

May 2021



In this edition, we will be looking at the changes to the EYFS in September and what that looks like within the setting and home, new ventures, activities to make and do with your children relating to this time of year and all things fun in and around our 11 sites.



Over the past three years, South Hills have been proud to be part of a wonderful community in Semley. Located in the village hall, we have had the most incredible fun, where the children and families have been at the heart of the most magical times. From forest fun, feeding lambs at a local small holding, joining in with annual fetes, sharing singalongs and enjoying family gatherings, we have truly felt part of a warm and caring community. It is with much sadness that at the end of May, we end our journey providing care and education for the children in Semley nursery. We wish the children and families a wonderful future and thank you for all your support.

After a few anxious weeks waiting to hear if the lockdown would be eased for school children to return, South Hills latest nursery proudly opened its doors on April 19th within Trinity CE Primary Academy in Devizes.

Caroline (Manager) and Justine (Deputy) are no strangers to South Hills life having worked together for four years at our Salisbury nursery and Caroline recently transferring from our Great Cheverell site. We have been made very welcome by all the staff at the school and in such a short space of time, the

children have made friends and memories that will continue to grow as more families arrive. The children are already happy, and confident, waving their families at the gate as they rush in to see what fun is in store that day.



Did you know that 20th May is World Bumblebee Day? It is supported by the United Nations and the International Federation of Beekeepers Association. It aims to raise public awareness about the importance of bees, preserving a healthy environment and maintaining biodiversity which is essential for human existence and a flourishing countryside. Follow this link (<https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/learning-zone/activities-crafts-and-games/>) for fun activities for all your family and to learn a little more about this special day. You could also watch this YouTube clip and sing along, using your fingers to be the bumblebees buzzing around (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5Bs9xydba0>).

Pollen is **very sticky!**



Bumblebees have **smelly feet** to identify themselves!



Pollen is full of **protein** which helps bees grow stronger.



Bumblebees don't have ears!



Did you know?

97% of Britain's meadows have been lost since WWII.



Some bumblebee species have really long tongues!



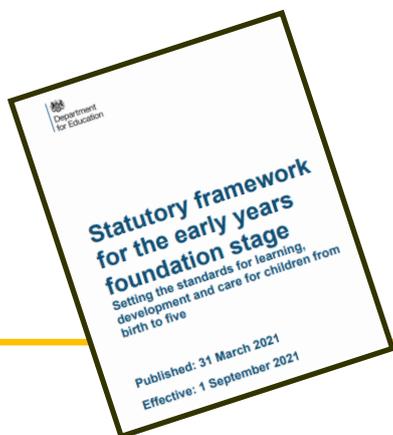
Bumblebees have four wings that can beat up to **240 times per second!** (Faster than a sports car!)

The new Early Years Foundation Stage

The EYFS has a new framework that all settings will have to follow from September 2021 and have been made to better support all young children's learning and development. This stage in your child's life prepares them for future learning and successes and the EYFS was created to ensure that your child's first 5 years are happy, active, exciting, fun and secure, as well as to support their development, care and learning needs.

The EYFS framework sets the standards to make sure that all children in attendance learn and develop well and are kept safe and healthy. They are divided into 2 documents;

- The Statutory framework
- The Development Matters non-statutory curriculum



The Statutory framework

This document lays out what all settings have to follow and looks at the learning and development provided, the assessments carried out on your children including the progress check at age 2 and the safeguarding and welfare requirements. These are all met through our policies and procedures and cover areas based around safeguarding, suitable persons, health and safety, behaviour, equal opportunities, information and records and the curriculum. Copies of these are held within each setting and are available on request.

Changes to these requirements in the new EYFS highlight the need to promote oral hygiene with the children, including talking about the effects of eating too many sweet things and the importance of brushing your teeth. This will be incorporated into daily conversations and fun activities with the children and we are currently seeking advice on what resources are available to support you as parents at home too. It stresses that educational programmes must involve activities and experiences for children, as set out under each of the areas of learning (see the development matters section). The expectations for children's development must ensure that cognitive development (how they think, explore and figure things out) proceeds hand-in-hand with their social and personal development. This is vital to your child's future learning and should not focus on the end result but the process involved.

The revised document also highlights the need for staff to spend less time writing assessments, using their professional judgement in promoting your child's unique level of development in the environment and truly knowing their 'story'. This allows staff to spend more time with your children, being immersed in the awe and wonder of a child's day at nursery.





