

Rocks Lane Montessori Newsletter



Spring Term 2023 Issue No. 7

A special message:

What a great start to the Autumn term we had! After catching up with old friends, welcoming new friends, and revisiting well-loved activities, we quickly got into the swing of things and had a very productive Autumn term. An exciting highlight was our Christmas play, where we sang and performed The Gruffalo for our families. We were so glad to have our families join us for this special celebration. Our garden's lush crops were also ready for harvest and we managed to take home courgettes, berries and lettuce to enjoy at home! We can't wait for Spring Term and all that the term has in store.

With love, the Rocks Lane Montessori team

Birthdays this term:

Happiest birthdays to the following children....

- Jasper (4th January)
- Ethan (21st January)
- Elodie (27th January)
- Winston (15th February)
- Kiaan (20th February)
- Rei (11th March)
- Gigl (14th March)
- Eden (27th March)
- Caspar (29th March)

Teacher Profile: our new teaching assistant, Katy!

Last term, our teaching team welcomed a new team member, Miss Katy. Katy has a Montessori Early Years qualification and has over 22 years experience in a variety of Montessori schools and leading science camps where she brings science to life for young children. Originally from the UK and Greece, Katy is a Chiswick resident, loves travel, swimming, nature, and we are so happy to have her in the classroom with us.



Dates to remember this term:

Start of Spring Term	4th January Wednesday
Chinese New Year	22nd January
National Storytelling Week*	28th January - 5th February
Children's Mental Health Week	6th - 12th February
Half term break	14th-18th February
Kindness Day	17th February
Pancake Day	21st February
St. David's Day	1st March
World Book Day	2nd March
Food Waste Action Week	6th - 12th March
International Women's Day	8th March
St. Patrick's Day	17th March
Global Recycling Day	18th March
Mother's Day	19th March
Spring Begins	20th March
End of Spring Term	30th March

*Please let your teacher know if you would like to volunteer a storytelling session during this National Storytelling Week!

What have we been up to over this Autumn term? A term in review....

This term has been an eventful one as we organised many open-door events inviting our families to join us with us in the classroom. Check out the events we held over the Autumn term!

1. Grandparents Day

It is said "a garden grows in every grandparent's heart" and we're so grateful for the presence of our grandmothers and grandfathers in our lives, nurturing us and imparting their wisdom. Thank you for spending the morning in the classroom with us.



2. Halloween

At Halloween this year, little witches, monsters, skeletons, dinosaurs, tigers and even spiderman joined us for arts and crafts, pumpkin carving and a parade. Check out our fanciful costumes



3. Black Awareness Month

In the month of October, we learnt about the inspiring stories of some of the most influential black people in history and celebrated the amazing diversity of the world in which we live.



4. Remembrance day

Do you know why poppies are used as a symbol of Remembrance Day? Poppies were a common sight, especially on the Western Front. They flourished in the soil churned up by the fighting and shelling. We are forever grateful to our fallen soldiers. May we never forget them.



4. Christmas celebration and Performance

The Gruffalo comes to celebrate Christmas with us this year! After extensive practice, we were so proud to showcase our very first play on the story of The Gruffalo! The little ones did not disappoint with their lively rendition of "This Little Light of Mine" and "When Santa Got Stuck on the Chimney" amongst other traditional Christmas favourites. And guess who visited us? Father Christmas himself! What an absolutely wonderful Christmas celebration for the Rocks Lane family! We wish all our loved ones a joyous and merry Christmas!



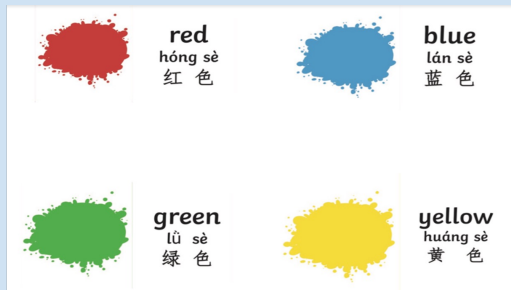
Mandarin Lessons on-the-go!

Do you know that there are over 120,000 Chinese people in London, comprising 1.5% of the city's population.

