

# Castlereagh Nursery School

## 'Hand in Hand We Learn Together'

### November 2025 Newsletter

We hope everyone had a safe, healthy and restful half term break. All the children have now settled really well into the nursery routines and activities and we are looking forward to the busy months ahead. On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November we will be carrying out our main fund raising event of the year, 'Our Welly Walk'.

The children can use their school Welly Boots that were sent in at the beginning of the year.



In previous years the nursery has been able to use this money to purchase fantastic additional resources for the children to enjoy. The welly walk has funded the purchase of 5 outdoor sheds, 2 additional ipads for the children to use and the 'Ipad Sofa Station' in the sunroom. More recently we have purchased large Teepee structures to be used for roleplay and reading nooks. These resources obviously not only benefit your child in nursery today, but also siblings or other family members that might come in future years. Last year was our biggest donation so far and we completely refurbished the sunroom, installing a new sub floor and waterproof flooring.

This is why we ask you to fully support our main fundraising event as much as you can. Without your amazing support and contributions we could not provide these fantastic resources for your child.

You will have received the Welly Walk sponsor form before Halloween, please fill this in and return any money collected by Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November. We completely understand that it is a very difficult time financially for many families. Any money raised, no matter how small, will be very greatly appreciated.

Keep an eye out on the parents info board in the hall, we will update you with our total raised so far!!

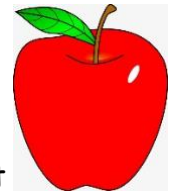
Don't forget to bring your child's sticker chart back to nursery once they have filled it up. They have been working very hard to get their stickers and when they bring it in they will receive a prize and a certificate.

### Settling in Questionnaires

Next week you will receive a link to the settling in Questionnaire. It will contain questions regarding the settling in process and dinner routine. Please fill this in as soon as you can. It shouldn't take any longer than a few minutes. These questionnaires are very important to us and help us as a nursery to self evaluate and inform our 3 year School Development Plan.



### What we are learning in nursery



This month we will be continuing our topic of Autumn and looking at vegetables in more detail. We will be making vegetable soup and using various foods in lots of different ways. We will be learning about different animals that hibernate. The change in the evenings getting darker and Road Safety.

### \*Open Enrolment\*

Please be advised, all applications for Nursery AND PRIMARY SCHOOL for September 2026 will be completed online via the Education Authority website.

The application process will open on Wednesday 7th January at 12 noon and will close on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> January at 12 noon. Please note that many schools' admissions criteria may change. Admissions criteria will be available on the EA website from Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025

<https://www.eani.org.uk/parents/admissions>

### OPEN MORNING FOR SEPTEMBER 2026 ENROLMENT

Our nursery school will have its open day on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January for prospective parents and children due to start nursery in September 2026. If you have any friends or family members with children who will be 3 on or before 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2026 please make them aware of the date of our open morning.





## The Ark Farm

We are delighted to be visiting The Ark Open Farm this year for our Christmas experience. On Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December. This was a new trip we started last year and the children really enjoyed this new festive experience. We will travel by bus to The Ark Farm in Newtownards. The children will take part in a range of activities including:

### **Feeding Santa's real Reindeer**

**A group visit to meet Santa in his house**

**Making reindeer food to take home and leave out on Christmas Eve.**

**A Farmyard Tour meeting lots of friendly animals**

**All the farm fun including play area, Fairy-tale Forest and Jurassic Ark.**

**This year the gift includes a lovely Christmas plush toy.**

We will provide a picnic snack for the children to eat during a break in activities. We will not however be staying for lunch. If you think this is something your child would enjoy the cost is £15. This covers entrance to the Ark farm and part of the cost of the bus. School fund will cover the remainder of the bus and the goody bag. We will leave nursery at 9.15am and return to nursery at 12.45pm, children should be picked up at this time. Payment availability will be added to the school money app at the end of November.

If you do not think your child would enjoy this trip please speak to a member of staff. Unfortunately, as all staff will be needed for adult:child ratio there will be no provision for those children not attending the trip to be in school.

