



Autumn Newsletter

September 2026



Dates for Your Diary

Friday 25th September – 2:30pm

MacMillan's Coffee Afternoon (School Hall/Playground)

Monday 12th October – details to follow

Pre-school Photographer, Peter Dyer

Wednesday 14th October

Committee Meeting, 7pm

Thursday 22nd October – see attached

Family trip to Hatters Farm pumpkin picking

Friday 23rd October

Halloween fancy dress party

Monday 26th Oct to Friday 30th Oct

Half Term

Sunday 29th November – details to follow

Village Christmas Fair

Monday 30th November

Occasional Day – NO school

Thursday 3rd December – details to follow

Ducklings & Toddlers Christmas Party, Hunsdon Village Hall

Thursday 10th December – details to follow

Ducklings Carol Concert at 11:15am

Thursday 10th December

Last Toddlers of the term

Wednesday 16th December

Christmas Jumper Day

TBC December

Breakfast with Santa

Friday 18th December

End of Term at noon

A very warm welcome to all our existing and new children and families who have joined us this term.

We hope you had a lovely Summer together and we look forward to spending time with the children, talking about the photos and memories made from their 'My Summer Holiday' booklets.

Gentle Reminders

You will notice that the playground can be very busy at drop-off and pick-up times. To help keep everyone safe, we kindly ask that Ducklings children do not ride their bikes or scooters into the playground during these busy times.

In the mornings, bikes and scooters can be left in the bike shed on the way into pre-school. Thank you for your help in keeping the playground safe and easy for everyone to use.

All clothing and items brought into pre-school should be clearly labelled. This includes scooters and bikes that are brought in from home. Labels can be purchased from www.stikins.co.uk. If you input our fundraising code – 10330 – we receive a percentage of money for each sale.

We understand that some children may want to bring in familiar toys from home, particularly at the start of the term, but we politely ask that they are kept to a minimal and, where possible, should be topic related.

Weather permitting, weekly Learning Walks will continue, and we will visit the park, dell or aerodrome. Could you please provide a bag of suitable clothing to include wellies and a puddle suit that can be left throughout the term on your child's peg. Clothing should be clearly labelled with their name.

If your child will not be attending Ducklings due to illness or holiday, could we please ask that you call 01279 841044 or email info@hunsdonducklings.co.uk giving details of the reason behind their absence. We will contact you if we have not been informed.

Please be reminded, so to help stop the spread of germs, we ask that if your child has been sick or had diarrhoea, that they are kept off school for 48 hours following the last episode.

THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH for the collection and end of term gifts our staff received. Like last year, we are looking at different places that we can go to on a day out using the end of year and last Christmas' collection money.

Recently, there has been much publicity around how young children are supported in early years settings, particularly during meal and rest times. We would like to take this opportunity to reassure you and highlight the procedures we follow at Ducklings to keep children safe and well cared for.

Meal and Snack Times

- **Staff supervision:** There are always at least two members of staff present during snack and lunch times.
- **Positive role modelling:** Staff sit with the children during meals, encouraging social interaction and healthy eating habits.
- **First aid training:** All staff are Paediatric First Aid (PFA) trained.
- **Choking prevention:** During our September inset day, we refreshed our training on choking risks and safe food preparation. To help us minimise risks further, we kindly remind families to:
 - Cut grapes, olives, tomatoes, large blueberries, strawberries and sausages **lengthways**.
 - Slice raw vegetables and fruit e.g. apple, carrot and melon into slices.
 - Popcorn should not be included in children's packed lunches.
- **No nut policy:** To protect children with allergies, we are strictly a nut-free setting – this includes Nutella type spread.
- **LifeVac device:** In addition to our first aid box, we have a LifeVac device on site. This non-invasive suction tool, recommended by our training provider (KeepaBeat), can be used in the rare event of a severe choking incident where back blows or the Heimlich manoeuvre are not effective.
- **Communication:** If your child is ever involved in a choking incident, you will be informed, and an incident form will be completed.

