




Gracelands
Nursery School

SUMMER 2 - 2026

NEWSLETTER

Sowing the seeds for lifelong learning

Dates for your diary

JULY

17th - Break up for summer holiday
WC 20th - SCHOOL HOLIDAY (6 weeks)

SEPTEMBER

1st (Tuesday) - TRAINING DAY
2nd (Weds) - Home visits for new starters
3rd (Thurs) - TRAINING DAY
4th (Fri) - 'Stay and Play' with parents 9:30-11am & 1-2:30pm for all returning families
7th - Normal provision resumes—Back to nursery (autumn 1)
From 8th - New starters (see individual for start date and times)

OCTOBER

23rd - Break up for half term
26th - SCHOOL HOLIDAY (1 week)

NOVEMBER

2nd - Back to nursery (autumn 2)
WC 9th - World Nursery Rhyme Week

DECEMBER

18th - Break up for Christmas holidays
21st - SCHOOL HOLIDAY (2 weeks)

JANUARY

4th - Back to nursery (spring 1)

FEBRUARY

12th—break up for half term holiday
15th - SCHOOL HOLIDAY (1 week)

MARCH

3rd - TRAINING DAY (closed to all children)
25th - Break up for Easter holiday
26th - Bank holiday
29th - SCHOOL HOLIDAY (2 weeks)

Head Teacher's message



Dear Parents and Carers,

Well we have come to the end of another wonderful nursery year at Gracelands. It is my absolute pleasure and privilege, alongside the team here, to serve the community of families and children that we do.

Education never stands still and we do our best to keep abreast of changes and developments within the sector, keeping moving forwards and never losing sight of our aim to give our children the

best start in nursery life. Thank you for coming on that journey with us.

It is an exciting time for the early years sector with the government's new *Best Start in Life* strategy, ensuring all children achieve and thrive, improving child development outcomes. We are passionate about doing our bit to support Birmingham's related city-wide initiative: 'Best Start Brum' strategy, ensuring every child from pregnancy to age five receives the support and opportunities needed for a strong start in life.



Feedback from surveys

Thank you to the many of you who have completed our annual parent carer survey; it was humbling that you took the time out to share your experiences and views with us. We will be reviewing the responses fully when we return in September in order to celebrate successes with staff and make changes where possible to respond to improvement feedback.

Free School Meals and Hot Meals Consultation

The low number of full day children in the summer term eligible for Free School Meals does not meet the required number for ordering external hot meal provision. We will now review the status in autumn 1 once the new cohort of children have joined. As it stands for September, we will continue with providing cold packed lunches for full-day children that are eligible for Free School Meals.

Summer break

May it be a safe and enjoyable summer holiday period for you all.

If you need urgent help or support during the break, please see the numbers you can contact on page 3 of this newsletter.

Best wishes to all those children starting school in September, and see everyone else in September.

Take care, Sam



Executive Head Teacher: Sam Richards

Deputy Head Teacher: Harshila Parmar

SENCO: Gail Goldberg

Teacher: Sophie Cameron

Office Admin Assistant: Abdi Omer

Nursery Practitioners: Salma Mushtaq, Sughra Sattar, Sonia Parvaz, Rifat Shaheen, Zaryab Mahmood, Ammara Usman, Mevish Rehmat & Ayah Masood

WE ARE A UNICEF GOLD
RIGHTS RESPECTING SCHOOL

Children's rights are learned, understood
and lived in this school.



Contact Us

GRACELANDS NURSERY SCHOOL
Grace Road
Birmingham, B11 1ED
☎ 0121 772 3124
enquiry@grclands.bham.sch.uk

Follow us on
FACEBOOK

'Gracelands Local Authority
Maintained Nursery School'

Follow us on
INSTAGRAM

[gracelandsnurseryschool](https://www.instagram.com/gracelandsnurseryschool)

CURRICULUM FOCUS



We have had a fantastic Summer 2!

