

July 2023

ACE Nursery School & ACE Day Nursery Newsletter



It's hard to believe we're already at the end of the school year. Our best wishes go to everyone who is moving on from ACE this summer and in September we look forward to welcoming back children who are entering their second year at ACE – they will be our “big girls and boys” who show the ropes to the new children and help to settle them in. Read on for news from both nurseries, including photos from the teddy bears’ picnic in June which was a particular highlight of the term.

ACE Nursery School News

Overview

Transitions have been a major theme of the term at both settings. At the Nursery School we have been visited by reception class teachers keen to get to know the children who will be moving to their school. Little ACE children moving up to Big ACE have been for settling in sessions at Parkside whilst Nursery School staff have been to the Day Nursery to get to know their new key children. Boys and girls from the outside waiting lists who are joining us in September have also been for visits. We're proud of the children moving on to new locations in the autumn and wish them all the very best. Do keep in touch – we would very much like to see “first day at school” photos please! If you would like to join our alumni email list, please email the office and we'll send you alumni newsletters (twice per year) going forward.

Thank you to everyone for your wonderful cards, messages, gifts, cakes and donations to the ACE leavers' fund. £630 has been raised for the Big ACE fund, which is amazing and will buy resources for the children to enjoy next year. We've also been given an apple tree for the ACE garden by a family who are moving out of Cambridge and a hydrangea by another family. Thank you everyone.



The social highlight of the term was the Teddy Bears' Picnic – it was a perfect summer's day at Wandlebury and we enjoyed seeing many current and former ACE families in attendance. Over 40 parents helped us on the day, illustrating the ongoing strength of the ACE co-operative. Our sports day on Parker's Piece was also incredibly

well supported – thanks to all the family members who came along to join in the fun.



We've enjoyed many wonderful interactions with parents and grandparents this term: from organising visits to places like the local church, to coming in to read, bringing in fossils for the children to look at, playing musical instruments, cooking and running a charcoal drawing session. Thank you all.



ACE Nursery School News

Friendship Tree

Friendship was one of our words of the week, which led to conversations about how to be a good friend, how to make friends and so on. We thought our handprints could be used as leaves on a friendship tree, so set about making one on a large piece of paper. As well as talking about how to make friends, we decided to actually make two friends by drawing round our bodies on paper,

cutting out the shape and then decorating them. We displayed our two friends either side of our friendship tree. This topic also linked well with many of the children transitioning to school and facilitated discussions about how they hope to stay in touch with ACE friends as well as meeting new ones.



During June we followed the '30 days of wild' initiative by the Wildlife Trust. They suggested a different wildlife activity each day. One of these was to "become a bee champion" so we learnt about why bees are important and how we can protect them. This led to us making a watering hole for bees, as they need water - especially on hot days. The children set to work with a block of clay.

Bees

Another day was 'watch a wild webcam.' We carried on the bee theme and watched live coverage from a bee hive; we could hear the bees buzzing and the children asked to watch it several times as they were so fascinated by it. We learnt about different types of bees - including red tailed bumblebees - and how important the insects are for pollination, to help our plants and flowers grow.

ACE Nursery School News



Butterflies

Continuing the insect theme, we learnt all about the life cycle of the butterfly. We took delivery of caterpillars in a container with special food and air holes, watching them grow and turn into chrysalides before eventually metamorphosing into butterflies. We fed the newly emerged butterflies fruit and nectar before releasing them in the back garden with all the children and staff watching on. One flew up and over the ACE building; it was a really magical moment. The children named the butterflies: Strawberry, Twinkle, Mr Shaya, Lemonry and Bally! We made our own giant butterfly painting to finish off the project.

The butterfly theme also dovetailed perfectly with transitions that are a feature of this term and our fly away song.



ACE Nursery School News

Bricklaying

Just before the May half-term break, we were visited by Luca's grandfather who is an architect. That inspired us to build a 3D model of ACE that we reported on in our last newsletter. Following on from this, we thought it might be fun to try bricklaying.



