



**St. Michael's Nurseries**

# Chatter

Where children blossom and grow



# MICHAELMAS NEWSLETTER 2025



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## September Newsletter 2025



Welcome to all our new families and friends starting St. Michael's this term. We are incredibly proud of how the children have settled during this important time...friendships are forming, relationships are building, confidence is growing and children are settling into the new rooms and routine.



This term we look forward to welcoming a new apprentice to our team, Libby, (pictured here on the right), who has had experience in the field of education before deciding to study with us.



We continue to build on the knowledge within our team and proud of Emma W (0-2 team) who has almost completed her SENDCo Level 3 training, and will be working closely with Emma Hedge over the coming year.

## Open School Evening

### Schools Evening Thurs 13th November 630pm & 700pm

We are pleased to be running our Schools Evening this year, with local primary schools all under our roof to meet families who are making choices about their child's education.

This year we also welcome Oral Health Team, the Bladder & Bowel Team to chat about toilet training, and also Learning Journey (home education )

More information will be coming out soon, with opportunity to book a timeslot to come and look around.



# Nutrition and Mealtimes

We are always proud to offer a delicious menu for all our children , from our onsite commercial kitchen. Liz has many years of experience in catering and has been with us at St Michael's for 9



years now. This term we have new guidance and new requirements to follow to ensure children are safely eating and also menus remain nutritious with children's health, including oral health, in mind. We use this term to celebrate our meals and cookery sessions in our nursery .



Our menus have a variety of home made meals, cooked from scratch with food

sourced locally. You will soon see our revised



menu board , listing the ingredients in each dish – you will be amazed just how many vegetables your children eat in their pasta dishes and Liz' famous nursery curry!. We have revisited our dessert menu, ensuring children still enjoy the second course , with fruit replacing sugar in cakes as an example. Cake and biscuits will still be served as a desert on special occasions. Don't forget we offer your child a birthday cake, all baked on site. This will be served as the pudding. Please note that we kindly ask for one week's notice to bake a cake for your child.



# Weather Stopped Play at the Carnival

The theme this year, was in homage to the Lionesses' win this summer, 'Football'. Team Leader Zoe lead the creative organising with designing and making 'St. Michael's' Football T-shirts - a massive thank you to Zoe.

Our football team did not expect to be shown a yellow card but disappointedly received a yellow weather warning issued from the MET office.

Kev, the Project Manager for Barnstaple Carnival explains "Their wellbeing was a major factor in the decision".

Prior to the decision and armed with umbrellas, waterproofs, wellies, staff and families turned up with that 'St. Michael's spirit'.

We would like to say the biggest THANKYOU to you ALL and we hope to enter again next year – with less wind and rain!





# St. Michael's Day

We celebrated our special day in style where many children and staff wore pink. Kindergarten and Dragonflies learnt about St. Michael through a puppet show and we enjoyed pink sponge cake for pudding!

Did you know.....? Our hall way is called 'Pink Hall' named after the beautiful hall that was once St. Michael's School, (Tawstock Court).



## Torrington Dental Practice

Thank you to Kim from Torrington Dentist for visiting us. We learnt a lot about oral hygiene and how to keep our teeth and gums healthy. Kim will be joining us at the Open Schools Evening. She will be visiting us again in the Spring term to show us more about how to brush our teeth correctly.

Thanks Kim!



# Hedgehogs Bakery



Emma Hedge has opened Hedgehogs Bakery for the new term and they have already been busy cooking pizzas, quiche, vegetable soup and fruit platters.

Emma is super impressed with her little bakers and it was a delight to see them prepare their ingredients, knead the pizza dough and use the graters with care.

## LADYBIRDS & BUTTERFLIES





We have had a brilliant start to the term. We have met lots of new friends and we are having lots of fun exploring the playroom. We enjoy the soft play, the sensory table, the story books, singing along to our favourite songs and building blocks.



Of course one of the highlights is going out and exploring the local area in the pushchairs. We are so fortunate to have a new multi seat stroller, (see article under Eco-Heroes).

We have been painting our portraits for our display board. Each child had a black and white photo portrait and they designed and coloured the picture with paint

Please could we ask that children in Ladybirds and Butterflies avoid wearing hair-clips. We are finding that they easily fall out due to the nature of fine baby hair , which can be a choking hazard if found by another small child .

We know baby hair can reach a stage of becoming long , but not long enough to style , it may be worth considering a headband for this stage .

Thank you for understanding

**Zoe took the group to Gardening Club. Scroll down to 'Green Fingers Gardening Club' to read more....**





# DRAGONFLIES



**Dragonflies enjoying stories, songs,  
and garden play.....**





Dragonflies have settled really well into the new term and they absolutely love their story times. They have been looking in the mirror and noticing things about themselves, for example, the colour of their eyes and the length of their hair. They have made portraits of



themselves.

We are enjoying our cookery sessions and Forest School. On Mondays we enjoy visits from Clare from Story Bears.





# KINDERGARTEN



Kindergarten have had a great start to the term enjoying a visit from Torrington Dental Practice, singing along with Clare from Story Bears, cooking with Emma Hedge and Forest School with Katie 'Fox'.