 **Literacy and Core Texts:** In Nursery 2, we have enjoyed reading *Six Dinner Sid*, developing counting skills whilst learning about animal welfare, homes and different forms of transport. We studied *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* in both rooms, where children learnt about the life cycle of a butterfly and the importance of healthy eating. The *Colour Monster Goes to School* has supported children with transition by exploring similarities and differences between nursery and school, while providing opportunities to share feelings, worries or questions. In Nursery 1, children continued to nurture their interest in minibests through a range of non-fiction texts, learning lots of fascinating new facts.

 **Celebrations and Special Events:** We celebrated Eid with a wonderful Eid party filled with delicious food, drumming, dancing, face painting & henna designs. Thank you to all the families who attended and made the day so special. The children were delighted by a visit from the Animal Man, where they learnt interesting facts about a variety of animals and had the opportunity to hold animals such as owls & snakes. We also enjoyed an exciting trip to Twycross Zoo, extending our knowledge of different animals. The children loved exploring the Gruffalo Trail and cooling off in the water play area. As part of our exploration of the wider world, we have been celebrating the World Cup, creating flags and learning about different countries around the globe.

We were also incredibly proud of the children's efforts on Sports Day, where they showcased their fundamental movement skills (just like 'Sammy Skills'), including stability and locomotor movements. Well done to everyone involved! **Butterflies and Stick Insects:** Both Nursery 1 and Nursery 2 have been caring for our very own butterflies. The children have enjoyed observing each stage of their metamorphosis and were excited to release them into the garden once they were ready. Nursery 1 have also continued to care for and observe their stick insects, learning about growth, change and responsibility.

 **Creative Learning:** This half term, we explored the work of artist Jackson Pollock. His large-scale artwork inspired us to create our own collaborative masterpieces outdoors by flicking and splattering paint to produce colourful layered pieces.

 **Our Outdoor Studio** – a highlight of the year – has provided children with endless opportunities to express creativity, revisit projects & develop their large-scale artistic skills. Activities have included creating clay mosaics, painting vertically and horizontally, and using large brushes attached to sticks to produce impressive works of art using the whole body.



ATTENDANCE INFORMATION

2025-26 year to date	
	Attendance %
Big nursery	84%
Little nursery	79.2%
All	82%
Attendance this half term	
	Attendance %
Big nursery	85.3%
Little nursery	80.1%
All	84%

Please take the time to read our attendance policy and support approach here:

<https://tinyurl.com/4jrnpxwr>

We want every child to access as much of their education entitlement as possible.

Our aspiration was to reach 90% attendance for the year—sadly, the summer attendance has dropped, lowering our year figure, but we will keep aiming high and promoting positive attendance patterns.

It can be tricky to know when to keep your child off school when they have signs of illness. The NHS guidance 'Too Ill For School?' on the web-site banner may help.

RRSA links:

UN Rights of the Child links =

Article 3: best interests of the child

Article 28: right to an education

ATTENDANCE MATTERS



 In music, we explored the genre of pop music, creating our own class playlists with suggestions from the children, including songs by artists such as Michael Jackson and Taylor Swift.

 **Cooking and Food Exploration**

The children enjoyed preparing and tasting a range of healthy foods. We made delicious salads packed with herbs and flavour, as well as a healthy cheesecake using alternative ingredients, helping children understand that healthy choices can still be enjoyable and tasty.

 **Maths:** In Nursery 1, children have continued to represent numbers using their fingers and have developed their understanding of enclosure. In Nursery 2, children have explored patterns, learning to identify, name and create various repeating patterns. They have also developed their understanding of one more and one less through practical activities and familiar songs.

 **Phonics:** In Nursery 1, children have enjoyed a wide range of rhyming books, songs and nursery rhymes, developing their listening and language skills.

In Nursery 2, children have strengthened their sound awareness by identifying objects and words that begin with the same initial sound. Children have also begun to orally blend simple words such as c-a-t.

