Sunshine Preschool Newsletter

St Gerard's November 2026

Welcome to our November newsletter! This month we're excited to share our upcoming events, including our Christmas singalong, and we'll be celebrating lots of autumn festivals with the children throughout this term. We will also be holding key meetings to update you on your child's progress 16th - 20th November.

TERM DATES

Term starts
Monday 2nd Nov 2026

Last day of term
Friday 18th Dec 2026
MORNING ONLY (collect 11:45 - 12:00)

Please note we do not always run to the same dates as local schools. Term dates are detailed in the Welcome book and on our calendar

Curriculum - This term we will be using child centred activities and books to celebrate various festivals including Bonfire Night, Diwali, the German festival of St. Martin and the Christmas celebration of St. Nikolaus. We will also commemorate Remembrance Sunday.

IMPORTANT! You will be receiving a (paper, not emailed) letter about a change in our bank details. If you receive any subsequent communication claiming to be from us and asking you to make payment to a different account, please do not make the payment and contact us directly to verify the request. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we make this change.

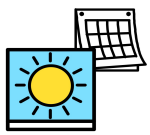
Sound of the Week - Starting this term, we will be introducing a weekly phonic sound. Each week we will be exploring a letter sound through fun phonic songs and activities. You can support your child to learn phonics at home by helping them to find items that begin with the sound of the week, which they can bring into preschool for our 'Sounds Basket' and to share with their friends. When introducing children to phonics, it is useful to remember to use the 'sound' that the letter makes and not the letter name. If you would like more information about phonics then please speak to your child's key person or look at the Resources section of our website for helpful tips.

SETTING CONTACT

St Gerard's mobile number:
07798 672 609



IMPORTANT DATES



10th Nov: Photographer
13th Nov: Children in Need
16th - 20th Nov: Key meetings
3rd Dec: Theatre trip
14th Dec: Christmas singalong
18th Dec: Christmas party (AM only)

SPECIAL EVENTS FOR THIS TERM – DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Children in Need: Friday 13th Nov. We will be organising a Pudsey Bear fun day and any donations received will be passed on to Children in Need; details to follow.

Christmas Sing-along: Parents are invited to join us for a Christmas sing-along on **Monday 14th December at 2:00**. The sing-along will be followed by a bring and buy cake sale (please bring cash!). We hope you will be able to join us but due to limitations with space we can only invite two people per child. All children and families are invited so if your child does not attend this session please arrive at 2:00.

End of Term Christmas Party – Friday 18th Dec. Our Christmas party will be held during the morning session and will mark the end of term so there is no afternoon session on this day. All children are invited to attend so if your child does not normally attend this session please bring them along for a morning of fun games and activities and a visit from Santa. Please collect children 11:45 - 12:00.

Family Celebrations: Please let us know if you have any special cultural celebrations or ways of celebrating that are different to traditional English customs so we can broaden our horizons and include them in our planning.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION. Please can we remind you of the following:
Sickness: If children are sick for any reason they must not return to pre-school until at least 48 hours after the last bout of sickness. This applies to cases of diarrhoea as well.

Illnesses: We ask parents to continue to be vigilant in keeping their child at home if they are unwell for any reason. We have had lots of colds, coughs and sore throat bugs being spread around pre-school due to children attending when they are poorly. The pre-school day is busy and if children are feeling under the weather it is better for them stay at home and recuperate until they are fully recovered. Please help us to minimise infections and keep everyone well by not sending children until they are fully fit and well.

Dress Code: In order for children to develop self-help skills and gain confidence in looking after themselves please dress children in clothing that they can easily manage themselves. Trousers and leggings that can be easily pulled up and down are best for accessing the toilet and preventing accidents. It is also essential that children have warm outdoor clothing to wear every day as they will be accessing outdoor learning at some point during the day. Children need to have suitable footwear for running & climbing, and coats to ensure they are kept warm and dry.

Lunchboxes: Please remember that due to health and safety and choking hazards the following items are prohibited from children's lunchboxes: **popcorn, tube yoghurts (e.g. Frubes), nuts/nut butters**. Any **round items such as grapes, cherry tomatoes, olives, sausages etc. need to be sliced lengthways.**

Date	Learning Themes	Sound of the week	Story of the week	Song of the week	Special events
2-6 Nov	Winter Festivals	S	Binny's Diwali	Twinkle Twinkle	
9-13 Nov	Our Universe	A	Whatever Next	Zoom, Zoom, Zoom	10th: Photographer 13th: Children in Need
16 - 20 Nov	Our Universe	T	Aliens Love Underpants	Five Little Men in a Flying Saucer	Key meeting week: please see Tapestry
23 - 27 Nov	Winter Wonderland	P	Jack Frost	Christmas songs	
30 - 4 Dec	Christmas: The Nativity Story	I	Nativity Story	Christmas songs	3rd: Theatre trip
7 - 18 Dec	Christmas: Santa's Grotto	N	Christmas Stories	Christmas songs	14th: Singalong 18th: Christmas Party

STORY OF THE WEEK

To support children's literacy development we will be continuing to explore a specific story each week as detailed above. Through revisiting a familiar story, children are able to develop pre-reading skills and enhance their own creative storytelling. You can support your child by reading our story of the week or asking them to retell the story to you.

