

We aim high * We are resilient * We are curious learners * We value diversity * We are respectful

Dear Golden Lane families,

We have had a very busy term in Early Years. The children are settled into the everyday routines and are busy with their learning.

In this issue we will focus on Physical Development across the Early Years which covers the areas of gross motor control, fine motor control and health and self care. Please explore the links we have included to find out more.

We have been enjoying the longer days and the occasional appearance of the sun. With the arrival of April we are hoping for more sunshine. However, summer is not with us yet so please ensure your child comes in with suitable layers that can be removed and added when necessary.

Bev & Rae

Deputy Head & Children's Centre Lead

Dates for your Diary

May 2025	
Monday 26th— Friday 30th	Half term for all term time only children
June 2025	
Monday 2nd June	INSET day term time only children in Nursery and all children from Reception—Year 6
Wednesday 25th June	Class photos
July 2025	
Sunday 6th July –morning	Run Prior Weston Run (fun run for Nursery and Reception aged children on Highbury Fields)
Monday 7th July– afternoon	Nursery & Reception sports day– on school pitch
Tuesday 22nd July	End of summer term

EYFS curriculum

There are seven areas of learning and development across the curriculum. All areas of learning are important and inter-connected. These areas are divided up into three **prime areas**. These are Communication and Language (CL), Physical Development (PD) and Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED). Then there are the four **specific areas**, Literacy (Lit), Mathematics (MD), Understanding the World (UfW) and Expressive Arts and Design (EAD).

Each issue we will focus on one area of learning with ways you can support at home.

Physical Development (PD)

Physical development is a vital area of early childhood growth, as it lays the foundation for children's independence and exploration of the world around them. In this edition, we'll focus on key milestones for gross and fine motor control development, referencing the *Birth to 5 Matters* guidance to support your understanding of this important aspect of your child's learning journey.

Gross Motor Control Milestones

Gross motor skills involve the use of large muscles in activities like crawling, walking, and running. According to the *Birth to 5 Matters* document, by 9 to 12 months, babies are typically starting to move more purposefully, pulling themselves up to stand and beginning to cruise along furniture. By 18 months, many children can walk unaided, and by 2 to 3 years, they are often able to run, climb, and kick a ball. At 3 to 4 years, children refine their coordination and balance, allowing them to jump with both feet, pedal a tricycle, and throw a ball more accurately. These milestones are significant, as they mark the development of strength, coordination, and physical independence, which are essential for building confidence in physical activities.

Fine Motor Control Milestones

Fine motor skills involve the smaller movements that require more precision, such as grasping, manipulating objects, and drawing. According to *Birth to 5 Matters*, by the age of 12 months, babies start to develop the pincer grip, allowing them to pick up small objects using their thumb and forefinger. By 18 months, many children can feed themselves with a spoon and begin to build small towers with blocks. At 2 to 3 years, fine motor control becomes more refined, and children start to draw basic shapes, like circles and lines, and may begin to dress and undress with some assistance. By 3 to 4 years, children can often complete puzzles, use scissors, and show more control over their pencil grip, reflecting increasing precision in their hand-eye coordination. These milestones are crucial for children's independence and their ability to interact with the world in a more detailed and creative way.

We hope this overview provides valuable insight into the milestones of physical development and how they unfold in early childhood. Supporting children as they reach these stages through play and active exploration helps foster their physical growth and overall well-being.

Nursery rhymes with hand actions



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loqrGRHUxWY>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwdxJnAA6CI>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwKX6m2tCR4>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0peZ5AN5vs8>

News from baby room

Hello everyone! In the baby room, we have been incredibly active over the past few weeks, engaging in a variety of exciting celebrations from around the globe, including Holi, Red Nose Day, and Ramadan, as well as creating beautiful cards for Mother's Day. Our babies are making good progress in their physical development, and we are committed to helping them meet their milestones effectively. We are actively fostering opportunities for all our babies to enhance their independence and self-care skills. From as early as six months old, we encourage them to grasp food and bring it to their mouths, setting a strong foundation for their growth.



