



# Early Years Newsletter



14/11/2025 Autumn Issue 2

#shineatpriorweston

Virtual tour @ <https://bit.ly/32RoLWi>

#unitedagainstbullying

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

Dear Golden Lane and Prior Weston families,

In this newsletter, we're excited to share our focus on **literacy in the Early Years**. Literacy is woven into everything we do—through stories, songs, rhymes, and playful mark-making. The children have been enjoying daily story sessions, experimenting with early writing in creative ways, and exploring sounds through phonics games.

We hope this gives you a glimpse into how we nurture a love of language and books, building the foundations for confident communication and enthusiastic young readers.

We hope you enjoy the newsletters. To help us make sure they have the information you want to see please click on the link and fill in the survey.

<https://forms.gle/JQ4FjBYWH5GkLYn96>

Bev & Rae

Deputy Head & Children's Centre Lead

## Dates for your Diary

### November 2025

Friday 28th November

PTA coffee morning 9am

### December 2025

Wednesday 10th December

WX ST cake sale- donations of cakes and bakes needed

Friday 12th December

Christmas Jumper Day & Christmas Lunch

Monday 15th December

EY Christmas panto

Wednesday 17th December

Class Parties & Festive performance at 2pm

Thursday 18th December

Festive performance at 10am

Friday 19th December

End of Term- 2pm finish

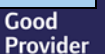
### January 2026

Monday 5th January

INSET Day— CC & School closed

Tuesday 6th January

Welcome back to School





## Early Reading: Helping Your Child Fall in Love with Books

Learning to read is an exciting journey! Long before children can sound out words, they are already learning to make sense of pictures, symbols, and the language all around them. Every conversation, picture book, and song helps build the foundations of reading.

## Everyday Print – Learning from the World Around Us

Children are surrounded by print from birth — signs, labels, packaging, and screens. These familiar words and symbols help them understand that print carries meaning.

**Try this:** Point out words and symbols when you're out and about — street signs, shop logos, or food labels — and talk about what they mean.

## Pictures Tell Stories Too

Before they can read words, children “read” pictures! Babies love exploring board and cloth books, and as they grow, they start to recognize pictures as symbols — like knowing that a drawing of a duck represents a real duck.

**Try this:** Look closely at pictures in books together. Ask questions like “What do you think is happening here?” or “How do you think the character feels?”

## Shared Reading – Reading Together Builds Connection

Reading with your child helps develop language, imagination, and empathy. Even very young babies love the rhythm of your voice and the closeness of shared reading.

To make story time fun:

- Use different voices, sounds, and actions for characters.
- Pause and give your child time to think and talk.
- Ask open-ended questions like “I wonder what will happen next?”
- Revisit favourite books — repetition helps children build confidence and understanding.
- Books don't have to be read sitting still — act them out, sing parts, or take the story outside!

## Reading for Pleasure

The best readers are those who enjoy reading! When reading is fun, children want to do it more.

### Try this:

Create cosy moments to share a book one-on-one.

Make story time active with actions and props.

Revisit a few favourite stories often — this helps your child feel secure and excited about books.

## Playing with Sounds – Building Phonological Awareness

Before learning phonics, children need to play with sounds. Listening, singing, and rhyming games help them tune into the sounds that make up words.

### Try this:

- Sing songs and nursery rhymes together.
- Clap along to the rhythm of words.
- Make up silly rhymes — the sillier, the better!
- Talk about sounds in everyday life — birds chirping, cars zooming, doors creaking.

As children grow, you can play with blending sounds together (“Can you find your c-o-a-t?”) and spotting rhymes in stories.

## Understanding Phonics

Phonics is learning how sounds link to letters. This helps children decode words when they begin to read and write.

In nursery and early school years, it’s best to keep phonics fun and meaningful — through songs, games, and playful reading.

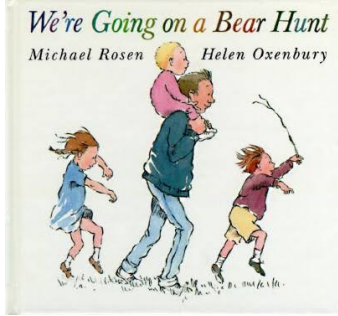
### Try this:

- Point out letters and talk about their sounds.
- Play treasure hunts with letter clues.
- Notice new words in stories and sound them out together.
- Remember: phonics is a tool for reading, not just for saying sounds!

