ST PHILIP'S MARSH NURSERY SCHOOL

Newsletter November 2026







WINTER OUTDOOR LEARNING

With the days getting shorter and weather getting colder it can be a challenge to get outdoors, but it's a perfect time to wrap up warm and get out and about with your child. See below link for ideas:

27 things to spot on an autumn or winter sensory walk with your child - BBC Tiny Happy People

At nursery we believe it is important to spend as much time outside as possible as:

- Children are interested in nature, plant life and minibeasts and they learn to be respectful and curious about living things.
- Children have sensory experiences with rain, wind, ice and learn about what to wear to keep warm.
- Fresh air and space are good for your body and your mind.



Did you know?
Colds and flu are caused by viruses, not cold weather.

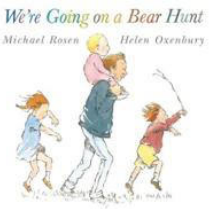
Elm Class

The children in Elm Class celebrated Diwali recently by exploring artefacts and learning about divas (the clay pots which are lit during the celebration). They also made their own Rangoli patterns using chalk, pens and paint.
The children have been particularly interested in building towers and structures out of Duplo and bricks, seeing how tall we can build them before they come crashing down ('crash!'). This has also transferred into building sandcastles in wet sand.
The children have also been constructing roads and ramps out of planks and drainpipes to see how fast the cars go down ('wheeee!'). We are using language to describe it such as "slow" and "fast".
One of our favourite activities is the 'Stop and Go' game. This builds great listening skills as we play our instruments and listen/look carefully for the time to stop and go.

Beech Class

Beech Class have recently celebrated Diwali by exploring Rangoli patterns using chalk, pens and paint. We have also been using bright colours in our mark making representing the colours we saw during Bonfire Night. There has been lots of talk about the colours of the fireworks and loud noises we heard "bang", "whizz".
The children have a keen interest in babies, and this has been evident in their role play: feeding; dressing; changing nappies.

Our book of the term is ‘We’re Going on a Bear Hunt’ which is full of rhythm and repetition, catchy chants and refrains like "We can't go over it. We can't go under it. Oh no! We've got to go through it.”



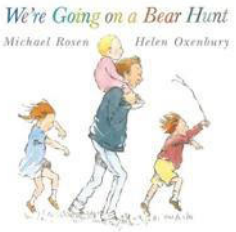
Our favourite songs are Sleeping Bunnies (where we choose different animals) and Five little ducks went swimming one day.

Oak Class

The children in Oak Class have been happy to see each other after the half term break. Both Bonfire Night and the celebration of Diwali have taken place in recent weeks, and we have been busy learning about these occasions. For Bonfire/Firework Night, the children made colourful firework paintings, learned the song ‘On Bonfire Night’, and talked about their own experiences of sounds and colours in the night sky. To begin learning about Diwali, we have been sharing books and photographs, exploring clay and using loose parts to make patterns inspired by Rangoli.

Many of the children are demonstrating an interest in mark making this year, and we have been offering a range of opportunities to encourage this. We have used spray bottles with paint to make big marks on white sheets in the garden, as well as painting boxes and cardboard tubes. The children have also loved using acrylic markers, chalk and traditional writing tools (pens, pencils). Lots of the children are applying meanings to their marks and are keen to share their work with others.

In the garden the children have been experiencing the changing seasons first hand. We have been talking about what we need to wear when it’s windy, rainy and cold. It’s important to wear layers, waterproof clothes and welly boots so that we can stay warm whilst we jump in muddy puddles! The changeable weather at this time of year links in with our core book this term, which is ‘We’re Going on a Bear Hunt.’

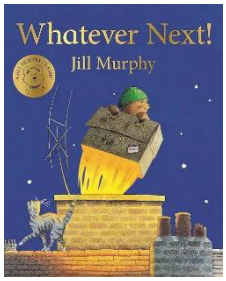


This term, Oak Class will be starting The Helicopter Stories Programme. This is an exciting opportunity for children to author their own stories and act them out with their peers.

Thank you to all the parents and carers who have donated fruit and vegetables for our snack time.