News from toddler room

The Toddler rooms have been busy with their book of the month 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. They have been creating some lovely art work, exploring the book through sensory play and thinking about all the healthy foods we like to eat. We don't want to get a stomach ache like the caterpillar!



News from Nursery

Nursery have been busy learning about people who help us this half term. They have been finding out about dentists, firefighters and the police. We even had our own Nursery police force. Nursery have also been busy learning about different shapes and then being shape detectives while on a shape hunt.



News from Reception

This week we've been soaking up the lovely spring sunshine and enjoying plenty of outdoor play, which has been a highlight for everyone. We have been loving building large scale structures together and we've been excited to have water play outside for the first time this year!

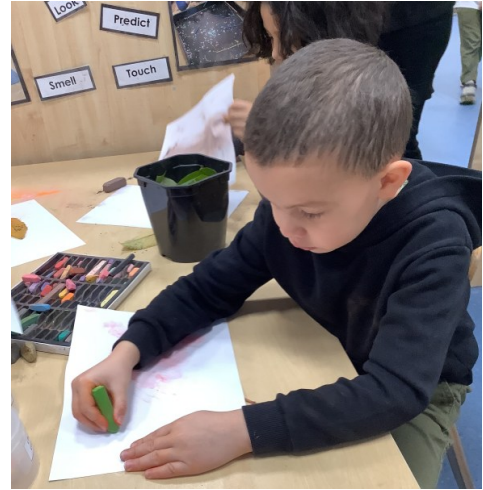
In our reading this week, we've been enjoying No Dinner! by Jessica Souhami. It's a traditional Indian story about a clever old lady who hides inside a giant pumpkin to stay safe from wild animals in the forest. We loved the crafty old lady and her clever ideas. We had a fantastic time imagining other ways she could disguise herself if she needed to go through the forest again. After some great thinking, we decided she could wrap herself up like a giant birthday present – what a creative idea!

In maths, we've been focusing on developing our perceptual subitising skills, which means recognising quantities without having to count them. This week, we used this skill to explore the idea of equal amounts and investigate equal groups. We looked at dice patterns and used our fingers to explore doubling quantities, all the way up to 10. The children are becoming more confident with these ideas, and a continued focus on using spatial language to describe the arrangements will help deepen their understanding even further.



News from Year 1

Year 1 have been busy learning all about Mary Anning and her fossil discoveries. They have used it as an opportunity to write about her life, to explore size in maths and use of geography skills to find her fossil locations. They also went on their own fossil hunt around the school. They brought all this to life in their first ever assembly on Thursday.



Whittington Park Community Association

ISLINGTON

WHITTINGTON PARK EASTER EGG HUNT

MON 14TH APRIL
10AM - 12PM
FREE TO PARTAKE

Hop along to Whittington Park and join us for a fun-filled Easter adventure!

An exciting, educational, and delicious experience for the whole family.

Whittington Park Community Centre, Yerbury Rd, London, N19 4RS

St Luke's & The Peel Baby and children's clothes, books and toys swap

Saturday 12th April 2025
Peel Institute
11 AM - 1 PM

If you are in need of pre-loved baby/children's clothes, toys and books, come to our swap event for items for ages 0-8 years!

Item donations welcome.

Free refreshments available

info@splt.org.uk 020 7549 8181
@StLukesTrust @StLukesTrust @StLukesTrust @StLukesTrust
Charity number: 207497

ST LUKE'S COMMUNITY CENTRE

@Peelinstitute @ThePeelinstitute @peelinstitute

THE PEEL
CONNECTING COMMUNITIES FOR 125 YEARS SINCE 1898

Brushing teeth daily is a key part of establishing healthy habits for young children, and it's essential for their overall well-being. According to the *Birth to 5 Matters* document, health and self-care practices, such as brushing teeth, contribute to a child's developing sense of responsibility and self-sufficiency. By encouraging regular tooth brushing from an early age, children learn the importance of personal hygiene, which supports their physical health and helps prevent dental issues later on. This simple yet essential task also fosters independence, as children begin to take ownership of their health and hygiene routines, boosting their confidence in caring for themselves.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FA80_Ff0CFk



Physical activity guidelines for children (under 5 years)

Use the link below to find out the recommended daily activity for your child at their different ages of development

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/physical-activity-guidelines-children-under-five-years/>

The Importance of Using Scissors for Fine Motor Development

Using scissors is a valuable activity for young children as it helps develop fine motor control and hand-eye coordination. According to the *Birth to 5 Matters* document, activities like cutting are essential for strengthening the small muscles in the hands and fingers, which are needed for tasks such as writing, drawing, and fastening buttons. Scissors also encourage concentration and precision, helping children build confidence in their ability to manipulate objects. By practicing with scissors, children not only improve their fine motor skills but also enhance their overall independence and control in everyday activities.