Your child’s reading journey starts long before formal lessons. Every time you share a story, sing a rhyme, or talk about something you see, you’re helping your child become a confident, curious reader.

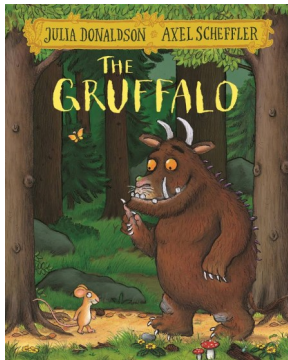
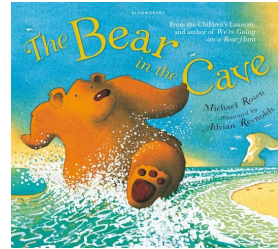
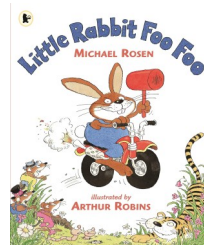
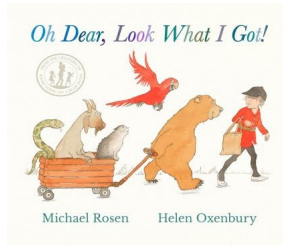
## The Big Picture

Your child's reading journey starts long before formal lessons. Every time you share a story, sing a rhyme, or talk about something you see, you're helping your child become a confident, curious reader.



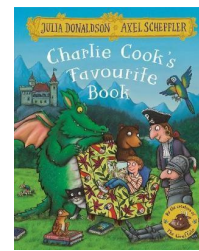
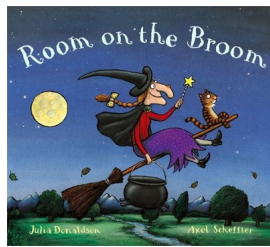
### We're Going on a Bear Hunt

by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury: A classic with repetitive text that helps with prediction and memorization.



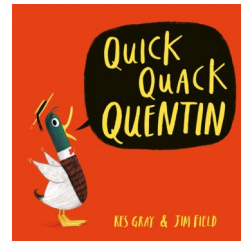
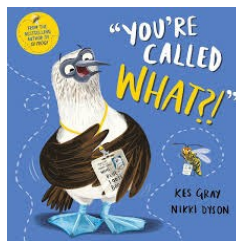
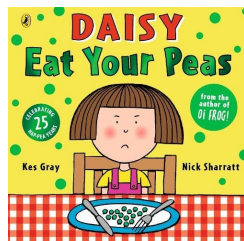
### The Gruffalo

by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler: A modern classic with a compelling narrative and rhyming text.



### Oi Frog

by Kes Gray and Jim Field: A humorous book that uses rhymes to teach about word sounds and phonics.



# Developmental steps for early reading

At the end of Reception children are assessed against the Early Learning Goals (ELG)

Enjoys looking at books and other suitable printed or digital material with familiar people, and being read to

Notices pictures and symbols and beginning to recognise what they stand for in their familiar experiences

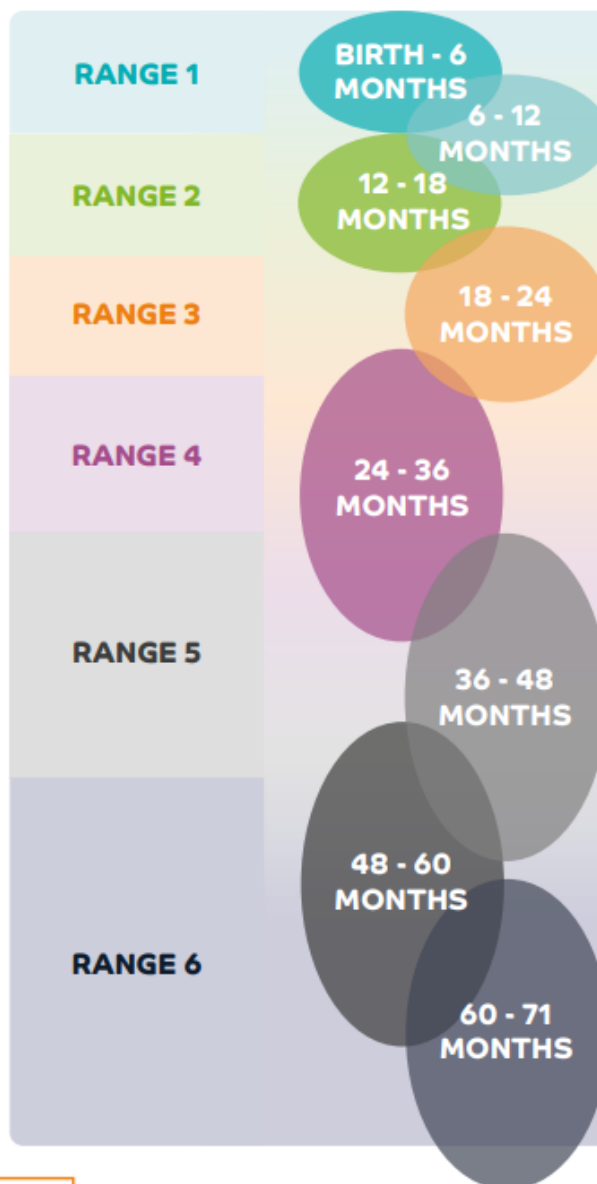
Begins to join in with actions and sounds in familiar song and book sharing experience

