

Our Friendly Magpie



Over the winter months we noticed a very friendly Magpie that waited in the car park for staff to arrive. Debbie was his favourite person, chirping to her and waiting by her car for her, or sitting by the window in the office watching her and chirping to her as when she was busy working!

Soon, the Magpie became friendly with all of us, hopping along in front of the nursery windows while the children watched and pointed. We started to put some seeds out for him to eat (by the nursery window) but he didn't seem to like the bird seed.

In the baby room, we were able to throw some walnut pieces out through our window and watched the magpie pick them up in his beak and hop off under the cars, coming back for more. The children loved watching him so close. We don't see him as often now; we think he has moved on to a nice nest somewhere in the park.



The interest in birds has continued, we have listened to bird songs on the computer (and we got very excited, shouting "Bird, bird, bird!")

We have also been listening to birds and looking for the birds in the garden. We have counted how many we have heard and how many we have seen and marked it down on a chalk board. We tend to see and hear sea gulls in the garden.



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Spring 2024

We have had a busy spring term in nursery this term.



For world book day we provided dressing up for the children and read lots of stories to them. Each child was given a world book day token to exchange for a book for their child, this was gratefully received by our parents who were excited to take their children to collect their book.

At the beginning of March we had Mother's Day, thanking our Mummies for all they do for us. We made cards with hearts and flowers. We read stories about loving our Mummies.

Our role play area was turned into a beautiful flower shop, we carried on the flower theme with children planting up the garden outside with beautiful flowers. Our growing then continued with some science experiments with growing mung beans: some with water, some without, some in the light and some in the dark.

For our Easter celebrations we revisited the Easter story, the children explored eggs, rabbits and made Easter crafts and chocolate nests.

All of the children and families were given Easter Eggs and we were given Easter cards and gifts by some of our families.



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Roves Farm Adventure

During the Easter holiday, we visited Roves Farm on a very wet and rainy day. Roves is one of our favorite day's out in Gloucestershire. Roves is a working farm; where you are invited to come visit rain or shine.



The families were able to meet and feed the animals, and for some, it was evident this was a first time experience. They were able to get up close with the goats and they were able to feed and pet them. Some parents were clearly thrilled to be a part of such an experience. One family that are new to our Country shared with us that this was a valuable adventure for them and their children. They had never experienced such a day. The rabbits and guinea pigs were kept safely housed with staff on hand to answer questions, and help children with learning to touch carefully.

The staff at Roves Farm were incredibly accommodating, as the whole pet's corner was in abundance with bleating lambs waiting to be scooped up safely, and placed into eager arms. Staff helped with this to show the children how to carefully hold the animals without hurting them. Nothing was too much trouble when it came to providing such a positive and interactive experience.



All our families had been provided with a packed lunch. The food, entrance fees and the coach were all paid through the Government's Holiday Activities and Food Programme. Supplying a picnic lunch for everyone helped take pressure off an already challenging day out for some parents. They could then enjoy the whole experience without worrying about providing a meal.

The children had so much space to play in the indoor activity barn. There was so many slides, climbing frames and soft play in abundance for the children to enjoy.

The staff invited us to access the sensory zone. This room was very calming, with bubble tubes, a book corner and calming lights to help sensitive children feel at ease. Many of the children used the sensory zone. Having this option was a welcomed support for our children that have additional needs.

The whole day was such a fun and relax experience from beginning to end. The families and the children as well as the staff (Helen and Claire) who went on the trip, totally enjoyed the day. Even though outdoors the rain was relentless, the farm could not have been more accommodating and pleasant. They certainly lived up to the statement 'come rain or shine'.



Arts and Crafts

The children really enjoy doing Arts and Crafts. They have so much fun creating things with playdough and enjoy coloring pictures.



Parenting and Personal Development



Over the past year, our Family Support and Development Program has provided a range of activities and sessions aimed at empowering families through education, skill-building, and community engagement.