Using sand, shaving foam and a little washing up liquid, we made our own mortar and then the children turned their hand to building a wall with wooden bricks.



Charcoal drawing

We were delighted when Clara, Gabriel's mummy, offered to run a charcoal workshop in the garden on a beautiful summer's afternoon. She showed us a range of materials and talked about how they are made. We also looked at ancient wall drawings from the caves of Chauvet in South Western France. Then we experimented with willow charcoal, painted with a crushed charcoal/water mix and made marks with charcoal of different sizes and shapes.



After that we unrolled a long piece of paper to create a group drawing. There was room for every child to draw what they wanted, try their hand at a cave painting, or draw what they could see in the garden. Thank you very much, Clara, for an inspiring workshop.

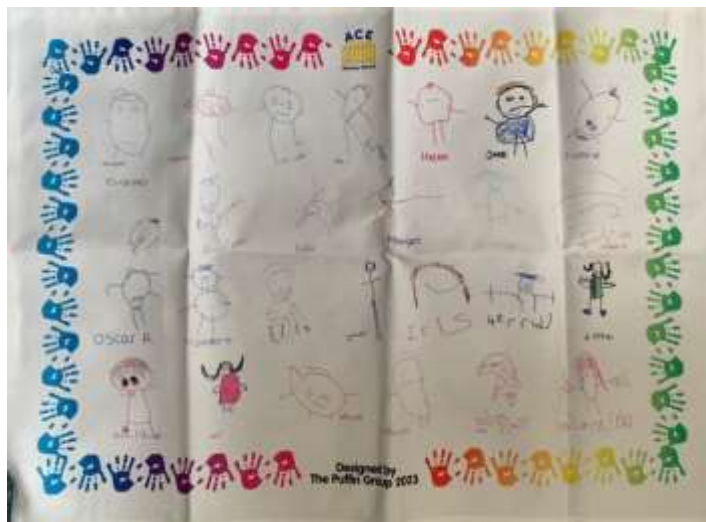


ACE Nursery School News

Tea towels

Another creative activity we enjoyed this term was designing our own Puffin and Penguin group tea towels, using the children's self-portraits.

We were delighted with the result and many families bought one to use at home or give as a gift.



Sports Day

The sun came out at exactly the time we had planned to be on Parker's Piece for our sports day (only minutes after a heavy downpour!) We enjoyed lots of fun games, supported by a wonderful turnout of family members.

After all our exertions, we sat down for a slice of orange and a drink of water before heading back to ACE.



ACE Nursery School News

Overhead projector

This was originally a STEM activity, but it blossomed into an open ended creative project, including story telling!

There was great excitement when the overhead projector came out, as we hadn't used it for quite a while. We started looking at light and shade, then placed loose parts on the projector and tried to anticipate where the shadow would appear. Much fun was had when the children realised that the image could also turn up on their tummies if they were stood in a particular position and lifted up their T shirts!

The giant shapes that were projected onto the wall inspired shadow puppetry as well as story telling. Diana led the way and made up a story about the objects, adding characters and some actions. The children were captivated and soon began to create their own wonderful tales. It's a great confidence building exercise too, recounting your story in front of the group.



ACE Day Nursery News

Overview

Now it's time to catch up on activities at ACE Day Nursery. In this edition, we'd like to update you about three items: role playing which led to a trip

to a pet shop, our tea party to celebrate Father's Day and our exploration of numbers.

Vet role play and pet shop visit

The girls and boys were showing lots of interest in animals so the staff decided to set up a vet surgery role play area. The children had access to doctors' equipment such as a stethoscope, bandages, thermometers and medical uniforms. The children looked after our animals (cuddly toys) so well, using gentle hands when putting bandages on their heads or checking their breathing. This led Carmen to plan a trip to the pet shop in the Beehive Centre. A few days later, Carmen, Gabi and Sarah took a group of six children to the shop. The children ate a snack of crackers, fruit and water on the grass before going in to see the animals.