Fills in the missing word or phrase in a known rhyme, story or game, e.g. *Humpty Dumpty sat on a*

Begins to develop phonological and phonemic awareness

- Shows awareness of rhyme and alliteration
- Recognises rhythm in spoken words, songs, poems and rhymes
- Claps or taps the syllables in words during sound play
- Hears and says the initial sound in words

Engages with books and other reading materials at an increasingly deeper level, sometimes drawing on their phonic knowledge to decode words, and their knowledge of language structure, subject knowledge and illustrations to interpret the text



## Statutory ELG: Word Reading

Children at the expected level of development will:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

## News from baby room

Hello everyone,

This month in the baby room we've been joyfully celebrating a variety of festivals from around the world, including Diwali, Remembrance Day, Halloween, and Children in Need. The babies joined in with great enthusiasm, taking part in creative activities such as visiting the local park to collect natural treasures like twigs, leaves, and flowers.

A small group of our babies are now beginning their transition into the toddler room, showing wonderful signs of readiness and independence. In the baby room, we also have our very own "little helpers," who take pride in setting up the lunch tables by carefully placing mats and beakers. We are so impressed by their growing independence and understanding at this stage of development.

Our book of the month is *Handa's Surprise*. To bring the story to life, the children dressed up in traditional outfits and made smoothies using the exotic fruits from the book. Everyone enjoyed exploring the fruits through tasting, touching, and smelling. While some babies were a little hesitant at first, their curiosity shone through as they eagerly joined in these fun, sensory sessions.



## News from Toddler room

During the October half term, the children enjoyed a very special outing to Mome—a delightful children's play and sensory café in Angel Islington, lovingly run by one of our toddler parents. We all hopped on the 153 bus and set off together. The children had a wonderful time exploring the wide variety of toys and resources, followed by lots of excitement in the sensory room. After play, we headed upstairs for tasty snacks and refreshing smoothies before returning to nursery for lunch.

Back at nursery, the children have been busy immersing themselves in sensory experiences. Inspired by *Handa's Surprise*, they explored real fruits using all five senses. Their creativity shone through as they pretended to cook with the fruit or role-played shopping adventures.

Our new book of the month, *Dinosaur Roar*, has sparked a wave of dinosaur-themed play. With adult support, the children made playdough and used it to create imaginative "dino cupcakes" in the home corner. They've also been enjoying a variety of tuff trays filled with natural materials, cornflour, and dinosaurs—providing endless opportunities for sensory exploration and imaginative play.



## News from Nursery

Nursery children have been learning about Autumn season and the festivals around autumn. We have sang songs about falling, read books and made lots of art work using materials such as fireworks, poppy flowers and children in need craft. Main focuses this term will be about transport and things that move. Children have been listening the story (Whatever Next) and have completed learning that relates to the topic. On the coming weeks, we will continue learning more about the different transport we use and see around us as well as explore more festive celebration coming up such as Christmas.



## News from Reception

We have been busy this term with our new learning theme 'My Home, My Family'. We have been using some great picture books such as 'What we'll build' and 'Shu Lin's Grandpa' to help us with our writing, drawing and thinking. We have also been looking for interesting new words that we can use in our own stories.