 **Our Recycling Project** has continued to flourish, with children demonstrating increasingly thoughtful ideas about reusing materials. They have transformed recycled resources into creations such as televisions, birds and many other imaginative inventions.

 **Safeguarding and Seasonal Changes**

As part of our learning about summer, we have discussed how to stay safe in hot weather. The children have learnt the importance of drinking plenty of water, wearing hats and sunscreen, and staying in cool, shaded areas.

 Our Big Nursery children have been learning the song "I'm On My Way" and have impressed us all with their enthusiastic singing and actions, in readiness for the graduation event. We are so proud of them and cannot wait to celebrate this special milestone.

Well Done, Nursery; we are so very proud of you all and wish our families a happy and restful summer!

The Nursery Team

July: National Picnic Month

National Picnic Month was formed to celebrate the history of coming together to share food both indoors and outdoors. It also celebrates the way that eating together brings people, cultures, and even countries together. The good news is that picnics can take place in your home, in the garden or in the park. You can have your lunch, snack, or teatime as a picnic. Having a picnic is a fun way to enjoy your environment and can encourage reluctant eaters to try new foods. There are lots of recipes for foods which would work well for picnics on the Startwell resources page. Remember to link in Micky Me Size to ensure we eat the right amount for us.

[Micky Me Size](#)

Summer 6 week challenge:

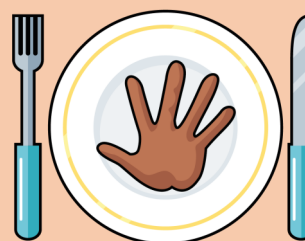
Head to the final 2 pages on this newsletter to view the Startwell 6 week summer challenge for physical activity and trying new foods.

Look at the Startwell website for more tips and advice:

[Welcome to Startwell Birmingham - Startwell 2020](#)



I'm Micky Me Size and I promote correct portion size according to children's age.



Startwell



SUPPORT SERVICES DURING THE SUMMER

**SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS –
IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & CARERS**

In an emergency, call 999.



**BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST**

**Birmingham Children's Advice and Support Service
(CASS)**

Phone: 0121 303 1888

Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 5:15pm / Friday: 8:45am – 4:15pm

Out of hours (emergency duty team):

Phone: 0121 675 4806

TWR
THE WAITING ROOM

Birmingham and Solihull Health & Wellbeing services at your finger tips

<https://the-waitingroom.org/>

SEND LOCAL OFFER



Birmingham's SEND Local Offer has been updated and the new Early Years 'Ordinarily Available Guidance' interactive tool is now live. The OAG sets out the support all mainstream schools and settings should provide for children, including those with SEND. It provides a shared, citywide framework to support consistent and inclusive practice.

It can also support parent carers to understand what inclusive practice looks like in Birmingham and what should be ordinarily available in settings. For practical ways you can help your child at home too, visit the Early Years section within the 'Strategies and Resources' area [here](#).

[Ordinarily Available Guidance - Local Offer Birmingham](#)

SAFEGUARDING UPDATE FOR FAMILIES

This website shares very important information and tips on keeping children safe.

You can sign up to receive info, resources and safety articles from them.



[Child Accident Prevention Trust | A safer world for all our children](#)

<https://capt.org.uk/summer-water-safety>

Summer water safety

Splashing around is a great way to relax and cool down in the summer. But drowning happens quickly and often silently. So, it's important you know how and where drowning happens and what you can do to prevent it.

Top tips:

Whether you're in the garden, at the beach or on holiday this summer please keep water safety in mind:

- Be a water watcher and actively supervise children in and around the water at all times. Don't rely on older children to supervise younger children.
- Even if you're not planning to be near the water, be alert to any water nearby. Be mindful of children wandering off.
- Expect children to do unexpected things. They can't be relied on to keep themselves safe.
- Pick a bright coloured swimsuit so it's easier to spot your child in or near the water.

Summer Water Safety

Cool baths are great for very hot days, but stay with them at all times, just like you would with the paddling pool. Young children can drown in very little water, in seconds and there's no noise to alert you.



