



February 2025

Dear Parents,

### ***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**

Also, please make sure your phone is on throughout the day, or a number that the nursery staff can contact you, in case your child is unwell or there is an emergency.

### ***World Book Day***

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March**, we will be celebrating **World Book Day** and invite children to dress up as book characters. Children are welcome to dress up on other days too if they do not attend on a Thursday. Perhaps you would like to share a story with your child and upload it for us all to see on Parentzone?

### ***Children's Teeth and Health Eating***

As parents, we want the best for our children, and ensuring their oral health is a vital part of their overall well-being. Did you know that registering your child with a dentist as soon as their first milk tooth appears is crucial? Registering your child with a dentist is a critical step towards their oral health. The NHS offers a convenient service search to help you find a dentist near you. Simply visit the NHS Service Search website (link: <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-dentist>), enter your location details, and explore the dental practices available in your area.

Helping to keep your children's teeth healthy:

Brush teeth twice daily for about 2 minutes with a children's fluoride toothpaste, before bed and on 1 other occasion. Use only a pea size amount of toothpaste.

More information can be found on the NHS website: Children's teeth – NHS

<https://www.nhs.uk › Live Well › Healthy teeth and gum>

Children's dietary health is important for them to reach their full growth and development. Try to keep sweet and sugary foods to a minimum will help prevent tooth decay, along with regular teeth brushing. Fruit as a snack provides the children with much needed vitamins and slow-release energy. If the children get hungry, cheese and crackers, breadsticks and extra sandwiches are great fillers. There are a lot of snack ideas readily available from the website at these sites:

<https://www.phunkyfoods.co.uk/parent/a-healthy-lunch-parents-information/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/recipes/healthier-lunchboxes/>

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/school-lunch-recipes>

**Choking hazards food safety advice for the under 5's (taken from FSA – [food.gov.uk](https://www.food.gov.uk))** Ensure that young children are alert and seated safely upright whilst eating.

Young children should be supervised at all times while eating.

Teach children to chew food well and take their time during meals.

Remove stones from fruits, cut small round fruits like grapes, cherries, strawberries, cherry tomatoes lengthways and then again in halves (so they are in quarters for the child).

Cut large fruits, like melon, into slices instead of chunks

Cut sausages etc into short strips lengthways.

Remove bones from meat or fish

Whole nuts should not be given to the under 5's.

Cut bread items into narrow strips (bread can form a ball shape at the back of a child's throat if not chewed properly).

Do not give under 5's popcorn, chewing gum, marshmallows, raw jelly cubes, ice cubes or boiled/hard/ gooey sweets.

Please also check the website for Oaklea's policy on Oral health.

### ***Safeguarding – Online safety***

At Oaklea, we are here to support you and your child/children through the early period of their life. Please do talk to us about worries or concerns you may have, and we will do the same with you.

Online safety- These days, most of us take the internet for granted for many of the things we do every day. Children learn from being curious and develop by pushing boundaries. Ensure parental filters are set or that you are with your child when they have access to children's activities or programmes direct from the internet, especially streaming sites like YouTube – **always use YouTube Kids**. Chat regularly with your child about who they should and shouldn't trust.

Social Media - take time to think about who might see your profile if you post about your child. Can you trust everybody with what you're sharing? Also, think about friend requests: can you trust that somebody is who they claim to be?

Get Safe Online - Get Safe Online is the UK's leading source of information and advice on online safety and security. For more information and expert, easy-to-follow, impartial advice on safeguarding yourself and your family, visit [www.getsafeonline.org](https://www.getsafeonline.org)

### ***Funding and Sessions...***

All codes need 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/>

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

The dates for making requests for Easter holiday bookings are set out below:

A reminder term time funding ends on **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and restarts following the Easter closure on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April. This is a 3 week break and any sessions for term time children during this period will need to be paid in**

**FULL. The final day for booking sessions in the Easter holidays will be Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025.**

Requests can be emailed. I am sure you appreciate that staffing for holiday periods needs careful planning. For this reason, we remind those of you who wish to book additional sessions in the holidays to do so by the date above. Thank you for your understanding.

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

### ***Fee increases and Consumables rates***

As you will appreciate with the ongoing costs and increased underfunding and rises in minimum wage and national insurance, to remain viable Oaklea needs to increase its fees. Please see the attached letter regarding fee increases from 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025.

Unfortunately, the funded hours are significantly lower than our hourly fee 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. To help the nursery remain sustainable, a voluntary consumables charge is charged per child. This is automatically added to your monthly invoice. The consumables charge covers items such as snacks, fresh fruit, wipes, nappies, sun cream, trips, online learning journal, and other sundries. *We have kept the price low, although will keep under review.* Any queries, please contact the office.

### ***Finally***

We wish our term time children, a happy half term and look forward to seeing you back the week beginning 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Yours sincerely,

**Dawn Lewis**  
*Oaklea Director*

**Carla Gunn**  
*Setting Manager*

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### ***2025 Term Dates***

#### **Spring Term 2025**

Monday 6<sup>th</sup> January – Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025

Half term: 17<sup>th</sup> February – 21<sup>st</sup> February 2025

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February and Friday 21<sup>st</sup> Feb CLOSED** for community hall maintenance

**Staff Training Day – Friday 21<sup>st</sup> February CLOSED**

World Book Day – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March

Good Friday Bank Holiday – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April CLOSED

#### **Summer Term 2025**

Easter Monday – Monday 21<sup>st</sup> April CLOSED

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April -Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Bank Holiday Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May CLOSED

Bank Holiday Monday 26<sup>th</sup> May CLOSED

Half Term 27<sup>th</sup> May - 30<sup>th</sup> May

#### **Autumn Term 2025**

Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December

Half term 27<sup>th</sup> October – 31<sup>st</sup> October