

Caterpillar Room Newsletter

Hello wonderful Caterpillar families! Here's what we've been up to this week.



Updated Toilet Training Guidance for Parents

We've put together the most up-to-date, research-informed advice to support you on your child's toileting journey. This guidance reflects **Department for Education (DfE) advice, NHS Healthier Together**, and **the new national Potty Training Guide approved by the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care**.

When to Start

- **Most children can begin learning toileting skills from around 18 months**, although simply practising sitting on the potty can start as early as 6 months.
- **Children should stop using nappies between 18–30 months**, as research shows this supports healthy bladder and bowel development.
- Waiting beyond 30 months can make learning harder, as habits become more fixed and modern nappies reduce a child's awareness of being wet.

Early Steps to Try

- Offer short potty sits once or twice a day, starting with a few seconds and building up to 2–3 minutes.
- Change nappies promptly when wet or soiled to help children associate clean and dry sensations with toileting.
- Offer nappy-free time (around 30 minutes after a wee or poo) so your child becomes comfortable without nappies.

Skills Children Will Need

- Pulling underwear and clothing up and down
- Sitting safely on the potty or toilet
- Wiping
- Flushing
- Handwashing

These skills can be taught gradually and practised well before your child fully stops using nappies.

Signs Your Child May Be Ready

(Although not all children will show signs!)

- Staying dry for 1–2 hours
- Knowing when they have done a wee or poo
- Being able to sit on and get up from the potty or toilet

Top Tips

- Keep the experience relaxed and positive. Toileting is a learned skill and takes time.
- Try to avoid starting during big life changes (new sibling, house move, starting nursery).
- Praise progress and stay calm about accidents—they are a normal part of the process.

If you have any concerns about constipation, readiness, or regressions, speak to your **health visitor or GP** for support.

SOS Sessions

We recently held two more SOS (Share Our Strategies) sessions, and once again it was wonderful to see parents supporting each other and sharing experiences. We always come prepared with topics and ideas, but what we enjoy most is when **you** take the lead and shape the conversation.

We continue to offer one morning and one afternoon session:

- **Monday, 23rd March at 9:00**
- **Thursday, 26th March at 13:00**

No pressure to speak—listening with a cuppa is absolutely fine.

There will be **tea, coffee, and biscuits**, so it's also a chance to relax in lovely company.

Makaton for Parents

We truly believe that offering children an additional way to communicate supports their overall learning and wellbeing, whether or not they have communication difficulties. Makaton is a brilliant tool, and we're excited to launch our first ever **Makaton for Parents** sessions.

Session dates:

- **Wednesday, 25th February at 14:30**
- **Tuesday, 3rd March at 9:00**

If you'd like to attend any session—SOS, Makaton, or both—just let us know so we can plan accordingly.

Weekly Wellbeing Tip

Enjoy the slower rhythm of half term!

Whether it's pyjama mornings, woodland wanders, or simply taking things at a gentler pace, giving yourselves permission to slow down helps children (and grown-ups!) reset, regulate, and recharge.

Thank You for Being Part of Our Caterpillar Family

We appreciate every smile, cuddle, and moment shared with your little ones. Thank you for being such a warm and supportive community.

Warmest regards,

 **Hayley and the Caterpillar Team**