



The Ark Newsletter

October 2026

Well we think the months of rain are upon us! Not to worry –that’s plenty of mud pies, splashing in puddles, making rain runs with guttering and seeing if we can make our own hideouts in the garden!. Nursery children have enjoyed making the most of the puddles by making them bubbly and exploring differing shades of colour as they mix paint in them.

Our garden has provided endless opportunities for physical challenges and problem-solving. The children have been busy transporting water, navigating spaces and working out how to move resources from one place to another. These experiences have encouraged them to think creatively, test out their ideas and develop their problem-solving skills, all while strengthening their physical abilities, coordination and confidence.

The children have noticed through their own observations that the weather has changed over the past few weeks and with more wind and rain around they have wanted to explore it and talk about it.



AGM

The AGM of The Ark’s Trustees (informally known as the committee) will take place in the Ark at 6.30pm on Tuesday 26th November. If you are interested in joining our team of parents and staff management of your child’s childcare facility this is the ideal opportunity. Please speak to Sarah, Tracey or one of the current Trustees before the AGM.

A Few Reminders

Please take extra precautions when entering and exiting the building, ensuring that both the front door and gate are fully closed behind you. Please DO NOT allow entrance to any other person without a member of the team being present. Please DO NOT bring your child into nursery if they need Calpol to relieve symptoms of illnesses.

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. End of the Day; 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 will incur a fee.

Packed Lunch

For children who do not eat a hot nursery lunch, the option of bringing in a packed lunch is available. When choosing items for your child's lunch box please be mindful of our Nutrition Policy which requests that parents support us in our healthy eating aims when providing packed lunches. Food such as crisps, chocolate, sweets or fizzy drinks should be avoided, as should any other foods with high levels of additives/colourings as some children are highly sensitive to these ingredients which can severely affect their behaviour and /or make them sick. Food with **nut** content should also be avoided as children with severe allergy to nuts can suffer extreme reactions even via indirect contact. Fruit or vegetable and dairy snacks are encouraged.

Clothes Labelling and spare clothes

Please also ensure your child's clothes have his/her name in them, as we constantly have a pile of unlabelled, unclaimed clothing. Please be warned that periodically we have a clear out and clothes are likely to be sent to the jumble if they are not claimed.

Here at The Ark we are promoting children's independence. Please can we request that children have shoes that they are able to put on and take off by their self. Velcro fastening shoes are ideal for all ages to master.

Please could all children come to nursery with at **least two** changes of spare clothes in their bags. Currently our nursery spare clothes are very limited.

Please could we request that parents provide a named wet suit for their child so they can enjoy outdoor play. The Ark will no longer be providing spare wet suits.

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. If your personal details have changed recently e.g. new phone number or new address, please let us know as soon as possible. It is vital we hold up to date information for all contacts involving your child. In the event of an emergency, we must ensure we have the relevant contact numbers we need.

Term Dates

Autumn term 2026

Thursday 3rd September – Thursday 17th December.

Friday 18th December Inset / Holiday club day

Christmas Holiday Club: Friday 18th December – Wednesday 23rd December.

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

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

Both the Ark and Raft buildings are closed for Bank Holidays

Christmas closure

Both the Ark and Raft buildings will be closed after sessions finish on Wednesday 23rd December and will reopen on Monday 4th January 2027.



Thank you to those parents who donated items for our Harvest Festival collection. The donations will be going to Nourish in Blandford.

Dates for your diary

Children in need: Friday 13th November:

Children can attend dressed in pyjamas - Suggested donation £1

Would you like to win a Pudsey money box full of money?

All you have to do is guess how much is in the money box! The winner will be the person who guesses the amount closest to what's in there! £1 per guess.

Preschool Nativity: will be taking place **Friday 4th December at 10am** in the school hall.

Christmas Bingo: The Ark will be hosting a Christmas Bingo on **Friday 4th December** at Child Okeford village hall. Doors open at 7pm eyes down at 7.30pm. Any donations of prizes will be gratefully received.

Coffee Morning: The Women's institute (WI) who are currently fundraising for The Ark are holding a Christmas stocking filler and small gift sale at Child Okeford village Hall coffee morning on **Saturday 5th December** 10.30am-12pm.

Christmas Fair: St Nicholas Primary School will be holding a Christmas Fair on Saturday 12th December

Open Days: St Nicholas School will be holding open days on the following dates & times:

Tuesday 10th November 09:30-10:30

Thursday 12th November 14:00-15:00

Please direct any questions about open mornings to the school office

01258860581

office@childdokeford.dorset.sch.uk

Sarah McNab

Nursery Manager