Throughout the year, families participated in numerous Parenting sessions and Personal Development sessions. These sessions covered a wide range of topics, addressing both specific concerns raised by parents and general areas of interest identified by nursery staff. Topics included: Getting Ready for School, Sun Safety, Parental Relationships, Food Refusal, and Toilet Training. Despite some families having heard certain topics before, their willingness to share experiences and support to our newer clients created a nurturing environment for learning and growth.

Knit and Natter Group

At the beginning of the year, we were fortunate to have two dedicated ladies from a Knit and Natter group, teaching families how to crochet and knit. This initiative was well received, providing families with an opportunity to learn new skills while engaging in a relaxing and social activity. Although the group could no longer attend regularly, Jess, a student who joined in November, continued to develop creativity through bi-weekly craft sessions.



Craft Sessions



Under Jess's guidance, families participated in various craft activities, including mug painting, bookmark making, wool dolls, shell trinket boxes and butterfly pictures. These activities not only offered a creative outlet but also promoted mental well-being by encouraging relaxation, concentration, and a sense of accomplishment.



Guest Speaker Sessions

Gail, our Family Support worker, organized guest speaker sessions featuring professionals from various organizations:

- Sara Dillon from the Hollie Gazzard Trust
- Lisa Davenport from the Parental Relationships scheme
- Emma Williams from Healthy Lifestyles Gloucestershire
- These sessions provided families with valuable insights, expert advice, and information about other organizations that can offer support and assistance.

The past year has been a journey of learning, growth, and community engagement for our families. Through a combination of skill-building activities, expert talks, and group discussions, we have strived to create a supportive environment that empowers families to navigate the challenges of parenting and personal development successfully. Gail has also attended a weekly Coffee and Chat group run by Hempsted Primary School, supporting the Pastoral Care Team. Gail provides services including active listening, craft sessions and information sessions to the families of school-aged children who attend.

The Hollie Gazzard Trust was created following the murder of 20-year-old Hollie Gazzard in 2014 by an ex-partner. Set up by parents Nick and Mandy, along with sister Chloe, the charity helps reduce domestic violence by creating and delivering programmes on domestic abuse and promoting healthy relationships to schools and colleges. The ultimate aim of the Trust is to positively change the lives of young people through partnerships in communities, as well as working alongside other charities and professional agencies. (2024, Home - Hollie Gazzard Trust).



Sara began the session by introducing herself and explaining what her role is, how she knew Hollie, and giving an overview of the talk. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic, the parents were given a trigger warning.

Sara went on to play a video of reconstructed events leading to the stabbing of Hollie by her abusive partner and interviews with family members and friends of Hollie's.

The families sat in silence as they watched and began to recognise some of the obvious and subtle signs of coercive control and stalking. Sara gave descriptions of the various forms of domestic abuse and signposted organisations that can help, and briefly spoke about the Hollie App, which is available to download onto a mobile if you, have concerns about personal safety.



Parents found the talk very informative and said they had learnt 'how to spot the red flags in a toxic relationship and who to go to for support'. Another parent said she will share the information she had learnt so other women could be protected.

Gail Jones
Centre Deputy Manager
Family Support Worker



We would like to say a **BIG THANK YOU** to David Oldfield, Company Director of Blue Sky Signs Ltd, and his employees for the excellent printing of all our Newsletters and Annual reviews over the past couple of years.

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Quote of the Month

Remember this: Not everyone will appreciate you - this is a fact of life. Sometimes you simply need to understand that not everyone knows your true worth.



Imagine the difference you can make

Did you know that legacies are a vital source of income for charities? To find out more about leaving a gift in your will we have a page on our website with information we hope is useful:

www.thefamilyhaven.com/how-you-can-help/leave-a-legacy/

When you "Leave a Legacy", you're enriching the lives of other people and supporting and sustaining charitable work for future generations

Become a Friend

Why become a Friend? As a Friend of The Family Haven, you will be supporting the Trustees and staff in helping provide the services our families so desperately need.

Your regular subscriptions and offers of voluntary help are invaluable and support us in delivering our aims.

Call 01452 422971 for an application form or

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