KEY MEETINGS: 16TH - 20TH NOV

During this week you will be invited into preschool to have a meeting with your child's key person about how they have settled into Sunshines, what they are showing us they can do and to share what we think their next steps are to develop their learning. You can find out more about our curriculum here.

(birthto5matters.org.uk/information-for-parents)

CHRISTMAS BOOKS

If you are buying any books this Christmas, please consider buying them from Scholastic where you can nominate Sunshines as your chosen school and we receive a percentage of the total sales in free books. As you click through to pay, select "Sunshine Pre-School, St Gerard Majella Church Hall, Buller Road Knowle, Bristol, Avon, BS4 2LN". (We hold one account with Scholastic, but any money raised is shared between all 3 of our settings). Thank you!

SECRET READER

To support literacy development we would like different people to come into the setting to be our 'secret reader'. This involves coming in for around 30 minutes to read a story (nothing too scary and staff will support you!) and the invitation is also open to grandparents and relatives as well. If you are able to come in please speak to a member of staff to book a convenient date and time and remember not to tell your child as we want it to be a surprise!

Inclusive and Diverse resources: Thanks to last year's fundraising efforts we have been able to update our library with books and resources that reflect a wider range of ethnicities, languages, abilities and disabilities, genders and family dynamics. We have been able to purchase high quality story books rather than information books, so children are able to identify with the characters and see positive images represented in the stories they love. Staff have been undergoing training and using reflective practice to identify how to improve on current practice and our work has been recognised and praised by the Local Authority. This is still a work in progress and we would welcome any comments or support you may want to give. Please email us if you would like any more information.

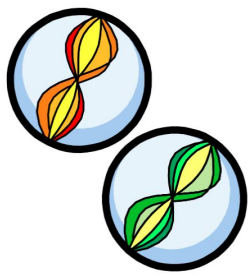
WORKING WITH THE DOGS TRUST

It is very important that children know how to keep themselves safe around dogs both in the home and when they are out in the community. A while ago we were fortunate to work alongside The Dogs Trust on an action research programme to help them develop teaching resources for preschool children. We continue to use these resources during the year to help children feel more confident and to keep safe around dogs. Parents can access these resources using this link and we would urge any families with dogs to have a look at the important messages they put across.

E-SAFETY

As part of our safeguarding responsibilities we will be talking to the children about how to keep themselves safe both in the real world and online. This term we will be specifically looking at appropriate use of devices, especially the need to switch off from screens and the internet at bed time. We will explore these messages using the book Webster's Bedtime and other age appropriate resources. Further information can be found on the Resources page of our website or from the NSPCC.

Marble Jar: Over the last few weeks your child may have told you they have 'put a marble in the jar' which is another way we use to reward children. Whenever a child is kind, helpful or has worked to achieve their best they are rewarded by adding a marble to our jar. When the marble jar is full the whole group has a treat and the treat is decided by the children. If your child tells you they've been able to put a marble in the jar be sure to give them lots of praise!



Harvest: A big thank you to everyone who supported our Harvest food collection which was given to Withywood food bank. Food banks are seeing a big increase in demand and were extremely grateful for all your donations. Please also let us know if you need any help or advice about using a food bank or getting help with any financial issues.

WEBSITE

Please remember you can find more information about special events, view our Welcome Book and find a copy of newsletters online at: www.sunshinepreschool.org.uk

WALK FOR WELLBEING WINNERS!

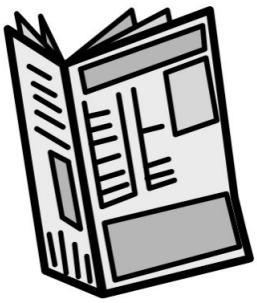
For the past year, we have been part of Bristol City Council's Active Travel Scheme and recently won Modeshift Stars Local Authority School of the Year 2026/2027 for our efforts to support families to walk, scoot and cycle to preschool! To continue this good work, please find our "Five Minute Walking Map" below, showing how far a five minute walk away from Sunshines would be. You may choose to park and walk the last bit of your journey, or try walking the whole distance, helping to reduce the traffic and pollution outside of preschool.