In maths we have been thinking about 'wholes' and 'parts'. We have also been practising our subitising skills as well as thinking about different amounts using words such as 'more than', 'fewer than' and 'equal to'.

We got very busy in the kitchen making pumpkin soup. Together we chopped, grated, stirred and tasted. It was delicious!



### Starting Primary School information

If your child was born between 01/09/21 and 31/08/22 you need to apply for a place in Reception to start in September.

All admissions are done online through Islington

<https://www.islington.gov.uk/children-and-families/schools/apply-for-a-school-place/apply-for-a-primary-school-place>

### The deadline is 15th January 2026

If you have any questions or need support with your application we are happy to help. Please speak to the office.



### Apply for a primary school place

If your child is due to start primary school and lives in Islington, you must apply online.

### Attend Today, Achieve Tomorrow



Every School Day Counts!

### 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](mailto:office@priorweston.islington.sch.uk) and we will pass the information on to their room.

#### Important Dates

The academic calendar for 2025/26 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.



# What to expect, when?

Guidance to your child's learning and development  
in the early years foundation stage



Supported by  
  
Department  
for Education



[https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/what\\_to\\_expect\\_when.\\_a\\_parents\\_guide.pdf](https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/what_to_expect_when._a_parents_guide.pdf)

In this guide, your child's first five years have been divided up into six age bands which overlap. This is because every child is different and children do not grow and develop at the same rate. It highlights what you might notice your child doing at these points. Children learn and develop through playing, exploring, being active, creative and being asked questions to help their thinking. After each age band we give you an example of some ideas and tips as to how you can help your child's learning and development. Page 34 details where you can find out more.



 St Luke's Community Centre

# GARDENING & NATURE CLUB!

Wednesdays 3:45 - 5:15pm

For south Islington Adults and Families (Children must be accompanied)

NO NEED TO REGISTER- JUST COME ALONG AND JOIN THE FUN!

Plant



Grow & eat



Improve wellbeing



Time in nature



Support sustainability



Building a stronger community through learning, wellness and connection in south Islington.

St Luke's Community Centre, 90 Central Street, London, EC1V 8AJ  
T: 020 7549 8181 [www.slpt.org.uk](http://www.slpt.org.uk)

 @StLukesTrust

Registered Charity Number: 207497





All sessions are drop in, no need to book

[brightstart@islington.gov.uk](mailto:brightstart@islington.gov.uk)  
020 7527 4089

South

Monday	
9.30 – 11am	<b>0-5's Stay and Play with Information, Advice and Guidance,</b> Moreland Children's Centre, EC1V 8BB
9.30 – 11am	<b>0-5's Extra Boost (SEND)</b> Golden Lane Children's Centre, EC1Y 8JA
9.30 – 11am	<b>Child Health Clinic,</b> Family Hub South at Bemerton Children's centre, NI 0DX
1.30 – 3pm	<b>Under 1's Stay and Play,</b> Family hub South at Bemerton Children's Centre, NI 0DX
1.30 – 3pm	<b>0-5's Stay and Play with Information, Advice and Guidance,</b> Golden Lane Children's Centre, EC1Y 8JA
Tuesday	
9.30 – 11am	<b>Under 1's Stay and Play</b> Paradise Park Children's Centre , N7 8SE
10 – 11.30am	<b>Little Seedling (Term-time ONLY) Starts 16 September</b> Barnard Park Wildlife Garden, NI 0ER
10 – 11.30am	<b>Childminder Group (Term-time ONLY)</b> Golden Lane Children's Centre, EC1Y 8JA
11am – 12noon	<b>Family Fitness</b> King Square Community Centre, EC1V 8DY
1.30 – 3pm	<b>Under 1's Stay and Play</b> Golden Lane Children's Centre, EC1Y 8JA
1.30 – 3pm	<b>0-5's Stay and Play with Information, advice and guidance,</b> Family Hub South at Bemerton Children's Centre, NI 0DX
1.30 – 3pm	<b>Breastfeeding Support Group</b> Family Hub South at Bemerton Children's Centre, NI 0DX
Wednesday	
9.30 – 11am	<b>Under 1's Stay and Play</b> Family Hub South at Bemerton Children's Centre, NI 0DX
9.30 – 11am	<b>0-5's Stay and Play</b> Moreland Children's Centre, EC1V 8BB
3 – 4.30pm	<b>0-5s outdoor Stay and Play</b> Barnard Park Wildlife Garden, NI 0ER

