

## January 2015 Newsletter



# Rooftop Nursery

### Welcome back and a Happy New Year!

We would like to welcome back all the children, parents, carers and staff and wish you all a happy and prosperous new year. We hope that you have had a restful break and ready for the year ahead.

We have some wonderful things lined up this year from our annual summer trip, staff awards ceremony, to our male and female carers day. 2015 will mark an extra special year in the Rooftop calendar, as we will be celebrating Rooftop's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We will be planning a very big party in the summer so there will be lots to look forward to.

### Welcome

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the many new friends that have joined us at Rooftop Nursery; Lyra and Isobel in Star room, Lucas in Rainbow room and Ned, Nefeesa and Amani in Sunshine room. We hope they love their time here at rooftop.

We also have a new staff member, Fateha, who has joined Rainbow room.

### End of Year Party

A big thank you to all the parents who attended the end of year party and for kindly bringing in food and drinks for everyone to share. We hope you all enjoyed the party, the pass-the-parcel games and the songs, as well as the lovely gifts that were given to the children. Star room children even managed to fit in a game of musical chairs, which was great fun!

A special thanks to all the staff who worked so hard to organise the party. It was a great team effort with everyone helping to clear the furniture and toys to open up the space, setting the party decorations, making food and snacks, organising music, gifts, entertainment and the children to make it an enjoyable afternoon. All the staff then stayed back after the party to put the rooms back in order so that it was ready for the children for the next day.



### End of term cleaning

All the staff came back to the nursery the day after the party to finish off the end of term cleaning and reorganising their rooms. They spent the day deep cleaning the toys, shelves, furniture, updating the displays and the children's work.

A big thank you to all the staff for the effort they put into making the nursery a fantastic place for the children to enjoy.

## Inset Day

We had Inset day on Wednesday 23rd January 2015 to train staff on various topics. External trainers also came in to do team building activities, which helped to elucidate our strengths and areas of improvement.

In the afternoon, Khadija held a workshop to brief staff on updates and changes regarding Special Education Needs. Diana led a workshop on 'Movers and Shakers' to promote creative forms of movement amongst the children and Guler led a workshop on

Makaton revisiting Makaton signs with all the staff.

## Rainbow room refurbishment



What a fantastic way to start the New Year with our new furniture being delivered from Community Playthings in over 40 large boxes. The staff all got busy opening and setting up the furniture as soon as it arrived to minimise disturbance to the routine of the children in Rainbow room. The children were amazed at our new furniture and layout and made comments of how happy they are.



We now have brand new wooden furniture and have created a home corner, dressing up corner, reading area, construction area, sand/ water play, storage baskets and a

creative arts area. Some of these areas will now be further developed to enhance the children's play and learning, the staff have been given an additional budget to buy resources and toys that the staff would like for the children in these areas. One area of play the nursery would like to develop is **heuristic play**

### What is heuristic play?

Heuristic play sessions allow children to explore the properties of everyday objects or cultural artefacts in a safe, supported, open-ended manner. Through heuristic play, children have the opportunity to determine their own actions and make choices. Heuristic play gives children an opportunity to make their own discoveries and encourages them to be creative in the way they combine objects together. It is a way of children playing with things that adults use every day.

### How can parents support us?

We would like parents to gather objects of different properties from around the house such as:

- Wood, wool, metal, cotton, plastic, cardboard and stone
- Large and small objects, heavy and light, clear and opaque
- Objects from the kitchen, laundry, bathroom and bedroom
- Objects that will fit inside each other and make sounds.

## Notices for all parents



### Buggy/ scooter storage

We understand that many parents are in a rush in the morning but we kindly request all parents to store scooters outside beneath the staircase. Please fold buggies away and store in the buggy storage area. If you do store your buggy at the back near the staircase, please ensure you store your buggy in an orderly fashion, leaving space for others to store theirs and keeping it neat and hazard free. This would make it easier for us to access the space. NO buggies are to be left in the front decking area near the entrance.



### Daily checks

Please check your child's bag and pockets before they arrive at the nursery. We have had a few cases of children bringing in coins and medication, which is a hazard to the children in the nursery. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.