At Rocks Lane, we aim to create an environment where ethnic diversity is appreciated and respected, and our Mandarin lessons are a good place to start! This term, we'll be focusing on learning basic greetings, colours and numbers in Mandarin.

Children have learnt to sing several songs in Mandarin, including Twinkle Twinkle Little Star. They also learnt some basic greetings, including "Nǐ hǎo", which means 'hello'.

We also looked this term at **COLOURS**: Most of the time Chinese colour words come with the word "colour" at the end. That means red is "red colour". Yellow is "yellow colour." Blue is "blue colour" and green is "green colour".



When we talk about colours in Chinese there are a few fun facts that you may like to know. Red is a lucky colour for Chinese. Red is the colour Chinese people use for weddings, birthday celebrations and festivals (for example, Chinese New Year) and do you know there is a special colour for Chinese emperors? Yellow was the emperor's colour in ancient China.

What will our children learn in Mandarin next term? We will build on the words and songs we learnt this term, learning new songs and phrases, and practicing also writing the Mandarin script to learn how different letters are across languages and cultures.

In summary...

Nǐ hǎo 你好 (means 'hello')



Contributions to our garden and classroom

Spring is coming! If you have excess plants or bulbs that you would like to rehome, please bring them down to the nursery and we'll be happy to rehome them for you in our garden for the children to look after.

In a traditional Montessori classroom, children also bring flowers to cut and prepare together in vases for the classroom tables, a great way to practice scissor skills and for children to have a sense of ownership of the classroom. Any flower contributions would be very gratefully received.

At your child's birthday walk, instead of gifts for children, a favourite book with your child's name and date of birth can be kept and read to the children.

Snack-Attack!

Many parents have asked for suggestions on what to pack for your child's snack time, so we thought we would share some inspiration with you from some nutritious snacks and ideas we've seen from some of our children!

- Reusable smoothie pouches can be frozen at home so they turn your lunch box into a mini fridge as they get to the perfect temperature for snack time.
- Take away sushi the night before makes a perfect snack box item, with children's chopsticks widely available and great for developing fine motor skills.
- Colourful wraps can be created by rolling ingredients into tortillas and cutting into little coin slices.
- Nut free banana muffins are a hit.
- How about peeled boiled eggs, a great source of protein.
- We are a nut free school, but pesto and pine nuts are OK.

Our Spring Term 2023 Curriculum

Overlaying our Montessori curriculum, we have a focus topic each half-term, which is split into weekly projects. This term we will focus on Landforms and then the Animal Kingdom. Below you will also find our letters, numbers, shapes, books and people of the week in case you would like to follow along at home.

Curriculum Focus Topics, Spring 2023						
Week	Project	Letters of the week	Numbers of the week	Shape of the week	Book of the week	Person of the week
4th January	Landforms	i, k	1, 10	circle	Earth's Landforms and Bodies of Water	Harm de Blij
9th January	Earthquakes	q, n	2, 12	triangle	Is that an Earthquake?	Tilly Smith
16th January	Volcanoes	u, w	3, 13	square	Going to the Volcano	William Morris Davis
23rd January	Tsunamis	y, b	4, 14	rectangle	Tsunami For Kids	Eratosthenes
30th January	Mountains	x, l	5, 15	rhombus	Everest: The Remarkable Story of Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay	Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay
6th February	Water forms	m, k, d	6, 16	kite	The Rhythm of the Rain	Ellen MacArthur
Half term break: 13 th – 17 th February 2023						
20th February	The Animal Kingdom	c, s	7, 17	parallelogram	David Attenborough (Little People, Big Dreams)	David Attenborough
27th February	Mammals	h, t	8, 18	pentagon	Is a Camel a Mammal?	Dian Fossey and Jane Goodall
6th March	Fish and sea life	a, j	9, 19	hexagon	The Snail and the Whale	James Cameron
13th March	Birds	z, p	20	heptagon	One Little Bird	Mya-Rose Craig
20th March	Insects	e, g	odd and even numbers	octagon	The Bug Collector	Sir Vincent Wigglesworth
27th March	Reptiles	o, v, f	revision of numbers	nonagon/decagon	Howard the Average Gecko	Bindi Sue Irwin

Thank you for reading our Newsletter!