in particular require a more concrete and predictable world to feel secure. You can decrease the uncertainty and increase the feeling of security by creating structure and routine for them.



BUILD STRUCTURE INTO DAILY ROUTINE

You want your daily routine to be as structured and predictable as possible. This reduces anxiety. Regular routines that are already in place such as bed times should be continued.



USE A VISUAL SCHEDULE

Try to use visual schedules so they can see what's coming up next. These plot a route through the day for them, creating predictability.



KEEP ROUTINE HABITS THE SAME

Keep your familiar routines consistent between days. For example, going for a walk at the same time each day, or following the same route on the walk.



MANAGE TRANSITIONS

Switching from one activity to the next can be challenging. Make it easier by giving reminders that things are coming to an end and others are beginning. You can use a Now/Next board, or a timer to help prepare for the change.



Glasgow Psychological Service
nurturing wellbeing and learning



Glasgow
CITY COUNCIL

Anxiety presents itself in many different ways...

The desire to control people and events



Difficulty getting to sleep



Feeling agitated or angry



Defiance and other challenging behaviors



Having high expectations for self, including school work & sports



Avoiding activities or events (including school)

Pain like stomachaches and headaches



Struggling to pay attention and focus



Intolerance of uncertainty



Crying and difficulty managing emotions



Over-planning for situations and events



Feeling worried about situations or events

Five Steps to Wellbeing

Take5

steps to wellbeing



Watch a short video about Take5 here



Be Active

Play, join a team sport, walk, cycle, run around. Being active helps us keep fit and also makes us feel good.



Connect

Have fun with friends, talk with family, help out at home, share your feelings. Being connected makes us feel loved.



Take Notice

Watch and listen to what's going on around you, changing seasons, bugs, birds, flowers and rainbows. Take notice of how you feel.



Give

Do something nice for a friend or family member, share, smile. Give to yourself - play, be creative, use your imagination, draw, paint, dance, dream. When we give to ourselves or others it makes us feel happy.



Keep Learning

Read for fun, learn how to do something new, try your best. Set a challenge you will enjoy. Learning new things makes us feel proud as well as being fun to do.

The value of outdoor play on Mental Health

Knockbreda Nursery School is committed to the value and importance of outdoor learning and the power of playing outside. We spend half of our play sessions outdoors as well as our weekly Forest School sessions. Being outside will help to promote your child’s physical development and will also help to lift their mood.

Knockbreda Nursery School is an accredited Forest School setting and the Northern Ireland Forest School Facebook page uploads simple outdoor activities with no specialist resources required:

<https://www.forestschoolawards.org/cgi-bin/main.cgi?page=Family%20Zone;vat=1642760711>



Children's Mental Health Week
5 Outdoor Activities

Monday
Go outside and close your eyes.
What can you hear?

Tuesday
Stand in an outdoor space.
What is the weather doing?
What does it feel like?
How does it make you feel?

Wednesday
Can you spot any signs of spring?
How many can you find?

Thursday
Watch the clouds.
Look up at the sky in the morning, afternoon and early evening. How has it changed?

Friday
Have fun!
Go for a walk, play a game, run, jump, skip or hop.