All the boys and girls behaved superbly with good listening skills. They were excited to see so many animals, big and small, and talked about how some had lots of hair, many had tails and others were covered in scales.

On the way back to nursery, the group stopped at the St Matthew's Piece play area and explored some of the equipment, practising their climbing, swinging and balancing. After the trip, the children extended their interest in animals by finding out facts about sea life creatures.



ACE Day Nursery News



Father's Day Celebrations

We held a tea party for fathers and grandfathers on 20th June. Bably organised a lovely afternoon with a big group of daddies and grandfathers turning up at the Little ACE yellow door. All of the children had been involved in preparing for the afternoon, by making medals containing their photo and a special message for their daddy. The children also helped make a delicious pizza in the morning, using homemade tomato sauce, red peppers, olives and cheese.

From 4pm our garden was full of daddies and grandads playing with their children or grandchildren. The girls and boys rode bikes, played football, explored playdough and had their photos taken with their family member using a frame that was specially made for the event. We finished off the afternoon with pizza and ice cream for tea.



ACE Day Nursery News



ACE Day Nursery News

Numbers

In the last few weeks the children have shown a lot of interest in numbers. We've enjoyed counting out pompoms to the number shown on a piece of paper, using tweezers to pick up the items (which helps with hand co-ordination). Number games with pegs have also been popular, with the boys and girls becoming very comfortable when it comes to matching the

number of pegs needed to make five, as shown in the photo below. Lining up number cubes in order is another good skill that the children have been demonstrating recently. At group times we've been singing number nursery rhymes like *"one two three four five, once I caught a fish alive..."* as well as counting out loudly!



Teddy Bears' Picnic

The main social event of the summer term took place on the afternoon of Saturday 15th June at Wandlebury Country Park. We invited current and former ACE families and it was wonderful to see so many in attendance on a perfect summer's day. Former Headteacher - Paula - and Deputy Head - Sally - were there, as well as Sarah P (Day Nursery manager who is on maternity leave). The event was brilliantly organised by Becca, Gilbert's mummy (thank you

so much!) with Julia (Rebecca's mummy) at the helm of the clean-up operation. It was an amazing team effort with more than 40 parents helping out in advance or on the day, from buying prizes for the best dressed teddy competition, to designing labels for the strawberry pots, to making a giant bubble wand and face-painting. Thank you everyone. The beautiful poster was the work of Ana (Luka's mummy) and the photos below are courtesy of Peter, Rowan's daddy.

Nursery Events



Nursery Events



Nursery Events



Staff News

This month we feature Gabi from the Day Nursery.

Hello everyone, my name is Gabriele. I'm from Lithuania and have been living in the UK for six years. My original plan was to stay for a year or two, save some money and go home. But I met my husband and my plans changed a bit!

I'm a coffee geek and have trained as an advanced Barista. I can brew coffee in nine different ways from siphon to aero press, Vietnamese and Turkish!

At home there are two pets: Luna the cat is shy, while Bertie the dog is an overly dramatic two year old who loves to pose.

I've just finished my bachelor's degree in Clinical Psychology and joined ACE in March because I love children and want to pursue a career in this field. My goal is to become a child development specialist.



Other staff news

We enjoyed meeting Clemmie at the Nursery School recently. Gemma (Deputy Headteacher of the Nursery School) is currently on maternity leave and brought in 10 week old Clemmie for us to have a cuddle! Clemmie was absolutely brilliant being passed from one staff member to another!



Staff News



Final piece of staff news

We've also been in touch with Virginie, a former staff member who is currently in Canada for a year (accompanying her husband on his sabbatical). Virginie has been temping at various early years settings in Montréal and was delighted to return to the nursery school she attended as a girl, but this time as a staff member! We are looking forward to welcoming Virginie back to ACE in the new academic year.



