

CHK PARENT NEWSLETTER

SHARING THE LIFE AND
LEARNING OF OUR
KINDERGARTEN DAYS

As February unfolds, the children have been noticing the softer light, lingering cold, and subtle changes in our garden – and still with plenty of mud! – as each morning brings new frosty patterns and wintry discoveries to explore.

February
2026 edition

THE CHILD SHOULD LIVE IN A WORLD
OF BEAUTY- BEAUTY NOT AS
DECORATION, BUT AS SOMETHING
ESSENTIAL TO HEALTHY GROWTH –
RUDOLF STEINER



Welcome Dear Parents

Welcome to our February CHK Newsletter! As the weeks of mid-winter continue, we share snapshots of the children's days — the warmth of indoor play, the fresh air and movement outdoors, and the familiar rhythms that hold us through the season. We hope this newsletter offers a gentle window into the children's experiences and celebrates the small, meaningful moments that shape our days together.



February has brought a subtle change in pace to our days at CHK. The children have been moving fluidly between moments of quiet concentration and bursts of energetic play, responding to the season in their own thoughtful and imaginative ways. Indoors, there has been a strong sense of purpose in the room, with children choosing activities that invite focus, creativity, and collaboration.

We have also been pleased to welcome four new children into our community this half term, with two joining Oak and two joining Spindlewood. Their arrival has added new energy to the groups, and it has been lovely to watch friendships forming and routines gently expanding to include new faces.

Outside, the garden continues to offer rich opportunities for exploration, from water-filled puddles to soft ground underfoot. We marked Candlemas together as a quiet seasonal moment, reflecting the turning of the year and the gradual return of light. As winter slowly loosens its hold, we hope this newsletter offers a fresh glimpse into the children's days and the evolving experiences that shape our time together.



News From *Spindlewood*

As February has progressed, Spindlewood has taken on a quietly active, rhythmic quality. The children have been engaging deeply with movement, sound, and sensory experiences, moving between moments of focused concentration and lively shared play as they explore the season together.

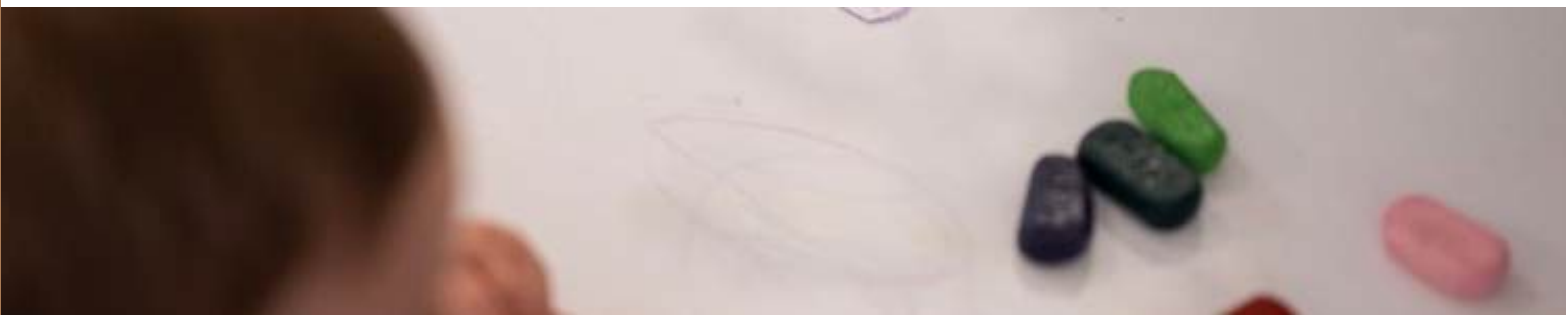


Throughout the month, the children have been drawn to activities that involve using their hands and bodies with purpose. Posting and pulling winter items through large cardboard boxes has supported fine motor control, grasping, and early problem-solving (PD, M). Snack times have continued to offer opportunities for growing independence, with children practising simple self-care skills and learning the BSL sign for “drink” as part of familiar routines (PSED, CL).

Music and rhythm have been woven through our days, with children joining in nursery rhymes, action songs, and instrument play. Shaking, tapping, and moving to steady beats has supported listening, coordination, and shared enjoyment, while songs from home languages have offered moments of connection and inclusion within the group (CL, EAD, PSED).

Sensory experiences have also been enriched through bread-making, with children mixing, kneading, and shaping dough, noticing textures, smells, and warmth as they worked together. These experiences supported curiosity, physical development, and early understanding of the world (UW, PD).