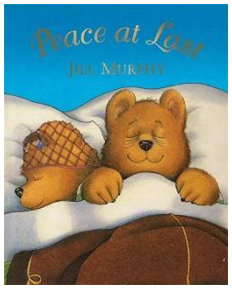
Fir Class

It was lovely to welcome the children back after half term and many of them had news to share about Halloween. We have since been exploring an array of activities linked to fireworks and also celebrating Diwali. The children were invited to make their own divas out of clay and decorate them; they also used chalk and coloured rice to make different Rangoli patterns.



We have been focusing on the book ‘Whatever Next’ by Jill Murphy. This has come from interest in the book from the children themselves. They have been telling the stories themselves, we've had our own picnic on the moon, and have been using props like boxes, colanders and welly boots to re-enact the story themselves.

We have also been exploring the book 'Peace at Last' by the same author. Which is an excellent book for exploring different sounds and the children have been amazing at remembering which sounds they can hear as daddy bear moves around the house!



The children have been showing interests in various ways of mark making (vertical painting and acrylic markers) and exploring making different colours. They have also created obstacle courses and challenging their gross motor skills with different ways of moving in the garden.

With the change in weather we do encourage as much exploration as possible and jumping in puddles is so much fun! Even with the correct wet weather clothes, the children can still get very wet so please provide spare clothes in your children's bags.

Thank you so much for any snack donations, we do rely on it and need fruit for snack time every day.

Donations

The school provides free milk for all children. We do, however, rely on **donations of fruit, vegetables (e.g. carrot sticks, cucumber, peppers) and other healthy snacks** (e.g. cheese, rice cakes) for your child to share at snack time in the morning and afternoon. If you could **bring in a small amount each week** it would be greatly appreciated. Alternatively, you can donate cash or by card using the card reader in the School Office.

It is the time of year for cold viruses, and we would also appreciate donations of **boxes of tissues** for the children's use. We are also running low on **spare girls' pants**.







Family photo board

Each class has a family photo board to help the children with their sense of belonging and community. Please could you bring in a family photo(s) **(no more than 3**) to display. If you do not have access to a printer, you can email Margaret.blake@bristol-schools.uk who will print it for you.

Clothing



As the weather is getting colder, children will need appropriate clothing and footwear. We go into the garden in all weathers. Please could you provide your child with **a pair of wellies and wet weather gear**. 'All weather' suits are a very good way to keep children dry and can be purchased quite reasonably. Children may need changing multiple times a day because of getting wet or toileting accidents so please ensure there are **lots of spare clothes** (**including socks**) in their bag. All **clothing and footwear must be labelled**. It would be very helpful if you could **support your child to practice putting on their coat** and putting **hats and gloves** into the sleeve of their coat when they take them off to prevent them being lost. Whether your child is starting school this September or in the years ahead, you can start to practise these skills together now. Building these habits early supports their development and helps them settle into school with confidence. For advice, click on the link Preparing for school - Best Start in Life

Surplus food from Marks & Spencer/FareShare

On Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, staff from St Philip's pick up surplus food from M&S which would otherwise go to waste. We also get weekly donations from FareShare (please bring a bag to take the loose fruit and vegetables). Any food we can't use for snack, we put in Reception for parents to take. Please help yourself to save food waste.

Sickness

If your child has sickness and/or diarrhoea, please remember that they must stay off school for at least **48 hours** from the last time that they were ill. Also, it is the time of year for coughs and colds. If your child is unwell keep them at home and telephone the School on 0117 977 6171 to report the absence. **If your child has a high temperature this means they are unwell. Please keep them at home until their temperature is normal.** A normal temperature is 36.4°C but this this can vary.

We can only give prescribed medication at school that has a pharmacist sticker on the bottle or box prescribed to your child – we cannot give any medicines that you have bought over the counter.

Sometimes it is hard to decide whether to keep your child off school. Please find attached flyer from UKHSA which gives advice on 'Should I keep my child off school?'.

Other useful websites include:

Is my child too ill for school? - NHS

A guide to keeping kids healthy this school year for parents and carers – UK Health Security Agency

The children's flu vaccine helps protect against flu. It's offered to children aged 2 to 3 years, school-aged children (Reception to Year 11) and children with certain long-term health conditions.
https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/child-flu-vaccine/

Progress discussion meetings

You are invited to attend a meeting with your child's key person to discuss your child's progress. These will take place on:

18 November (3.40-4.50pm) for Oak and Fir Classes
24 November (3.40-4.50pm) for Beech and Elm Classes

Please sign up for an appointment on the list displayed on the classroom doors.