Development Matters

This document is used by the staff to progress your child through milestones of achievements in their learning and are divided into 2 areas. The prime areas are vital because they lay the foundations for children's success in all other areas of learning and of life and cover personal, social and emotional development, physical development and communication and language. The specific areas provide the range of experiences and opportunities for children to broaden their knowledge and skills and cover literacy, mathematics, understanding the world and expressive arts and design.

One of the key changes made from September are that it is shorter in length than the previous version, to allow for more freedom to develop the right broad curriculum for the children. This enables the staff to use the children's next steps creatively which are based around their interests. This allows the same focus of learning to be carried out inside, outside, in the creative, role play, sensory and small world areas at the same time as introducing and extending language and adding in mathematical concepts for good measure! By using development matters in a more holistic way, the children will be thoroughly embedded in the concepts before moving on to more next steps. There are also fewer age bands in the reforms. Previously the children were assessed against birth-11, 8-20, 16-26, 22-36, 30-50 and 40-60 (months). As of September, these will change to birth—3 years, 3-4 years and reception. Depth in learning matters much more than moving from one band to another for example, it is important to give a child many opportunities to deepen their understanding of numbers up to five. There is no value in rushing to 10. When we succeed in giving every child the best start in their early years, we give them what they need today. We also set them up with every chance of success tomorrow

Within the framework, there are some 'buzz' words too that might be new to you:

Pedagogy

This is the mix of different approaches that we use in the setting to help educate and develop your children.

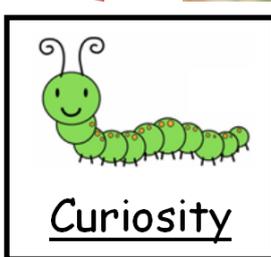
Varying strategies and techniques are used based around theorists such as Montessori, Steiner and the Curiosity Approach at South Hills.

Executive functioning

This helps us to 'get things done' and is made up of working memory, mental flexibility and self control. Executive functioning goes hand in hand with self regulation—that's how we understand and control our emotions for example, it is hard to stay focused if you are feeling too sad or frustrated.

Self-regulation

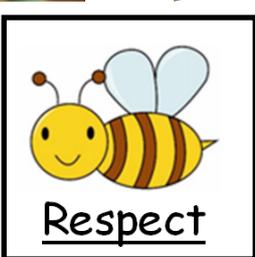
Language development is key to self-regulation as it is when children have the ability to understand and manage their own behaviour and reactions. It plays a huge part in learning and socialising and is promoted through talking about feelings and role modelling behaviour.



Curiosity



Our company
visions are
achieved in so
many ways
throughout
busy days.



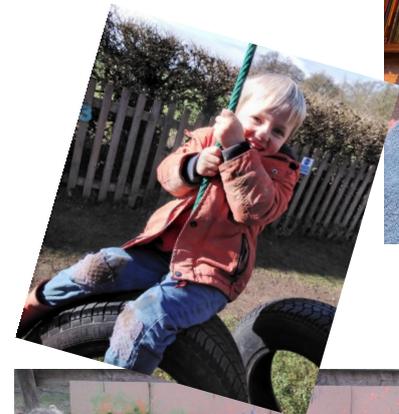
Respect



Inspire



Nurture



A day in the life of a 'South Hills' child.....

When I get messy, I have been showing curiosity, determination, persistence, imagination and confidence.

Playing outside is so important. I like to run and jump and get lots of fresh air. Sometimes I might get grass or mud on my clothes.

Feeding myself or using a knife, fork or spoon at lunchtime is tricky. But I keep trying which means that I might get food on my clothes.

Our mud kitchen is so much fun. I use all of my senses which is important for my development. It also helps me use my imagination and play with my friends, learning new descriptive words as I mix and create something yummy!

I sometimes get pen and paint on my clothes. This is because I am developing creative skills and exploring lots of different ways to make amazing art.

Exploring in the water tray is giving me lots of mathematical and scientific skills. I love pouring, filling and emptying containers, funnels and watering cans. I will be offered an apron but I don't always like to wear it which means my clothes might get wet.

Exploring with playdough and other messy play resources like foam and food helps me to develop my fine motor skills and build up muscles and co-ordination in my hands and fingers. I will need these for when I learn to write.



Bemerton



Following the children's interests, we have been exploring our senses both inside and out and have felt many different textures, using some amazing words to describe these including 'furry, fluffy, scratchy, squishy and jaggedy'. The children have also done some mark making using various different tools and techniques.