### Label your child's belongings

Please clearly label nappy bags, wipes, coats, hats, spare clothes bag with your child's name to avoid confusion.



Please remember to sign your child in and out on the daily registers.



Close the gate behind you after entering and leaving the premises

## Play, Learning and Development

### Sunshine room

Sunshine room would like to give a warm welcome to Ned, Nafeesa and Amani. They have just started this term and are in the process of making bonds with staff and other children.

### Transport

Sunshine room have settled in well after returning from the Christmas holidays and have been getting familiar with their new peers. Since they have been back, they have been exploring different modes of transport such as buses, cars trains and aeroplanes.

To support the children to become more familiar with the different modes of transport, they have been playing with different toy vehicles.

They have also engaged in creative activities that have enabled them to explore the transport theme using various tools and techniques to support their physical development. For instance, they have been painting vehicles, using vehicle stamps and paint to make prints and used crayons to draw and colour in.

To support the children's communication and language development, practitioners have been repeating the vehicle names during the activities to help the children become familiar with the

sounds of the words. Flynn was able to repeat the word 'aeroplane' when he was sticking coloured paper onto an aeroplane template.



### **Brown Bear, Brown Bear**

Sunshine room have been focusing on one of their favourite books: *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* The children show a lot of interest in this book and the animals in the book. It is a very engaging book that provides many opportunities to widen the children's learning through creative play. The book was used as an

inspiration for the children to do stamping, sticking and colouring activities that enabled the children to explore and learn about animals and colours. For example, during the sticking activity, Yusuf repeated the word 'duck'.



To reinforce the animal names and help the child to recollect the story, they play '**What's in the bag?**' with images of animals from the actual story.



### **Making play dough**

As the Brown Bear story sparked a theme of colours in addition to animals, Sunshine room explored different colours by making play dough in different colours. The children

helped to pour and mix the ingredients together seeing how the play dough forms. They were able to knead and roll the dough as a way of encouraging their fine motor skills. They then used the play dough to mould and cut into different animal shapes.



### **Textured play**

An important part of the children's development involves experimenting with a range of materials and textures that raise sensory awareness as well as their physical development, for instance with play dough.

As part of their ongoing sensory development, sunshine room children have been exploring ingredients like corn flour and Rice Krispies using everyday tools and equipment like bowls and spoons. This allows the children to feel, taste and smell the different textures, which all play a part in developing their sensory awareness.

## Rainbow room

- Rainbow room children need indoor closed-toe slippers
- Ensure your child has plenty of nappies, wipes and spare clothes for those that are toilet training and ensure these are labelled.
- Bring in coats, hats, gloves and scarves for outdoor play.

On the first week back Rainbow room focused on resettling the children back into routine. All the children were very keen to discuss their holiday experience with their peers and adults. For example, Cormac said that he got a Spiderman costume from Santa and all the children joined in to share what they had received or did over the holidays.

### Pirate theme

Since being back from the Christmas break the children have shown interest in pirates so the practitioners planned various activities relating to pirates.

To support the children's personal and social development and their communication, the practitioners have extended the role-play that the children had initially instigated in outdoor play on the rooftop. The children have been enthusiastically engaging in role-plays in small groups, going on treasure hunt and pretending to be the captain on the rooftop.

Role-playing in this way encourages children to interact with each other in creative and imaginative ways that promotes their self-confidence, social interaction and communication skills.

To support the children's communication and language development further, the children have been learning songs about pirates during language group sessions. Furthermore, during circle time, Rainbow room have been listening to pirate stories such as *Pirate's Underpants* and *Treasure Hunt* to stimulate their imagination further, encourage their language and communication development and inspire them with ideas for their own play.