Of course all the usual fun in Kindergarten including dancing games, story time, painting, role play area, building blocks, craft, jigsaw puzzles, dressing up and so much more!





# ECO-HEROES - NEWS



## Action for Climate

It is now a requirement for early years settings to have an Action for Climate Policy. Already ahead of this new requirement, the late Steve Roberts (Director), was incredibly passionate about protecting the planet and launched the 'green project' back in 2018. We are confident in this area, as you know we are proud of our plastic free status and we have won awards in sustainability / eco projects as well as wildlife and gardening over a number of years now. We will continue to follow our green ethos at St. Michael's.



## Recycling Week (22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September)

We have weekly 'Eco-Hero' sessions where children are not only involved in the sorting of materials that can be recycled, but enjoy stories, discussions, songs, puppet shows, music, dance, walks and litter picking to illustrate the importance of living sustainably.

Most recently, we have been making a scarecrow, reusing everyday items. The children used the mirrors to identify what the featured the scarecrow needed and which items could be used.

We are currently collecting name ideas for our scarecrow so watch this space!





# Our New Wheels!



Ladybirds and Butterflies have been out exploring the local community in their brand new multi-seat buggy. Accommodating up to four friends, it's a huge hit with the team. Team Leader Zoe enthuses, "We enjoy our walks so much and now we can take even more friends at a time. We have rain covers ensuring that we can go out

whatever the weather and the fresh air



really benefits the children's well being."



As a plastic free nursery, we were delighted to note that the seats are crafted with fabric made from recycled PET bottles. We are so happy with our new wheels, we are already





# Green Fingers Gardening Club



Sarah has been working hard this spring and summer planning, designing, planting and cultivating the vegetable patch with the children. The children have been tending to the plants and watering them over the long hot summer.

We are getting ready for harvest and we have already enjoyed our delicious plums straight from the tree!



We have opened our community garden centre where we will be sharing our plants and seeds for donations to put towards more gardening equipment. **Thank you for the donations already.** We have purchased children's gardening gloves and little spades. Look out for our seed sharing and swaps garden centre in the coming weeks.







Our little Butterflies from the 0-2 years room joined Gardening Club to harvest the carrots. The children explored the texture of the soil, the crumbly feel of it between their fingers and pulled at the bright green leaves. They used little spades to dig the soil. They were amazed to see the different coloured carrots emerge from the earth.





# FOREST SCHOOL



Forest School is back up and running throughout the term again and the children have been getting into the routine of finding their own puddle suit, coat and wellies.

The children start the session with a 'check in' to become familiar with their surroundings and peers.

During this time we discuss the 'three agreements' – Look after ourselves, look out for others and look after nature.

We have been looking closely at the stinging nettles and learning to identify them within the woodland. We have had great fun during the wetter days, looking for snails and slugs. We even fed them a cucumber and counted 8 snails!



Kindergarten children choose their 'Forest School name' at the beginning of term so be sure to ask your child what their native animal/tree/plant name is!





# **Dates for your Diary/Notices:**

## **Schools Evening**

**Schools Evening Thurs 13th November 630pm & 700pm**

We are pleased to be running our Schools Evening this year , with local primary schools all under our roof to meet families who are making choices about their child's education. More information out soon!

**Book Aid – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> October** – wear cosy clothing/PJs.

Book Sale – all welcome. If you wish to donate good quality books for the book sale, please donate by Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October.

**Individual/ Family Portraits - week beginning 20th October – Jayne Poole**

**Photography – more details to follow**

**Half Term w/b 27 th October – funding does not apply for term time children**

**World Prematurity Day Friday 14 th November – staff and children invited to wear something purple**

**St Michael's Toy Swap – 25 th – 29 th November – families invited to bring in good quality unwanted toys ready for the swap**

**Toy swap open to families 1 st and 2 nd December, come and find toys for Christmas**

**Autumn Term ends for Term Time only children on Friday 19 th December**

**Spring Term begins for term time only children Tuesday 6 th January**

**Nursery Closed for Christmas Weds 24 th December**

**Nursery re-opens Monday 5 th January 2026**



# Funding

As you know , families may be eligible for Working Extended Funding , from the term after their child is 9 months old – depending on the date parents return from maternity leave.

It is important to apply in good time to gain your funding code, and from then it is really important you renew your account every three months to avoid the code expiring.

Thank you to everyone for returning your funding forms , the transferring of a high percentage of our children to further funded hours has been a big task !

Don't forget to use your Tax Free Childcare if you are eligible as this can be used for any payable fees ( up to



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20% of your fees paid by HMRC). Did you know this can be used for babies until they are eligible for funding, and also for children's after school club at their school , and for holiday childcare too. Ask your provider for more details. Donna and Sarah are happy to help with any funding / tax free childcare questions.



**Remember...I  
don't need to  
rinse my mouth  
out with water  
after brushing  
my teeth**



<https://www.facebook.com/ccsdentalhealthcare>



**St. Michael's Nursery**

in partnership with  
**Devon**  
County Council



**NDNA**

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**St Michael's Nursery**

**Sustainable Business Award**