Check out our blog for more curriculum insights: charthamhk.co.uk/blog



News From *Oak*

February in Oak has been marked by a steady deepening of focus and imagination. The children have been engaging with familiar stories, practical tasks, and sensory play in ways that encourage concentration, creativity, and thoughtful participation in group life.



This month, the children have explored fine motor activities such as threading, working with pasta, and building with wooden blocks. These experiences have supported hand-eye coordination, careful control, perseverance, and early problem-solving (PD, M). Sensory play has invited filling, scooping, and transferring, with children exploring capacity and comparison through repeated, purposeful actions (M, UW).

Story, verse, and song have continued to provide a strong rhythmic thread within the room. "The North Wind Doth Blow" has been revisited alongside imaginative tales of King Winter and the Wise Old Gnome, supporting attentive listening, language development, and shared imaginative play (CL, EAD).

Across these experiences, the children have shown growing confidence in sustained activity, cooperative play, and imaginative expression as they learn and explore together (PSED).

Alongside these planned experiences, we continue to value free, unhurried play. Time and space to follow their own ideas allows the children to deepen their play, build confidence, and make sense of their world within the steady rhythm of the Oak room.

Check out our blog for more curriculum insights: charthamhk.co.uk/blog



News From *Maytree*

February in Maytree has been shaped by seasonal celebrations, purposeful making, and moments of care for others. The children have been engaging with materials and ideas that invite reflection, creativity, and a deepening sense of connection to the natural world and to one another.



We began the month by marking Candlemas and Imbolc through candle-making, with the children rolling beeswax sheets, shaping wicks, and decorating candles with coloured wax.

As the month progressed, the children began tending to the garden through regular gardening sessions, planting seeds, preparing soil, and learning to care for growing spaces as part of the seasonal rhythm. These experiences supported fine motor control, collaboration, and a developing understanding of seasonal cycles and care for the natural world (PD, UW, PSED).

The children continued to engage in practical and creative work that required focus and intention. Working with fleece, wool, and other natural materials supported hand strength, coordination, and patience as children shaped, coloured, and assembled their work. Gardening tasks continued to offer opportunities for responsibility and perseverance, with children returning to their planted areas to observe changes and tend to the garden together. Shared projects and birthday celebrations brought moments of connection and joy, supporting confidence, cooperation, and a growing sense of belonging (PD, EAD, PSED).

The children explored painting with blue and yellow, observing how the colours met, blended, and slowly transformed into green. These calm, focused painting experiences invited careful observation and curiosity, while echoing the subtle seasonal shift from winter toward new growth (EAD, UW).



Festival News *Candlemas*

Candlemas offered us a gentle pause within the flow of the term — a moment to come together and acknowledge the subtle turning of the year. Rooted in rhythm, warmth, and shared experience, this seasonal festival was held simply and with care, allowing the children to meet its meaning through doing, sensing, and being present together.



We gathered outdoors around the earth candle, sharing food and gentle winter songs as we stood together in the cold air. The children listened, watched, and joined in at their own pace, held within the stillness of the season and the sense of anticipation it brings. In the kindergarten, festivals are experienced through simple shared moments like these, helping the children to feel the rhythm of the year as it unfolds around them. Candlemas comes at a quiet point in winter, when the days are slowly beginning to lengthen and the returning light is gently noticed.

Indoors, this calm focus continued as children of all ages worked with soft wool, weaving, colouring, and shaping in their own time. A peaceful, purposeful atmosphere filled the room, supporting concentration, creativity, and independence within the shared work.

Later, the children carried their wool back into the garden, offering it to the birds as a simple act of care and connection with the natural world. Through these small but meaningful gestures, Candlemas was experienced not as something explained, but as something lived — held in warmth, light, and quiet purpose as we continue through the winter season together.





CHARTHAM HOLISTIC KINDERGARTEN
Festival News *Candlemas*



Festival Ahead *Passover*

We are looking forward to celebrating Passover — a gentle moment in the year that honours the journey from constraint toward freedom, and the hope that comes with new beginnings. The children will prepare ahead through simple stories and quiet, purposeful activities that reflect themes of movement, waiting, and togetherness.

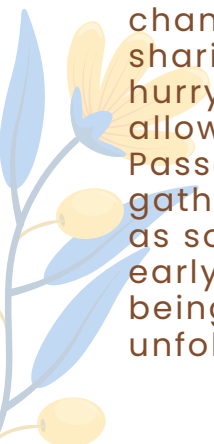


Passover enters the year as a festival of movement and transition. It carries the image of setting out on a journey — leaving what is familiar and moving forward together. For young children, this is not approached as history, but as a lived experience of change, supported by rhythm, repetition, and shared activity.