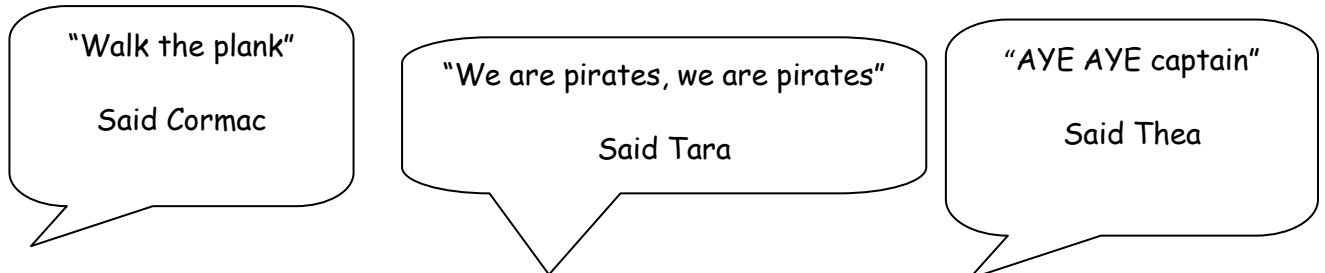
With all the enthusiasm around pirate role-playing, Rainbow room children indulged in the theme further by creating their own props such as eye patches, a pirate ship and treasure chest to support their role play.



The children engaged in various creative activities in line with the pirate theme to recreate images from the pirate stories they had read such as making a large pirate ship using brown paint and paintbrushes.

They created treasure maps by making marks using felt tip pens and then dabbing tea bags to stain their maps to give it an aged effect.

They used three different shades of blue to do a large ocean painting for their display. They decorated their pirate hats using glitters and coloured crêpe paper. They created a treasure chest using black paint and paintbrushes. They also made pirate masks using glue and sticking on various materials.



To further extend their learning and play, they used their props in their role-play. During their role-play, they took turns to be the captain, which shows maturity and understanding in the concept of turn talking.

## Toilet training

Toilet training has been a big focus this term as many of the children are toilet training at home.

To support the children who are potty training, Rainbow room have been looking at books about using the potty and then using the stories to initiate discussion, and promote understating through questioning and listening to peers and adults about the topic.

Practitioners have also been supporting the children through play by using dolls and potties in role-play.

In addition to the stories and play, the children are also encouraged to use the toilet during nappy changes.

This will continue to be an underlying theme in the room as many of the children are still in nappies and toilet training at home. If you would like further information about potty training please talk to your child's key person.



## Star Room

- ❖ A warm welcome to Lyra and Isobel who have joined Star room.
- ❖ Book bags: Every Tuesdays and Thursdays. Every child should have a book bag and reading record book. Please keep these safe.
- ❖ Show and Tell: 1<sup>st</sup> week of every month. Please ensure children bring in toys only during the first week of the month and not any other time as this upsets some of the children who do follow this rule.
- ❖ Ensure your child has plenty of spare clothes.
- ❖ Bring in coats, hats, gloves and scarves for outdoor play and label each item of clothing.

This month Star room have talked about the children's holidays, body parts and occupations.

## Holidays

On the first week back from the holidays, the children discussed what they did in their holidays during circle time. Some of the children talked about the presents they had received and brought in toys from home to talk about and show to their friends.

The children talked about the different types of transport they used whilst they were on their holidays and then drew the vehicles they had used. Albert drew a bus with carriages; Millie said she went to her auntie's house in a car, Oliver.K said he went to his grandparents' house in a car and Lucian talked about riding a train.

To mark the beginning of the New Year, Star room children did an adult-led activity, personalising calendars. They personalised individual 2015 calendars by making hand prints on it to give to their parents.

## Body parts

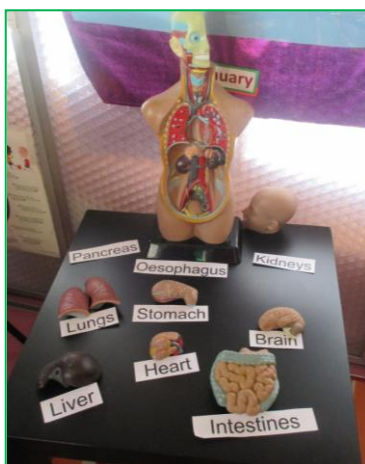
The children showed interest in their body parts; some were asking questions about the colour of their eyes and hair so the staff extended this child-led interest into various activities to extend their learning.

The children watched a video that talked about the different body parts. During and after the video, the practitioners encouraged the children to point to and name their own body parts.

