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## Nursery News - Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

Dear parents / carers,

### Our busy week



The nursery children have been learning about Easter in the last couple of days. We've had eggs everywhere: in the sand tray, in the water tray, on the playdough table and in our books. We have also counted eggs in the egg cartons, made chicks using googly eyes and feathers and had a go at decorating Easter eggs. We have read about Palm Sunday and learned about the importance of Easter for Christians. The nursery children had a blast on our Easter Egg Hunt and they were happy to follow the clues and use positional language to find the eggs. Thank you for all the wonderful Easter bonnets sent in.



### Changes

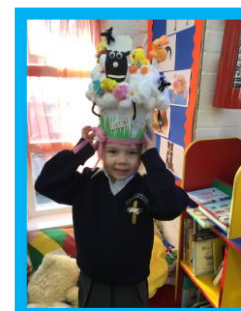
Next term we will be learning about minibeasts, "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and the transformation of caterpillars into butterflies. We have ordered caterpillars for our nursery, so we will be able to see the whole process live. There are some children who seem to be very scared of bugs. I am attaching some useful information. Can you please use the Easter holidays to read the attachment and help your little one be more comfortable around insects? We don't expect the children to love bugs, but we want them to be open minded, to like exploring and investigating.

I am also attaching the link to the Universally Speaking ages and stages of children's communication development document -

[https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/363847/tct\\_univspeak\\_0-5.pdf](https://www.thecommunicationtrust.org.uk/media/363847/tct_univspeak_0-5.pdf). The document has information on assessing your little one's language and ideas to encourage their talking and listening. The children are developing differently and they are all at different



stages. We are working hard in nursery to help them expand their vocabulary, but you are the first person who can make a huge difference to your little ones' language development. The site provides small ideas you can use every day when getting dressed, walking home from school, cooking or going for a walk, without needing resources. It is going to help you to make small steps each day, which will benefit your little one in the long term.



In addition, we want to see how we have changed since we were babies. We have asked you to send some pictures of your little one as a baby. You can email the photos to the school's email address: [admin@st-marys.lewisham.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-marys.lewisham.sch.uk). We will

share the photos next term in our carpet sessions and make a 'now and then' display for the children.



A lot of homework for you, dear parents over the Easter holidays. I hope you will find the information useful and you will be able to apply some of the guidance.

Thank you for all of your support. We are always here for you, so if you have any questions or worries please send an email or give the office a call and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

The nursery team and the whole school are wishing you an amazing Easter, peace, love and sunny days!

Take care and stay safe!

The Nursery Team



## **Tackling Your Child's Fear of Creepy Crawlies**

A fear of the creepy crawlies – and fear in general – is a normal developmental stage for children. It's normal to not like spiders, but what is not normal is taking that fear to the extreme. For example, a child refusing to go into a room because there was once a bug in there. Or refusing to play in the garden because the game is played in the grass and the grass contains bugs.

### **You can help your child at home:**

**Put a label on it.** Your child's perception is his reality. Dismissing their fear by downplaying it might make them feel worse about it. Saying something like, "Boy, you looked really startled when you saw that bug," justifies their feelings without saying it's right or wrong. Validating lets your child know you take their fear seriously and understand that this is hard for them. Saying, "I know flying bugs really scare you" can go a long way.

**Model calm behaviour.** Children are incredibly insightful and pick up on when their parents are anxious or afraid of things. If you're afraid of spiders and react by jumping up on a chair when you see one, it's going to be more difficult for your child to overcome their fear of spiders. Taking deep breaths and remaining calm will go a long way in helping your child to stay calm as well.

**Educate yourself and your child.** Children, like adults, are better equipped to handle the unknown or the unexpected when they're educated on the topic. Research some books and movies about the bug that frightens your child. Watch a national geographic or discovery channel special. Mention the fact that bugs are helpful (like bees) or are useful in other ways (worms are good for aerating the soil, making it soft and granular, perfect for growing plants).

**Avoid over exposure.** Parents have the best intentions when trying to help their children face their fears. However, exposure to the insect they are afraid of needs to be done in a slow and methodical way. For example, if your child is afraid of ants, forcing one to crawl on them is going to be overwhelming and will probably make them run away. They will likely calm down once they are removed from the situation, which can unintentionally reinforce their fear when they realize they are more calm when they are not around ants.

**Start off by observing.** Watching an insect and seeing what it does is a great way to expose your child to it without it being an overwhelming experience. Try going to the insect house at the zoo. Get an insect house and catch one. Talk to your child about what it is doing.

**Go on a bug hunt.** The next step might be to go looking for the bug in your garden or local park. Grab a net and go on a hunt. Kids are much braver when they encounter the bug on their terms.

**Teach positive self-talk.** When you and your child encounter a bug and they show fear, try to rationalize with them. Ask them who is bigger, them or the bug? Who's stronger? And give them the words to say to themselves: I can do this. It's just a little bug.

**Distract and relax.** If your child is overwhelmed and doesn't want to talk about bugs anymore, find something else to do, for example a visit to the playground. If they are overwhelmed, help them to calm down by closing their eyes and taking deep breaths.

**Make Gradual Changes.** If your child has been struggling with extreme fears of bugs for months or years, it's not reasonable to expect your child to change overnight. Likewise, if you've been checking places for bugs daily, you can't just stop doing it without a plan. Begin by taking small steps. Sometimes just talking about bugs or looking at videos of them is a good start. Taking a 10-minute walk through a park would be a great next step.

**Practice, Practice, Practice.** It takes a lot of practice to do something that one has previously avoided. In other words, your child will need a lot of gradual exposures to get over the fear. They will need to have a lot of opportunities to face fears and tolerate them. They don't have to love bugs, but they need to experience what it's like to be near them without having the type of strong reactions they've had before.

Regardless of what your child is afraid of, fear is completely normal for children and parents can play a large role in helping their kids work through it.