🌿 Grasshoppers Newsletter 🌿

It was so lovely to see all the children return after half term with big smiles and lots of energy. We've really enjoyed welcoming them back into the room and settling into our routines again. 💚

This week we gently introduced a little bit of **Chinese New Year**, focusing on the **Year of the Fire Horse**. We kept the changes small and gradual so the children could explore something new without feeling overwhelmed. They've responded beautifully and shown lots of curiosity.

🍜 Messy Zone – Noodles

In the messy zone we explored **rice noodles** in the tuff tray. At the start of the week the noodles were dry and firm, and as the days went on we gradually added water to change the texture. The children loved noticing the differences — some enjoyed scooping noodles into pots and containers, while others preferred tasting them or throwing them to see what would happen. The sensory exploration has been wonderful to watch.

Alongside this, our sensory tray was filled with **different lengths of wool**, bowls, plates, and chopsticks. Some children created lovely pretend play scenes, serving "noodles" on plates and using chopsticks to pick them up. Others enjoyed simply touching the wool, lifting it, and watching it fall back into the tray. It has been a calming and engaging sensory experience for everyone.

🧩 Table Activities – Puzzles

On the table we offered a variety of **farm and animal puzzles**. We included larger puzzles, smaller inset puzzles, and lock puzzles so that every child could find something suited to their stage of development. It has been wonderful to see how many children chose to sit, focus, and engage with the puzzles this week.

A few benefits of inset puzzles for early years:

- Support fine motor development
- Encourage problem-solving
- Build concentration and persistence

🐄 Floor Area – Farm Small World

In the floor area we set up a large tuff tray with a **farm small world**. The children enjoyed exploring the animals, moving them around the tray, and creating their own little stories. Small world play like this helps develop imagination, language, and social interaction, and it gives children a safe space to explore familiar themes.

📚 Gentle Reminders – World Book Day

Thursday 5th March is **World Book Day**, and we would love to celebrate our shared love of stories.

Your child is welcome to:

- Bring in their **favourite book** (please name it)
- Dress as a **book character**
- Or simply come in **comfy clothes** ready for a cosy story

If your child isn't in on Thursday, they can dress up **any day of the week** and still bring their favourite book to share.

There is absolutely **no pressure to participate**. We understand that changes can be challenging for some of our children, so we will keep our routine as consistent as possible. Some staff may dress up, but not everyone.

👋 Staffing Update

We are pleased to share that we have appointed a new member of staff who will be taking Jess's place. She will be joining us in a couple of weeks and will be working **Tuesday to Thursday**. We look forward to welcoming her into our Grasshoppers family.

🪵 A Little Request

If you have any **old kitchen utensils** such as:

- metal bowls
- wooden or metal spoons
- scoops
- trays
- egg cups

…or anything wooden or metal that could be used in our **mud kitchen** or added to our **continuous provision baskets**, we would be extremely grateful. These items are brilliant for sensory play, role play, and encouraging independence.

As always, **thank you for your continued support**.

Have a great weekend.

Thank you — The Grasshopper Team 💚