After watching the video, they went on to making **life-scale drawings** of their friends. They did this in pairs. They laid down large pieces of paper on the floor on which one child from each pair lied down whilst their friend marked the outline of their body. They then added detail to the outline such as arms, legs, fingers, toes and then the face.

The children also drew their **self-portraits** by looking in the mirror and drawing the shape of their face, their eyes, nose mouth and eyebrows.

Once they learned the names of the outer parts of the body, Star room extended their learning by exploring the **internal organs**. The children were shown a human model of internal organs.



Khadija introduced each organ and talked about its functions. The children found it intriguing to learn about the different organs and what they do and repeatedly questioned what each part is and what it does which demonstrated their interest and engagement in the topic. The children watched various video clips on how each internal organ works and how to keep the internal body healthy. The children were also

repeating and learning the names of the organs

and pointed to their own body to indicate where those organs can be found.



The children were given a paper template of a body with paper cut outs of different body parts to arrange in the correct place in the body. The older children were given internal organs to arrange and younger children were given outer body parts. During this **sorting activity**, the children familiarised themselves with the body parts through questioning. If they were unsure, they asked what each organ was called and where it would go. For instance, Albert, Millie and Jonah asked questions like: "Is this a brain? Is this a heart? Is this an intestine?" and then placed them correctly on the body template.

The children learned many new words associated with the body such as heart, brain, muscle, oesophagus, intestines, kidneys, stomach and liver. The children were given detailed information



as to what each body part does and how to keep it healthy. This led to discussions about good food and drinks that will help to keep the organs healthy. The children talked about eating vegetables, fruits and drinking water, some children mentioned that it is good to eat chocolate sometimes!

This led to their next topic- learning how to keep their bodies healthy by eating healthy food.

### **Healthy eating: learning about keeping healthy and promoting health and self-care and physical development.**

The children started off by watching a video about healthy foods and where they come from, the children were discussing about what foods are healthy and which are not.

The children were given a sheet of paper with **healthy and unhealthy foods**. They were asked to cut out only the healthy foods and stick it on their plates. Some of the children were able to follow through the instructions independently and stick down only the healthy foods whilst others were able to identify the healthy foods but still wanted to stick the unhealthy food on their plate!

During this cutting and sticking activity, staff identified that some of the younger children in Star room needed support in holding a pair of scissors and in cutting so the practitioners planned further cutting activities to support those children.

For instance, all the children were given templates of fruits and vegetables, which they cut out and stuck on coloured card to develop their fine motor skills by using scissors to cut paper. Millie, Albert and Jasmine were very particular about making sure they cut around the lines accurately. This activity also helped the children to distinguish between fruits and vegetables.

### **Grocery shopping:**

A small group of children from star room went to the shops and brought some fruits back to make smoothies with the rest of the children. They chose the fruits they wanted to add to the smoothie; strawberries, apples, bananas, oranges and custard apple. The children were very excited to have chosen their own fruits and came back and talked about their visit with the others.

The children cut out the fruits into small pieces, and put it all in a blender to make their smoothie. They children requested to drink it at nursery so they all got to drink their smoothies and were very proud to have made it themselves. When Jasmine's daddy came to pick her up she recalled the ingredients and told her daddy how she had made it and she would like to make it at home.

The room was also set up with fruits in the home corner, the children played with the fruit and vegetable puzzle and had many discussions around healthy eating. The children also talked about the different kind of fruits they eat in nursery and what they like and were confident in talking about all the healthy foods they ate. Towards the end of this topic, the children were able to link healthy eating to keeping your body fit and healthy.

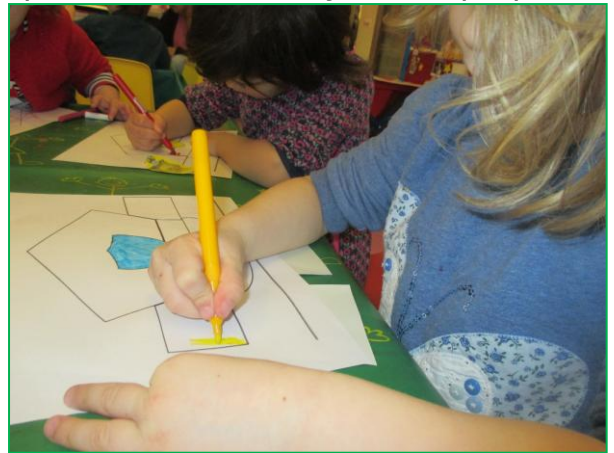
### **Occupations**

The children in star room have a great interest in police officers and prisons. They are regularly role playing indoors and outdoors talking about the *baddies* and how they need to go to *jail*. This

was a great time to talk to the children about police officers and other people that help us in the community.