<https://www.cambspborochildrenshealth.nhs.uk/child-development-and-growing-up/hand-skills/scissor-skills/>

Encouraging independence and self-care skills

For a child who is 3 to 4 years old and has typical physical development the expectations are they become more involved and independent in their self care. This can be seen in the following ways:

Dresses with help, e.g. puts arms into open fronted coat or shirt when held up, pulls up own trousers, and pulls up zipper once it is fastened at the bottom .

To promote independence in your child consider how easy the clothes are to take off and on independently.

Footwear is an important consideration. Learning to tie shoelaces is hard. Teaching your child how to do it before they need to wear shoes with laces is a good idea. You need to be able to use both hands together to do different jobs. Most children don't have the required hand skills until they are **between 5 and 7 years**.

<https://www.nhsggc.org.uk/kids/resources/ot-activityinformation-sheets/shoelaces-information-for-parent-carers/#:~:text=Learning%20to%20tie%20shoelaces%20is,between%205%20and%207%20years.>

North London parks



Finsbury Park, N4 2DE

Finsbury Park is home to not one, not two but three playgrounds: a traditional toddler situation with a sandpit, a new big kids' area consisting largely of green metal structures, and this. Inhabiting the former rocky hillside area next to the above, this recent addition offers equipment for all ages, including a wooden playhouse with a slide, a bouncy bridge, a circle of swings, lots of nice landscaping and a hillside slide, among other bits and pieces

King Square Gardens, Clerkenwell, EC1V 7AN

I've heard this one referred to as a "summer playground" and I'm kind of inclined to agree, owing to its climbing frame and slide both living in a giant sandpit – that and the splash-pad thingy that's only switched on in the warmer months. It's still a decent all-rounder though, offering plenty of play options across a large site and in a good location if you're close to Angel or Barbican. Look out for the colourful metal igloo shelters.



Shoreditch Park Playground, Hoxton, N1 5DR

This formerly pretty dreadful playground underwent a £2m revamp in 2023, joining a slew of Hackney playgrounds to have undergone jazzy upgrades the last few years. Designed for all ages, though better for younger kids, the new, improved Shoreditch Park Playground includes a hillside slide with clambering tower, swings, an accessible roundabout, seesaw, balance beams and a good-sized sand-play area .



Find out about more playgrounds on the link

<https://bablands.com/2022/12/15/londons-coolest-playgrounds-by-area/>



Coram's Fields WC1N 1DN

An enclosed play area for young children with sand and water play, 3 playgrounds, paddling pool, lawns, wildlife garden and toilet facilities. The great thing about Coram Field's is there is only 1 way in and out and this is managed by the park warden.

There are also sports pitches and halls that can be hired for parties and other events.

Clissold Park N16 9HJ

This park has wide open spaces, a playground with a large sand pit and sinking pirate ship. It also has a water park and wheels park. In the middle there is a deer enclosure. There are toilet facilities next to the playground.

It is easy to get to, just jump on the 141.