Sowing the seeds for lifelong learning

Physical Challenge

WORLD ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS

The World Athletics Championships is in Budapest this summer. This week introduce your children to lots of great athletics skills by creating a mini-championships outside with different events/ stations - running, jumping and throwing.



Focussed Skill: Locomotor - Running, Jumping, Manipulative - Throwing

THE ASHES ARE HERE!



This summer see's The Ashes (England vs Australia Cricket) come to England. This week get outside and practice your cricket. We want you to practice your throwing, hitting and catching.



Focussed Skill: Hand eye co-ordination

DEN MAKING

This week go to the woods and make your own den or if the weather is bad make an inside fort. Encourage your children to build, create and challenge their decisions.

Focussed Skill: Constructing on a large scale

GRASS PLAY

This week mow the lawn and ask the children to create anything they want with the grass clippings – you can even have teams and do mini competitions



Focussed Skill: Transporting/ transferring



THE GOLF OPEN

The Golf Open comes to Liverpool this summer, so this is a great time to introduce manipulation skills to your children and get them to start practising aiming a ball at a target with their foot, hand, or even a mini golf club.



Focussed Skill: Manipulation skill - Aiming

WOMENS WORLD CUP



It is the women's World Cup this summer, so a great time to focus on those football skills with your children. This week focus on different activities which include balls of all sizes.

Focussed Skill: Manipulation Skills – sending away, receiving



Food Challenge

PREPARE SOME HEALTHY FOOD

Prepare one of the healthy recipes from the Startwell Website.

Why not prepare a rainbow salad – remember it's important to eat a rainbow of colours to get a range of vitamins and minerals! Enjoy this refreshing snack outdoors in the warmer weather.

Focussed Skill: Peeling, Cutting



ROLE PLAY SHOP

Set up a shop at home with play foods or items from your cupboards. Look at the different types of fruit AND vegetables available, can the children name them?

Talk about size, texture and even taste.

Focussed Skill: Recognising Ingredients



FOOD SCIENCE

Which fruit and vegetables float/sink? Add food colouring to them in water – which change colour?

We have lots of Food Science activities pinned on the Startwell Birmingham Pinterest page.

Focussed Skill: Exploring Foods, Picking up, Releasing



GROW YOUR OWN FOOD

Give some food growing a go! You can develop lots of great skills growing food, but we want you to focus on pouring. Food won't grow unless we water them. What different household items can the children use to water the growing foods.

Focussed Skill: Pouring



FOOD HUNT

Make a list of food items you have available and call them out at random for the children to find. Hide them outdoors if you can! Once foods have been found, have a discussion about which are the appropriate portion sizes for the children and adults.

Focussed Skill: Following rules or instructions



FIND, READ AND GET ACTIVE WITH FOOD BASED STORIES

Look on your bookshelf and see if you can find any healthy or food related stories for example Goldilocks and the three bears, Hungry Caterpillar, Handas Surprise. Make them into active stories and do actions together.

Focussed Skill: Developing knowledge and awareness of different foods



WEEK 1

WEEK 2

WEEK 3

WEEK 4

WEEK 6

Startwell Summer Challenge

Being active, eating well, achieving more.

6 Weeks

6 Challenges

...are you ready for the Startwell Summer Challenge?

Physical Challenges

Food Challenges

1. World Athletics Championships



Week
1

1. Make a fruit rainbow!



2. Crazy Cricket



Week
2



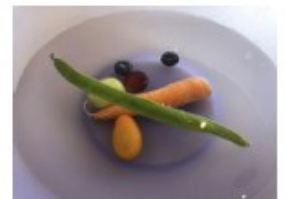
2. Role play food shop



3. Den Making

Week
3

3. Food Science



4. Go Golf Crazy



Week
4



4. Grow your own food

5. Summer walk



Week
5

5. Food Hunt



6. Football Fun

Week
6



6. Find, read and get active with food based stories