In the early childhood setting, Passover is experienced through the body and the senses. Through preparing simple food, shaping dough, and creating a quiet journey space, the children take part in meaningful work that reflects cooperation and care. These activities allow them to experience continuity and belonging, as each small gesture contributes to the whole.

The central image of the journey supports the children in meeting change with trust. Walking a path, placing objects along the way, and sharing in preparation all offer a sense of forward movement without hurry or explanation. The emphasis rests on doing rather than telling, allowing the meaning of the festival to unfold naturally.

Passover also carries a strong social gesture. Working side by side and gathering around a shared table, the children experience togetherness as something steady and reassuring. In this way, the festival offers an early sense of freedom — not as an abstract idea, but as a feeling of being supported, capable, and connected as the year continues to unfold.



General News *Funded Hours*

We know that navigating funded hours can sometimes feel confusing, particularly when family needs change during the term. This section is intended to offer a clear explanation of how KCC funded hours work in practice, and why certain arrangements need to be confirmed early on. Our aim is always to support families as best we can, while working within the guidance we are required to follow.



When families access KCC funded hours, the number of funded sessions and hours must be agreed and confirmed at the start of each term. Under KCC rules, funded hours cannot be increased once the term has begun. This means that any additional care you may need — such as holiday care or ad hoc after-kindi sessions — must be booked within the first week of term.

For example, if you think you may need care during the February half-term holiday, this would need to be booked at the start of the spring term in January. After this initial agreement period, we are not permitted to add further funded or associated hours until the next term begins, even if availability exists or family circumstances change which would mean you would need to pay privately for the extra sessions or miss out.

While we understand that this can feel restrictive, these conditions are set by KCC and apply to all settings offering funded places. Planning ahead where possible helps ensure we can support your family within the funding guidance. If you are unsure what you may need, we are always happy to talk things through with you during the first week of term so you can make an informed decision without pressure.

Clear communication at the start of term helps us support families fairly while remaining compliant with KCC guidance. Please do speak to us if you have any questions about funded hours or booking patterns.



Parent Waldorf Insights

Each month, this page will offer a short reflection drawn from Waldorf education, sharing some of the thinking that guides our work with the children. These insights are not intended as instruction, but as gentle windows into the philosophy – supporting connection, understanding, and shared language between home and kindergarten.



In Waldorf education, rhythm is seen as a vital foundation for early childhood. Young children experience the world primarily through movement, sensation, and imitation, and it is through regular, predictable rhythms that they begin to feel safe and oriented in their surroundings. Daily rhythms – such as shared meals, outdoor play, songs, stories, and familiar transitions – create a sense of continuity that allows children to relax and engage fully in their play.

When life feels predictable and trustworthy, children do not need to spend energy anticipating what will happen next. Instead, they are free to explore, imagine, and connect with others. Repetition, which can sometimes appear unremarkable to adults, is deeply nourishing for young children. Each repeated song, activity, or gesture allows them to revisit an experience with greater confidence, understanding, and mastery.

Seasonal rhythms play an equally important role. Through festivals, changes in weather, light, and activity, children gradually develop an embodied sense of time – not measured by clocks or calendars, but felt through warmth and cold, movement and rest, light and darkness. Celebrations such as Candlemas offer children a lived experience of these seasonal shifts, helping them feel connected to the natural world and to the turning year.

Over time, these rhythms support emotional security, resilience, and a sense of belonging. They form a quiet framework within which children can grow – socially, physically, and emotionally – held by consistency, warmth, and meaningful repetition.

If you would like to explore this topic further, you may enjoy reading our blog post on rhythm in early childhood which can be found at:

www.charthamhk.co.uk/a-reflection-on-rhythm-in-early-childhood



The EYFS and the 7 Areas of Learning

You may have noticed that when we share observations on Tapestry or in the newsletter, we often include letters in brackets after activities or experiences. These letters link to the seven areas of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the statutory framework all early years settings in England work within.



The EYFS is the statutory framework for children from birth to five in England. It sets out how early learning and development are supported during the early years, recognising that young children learn best through play, relationships, movement, and hands-on experience rather than formal instruction.

The seven areas of learning within the EYFS are:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)
- Communication and Language (CL)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Literacy (L)
- Mathematics (M)
- Understanding the World (UW)
- Expressive Arts and Design (EAD)

These areas are not taught as separate subjects. Instead, they describe different aspects of a child's development during the early years, which are often closely connected. A single experience — such as baking, outdoor play, or storytelling — may support several areas of learning at the same time.