Soft play at Sobell Centre N7 7NY

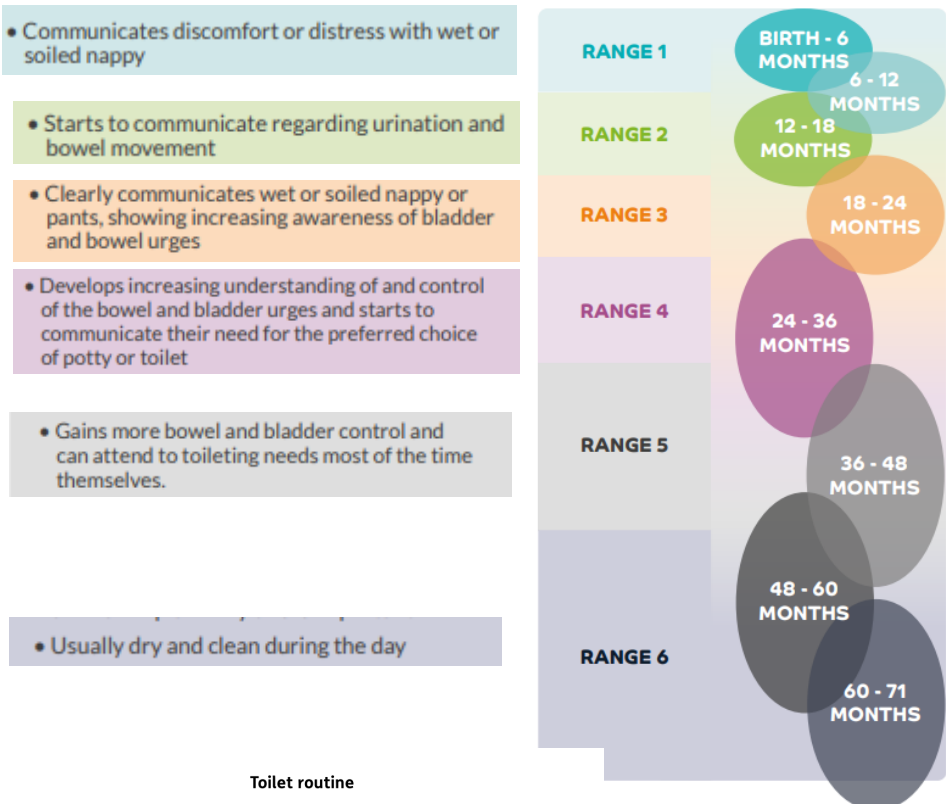
If it's raining soft play areas can still let children run, jump and climb with no need to get wet! Sobell has an 'Active Play Area'. Children aged 10 and under can embark on new adventures within the brand-new Active Play Area.

With features including a go-kart area, climbable mangrove tree, playhouse games room, rope bridge and baby sensory area (as part of a dedicated under 2s area),



Health and self-care

Potty training is a significant developmental milestone that requires patience and understanding from parents. According to the NHS, most children begin to show readiness for potty training between 18 months and 2 years old, but each child is unique and may be ready at different times. Signs of readiness include staying dry for at least an hour or two, showing awareness of having a wet or dirty nappy, and indicating when they are about to urinate or have a bowel movement. The 'Birth to 5 Matters' guidance emphasises supporting children's growing independence in self-care routines, such as toileting, by encouraging their efforts and recognising individual progress. It is important that we work closely with parents and carers to ensure consistent messages about toilet training are given as this supports a smoother transition for children. It's essential to approach potty training as a collaborative and flexible process, tailored to your child's unique development and needs. So your child can see home and school working together please talk to the team in your child's room about potty training and when is the best time to start.



Books to share when potty training



<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/booklists/p/books-for-potty-training/>

Toilet routine



We use visuals to support with toilet routines.

If you would like a copy for home please talk to the team in your child's room

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development/potty-training-and-bedwetting/how-to-potty-train/>



Toilet training workshop

This session, delivered by Jill (Counselling Psychologist) will:

- Help you to know when your child is ready to start toilet training
- Give information about ways to help children to toilet train
- Provide a space to share ideas and ask questions
- Suggest ways to encourage children.

Booking required

Friday 25th of April 2025

10:00am – 11:30am.

Family Hub Central at
New River Green
Children's Centre
N1 2SX

Booking required.

Please contact:

020 7527 8465 or email

BrightStartCentral@islington.gov.uk



Health and self care: independence in dressing

Another vital skill in self-care is being independent with dressing. We want our children to have an “I can” attitude. Part of this is knowing ‘I can put on my coat’ instead of feeling that they have to wait for an adult to put it on for them.