Co-op Hours

ACE was founded as a parents' co-operative 57 years ago and the input of parents in the running of the nurseries is a huge part of the ACE ethos. All families are asked to contribute practically via co-op hours every term or to pay in lieu if it isn't possible to help out.

We're enormously grateful to all of you who have helped with the smooth running of the co-operative as well as enhancing the experiences we are able to offer the children.

The **Teddy Bear's Picnic** was a massive undertaking. Thank you to everyone who helped out including: Becca and Dan (Gilbert's parents), Julia (Rebecca's mummy), Ariana (Luca's mummy), Anna (Drew's mummy), Brendon (Esme's daddy), Ed (Otis H's daddy), Sikander (Rayyan's father), Ella (Otis W-M's mummy), Theresia (Max M's mummy), Ayesha and Salman (Esfir's parents), Mustafa and Ella (River's parents), Sasha (Max's mummy), Mehmet and Zeynep (Naz's parents), Jon (Clara's daddy), Jemma (Tallulah's mummy), Jelena and Will (Neva's parents), Michaela (Jules's mummy), Sarah-Jane (Oscar's mummy), Oliver (Max de G's daddy), Andreia (Maria's mummy), Regev (Yotam's daddy), Bethany and Carlos (Eusebio's parents), Alison (Oscar M's mummy), Peter (Rowan's daddy), Adriana (Felix's mummy), Yashi (Ethan's mummy), Tom (Helen's daddy), Bego (Enzo's mummy), Vicki (Anouk's mummy), Helen (Emer's mummy) and Ana (Luka's mummy).

Big ACE Co-op hours

Shopping has been undertaken by Ben and Atira (Shaya's parents), Cise and Niyazi (Mirai's parents), Lara (John's mummy), Andreia (Maria's mummy) and Yashi (Ethan's mummy). Thanks to our **laundry** team including Ayesha and Luke (Evren's parents), Jon and Hanna (Clara's parents), Ana and Jack (Luka's parents), Jessica (Oscar's mummy) and to Regev and Yael (Yotam's parents).

Thanks to Luke (Evren's daddy and Yashi (Ethan's mummy) for **poster designs**. Thanks to Andi (Max's daddy) for helping with **maintenance** tasks

like a broken sash window catch. Thanks to Valerie (Helen's mummy) for **repointing** the sandpit



We're grateful to Chloë (Oona's mummy) for **planting** the garden with summer flowers which are now a riot of colour.



Thanks to Steven (Jules's daddy) for his help moving a heavy parasol base to ACE and for **cutting the hedge** a couple of times. Thanks, also, to Angus and Jenni (Orla's parents) for mending some books and **hedge trimming**. Thank you Alison and Andrew (Oscar's parents) for tidying up the **front garden** and taking away a large bag of

Co-op Hours

greenery. Thanks to Peter (Rowan's daddy) for **painting** a chair and to Jon (Clara's daddy) for **organising a church visit** for us.



Music: Thanks to Regev for playing the piano and guitar several times as well as Helen (Emer's mummy) for playing her saxophone. Thanks, also, to Sophie for **drawing** a floor plan of ACE and to Helen for **painting** a sign for the allotment.

Reading: Thank you to Sophie (Esme's mummy) Kanika (Maia's mummy) and Will (Otis's daddy).

Website: Thank you to Rob (Jamie's daddy) for updating the website on a regular basis.

Thank you to Henry (Otto's grandfather) for coming in to show us his **fossil** collection.



Little ACE Co-op hours

Thank you to our **washing team**: Sophie and Giles (Marina's parents), Victoria (Flora's mummy), Ella (River's mummy) and Mehmet and Zeynep (Naz's parents) and to Tom (Benjamin's daddy).

Thank you Sasha (Max's mummy) for doing our **shredding**. Thanks to Victoria (Anouk's mummy) for replacing the flowers in our hanging baskets and plant pots; they look so colourful now! Thanks to Alice (Isla's mummy) for donating a number of plants to us and for looking after our **front garden**.