Thursday	
9.30 – 11am	<b>Child Health Clinic,</b> Moreland Children Centre, Gard Street, EC1V 8BB
10 – 11am	<b>0-5's Song and Movement</b> Betty Brunker Hall, EC1V 8BG
10 – 11.30am	<b>0-5's Outdoor Stay and Play</b> Barnard Park Wildlife Garden, NI 0ER
10 – 11.30am	<b>Breastfeeding Support Group</b> St Lukes Community Centre, 90 Central Street, EC1V 8AJ
10am – 12.30pm	<b>Sling Library,</b> Paradise Park Children's Centre 164 Mackenzie Road N7 8SE. <b>11 and 25 September, 9 October, 13 November, 11 December</b>
1.30 – 3pm	<b>0-5's Stay and Play,</b> Family Hub South at Bemerton Children's Centre NI 0DX
3.45 – 5pm	<b>0-5's Twilight Stay and Play</b> Golden Lane Children's Centre, EC1Y 8JA
Friday	
9.30 – 11am	<b>Under 1's Stay and Play</b> Moreland Children's Centre, EC1V 8BB
10 – 11.30am	<b>0-5's Outdoor Stay and Play</b> King Square Gardens, Lever St EC1V 7AN
3 – 4.30pm	<b>0-5's Stay and Play</b> Paradise Park Children's Centre, N7 8SE
Saturday	
10am – 12noon	<b>Father and Male Carers 0-5's Stay and Play (partners welcome)</b> 1st Saturday of every month. Family Hub South at Bemerton Children's Centre NI 0DX
10am – 12noon	<b>Family 0-5's Stay and Play</b> 3rd Saturday of every month. Family Hub South at Bemerton Children's Centre NI 0DX

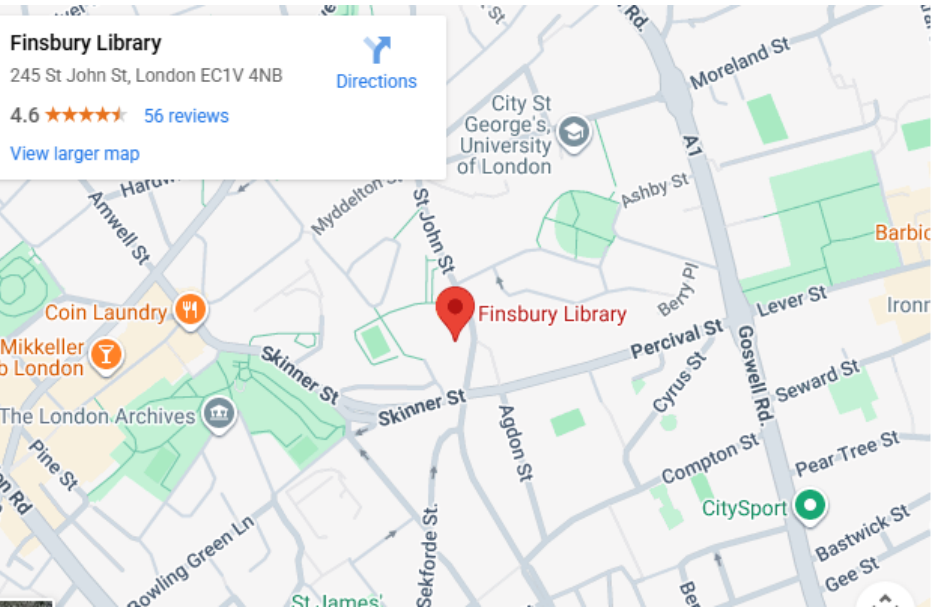
Weekly timetable  
Wednesday 3 September – Friday 24 December 2023

South





## Finsbury Library



### Opening times

- Monday: 9am-8pm
- Tuesday: 9am-5pm
- Wednesday: 9am-5pm
- Thursday: 9am-8pm
- Friday: 9am-5pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm



### Opening Hours

- Mon:** 9.30am - 5.30pm
- Tue:** 9.30am - 7.30pm
- Wed:** 9.30am - 5.30pm
- Thu:** 9.30am - 7.30pm
- Fri:** 9.30am - 5.30pm
- Sat:** 9.30am - 4.00pm
- Sun & Bank Holidays:** Closed

