



November 2024

Dear Parents,

New term

What a wonderful start to the new term! Your children are already so settled, and we are all grateful for your encouragement and engagement.

Oaklea Carla (Manager & Safeguarding lead) and Kerry (Deputy Manager and SENDCo) are heading up a wonderfully happy effective team. Together they are creating an environment in which your children are settling, thriving and enjoying their time at nursery!

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**

Funding and Sessions...

Funding forms will be given out shortly, ready to be signed and updated for the Spring term., and all codes need to be validated or reconfirmed by 31st December to be valid for Spring. 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 Spring 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.

Clothing

As you know, the children enjoy a spell outside as soon as they arrive. This means that they need to be wearing clothing suitable for the day, including wellies! All they need to do is hang up their bags and go into the garden. The children will then move inside as they choose. Many may prefer to work outdoors for longer; another reason to dress them for the day's weather.

Please make sure that children have some easy to put on indoor shoes (slippers, plimsols) and clothing that is easy to change inside their bag. We always support and encourage children's independence to dress themselves (as developmentally appropriate). Changing children out of skinny-fit trousers and sneakers/converses is very time consuming! And please.... name everything!!!

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/> Last day for collection is Wednesday 20th November 2024.

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>

Nativity play

We would like to remind you that all of you are invited to come with your children to see our simple Nativity on Tuesday 17th December start **at 2.15pm at St John's Church**. We will take all the children in that day to the church. If your child is not in nursery that day, please meet us at the Church. Please encourage your child to join their friends and teachers to sing and dance at the front. However, you retain responsibility for your child. We have always found this a very special event and a lovely finish to the nursery year. Please do come! And please do not take photos, there will be an opportunity to take photos of your child at the end of the nativity. We would love if you can join in, please see attached the nativity song sheet including 'Jingle Bells' that teachers and parents can sing to the children.

Staff Dress down Friday

You may have noticed that the staff on Friday's, have been in casual clothes, they are instead bringing in items for the food bank. Food banks have always been a vital part of community support, although recently seems more important. We are so pleased that we can help support those in need in our local community.

Bits & Bobs

Please follow important safeguarding measures and ensure that you are not using a mobile phone in the nursery or outside area.

Please whilst waiting for your child's session to wait quietly outside the nursery, there are other users are in the building and we do not want to disturb their sessions.

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.

A reminder that if you wish to cancel meal costs, such as for a planned holiday, please give at least 1 week's written notice.

And finally...

Thank you again for your support.

Yours sincerely,

Dawn Lewis
Oaklea Director

Carla Gunn
Setting Manager

2024/ 2025 Term Dates

Autumn Term 2024

Monday 9th September – Friday 20th December 2024

Nativity Play – Tuesday 17th December 2.15-3pm (@ St John's Church)

Spring Term 2025

Monday 6th January – Friday 28th March 2025

Half term: 17th February – 21st February 2025

Thursday 20th and Friday 21st February 2025 - Oaklea St John's Closed (church maintenance)

Staff Training Day – Friday 21st February CLOSED

World Book Day – Thursday 6th March

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