They started off by talking about police officers. They had a discussion about what the children think police do. All the children said they take people to *jail*, some of the children talked about their encounters with the police. Khadija explained that police officers do not just take people to prison but spoke about what the role of the police is and emphasised how they help us.

They spoke about how the police force look after us and help us, how they patrol the streets to make sure all grown-ups and children are safe. They watched a video about what kind of things Police officers keep with them such as police dogs, police radios, special cars and special tools.



This was then extended to a creative activity. The children made individual police hats, decorated them and took them home. Khadija has also arranged for **a police officer to come in and talk to the children about the role of a police.**

In line with the occupation theme, Star room children explored other occupations. They talked about farmers and how important they are to us, how they spend lots of time looking after animals. They explored:

- How farmers have to feed their animals to ensure we get our milk, cheese and yoghurts and ice creams.
- Where we get eggs from.
- What kind of food the animals eat, such as grass, hay and fresh water.

They watched a video of a farm and how farmers milk cows and grow vegetables. The children also had fresh vegetables to touch and feel and talk about where they came from.

The children talked about opticians and what happens when we go there. They made their own glasses by cutting individual shapes and then put them together to make glasses.

They also learned about dentists. They watched a video about what happens at the dentists. The children discussed how they brushed their teeth and how many times a day. For their activity, they were asked to count how many teeth they have and then stick that many paper teeth cut outs to a picture of a mouth template.

Star room also had a **visit from a doctor**, Weyma-Flynn's mum from Sunshine room, who very kindly came in to talk to the children about what a doctor does. She came in with her doctors bag full of real equipment for the children to examine and explained what each equipment is used for. They did an activity where they placed different body parts on a paper image. Jonah demonstrated where the heart is located and said it 'helps your blood flow'. Tarjhanae said 'the brain is under your head'. Amaya, Tarjhanae and Jonah talked about when they went to the doctors. The children were very excited throughout the session and enjoyed meeting a doctor and

getting a chance to explore the real equipment and tools. **A big thank you to Weyma for coming in for the session!**

These activities gave children an understanding of a range of different occupations that play an important role in the community.

### Phonics

Amongst all this, Star room children have been continuing with their phonics and are doing very well at sounding the letters. The children have been choosing their name cards at circle time and sing the hello song to their friends. Some are able to sound all the letters from their name independently whilst others need some support. The children have also been keen learning at the literacy table and tracing letters or writing their names or making simple drawing and giving meaning to it. They have an accessible graphics corner where the children have choices and can access at all times during free play.



Book bags have also been continued every Tuesday and Thursday .

### Being thankful

Lucian's mum kindly suggested an activity about building children's awareness of being thankful for things. This has been put in place at circle times and lunch times where the children have 5 minutes to think about what they are thankful for on that day. On one occasion, Lucian said he is thankful for the nursery, Millie said she is thankful for the food, Jonah says he is thankful for his mummy and daddy. This was a great idea and will be continued in Star room.

## Dates for your Diary

### Informal Parents Afternoon and 27<sup>th</sup> Month review

Fri 13th Feb 2015  
(9am to 11am, 2pm to 2.30pm & 4.30 to 5.30)

### Open Mothers/Female Carers Day

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March  
9-11am

### Formal Parent's Afternoon and 27<sup>th</sup> month review

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March

### Easter Holiday- Last day of term

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April  
Nursery closes at 4pm

### Nursery re-opens

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April

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### Comments/ Suggestions

Please feel free to write any suggestions/comments you may have on the space below and return the slip to the office or post it into our suggestion box located on Rainbow Room counter.

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