If you cannot attend this date/time, please speak to your child's key person and they will try to make alternative arrangements.

Best Start in Life

The Government has launched a new website for the Best Start in Life parent hub which is full of great advice '*from pregnancy to childcare right through to starting school, get advice and support for your child's development*'. Click on the link above or scan the QR code in the poster below.

Christmas

During the last two weeks of term, we will be celebrating the Christian festival of Christmas. We will also be having a Winter raffle to raise money for school funds. You will be able to buy tickets at Reception very shortly.

Parties

All classes will host two parties:



Elm and Beech Classes (2-year-olds):
Party 1 **– Tuesday 8 December – PM**
Party 2 **– Thursday 10 December – AM**

Oak and Fir Classes (3–4-year-olds):
Party **– Wednesday 16 December – PM**

If your child does not normally attend one of these sessions, please speak to your child's key person. More details to follow in the December newsletter.

Drop-in Stay and Play sessions

We will be hosting drop-in stay and play sessions at the end of term. Parents/carers are invited to come into nursery to explore, make decorations, create and play with their children, join in with a sing-along or listen to a story. These will be held on:

Wednesday 9 December 2.20-3.20pm - Oak and Fir Classes (3–4-year-olds)
Wednesday 16 December 2.00-3.00pm – Elm and Beech Classes (2-year-olds)

If your child does not attend on a day when their class has a Stay & Play drop-in session, please speak to your child's key person.

Session times

Please could we remind parents of the session times. The morning session starts at **9.00 am** and finishes at **12.00 noon (door opens at 11.55 am)**. The afternoon session starts at **12.30 pm** and finishes at **3.30 pm (door opens at 3.25 pm).** We understand that the start and end of the sessions are extremely busy times of the day and the car park is often crowded and allowances should be made for this. If in an emergency you anticipate being late to pick up your child, please could you phone the school to let us know. This avoids your child becoming upset. This is particularly important at the end of the day pick-up.

If you need to pick up your child before the end of the session, please pick up before 3.00 pm (afternoon session) and before 11.30 am (morning session). At the end of each session, we have story, song or sound and it is important that this is not disturbed. It is an important part of their **phonics and numeracy learning which needs to take place in a quiet atmosphere to develop listening and attention skills.**

Parking and Children's Safety

Your child's safety is always our number one priority. We ask you to make sure that this is yours too. Every school in Bristol has an issue with parking and we are no exception. We are fortunate that we have a small car park at the front of the premises that parents can use. This can get very congested and if you are in a hurry, it is best to park in a nearby side street. Walking, cycling and lift sharing are all ways in which to reduce congestion. **PLEASE DO NOT PARK IN THE CAR PARKS OF LOCAL BUSINESSES (e.g. Grundons, Fox Storage)**. Not only is this very dangerous but you may well get clamped. Please ensure you keep a close eye on your child whilst walking in and out of the school and **close all doors/gates behind you.**

Application for primary school

Please remember that the deadline for applying for a Reception Class place for your child is 15 January 2027 (if your child was born between 1 September 2022 and 31 August 2024). Look out for tours at your local primary schools. They are a useful way to see what life is like at school and to ask questions to find out if it could be the right school for your child. The online application system is now open (www.bristol.gov.uk/schooladmissions). If you require any help with this, please ask.



School meals

School meals must be paid for IN ADVANCE via **Arbor**. The school cannot keep arrears, and it may lead to meals being stopped.

The eligibility criteria for free school meals has now changed. **If you receive an element of Universal Credit, you may well be entitled to free school meals.** If you think you may be entitled, please ask at Reception.

Toileting

If your child is in nappies, please ensure there are enough **nappies** and **wet wipes** for the session and if your child is toilet training, please put **wet wipes in their bag** and lots of **spare clothes** (including **socks**) as children may need changing more than once.

If your child is not actively potty training (i.e. attempting to use the toilet regularly), please could you provide **nappies (with tabs)** instead of pull-ups to help key people with the changing process.

Advance notice – changes to Free School Meal holiday vouchers (from December 2026)

The council currently provides free school meal (FSM) supermarket vouchers during school holiday periods to families in receipt of benefit related free school meals (FSM). This is now coming to an end. **The final FSM supermarket voucher issue will take place for the December 2026 school holidays**.

Please note that this does not impact your child's standard meals; regular FSM provision during term time remains fully available for all eligible children.

Why is this change happening?

This adjustment follows the UK Government's decision to end the Household Support Fund, which previously financed supermarket holiday vouchers through local authorities. The replacement fund, the Crisis and Resilience Fund, operates under different national criteria and cannot be used to run widespread holiday voucher schemes.

We understand this news may be concerning during a time of ongoing financial pressure for families.

What alternative support is available?

To ensure children continue to receive support during school holiday periods, the following options remain available:

Cost of Living https://www.bristol.gov.uk/residents/people-and-communities/cost-of-living-support

Holiday Activity and Food Programme (HAF) Your Holiday Hub Bristol - Your Holiday Hub Bristol

If you have questions about your ongoing term-time eligibility or need guidance on how to access local support funds, please visit the local council's family support hub Bristol Family Hubs.

INSET Days

The School will be closed on the following days for staff training: **4 January, 25 March, 7 June.**

Important Dates

Menu change – festive roast dinner – **Wednesday 9 December**

Parties - Elm and Beech Classes (2-year-olds):
Party 1 – Tuesday 8 December – PM
Party 2 – Thursday 10 December – AM

Party - Oak and Fir Classes (3–4-year-olds): Wednesday 16 December – PM

Drop in Stay & Play Sessions:
Wednesday 9 December 2.20-3.20pm - Oak & Fir Classes (3–4-year-olds)
Wednesday 16 December 2.00-3.00pm – Elm & Beech Classes (2-year-olds)

Christmas holidays – School **CLOSED** – **Monday 21 December to Friday 1 January (inclusive)**

INSET day **– Monday 4 January** (School **CLOSED**)

Return to School – **Tuesday 5 January**

Full details of all Bristol City Council term dates can be accessed HERE

St Philip's Marsh Nursery School/Cashmore Early Years Centre are part of the My School Fund initiative to help boost our budget

St Philip's Marsh Nursery School/Cashmore Early Years Centre is part the My School Fund initiative. This innovative scheme allows for us to be able to boost our school's budget with your help.

How does it work?

Parents, guardians and carers can sign up to the scheme for free and start earning cashback on the things they buy in participating retail stores, including Sainsbury's and Argos. As you spend, you'll receive 2% cashback in the form of eGift vouchers that can be redeemed in participating stores. By linking your spend to our school on the My School Fund website we'll also earn 1% cashback on your spend.

Add that all up across our school's network of families and together we can all make a big difference!

How to get involved

Visit myschoolfund.org to register for free and link to St Philip's Marsh Nursery School BS2 0SU. From there, everything you spend in participating stores will go towards helping boost our budget, plus your own!

Sign up today at myschoolfund.org



How to apply for help with childcare for working parents

If your child is:

- 2 years old, you can get 30 hours per week of free childcare
- 3 to 4 years old, you can get 30 hours per week of free childcare

(You will not be eligible if your child does not usually live with you).

30-hours free childcare using eligibility code

If your child is 3 years between September 2026-December 2026, you may be eligible for 30-hours free childcare (this can be used from January 2027). For this you will need an eligibility code. You can use this for the following nursery sessions:

- Monday-Friday 9:00am-3:30pm; or
- 3 days 7:45am-5:45pm.

30-hours free childcare using eligibility code

If your child is 2 and you are currently paying, you may be eligible for 30-hours free childcare (this can be used from January 2027). For this you will need an eligibility code. You can use this for the following nursery sessions:

- 5 x morning sessions
- 5 x afternoon sessions
- 2½ days (e.g. Monday all day, Tuesday all day, Wednesday morning)

We are unable to use the code for Breakfast/Afterschool club for 2-year-olds due to child staff ratio.

To check if you are eligible, please visit www.beststartinlife.gov.uk

If you are eligible, you will be provided with an eligibility code. Please give the code and the National Insurance number it is registered with to office staff as soon as possible. Due to school holidays, please give this information to us by **Friday 11 December** to ensure the nursery can submit the code to Bristol City Council for the start of the new term.

To continue receiving the government support, you will need to reconfirm your details every three months on your gov.uk account.

Tax-free childcare

You may also be entitled to tax-free childcare which will help towards paying for nursery fees. For more information and to check eligibility, please visit www.beststartinlife.gov.uk

Paying for nursery sessions

If you receive an invoice for nursery sessions, you can pay by:

- Tax-free childcare (please give your code to office staff by email)
- BACS payment (the bank details are at the bottom of the invoice, and your reference number will be **1002** and the six numbers starting with 2 on the top of your invoice)
- Cheque made payable to Bristol City Council Schools General
- Cash

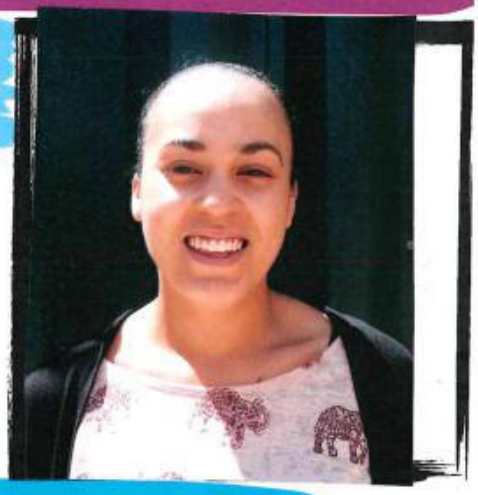
Please do not use Arbor for nursery sessions. Arbor is used for paying for meals and communication from the school to parents.

CAPO

Children Affected by Parental Offending

Your CAPO Champion is:

Cressida



In every community there are families affected by having a family member in prison or the criminal justice system. We provide a welcoming space for children and families affected by offending and imprisonment.

For confidential, non-judgemental support contact:

0117 3534295 / cashmore@bristol-schools.uk

or email: CAPO@everyfamily.org.uk

everyFAMILY

KEEPING BRISTOL SAFE

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

CAPO
Children Affected by Parental Offending

UK Health Security Agency

NHS

Should I keep my child off school?



Yes

	Until...
Chickenpox	at least 5 days from the onset of the rash and until all blisters have crusted over
Diarrhoea and Vomiting	48 hours after their last episode
Cold and Flu-like illness (including COVID-19)	they no longer have a high temperature and feel well enough to attend. Follow the national guidance if they've tested positive for COVID-19.
Impetigo	their sores have crusted and healed, or 48 hours after they started antibiotics
Measles	4 days after the rash first appeared
Mumps	5 days after the swelling started
Scabies	they've had their first treatment
Scarlet Fever	24 hours after they started taking antibiotics
Whooping Cough	48 hours after they started taking antibiotics

No

but make sure you let their school or nursery know about...

Hand, foot and mouth	Glandular fever
Head lice	Tonsillitis
Threadworms	Slapped cheek

SCAN ME

Advice and guidance

To find out more, search for **health protection in schools** or scan the QR code or visit https://qrco.de/minfec.

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BEST START IN LIFE

Childcare & Early Years Education support



Free breakfast clubs and wraparound childcare



Childcare support checker

Check what support you could get.



Week-by-week guide to pregnancy

Find out more on our NHS health website.



Breastfeeding support

Find out more on our NHS health website.



Introducing solid foods

Find out more on our NHS health website.



Baby and toddler teeth care

Find out more on our NHS health website.

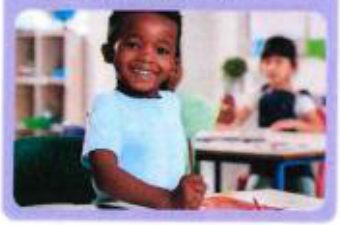


Learning to talk

Find out more on our NHS health website.



School readiness



SCAN ME

Bristol Family Hubs

Here To Help

Families with children 0-19

Join our WhatsApp Community!
Find out what events and resources are in East Central Bristol!

- No personal information needed except your WhatsApp phone number.
- Your phone number will not be visible to other members.
- Only admin of the WhatsApp Community can share content.

Run by East Central Bristol Family Hub Navigator

Scan the QR code to receive up-to-date activities in your community!

OR CONTACT:

Yvonne
07393802844
yvonne.young@bristol.gov.uk

Winter Clothing

Now the weather has changed, please remember to provide appropriate outdoor clothing for your child as we experience lots of learning when we go outside in all types of weather.

Also, please don't forget to label your child's clothes.

Thank you

Rainy Day



Wellington boots



Waterproof Coat & Trousers

Wintery day