When you see these references in brackets, they are included to help make visible how children's everyday play, routines, and experiences link to the EYFS framework.



The EYFS and our *Waldorf Approach*

We meet the requirements of the EYFS while working within a Steiner Waldorf-inspired approach to early childhood. This means that although the EYFS provides the statutory framework we work within, it does not dictate how children's days look or how learning is experienced.



In Steiner Waldorf early childhood, learning grows out of play, movement, imitation, rhythm, and real-life experience. Children are not taught the seven areas of learning directly or asked to meet formal academic targets. Instead, we observe children carefully and use the EYFS framework to recognise and record the learning that naturally takes place through their play and daily experiences.

This approach can look different from more mainstream settings. Physical development is supported through climbing, digging, carrying, handwork, and outdoor play in all weathers. Communication and language develop through songs, stories, conversation, verses, and circle time, while early literacy is nurtured through storytelling, mark-making, and a rich spoken language environment rather than formal reading or writing.

Mathematical understanding emerges through everyday activities such as baking, building, sharing food, filling and emptying containers, and noticing patterns. Understanding the world develops through time outdoors, seasonal changes, practical tasks, and celebrations of the year. Creative expression is supported through open-ended materials, singing, movement, and imaginative play, with an emphasis on process rather than end results. Using the EYFS in this way allows us to meet statutory requirements while remaining true to our philosophy. The framework helps us name and document children's learning, but it does not drive the experiences we offer. Our focus remains on supporting the whole child – emotionally, physically, socially, and imaginatively – during this important early stage of life.



General News

A New Face

A very warm welcome to Holly, who has now joined our team on a part-time basis, supporting children and staff across all rooms. We are delighted to have her as a valued member of our team, alongside her ongoing role as our SENDCo consultant.



Holly is an incredibly experienced and caring early years practitioner who brings a calm, nurturing presence to our setting. She is passionate about creating environments where children feel safe, valued, and eager to explore, taking a child-centred approach that supports development through play and meaningful interactions.

With her background as a Nursery Class Teacher, SENDCo, and senior leader, Holly offers strong expertise in inclusive practice and early childhood development. She is skilled at adapting provision to meet a wide range of needs and works closely with families and professionals to provide consistent, high-quality support.

Holly is particularly dedicated to promoting inclusion and emotional wellbeing, helping children build confidence and independence in a warm and supportive atmosphere. We are delighted to have her with us and look forward to the continued strengths she brings to our community.

Want to meet the rest of the team? You can see details of all 12 CHK staff members at www.charthamhk.co.uk/staff



General News *Last few things*

Happy News

We're excited to share the wonderful news that Justine is expecting a baby! Justine will be on maternity leave beginning in May and plans to return in September. Please join us in congratulating Justine and wishing her all the best as she prepares for this exciting new chapter.

Maytree garden change

After half term, we will be adjusting the morning routine for Maytree children. Spindlewood and Oak children will continue starting the day in the garden. Maytree children will now arrive and go straight indoors, beginning with free play and a focused activity before having garden time later in the morning. This change will give both younger and older children more space and a rhythm better suited to their age. Afternoon garden time will continue to be shared across all age groups.



General News *Last few things*

Parent Ads

Do you run a business or have a service to offer?
We would like to add a section on the newsletter offering our parents an opportunity to advertise their services to other parents by way of supporting CHK community businesses. It will be completely free to advertise. Please get in touch if you have something to offer.

Another reminder

To date, we have not applied late payment fees to any accounts. However, as invoices are increasingly being paid past their due dates, we may need to introduce late fees if this issue continues.

Timely payments are essential for us to meet our own financial obligations, including paying our bills and staff on time. We kindly ask that invoices be paid by the 1st of each month.

If you're experiencing any difficulties or anticipate a delay, please get in touch with us as soon as possible.

info@charthamhk.co.uk

www.charthamhk.co.uk



THAT'S ALL FOR NOW

WITH HEARTFELT THANKS
FOR YOUR CONTINUED
WARMTH, SUPPORT, AND
PRESENCE IN OUR CHK
FAMILY

Parents are always
welcome to make an
appointment to speak with
their child's key person at
any time, and please don't
hesitate to WhatsApp or
chat with a member of
staff during drop-off – we
are always happy to
connect.



“ A CHILD FLOURISHES MOST WHEN
MET WITH PATIENCE, CONNECTION,
AND QUIET UNDERSTANDING.

- UNKNOWN