Ways that you can support with this is to dress your child in clothes that are easy to pull up and down, especially when toilet training. Look at the fastenings that are on your child’s coat. Also look at the fastenings that are on their shoes. As mentioned before children’s hands are typically not developed enough to manage shoelaces until 5 to 7 years of age. Velcro shoes are more suitable for children and help support with independence.

• Can actively cooperate with nappy changing, dressing/undressing

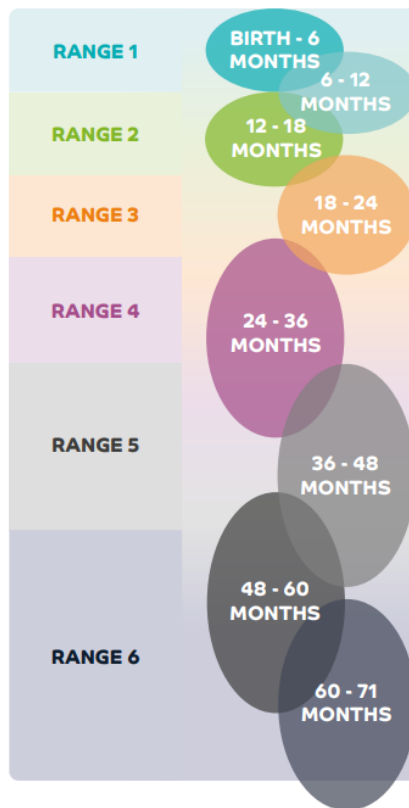
• Shows interest in indoor and outdoor clothing and shoes/wellingtons

• Able to help with and increasingly independently put on and take off simple clothing items such as hats, unzipped jackets, wellington boots

• Dresses with help, e.g. puts arms into open-fronted coat or shirt when held up, pulls up own trousers, and pulls up zipper once it is fastened at the bottom

End of Reception
Early Learning Goal assessment

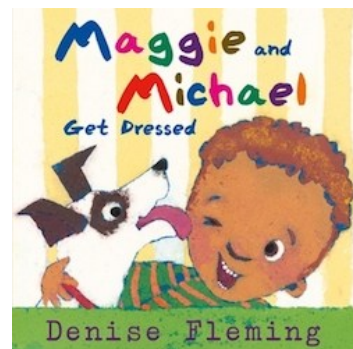
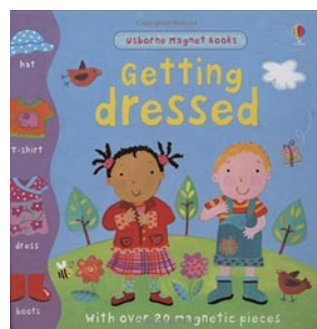
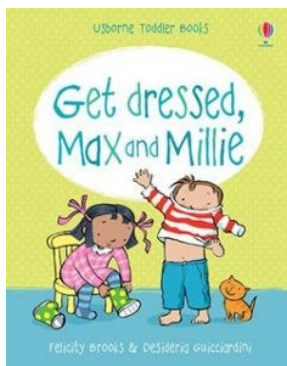
Statutory ELG: Managing Self
Children at the expected level of development will:
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.



<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/articles/zb4grj6>



<https://www.lineupthebooks.com/dressing/>



Important Dates

The academic calendar for 2024/25 is available on the school's website. Please check it regularly to stay informed about upcoming closure dates and event days.



VITAMINS FOR MUMS & CHILDREN

Collect your **FREE** Healthy Start vitamins.



Collecting Your Child

If a different adult is collecting your child, please inform a staff member in the room and the receptionist at drop-off. The adult **must** also have your child's password.



Child Absences

We look forward to welcoming in all our children everyday. If your child is unable to attend for any reason, i.e. they are unwell or have an appointment or you they will be in late please contact the office on 0207 786 4800, via parentmail or email office@priorweston.islington.sch.uk and we will pass the information on to their room.

Room times

Baby room - Fortune Park

Core day 9.15am -3.20pm

Toddler room – Toffee Park

Core day 9.15am 3.20pm

Toddler room- Bunhill

Core day Wednesday 1pm – 3.15pm

Thursday & Friday 9.15am-3.15pm

Nursery – Green Park & Hyde Park

Core day 8.45am– 3.25pm