



Dear Parents and Carers,

It's been a busy start to the year, and both the staff and children have been enjoying some fantastic activities and learning experiences. As we look ahead to the special events planned throughout the year, our team is excited to build on the children's experiences, expanding their knowledge and creating new opportunities for learning and exploration.

We're also kicking off the year by focusing on our local community and surroundings. Through our regular walks and beach school sessions, the children are discovering more about the world around them and how they fit into it.

We'd love to involve you in this too! By making the most of local resources—especially the Family Hub—we can strengthen our sense of community together. The Family Hub offers a wide range of valuable services, and alongside the Food Bank, we can ensure families receive the support they need. The Food Bank is our chosen charity here at Lancing, and with your help, we can continue to make a meaningful difference in our local community.

Best Wishes,

Rachel and the Lancing Team!

## Dates for your diary

### Holidays and Closures:

- **Friday 18th April** – Good Friday
- **Monday 21st April** – Easter Monday
- **Monday 5th May** – Early May Bank Holiday
- **Monday 26th May** – Late May Bank Holiday

### Other:

- **Friday 28th March** - Mothers Day Afternoon Tea
- **Wednesday 23rd April** - Parents Evening
- **22nd April 12th** – Earth Day
- **18th May** - Mental Health Awareness Week
- **24th May – 1st June** – National Children's Gardening Week

**Don't forget to follow our Social Media:**





### The Baby Snug

Baby Snug has been having fun exploring natural and wooden resources this term! We've been busy stacking and knocking them down and discovering different ways to play and interact with them.

We also had a wonderful tasting experience, during which the babies explored the textures and smells of lemons and limes before finally getting to taste them—there were certainly some funny faces!

To celebrate St. Valentine's Day, we created a sensory red and pink rice tray. We used wooden spoons and cupcake cases to scoop and pour, developing fine motor skills while having fun.

The babies have shown a big interest in dolls, copying real-life actions like changing nappies, rocking them to sleep, and feeding them with bottles. To build on this, we made our very own bubble bath, where the babies got to wash the dolls using their hands and cloths—such a fantastic way to encourage nurturing and role-play!

### Continue at home

Gather some natural materials, such as wooden spoons, pinecones, fabric scraps, or smooth stones. Encourage your little one to explore the different textures, stack the objects, and knock them down just like they've been doing in Baby Snug!

### The Toddler Den

Our toddlers have been busy exploring, creating, and learning through hands-on activities that spark curiosity and encourage growth. This term, they have been particularly engaged in sensory play, discovering new textures and developing important early skills through exciting, messy fun!

The children loved experimenting with sand, foam, and paint, naturally mixing these materials to create unique textures. Through scooping, pouring, and combining, they have not only strengthened their fine motor skills but also expanded their language development, learning and using new descriptive words like "squishy," "mushy," and "grainy."

Sensory play is a fantastic way to support early learning, helping toddlers build confidence, problem-solving skills, and creativity. It's been wonderful to see them fully immersed in these experiences, embracing the joy of discovery along the way!

### Continue at home

Try a simple sensory activity, a bowl of dried rice or pasta with spoons and cups for scooping and pouring can be a great way to build on your child's nursery experiences while having lots of fun!

### The Pre-School Study

This term, we have been focusing on the world around us, taking a closer look at the wildlife, plants, and animals we see in our environment. This theme has sparked wonderful conversations about our garden and the birds we can spot throughout the day.

Building on this curiosity, Toddler Den extended the learning by creating binoculars to help find birds in the garden. The children then used bird books to match what they saw with the illustrations, helping them develop observation skills and early research techniques.

A particular highlight for both toddlers and pre-schoolers was making bird feeders using mashed bananas, hollowed oranges, and bird seed. This hands-on activity encouraged fine motor skill development and an early understanding of cause and effect. After hanging their feeders outside, the children watched excitedly through their binoculars, making connections between their actions and the arrival of the birds.

We've also seen a wonderful boost in confidence as children make more independent choices, proudly share their creations, and express their accomplishments excitedly.

### Continue at home

Take a walk with your child and collect interesting leaves, twigs, or feathers along the way. Encourage them to explore the different textures, colours, and shapes, describing what they find. Once home, use the collected items to create a nature collage.



## Recipe of the Month

### VEGGIE PARMIGIANA

#### INGREDIENTS:

- Aubergines, cut into 1cm thick rings
- 1 tbsp garlic infused olive oil (you can make your own by adding 2 cloves of garlic to olive oil)
- 3 large onions, finely chopped
- 3 large carrots, diced
- 3 peppers (any colour), diced
- 2 large courgettes, sliced
- 2 tspn dried oregano
- 2x 400g tinned chopped tomatoes (no added sugar or salt)
- 50g pasteurised Italian style cheese, finely grated
- 125g mozzarella, thinly sliced



#### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Set the grill to high, and grill the aubergine slices until browned on each side, and set aside.
2. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/Gas mark 4.
3. Heat the oil in a pan and add the onions. Stir until softened.
4. Add the carrots, peppers, and courgette, and stir frequently.
5. Mix in the tinned tomatoes and oregano, and simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Layer the sauce and aubergines in an oven proof dish, finishing with the sauce.
7. Top with Italian style cheese and sliced mozzarella.
8. Bake for 35 minutes until golden.

## Recent Training

Rachel and Nicky have started their Level 3 - Award for Special Educational Needs Coordinators in Early Years Settings

## Colleague Spotlight

Lydia is our spotlight team member as she has made the wonderful decision to start her level 3 training in early years education.



# EXCITING CHARITY PARTNERSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

At iStep Learning, we believe in nurturing young minds while also fostering kindness, empathy, and a strong sense of community. That's why we're thrilled to introduce iStep into the Community - our new initiative dedicated to giving back to local causes.

Each of our nurseries has chosen a charity close to their hearts. At Lancing Day Nursery & Preschool, we are dedicated to fostering a sense of community and compassion in our children. We recognise that food insecurity is a pressing issue affecting many local families, and we believe in the importance of supporting those in need within our community. This is why we have chosen to support the Lancing and Sompting Churches Food Bank, a vital organisation committed to providing emergency food assistance to individuals and families facing hardship. Their mission aligns with our empathy, support, and community engagement values.

Through two fundraising events - one in June and one in November - children, families, and staff will come together to make a meaningful impact. Keep an eye out for more details soon! Together, we can create a ripple effect of kindness!

We will soon be releasing our full iStep into the Community pack, which will showcase all the charities our nurseries have chosen to support.

You can find out more about the incredible work that Lancing and Sompting Churches Food Bank do [here](#)