We will be offering different ideas and incentives throughout the year to enthuse the children about walking and scooting, as well as teaching road safety, so please look out for our ideas via newsletters and Tapestry.

JUNK MODELLING

Donations required! We are going to be enjoying lots of junk modelling this term, so please save us your clean boxes, tubs and tubes for us to turn into amazing learning opportunities! We are also on the lookout for old **newspapers and egg boxes**, so please bring any donations into preschool.





TAPESTRY

We hope you are enjoying Tapestry, and finding it a useful way to get a flavour of the lovely activities your child has been up to during their busy preschool day. We love seeing your Tapestry posts too, and it is a great way for children to link their learning between preschool and home. If you do put a Tapestry post on, please could you mention to the person on the door when dropping off your child so we know to look out for it? Our practitioners have set “non contact” time each week to upload their observations so may not see your post for a few days otherwise!

Fundraising: This year we will be fundraising for outdoor resources to support children’s early mathematical understanding in the natural world. We will be holding a Sponsored Reindeer Walk in December, so look out for a form coming home to you soon!

Cancer Research UK Shine Night Walk: Thank you for all your support for our fabulous team members who did their Shine Walk last term and raised over **£2,000!**

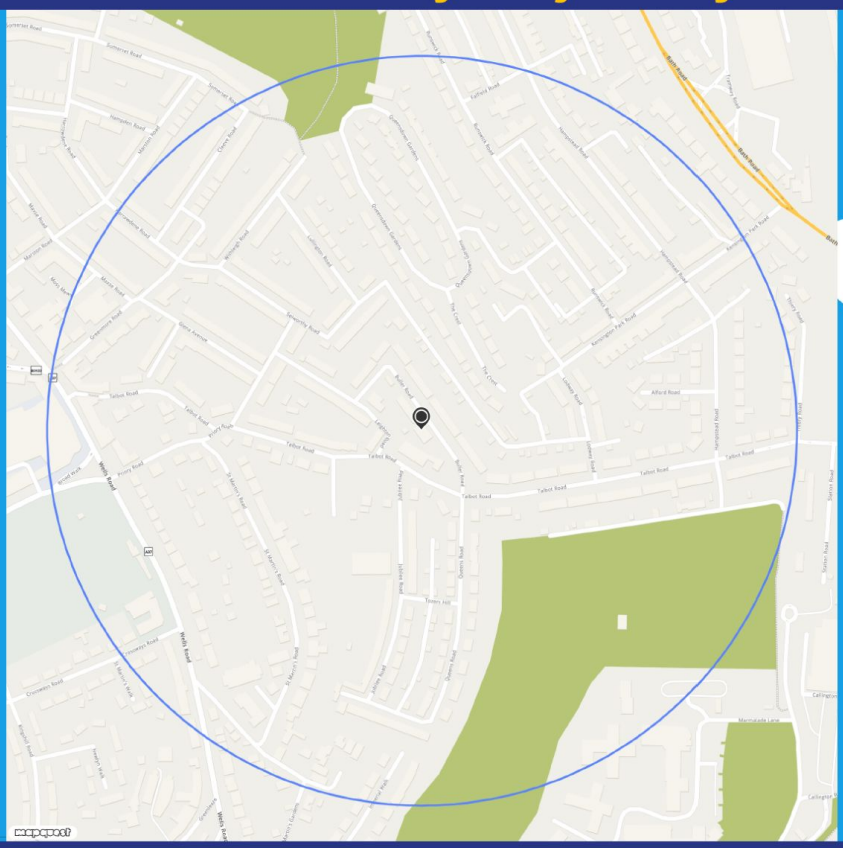
Thank you for supporting our **MACMILLAN COFFEE AFTERNOON**. It was lovely to spend time with you and we hope you enjoyed being with your child at pre-school and sampling the delicious cakes! Across all three of our settings we raised over £300 for Macmillan Cancer Support, so thank you for all your donations.

5-MINUTE WALKING BUBBLE

#StaySafeGetActive on your journey to school

#Stay Safe Get Active

Sunshine Preschool - St Gerard's



Protect our children

If possible, walk, cycle or scoot to school

If you have to drive, park at least 5-minutes away

MODESHIFT STARS EDUCATION

Supported by the Department for Transport

For more hints, tips and information please visit **www.modeshiftstars.org/staysafegetactive**

This 5-minute walking zone represents a distance of 400m measured as a straight line, based upon an average walking speed of 3-miles per hour