Great Cheverell



We have had a busy term, having enjoyed a real mixture of weather. The children enjoyed snow, sun, rain and wind, experiencing the beautiful garden in many different forms. They have taken part in their own 'tough mudder' obstacle course complete with muddy camouflaged faces, held on tight to the parachute on a windy day of games and lit a campfire to toast marshmallows. We have recently joined the village celebration "Step into Spring" hung out bunting, created a variety of different paintings and planted many brightly coloured spring flowers. The sensory garden is full of



fragrance and our vegetables are all beginning to grow, allowing the children to taste and cook later in the season. Other exciting opportunities to explore include a new tyre snake and outdoor stage to enthuse the imagination, sparking some fantastic role play and singing. Our outdoor art willow studio has also proved a big hit with the



children creating their own pieces of art from a range of natural materials. Last month we excitedly watched our bantam chicks hatch in the nursery incubator having counted down the 21 day life cycle from fertile egg to chick. Meanwhile our tadpoles have grown legs becoming froglets and the children watch eagerly every day to spot the first frog. Inside we have introduced a range of mindfulness activities and created our very own colourful snake to help the children explore their feelings and build their resilience.



Semley

Spring has well and truly sprung at Semley nursery. With so many beautiful changes in the outdoors at this time of year, the children have been excited to explore this wonderful season. Our children have picked dandelions from the garden to make delicious cookies, planted seeds including sunflowers, lettuce and cress and have been patiently counting down the days until our ducklings emerge from their eggs. After a year of restrictions from the pandemic, we were thrilled to be able, once again, to take a trip on the minibus to Wilton's forest school and farm. The children had a wonderful time and almost all of the children had a

snooze on the way home, possibly dreaming of dens in the woods, alpacas and new adventures!



St Peters

We have been planning surrounding the children's current interests. This has sent us on adventures as pirates, hunts for bugs, being creative and getting messy in the mud kitchen. We have had children have arrivals of new siblings and others who have been to the hospital, which has led us to a real interest in hospital themed role play. We love puppets and have been creating our own stories surrounding animal puppets as well as more traditional ones, including retelling the story of the 3 little pigs. We used a giant cardboard box to create a puppet theatre and puppets to go with it. We have been busy planting and looking after our plants. We have planted mint, onion, radish, beetroot, carrots and potatoes, as well as each planting our own sunflowers. Currently we are looking into metamorphosis, where we have had some caterpillars arrive at nursery and we are enjoying watching and following them go through their lifecycle.





Froxfield

The babies and toddlers have been enjoying making pies in their new mud kitchen and creating sounds on their outside music wall. Inside they have been exploring their senses as they play with sensory bags and painting pictures of cars and aeroplanes. Lower Nursery have been exploring sizes, big and small. They have been building tyre towers and measuring themselves against them and taking about big and small. Upper Nursery have been following the interest of transport. We have made a giant junk model post van and our name trains. We gave the cars a clean in our car wash and played a number squirting game. We also completed a traffic survey to see how many different coloured cars went past our nursery and recorded our findings on our car sheet clip boards.



Corsham

The children have been making the most of the sunny weather and enjoying playing with the resources

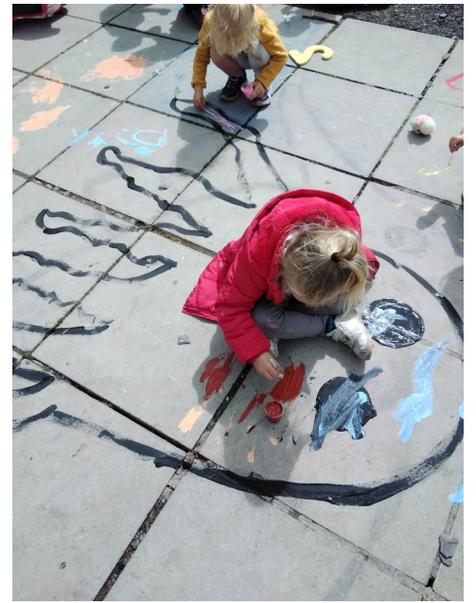
they have chosen to engage in. Physical development, mark making, social interaction, and risk taking as well as demonstrating a persistence in achieving what they set out to do whilst having fun.



