



September 2024

Oaklea Montessori St John's

Dear Parents and Carers,

We hope that you and your families are all safe and well and that you have been able to enjoy some of the hot spells over the summer period as well as splashing in lots of puddles too! We have been excited to welcome back our existing families, and it has been lovely to see the new children settling in.

New Families...

Please ensure you read all documents in your welcome pack carefully to ensure you are familiar with our policies and procedures, and should you have any questions in relation to the details in the welcome pack please direct them to admin@oakleamontessori.co.uk. Key Policies, procedures and help your child at home leaflets can be found on our website.

Oaklea Clothing

We currently have some second hand t-shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces for a reduced price. If you would like new clothing, please fill in a clothing order form, note this could take a couple of weeks for the clothing to arrive.

Facebook and Parent Zone...

Please like and join our **Facebook page...** we put out lots of information via Facebook about what your children have been up to, Sign of the Week, important notices and much more.....
<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100037208067008>

ParentZone – Thank you also to all of you who have been posting photos and observations through Parentzone to add to your child's learning journey. There are some wonderful things happening and it is a delight to see.

Holidays and Absences

Although nursery attendance is not statutory, it is important for parents/carers to report their child's absence to nursery on the first day. Nursery has to follow guidelines set out by the local authority regarding the regular attendance of all children. Please report all absences on our landline number **Oaklea St John's: 01206 589995 / Oaklea New Town: 01206 587448**

Reminders....

Named slippers or comfy indoor shoes must be brought in each time your child attends, as well as wellies for outdoor play. This helps with keeping the indoor floor as clean as possible and supports your child with the work cycle and routines. Please ensure your child's bag also includes lots of spare named clothes for all eventualities (please bring clothes you don't mind getting messy). If your child has a comforter whilst they settle, we invite you to bring these, but please leave all toys at home.

Please can we remind all parents to adhere to the following guidelines if your child is unwell, for sickness/diarrhoea children **cannot** attend until 48 hours after the last bout of illness. If your child has been prescribed antibiotics, please keep your child at home for the first 24 hours. Additionally, we continue our policy of No Calpol, to reduce the risk of spreading illness. Please keep them at home where they can rest and recuperate so they can return quickly to explore with their friends and teachers.

Looking ahead: Dates for your diary

Tuesday 17th December 2024, 2.15 - 3pm Nativity Play at St John's Church
Thursday 20th and Friday 21st February 2025 - Oaklea St John's Closed (church maintenance) There will be an option for your child to attend an alternative day that week or Thursday 20th February at Oaklea New Town. Our staff training day will coincide with the closure on Friday 21st February.

Funding and Sessions...

You should have by now received a funding form for your child for the Autumn Term, if you are eligible, we have already had lots returned to us, thank you. If you are still to return your form to us, please do so ASAP.

Please make sure, if eligible, you apply for or renew your working entitlement code for the Spring term by 31st December, this is to be renewed every 3 months. You can find out more information regarding funding available and tax-free childcare at:

<https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>

Important note: If we do not receive a completed and signed funding form, your child may not receive funding for the Autumn Term resulting in sessions being invoiced.

If you would like ad hoc sessions, please ensure your invoice is settled as we are unable to cater for ad hoc sessions otherwise.

If you have any questions regarding funded sessions, please do not hesitate to contact the office for the further information.

Spaces are now very limited for this academic year, if you would like to increase your sessions from January /April please email admin@oakleamontessori.co.uk a.s.a.p, although we cannot guarantee there will be any availability.

Unfortunately, the funded hours are significantly lower than our hourly rate and as such do not cover the rising costs of consumables. The Early Years Entitlement funding is intended to deliver free, high quality, flexible childcare. It is **not** intended to pay for the costs of meals, drinks, snacks, other consumables, extra hours or additional activities. *We have kept the price low, although will keep under review.*

To help the nursery remain sustainable, a consumable charge of £1 per 3-hour core session 9-12pm / 1-4pm or £2 for all day 9-3pm, was introduced September 2024. This is automatically added to your monthly invoice.

School Applications

Applications for school can be applied from 4th November 2024 and needs to be completed and submitted by the national closing date of 15th January 2025.

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/admissions-to-essex-schools-for-the-next-school-year>

Booking Holiday Sessions

I am sure you appreciate that managing staff prudently for holiday periods needs careful planning. All requests to book additional sessions in holiday periods will be on a first come, first served basis. The date for making requests for October half term is: Friday 27th September 2024. Requests can be emailed to stJohns@oakleamontessori.co.uk. Thank you for your understanding.

Autumn Theme....

Our theme for this term is 'All About Me'. We will also be looking at things all Autumn... when will the leaves start to fall? What colour are they? Can you spot any hedgehogs?

Shoebox Appeal

We are delighted to be taking part in 'Operation 500 Smiles' again this year. This is such a rich opportunity for the children to be part of. Please do not feel obliged to complete a whole box – anything you can contribute will be hugely appreciated. We will have a collection table available at the front of the building for any items you would like to donate. We will be watching short video clips with the children to support their understanding of giving and receiving. There is also further information including what can be included in the box, on the St John's Church website: <https://stjohnscolchester.org.uk/shoebboxes/>

Festivals

We will not be participating in any Halloween activities and kindly ask that children do not attend wearing any costumes. However, we would love to learn about any other festivals that you celebrate as a family. Please let us know!

And Finally...

Please leave **all food** at home, we have many children with allergies, and we need to keep all children safe. Our mealtime policy is on the website for further information.

Reminder to regularly check lost property as this quickly builds up! If your child has left something behind, please ask a member of staff. At the end of term, any unclaimed lost property is donated to charity.

We wish you a wonderful start to the Autumn term 2024 and look forward to sharing your children's learning and development with you all!

Yours sincerely,

Dawn Lewis

Carla Gunn

Oaklea Director

Setting Manager

2024/ 2025 Term Dates

Autumn Term 2024

Monday 9th September – Friday 20th December 2024

Half term: 28th October – Friday 1st November

Spring Term 2025

Monday 6th January – Friday 28th March 2025

Half term: 17th February – 21st February 2025 (Oaklea ST Johns Closed Thursday 20th and Friday 21st February, please see above)

Thursday 6th March – World Book Day

Good Friday Bank Holiday – Friday 18th April CLOSED

Summer Term 2025

Easter Monday – Monday 21st April CLOSED

Tuesday 22nd April -Tuesday 22nd July 2025

Bank Holiday Monday 5th May CLOSED

Bank Holiday Monday 26th May CLOSED

Half Term 27th May - 30th May