Thank you Tal and Tali (Yulie's parents) for replacing our **kitchen fly net** and to Emily (Toby's mummy) for repairing a couple of **blinds** in the playroom.

Thanks to Katarina (Stefan's mummy) for **painting** the caterpillar and ladybird in our back garden, and to Frank (Daphna's daddy) for arranging to **paint a mural** on the playroom wall. Thank you to Daniela and Kevin (Leo's parents) for buying **compost** for us to use in the vegetable plot. Finally a big thank you to Friso (Julius's daddy) for revamping our two **mud kitchen** units.

ACE Parents' Committee

ACE Parents' Committee News

The parents' committee met on July 5th. It was primarily a finance meeting to discuss fee and salary increases for the year ahead. Further information will be circulated shortly to parents of children who will be with us in September. We also talked about the shape of the committee moving forward (do get in touch if you are interested in joining the committee as some members will be leaving at the AGM in November when their children move to primary school).

There's also an important non-committee role to fill, updating our website on a regular basis. If you would like to do this as your co-op hours going forward, we can put you in touch with Rob who has done this role for a number of years and will be able to give a full handover.

ACE Committee 2022/23

Chair	Caspar Rebling
Treasurer	Liam Kelly
Secretary	Rene Oosthuysen
HR/staff liaison	Anna Masefield & Charlotte Eccles
Child protection/safeguarding lead	Miriam Haaser
Newsletters	Charlotte Eccles
Social events	Anna Masefield
Social events	Angharad Walter
Social events	Becca Handley
Social events	Vicky Hallam
Social events	Ariana Rees-Roberts
Social events & policy review	Bego Carod Alonso
Social events & policy review	Mircea Iliescu
Community liaison & policy review	Julia Forman
Headteacher	Lisa Tuohy
Day Nursery Managers	Sarah Piotrowski & Hanna Ochalik-Baca

The committee can be contacted independently of either nursery via ace.parents.committee@gmail.com. There is also a separate email address for any safeguarding queries: acesafeguarding@gmail.com. These email addresses divert to two different committee members and operate independently of the ACE staff teams.

Useful Info

- We have two alumni email lists: one for playschemes (ex-Big ACE children are welcome back at our holiday playschemes until the age of 7) and one for news/events (we'll send you two alumni newsletters per year). If you would like to join one or both of these lists and haven't already got in touch to let us know, please do so.
- The Government has announced various changes to early years funding, starting in April 2024. At the time of writing, we don't have any information about the rate at which government will fund this initiative and so ACE has not made any decisions about our involvement with such arrangements. We'll update you when we know more.

Pictured below are some of your end of term gifts and cards – thank you.



Term Dates

ACE Nursery School

Summer Term 2023

Thursday 20th July: last day of term

Friday 21st July: closed

Monday 24th July - Friday 18th August inclusive: Summer holiday playscheme. There is still some availability so please get in touch if you would like to make a booking. Please note that the office is not staffed every day during the summer holiday playscheme, so please call the land line with any messages.

Autumn Term 2023

Wednesday 6th September : first day of term

Monday 23rd - Friday 27th October inclusive: half-term holiday playscheme

ACE Day Nursery

Summer Term 2023

Friday 18th August - Thursday 31st August inclusive: Summer holiday closure period

Autumn Term 2023

Friday 1st September : first day of term (staggered start for new children)

Full term dates for the Day Nursery and the Nursery School are available on our website.

Upcoming Events

Parents' drinks evening – Tuesday 3rd October, 7.30pm, pub (venue tbc)

Pumpkin party – Saturday 14th October, 2-4pm, ACE Nursery School

Annual General Meeting – Monday 13th November, 7.30 for 8.00pm, ACE Day Nursery

Teddy Bears' Picnic – Saturday 22 June 2024, 2-4pm at Wandlebury