Calne



This term, the children have been curious about water and animals and so we combined these interests and celebrated 'Mother Ocean Day'. Exploring the awe and wonder of the commotion in the ocean, the children have strengthened their gross motor skills through active time. From wiggling like jellyfish to scuttling like crabs! The children also developed their awareness of recycling as they learnt many facts about how pollution can impact on the beautiful animals that live in the sea. In addition when



clearing an area of the garden, we found a slow worm. The children are very interested in insects



and mini beasts and were fascinated by the way the slow worm moved and how similar it was to a snake. The children made sure that we returned the slow worm to the same spot so that he could get back home.



City

The babies have been mark making using cars, paints and brushes. The children have loved spending time in our playground, making the most of the warmer weather and had great fun with water play, where they got to wash the dolls. During this spring term, the butterfly room have welcomed several new children who have settled in well. The children have been showing an interest in ice creams so we've incorporated these in to their play by making ice creams and ice lollies using playdough, whilst discussing their favourite flavours. The pre-school children have been learning all about the different lifecycles of animals such as frogs, caterpillars and bumblebees. We have also been discussing the children transitioning into primary schools and how they are feeling. With this in mind, we have been practising our independence skills by having weekly PE sessions, encouraging them to stay fit and healthy.



Wilton

The Barn classes has really loved learning about animal lifecycles, which started by collecting frogspawn from our nature pond. They quickly turned into tadpoles and we have spent several weeks caring for them by catching rain water to refresh their pond and feeding them cucumber. Before long they had grown back and front legs and we loved watching the froglets hopping over the rocks. We have now released them back into the nature pond. We have also been caring for caterpillars, watching them grow bigger and then turn into chrysalises. What a surprise we had after the bank holiday weekend when we discovered 4 beautiful 'painted lady' butterflies. We fed them sugar water on dandelions for a few days then released them in the garden. We are now patiently waiting for our chicken eggs to hatch, only 11 days to go!! Baby unit and dairy have been planting flowers & seeds, watering and watching them grow. As we have so many parents who are doctors and nurses, we celebrated International nurse's day with the children discovering the roles of doctors and nurses, practicing their bandaging skills, taking temperatures of the dolls and painting pictures.



Trinity

After a month of unpacking, building furniture and setting up resources we opened our door on the 19th April. We were still in the middle of lockdown which made visits and settlings difficult but we were rewarded with happy, confident children who came in full of enthusiasm and smiles from day one. We are still busy adapting the environment to incorporate the children's interests. The mud kitchen and potion station have been extremely popular but as the children love the cosy den in the indoor environment an outdoor den is the next project so a woodland themed reading den is planned. Justine has been busy with the children brightening up the bare walls with some lovely displays. So the nursery is bright and colourful with lots of laughter and fun.

Burcombe

Following the children's interests, the children have been developing their imaginations by engaging in imaginative role play and recreating real life experiences. The children have also been working on their independence and self-help skills as well as taking care of our indoor and outdoor environments. With the milder weather, we have renewed the interest of life cycles looking at tadpoles and caterpillars. We have planted seeds in the garden and we are continuing to monitor their growth.



Outdoor learning @ Wilton

May Day is an ancient festival marking the first day of Summer. We believe that the seasons are best experienced first hand and that the natural processes occurring at the varying times of the year are a huge part of this experience. So what better way to celebrate May Day than immersed in nature, joining in with a Forest School session?

This year the Barn Classes made May foliage gathered in were particularly colours they were include. The children Baby Unit made mini ribbon and bells to foliage they woods, these were accompaniment to dancing. The setting have also create an impressive



Day Crowns from the woods, they interested in which able to find to from the Dairy and May Poles, adding the sticks and collected in the the perfect our singing and children across the worked together to lodging for our

insect friends. They had a good think about the ecosystems we see out on Forest School and recreated an environment fit for a 5* rating! We collected a variety of natural materials; leaf litter, sticks, mosses and pine cones and added them to manmade clay pots, slates and bricks to create the structure situated in our pond area. We will revisit it with our bug pots, magnifying glasses and identification cards to see who has moved in.

SPRING RECIPES TO MAKE AND ENJOY..



To make Avocado pasta you will need—300g pasta, 2 ripe avocados, 1 tsp olive oil, salt and pepper to taste, fresh basil and parmesan to serve (you could also add some cooked chicken or bacon). Fill a large pan with water and put the pasta on to boil - cook according to pack instructions. While the pasta is cooking, slice the avocados in half, remove the stones and scoop the contents into a bowl, then mash. Add some olive oil (just a drizzle) to make the sauce a smooth consistency. You can add a sprinkle of salt and pepper if desired. Once cooked, drain the pasta and combine the pasta and the avocado sauce (and the chopped chicken/bacon if using). Sprinkle with grated parmesan and fresh basil to serve.