## Christmas Nativity

Each year the children participate in our school production of the Nativity. This year our Nativity is called 'It's A Baby'. The children will be learning the songs over the next few weeks. We are grateful to Lisnasharragh Primary

School for letting us use their hall for the morning. The children are always fantastic and love performing for their family and grown-ups. The date we have agreed this year is Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> December at 11am. The children should attend nursery as normal that morning and we will walk them over to Lisnasharragh PS.

The performance will last until approx. 11.30am and they can be taken home straight afterwards.



## Stranmillis Students

We are delighted to welcome 2 Stranmillis students to our nursery. Katie Davison will be working with the children in Mrs Morrow's classroom and Sophie Connor will be working in Mrs Ross' room. Miss Davison and Miss Connor will be with us for the next 3 weeks.



## Makaton

### Makaton Signs of the week

We will begin introducing our Makaton signs to the children this week. Makaton is a language program that uses a combination of signs, speech, and symbols to help people with learning or communication difficulties communicate more effectively.

Look out on our classroom door each week for the new signs we are learning together.

### Lending Library - Big Bedtime Read

We will be sending home the book bags each Friday, please read these books throughout the week with your child. They will receive 3 books each week that they can choose. 2 will be fiction and one will be a non-fiction or information book.



All book bags should be returned on the following Friday and will be given out every Friday thereafter. Please do not write on the bags so we can reuse them each year.

## Health Visitor Interviews

Thank you for filling in and returning your child's health visitor Questionnaire. Castlereagh Nursery School is very happy to be included in the Early Years Transformation Programme (EYTP) for the ninth year. This means we work very closely with a number of local Health Visitors and we offer interviews with a health visitor for you and your child here in the nursery. All our previous families have found this very beneficial, they can discuss and help you with many developmental issues you might have like, bedtime routines, sleeping, feeding or behavioural issues.

Interview sheets will be placed in the front hall for you to select a day and time slot that suits you best. We would encourage you to take part in this opportunity to discuss your child with the health visitor.

\*If you cannot come to the nursery to put your name down at a date and time then simply ring us and we can let you know what times are left and book you in\*

### Dates for your Diary

## November - December 2025

We understand how busy family life can be so we have given you details of event dates and times for the remainder of this term. We hope this helps you to plan ahead.

All the staff thank you for your continued support!

<b>November</b>	
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> November	School re-opens at normal time
W/B 3 <sup>rd</sup> Nov	<b>Please bring something Blue</b>
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> November	Joe from The Gathering Drum Visit - Drumming workshop
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> November	Main fund raiser of the year 'Welly Walk'
W/B 10 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<b>Please bring something yellow</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> - 14 <sup>th</sup> November	World Nursery Rhyme Week
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> November	Lynn the Dental Nurse Visit
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> November	Sonal Sports - Physical skills
W/B 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<b>Please bring something purple</b>
Mon 17 <sup>th</sup> - Wed 19 <sup>th</sup> Nov	<b>Health Visitor Interviews (booking sheets will be available from 11<sup>th</sup> November)</b>
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> November	Debbie Dolittle Wildlife visiting nursery
W/B 24 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Please bring something <b>White</b>
<b>December</b>	

W/B 1st December	Please bring something Green
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December	Belfast City Council - Litter Elf
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Visit to the Ark Farm
W/B 8 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Please bring something Silver
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Sonal Sports - Physical Skills
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Jumper Day - £1 donation please
W/B 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Please bring something Gold
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Nativity dress rehearsal
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Nativity Performance - 11am in Lisnasharragh Primary School. Children go home straight afterwards
Wednesday 17 <sup>th</sup> December	'Make a sound' Music and movement session
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	Visit from Santa SShhhhhh it's a surprise for the children
Thursday 18 <sup>th</sup> December	'Make a sound' Sensory story
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> December	<b>Christmas Party - Non uniform</b> <b>School closes at 11.10am for Mrs Morrow's Class and 11.20 am for Mrs Ross' class for the Christmas Holidays</b>
<b>January</b>	
Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> January	School Staff Development Day (school closed to pupils)
Tues 6 <sup>th</sup> January	School re-opens for children - Normal Time
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup> January	Open Morning for new parents and families due to start nursery in September 2026.