Sleep and Rest Times

While we do not schedule sleep times at Ducklings, there are occasions when children may naturally fall asleep. If this happens, children are:

- Settled into a quiet area (such as the reading corner) on a mattress.
- Covered with a cellular blanket for comfort - please supply your own.
- Always kept within sight and supervision of a staff member and checked regularly.

Dogs

For the safety of all our children, dogs are not permitted on Ducklings' grounds or on the ramp entrance. If you do need to bring your dog to school, we kindly ask that they are held in your arms and kept away from the children.

We hope this information reassures you about the measures we take to ensure your child's safety and wellbeing. As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to speak with a member of staff.

Your child's memories, milestones and achievements are gathered during their time with us at Ducklings and are presented in their Learning Journey books. These are personal to them and gives a picture of how your child has learnt and developed during the beginning of their early years education.

The children get to take these home at the end of their time with Ducklings, but we offer an open-door policy and welcome parents/carers to make an appointment to come and have a chat with your child's keyworker, have a look through the learning journey and to discuss their progression.

We also issue Unique Child Summaries at the end of each term which gives an overview of your child's progress during that term. They also outline the next steps that we will be working to with them and suggestions of how you can support your child with them at home.



SHOW & TELL

Show & Tell gives your child the opportunity to bring in something relevant to the topic for that week e.g. a book, toy, picture, object or an event which they will share with their peers and staff during the week. We have also given suggestions for things you can do at home to promote and support your child's learning. **If some weeks you do not have anything relevant, please do not worry as we have many resources the children can share.**

Week commencing 7th & 14th September – Sea Life

- 'Somebody Swallowed Stanley' is one of our core book reads. Replicate the end of the story by turning a clean plastic bag into a safe flying kite or wind streamer using string and a stick, showing how Stanley found a new, safe purpose

Week commencing 21st & 28th September – Transport

- Junk Model Vehicle - Use old shoeboxes, plastic bottles, cardboard tubes and bottle tops to build a form of transport

Week commencing 5th & 12th October - Fairies

- Look for a recipe in a book or online and use it to make a fairy cake. Allow your child to participate, following the instructions; counting and scooping; stirring and sprinkling etc

Week commencing 19th October - Autumn

- Go on a walk and collect items for your Autumn Treasure Bag

Week commencing 26th October – HALF TERM

Week commencing 2nd November – Autumn & Fireworks

- Bring in an object that makes a great firework sound for us to make a firework sound box

Week commencing 9th November – Autumn & Remembrance Day

- Collect items around the house that are red

Week commencing 16th November – Colour Mixing

- Sit and mix paints together, talking about the different colours. Paint a picture using the new colours you make

Please visit our website www.hunsdonducklings.co.uk for our Medium Plan, which outlines our curriculum in more detail.

FUNDRAISING

Hunsdon Ducklings pre-school is a registered charity and the staff are always thinking of ways to help raise funds so that monies can be put back into the pre-school so that the children can benefit from even better learning opportunities, enabling environments and resources.

How can our parents/carers help?

- Do you have any fundraising ideas?
- Are you part of a company/organisation that participate in matching donations?
- Do you have free time to volunteer at fundraising events? As much, or as little time as you can give would be welcomed.
- Are you able to source exciting raffle prize donations from your employees or personal contacts?
- When fundraising events are published, gather friends and family to pop along to and support.



Buy your personalised labels via
www.stikins.co.uk
Use fundraising code 10330



Unwanted clothing and shoes can be put in the shed opposite the bike shed. Regular collections are made and we earn money from its weight.

We are delighted to announce that we have secured 'The Soul Man to perform soul classics, reggae favourites and chart toppers on Friday 2nd October!!!

For those of you that came to our first fundraiser fronted by Peter, you will remember what a fab night it was and what a superb vocalist he is - his powerful vocals had everyone on their feet from the very start!

Performing at Hunsdon Village Hall tickets are available now!!!

To secure yours, email info@hunsdonducklings.co.uk or pop into Ducklings.

As normal, we will have a fully licensed bar.

Don't forget to book a babysitter - this is an adult only event!

This is a great way to meet other parents or gather friends for a local night out. Let's come together for a great cause, our pre-school and a fab night!