To make banana, pear and apple cake you will need—150g plain flour, 3tbsp light Muscovado/caster sugar, 200ml milk, 1tsp baking powder, 3 eggs, 2 bananas, 1 apple, 1 pear. Preheat the oven to 200°C. Butter a loaf tin and line with baking paper. Wash and peel the fruit. Chop the apple and pear into small pieces. Cut the bananas into thin slices and mash until soft. Set the fruit aside and combine the sugar and eggs in a large bowl. Mix until light and fluffy. Add the flour, milk, baking powder and mix well. Add the fruit and mix until combined. Pour the mixture into the loaf tin and bake in the oven for around 30 minutes. It should be golden brown on top and fully risen. You can test it with a skewer to check – if it comes out clean then the cake is ready.

To make crawly caterpillar treats you will need—45g butter (or margarine), 300g marshmallows, 180g Rice Krispies, 140g butter, softened, 280g icing sugar, 1tbsp milk, food colouring (a few drops), smarties and sprinkles (to decorate). In a large saucepan melt the butter over a low heat and add the marshmallows, stir until melted. Remove from the heat. Add the Rice Krispies and stir well. Using a spatula, evenly press the mixture into a baking tray and allow to cool. Cut into circles. Place 8 or 9 circles together to form a caterpillar. Beat the butter in a large bowl until soft. Add half the icing sugar and beat until smooth. Then add the remainder with one tablespoon of the milk. Beat until creamy, add the food colouring and mix well. Decorate the caterpillars with icing, smarties and sprinkles.

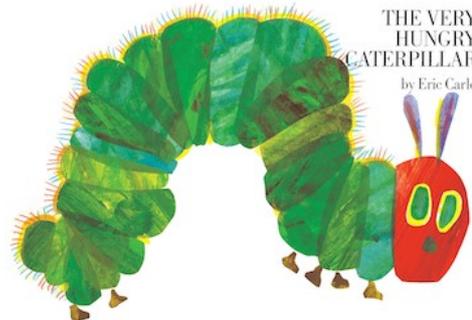
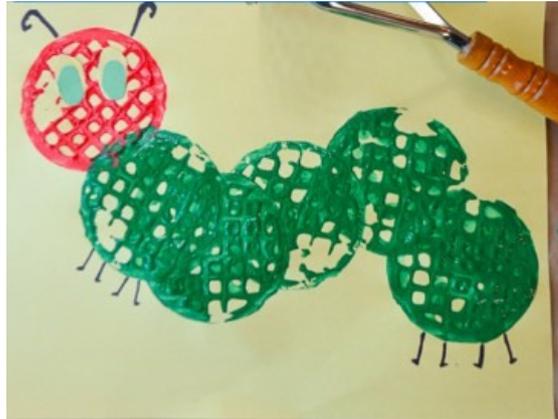
To make cheese and potato swirls you will need—200g potatoes, mashed, 1 onion, diced, 1 egg, beaten, 100g cheese, grated, 250g puff pastry (ready made), 1 tsp English mustard powder, 1tbsp parsley, finely chopped, 2tbsp milk. Boil the potatoes until tender, then mash the with milk and cheese. Fry the onions in a drop of oil until soft and then add to the mix. Add parsley and mustard to mix, Season to taste. Preheat oven 180°C/Gas mark 4. Then roll out your pastry. Spread your cheese and potato mix onto the whole of the pastry just leaving a little space on one end (about 1cm). Roll your pastry so you have what looks like a swiss roll, put a little milk along the last edge to keep in place. Glaze the top using the egg, then cut your swiss roll width ways into slices. Place on baking tray and cook for about 20 minutes or until golden.



Due to most of the children being hugely interested in life cycles this term, consider carrying out some of these activities at home to support your child's understanding of growth and change whilst developing their language skills by reading some spring time books.



reading some spring time books.



Spring books;

Ferdie's Springtime Blossom by Julia Rawlinson

Spring by Gerda Muller

Snail Trail by Ruth Brown

The Bog Baby by Jeanne Willis and Gwen Millard

Caterpillar Butterfly by Vivian French

I Don't Want To Be A Frog by Dev Petty

A Frog In A Bog by Karma Wilson

The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle