



# The Ark Newsletter

March 2026

This term we have been focusing on keeping healthy, through physical activity, healthy eating and wellness activities.

Everyone is busy in the garden preparing and planting vegetables and herbs, for later consumption. We would be very grateful for any donations of empty seed packets and plant pots for the children's role play (garden centre); and particularly so if anyone has any spare plants to donate.



## Staff

We are still currently recruiting a replacement staff member for the Raft

Lucy & Maddie are busy training for a Snowdon challenge in May. Please visit their just giving page, if you are able to support their fundraising efforts. They are just £50 short of their £500 fundraising target.

[The Ark is fundraising for The Ark Child Okeford](#)

## Children's activities

In the Pre-school room the children have been exploring the Hungry Caterpillar story; they have read the story during circle time and used the story sacks to explore the puppets and props for the story. Using visual aids during story time really helps bring the story to life and encourages the children to take an active role at story time. The children have also been looking at 'Life cycles' and have welcomed some Caterpillars to observe the changes over time.



We have also been celebrating St Patrick's Day, Mother's day and Red Nose Day with crazy hair along with our day to day activities



Thank you to everyone that participated in this year's world book day, either dressing up or sharing their favourite stories with us



## A Few Reminders

### **Arrival/Collection Times**

Please ensure you leave and collect your child at the times booked, as several children have been arriving before their session begins and/or have been collected after their session ends. This is particularly prevalent before the 8.45am session and at the end of the 12.45 – 3.15pm session. If you do occasionally arrive early please wait with your child in the lobby until the start of the booked session. If you are also collecting older siblings from school at 3.15pm, please ensure you collect your child from The Ark first. This is very important as we may breach our OFSTED registration conditions if we do not adhere to correct staff/children ratios. Also as you are all aware as a setting we operate 8am-6pm. This means we close the doors at 6pm, if you require a handover at the end of the day please arrive by 5.50pm so that staff have time to do the handover. If you arrive after this time, handover will be short and limited. Any collections after 6pm may incur a fee.

### **Toys from home**

We now request that you **Do Not** bring any toys into nursery, unfortunately they are causing arguments, getting broken and are taking staff time in finding them at the end of sessions. This will now include during the holiday time as well.

This will also help for preparation to school

Children can bring in a book to share with their peers however we will not be responsible for keeping it safe or sending it home.

### **Administrator**

Just a polite reminder that Tracey our administrator works **Wednesday, Thursday and Friday 0830am-5pm**. We ask that if you would like to discuss ongoing bookings, payments or funding please email or pop in during Tracey's working hours. This way we will be able to help you more efficiently as other members of staff maybe included within the ratios for the children.

### **Easter Egg Competition**

We will be holding a decorate a hard boiled Easter egg competition during the Easter holidays

If your child would like to decorate an egg with a donation of 50p, we will be accepting entries from Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March in the foyer.

If your child doesn't attend in the holidays but would like to enter please feel free to bring your entries in next week.

Members of the local Woman's Institute who have chosen us as their charity to support during 2026 will be judging the eggs. There will be a small prize for the winners.

### **Term Dates**

Easter Holiday club Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March –Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April

### **Spring term 2026**

Good Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April – The Ark closed

Easter Monday 6<sup>th</sup> April – The Ark closed

## **Summer term 2026**

### **Monday 13<sup>th</sup> April – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July**

Half-term and Holiday Club Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> May – Monday 1st June

**If your child has a term time only booking they should not attend on inset/holiday club days.**

### **The Ark Summer closure week Monday 24<sup>th</sup> August-Friday 28<sup>th</sup> August 2026 inclusive**

The Raft opening times are **8.00am-5.45pm** during both term time and for holiday club.

### **Dates for your Diary**

We will also be hosting a stall at the **Heyday at Child Okeford Recreation Ground on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> June**. Do you have an hour to spare to help run the stall? Any volunteers would be greatly appreciated - please speak to Sarah, Tash or a member of the Arks trustees. Please come and support us at these events.

Preschool Graduation and family picnic **Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> July 11.00am-1.00pm**

### **Bags to school**

Please bring any bags back by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April.

### **Cake sale**

Thank you to everyone who donated cakes and supported our cake sale in aid of Red Nose day we raised £97.33 which will be split between Comic Relief and The Ark.

### **Fire assembly point**

In the event of the fire alarm sounding when you are dropping off or collecting your children at The Ark please follow the staff's direction and evacuate through the nearest fire exit. The fire assembly point is on St Nicholas's school playground next to the outdoor classroom

Sarah McNab

Nursery Manager