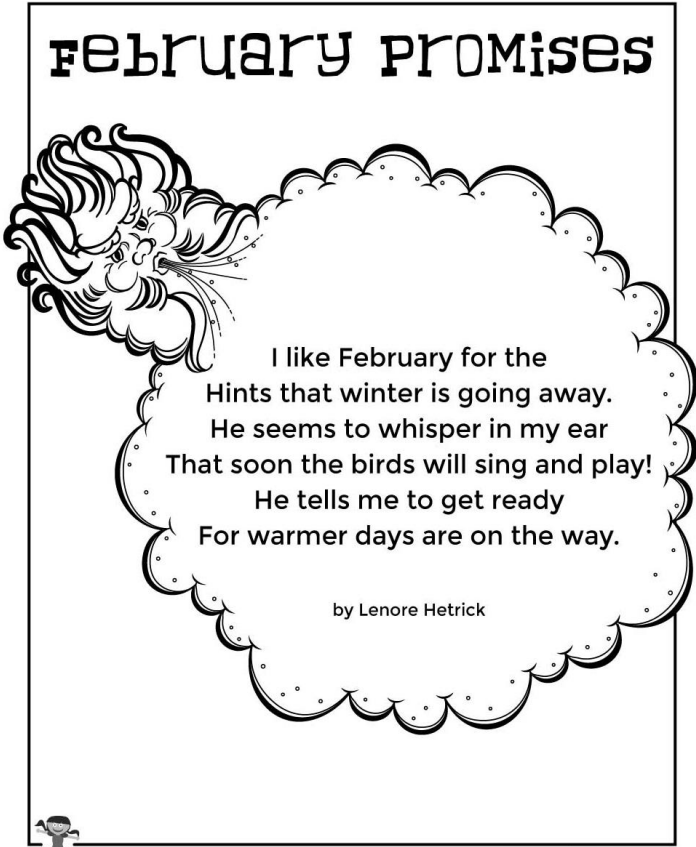
Teach Outdoors
Learning Through Discovery
www.teachoutdoors.co.uk
@teach_outdoors

Diary Dates:

Date	Time	Event
Monday 5 th – Friday 9 th February	All Day	Mental Health Week. Children will learn tools and activities to support their mental health
Tuesday 6 th February	All Day	Safer Internet Day
Tuesday 6 th to Thursday 8 th February	11am finish No school meals or Hub Club.	Parent/Carer Consultation Meetings. This is an opportunity to speak with your child's Class Teacher. Children will finish at 11am. No school meals to be served on these days.
Thursday 8 th February	All day	Rights Respecting Gold Assessment Parents are welcome to provide feedback to the UNICEF visiting staff member at 8.40am.
Friday 9 th February	Finish at 11am No school meals or Hub Club	Half-term holiday from Monday 12 th February until Friday 16 th February. School re-opens on Monday 19 th February as normal.
Thursday 29 th February	All day	Shared Education event with St. Bernard's Preschool.
Thursday 7 th March	All day	World Book Day- Dress as your favourite book character and donate to Book Aid.
Friday 8 th March	All day	Performing Starz – interactive storytelling session to follow on from World Book Day.
Friday 15 th March Monday 18 th March	Closed	School closed for staff development and St Patrick's Day holiday. Children return Tuesday 19 th March
Friday 22 nd March	Finish at 11am No school meals or Hub Club.	Easter egg hunt and Earth Day. School closes for Easter and will re-open on Monday 8 th April, as normal.
Friday 3 rd May	Closed	School closed for staff development.
Monday 6 th May	Closed	School closed for the bank holiday.
Friday 17 th May	All Day	Hats and Shades Day
Tuesday 21 st May	All day	World Day for cultural diversity. Celebrate with us as we learn about different cultures from around the world.
Friday 24 th May	Closed	School closed for staff development.
Monday 27 th May	Closed	School closed for the bank holiday
Tuesday 4 th , Wednesday 5 th and Thursday 6 th June	11am finish No Hub Club	Parent/Carer Consultation Meetings. An optional final term discussion meeting. Children will finish at 11am. No lunches will be served on these days and there will be no Hub Club.
Wednesday 5 th June	All Day	World Environment Day

Thursday 20th June		Red Apples Celebration show at 11am. Green Apples finish at 10.30am. No lunches will be served on this day and there will be no Hub Club.
Friday 21st June		Green Apples Celebration show at 11am. Red Apples finish at 10.30am. No lunches will be served on this day and there will be no Hub Club.
Thursday 27 June	11am finish	School closes for summer. No lunches will be served on this day and there will be no Hub Club.

February Songs and Rhymes



Family Love



I love you, you love

me!

We're a happy family!

With a great big hug and a kiss from me to you!

Won't you say you love me too!