



News Story – Little Ducklings Discoveries in the Nursery

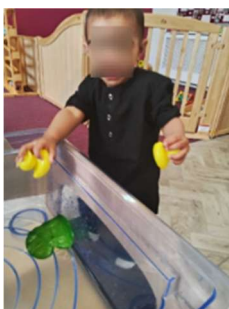
Babies

This week, the babies were introduced to real ducklings, and it has been a truly exciting experience for them. The babies showed great curiosity as they watched the ducklings waddle, run, and gently peck, and many of them confidently reached out to touch and explore the ducklings with growing interest. Spending time with the ducklings supported the babies' confidence, sensory exploration, and early understanding of living things.



To build on this interest, we planned a range of duck-themed activities throughout the week. These experiences helped the babies begin to recognise ducks, make simple connections between the activities and the real ducklings, and point towards the cage to show their understanding. The babies were able to spend up to an hour each day with the ducklings, and they eagerly looked forward to seeing them again each morning.

During group time, we also sang *Five Little Ducks*, where the babies joined in with actions and made their own “quack” sounds. This supported their early communication, listening skills, and language development, while also encouraging cognitive growth as they began to anticipate parts of the rhyme and respond to familiar sounds.



These experiences have allowed the babies to explore their interests more deeply while developing key skills such as sensory awareness, social interaction, early language, and emotional confidence. It has been a wonderful week of learning, curiosity, and gentle hands-on discovery.



Toddlers

The children have continued to show a strong and sustained interest in the ducklings as they have grown and developed. They have been deeply engaged in observing the ducklings' daily routines, watching them feed, drink, play, and rest. Through these hands-on experiences, the children have begun to understand what it means to care for living creatures and have enjoyed opportunities to gently handle the ducklings, helping to build their confidence, empathy, and respect for animals.



To extend this interest further, the children took part in a variety of duck-themed learning experiences. They enjoyed listening to duck stories and joining in with the nursery rhyme *Five Little Ducks*. Using their fingers to represent the ducks while singing supported their early counting skills, number recognition, and one-to-one correspondence, enriching their mathematical development.

The presence of the real ducklings has inspired meaningful learning across the provision. In the water area, the children explored a duck-pond-themed tuff tray, engaging in imaginative play while identifying and naming the different coloured flowers within the tray. They also developed their fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination by using pipettes and measuring cylinders to transfer and pour water. This sensory experience encouraged curiosity, exploration, problem-solving, and rich language development.





Pre-School

This week has been an exciting in pre-school as the children explored the wonder of life cycles through the arrival of our ducklings. Before the eggs hatched, the children examined the incubator, cage, food, and water equipment, developing their understanding of how living things are cared for. They watched closely as the eggs began to crack, and by the next day, we welcomed our very first duckling. The children were captivated as they observed it take its first steps, supporting their observation skills, patience, and scientific curiosity. Once two ducklings had hatched, we moved them into their cage, where the children continued to notice changes in their size, movements, and routines.



Throughout the week, the children took turns feeding the ducklings, helping them develop a sense of responsibility, empathy, and confidence around animals. They loved watching the ducklings waddle and peck on the carpet and were fascinated by their splashing in the water tray. These experiences encouraged the children to use rich descriptive language, supporting their communication and vocabulary development.

To extend this interest, we offered a range of duck-themed creative and exploratory activities. The children enjoyed duckling printing, playdough modelling, and creating their own ducklings using shapes. These activities supported their fine motor skills, shape recognition, creativity, and early mathematical understanding.





Through shape-matching and modelling, the children practised problem-solving, spatial awareness, and hand-eye coordination.

Across the provision, the ducklings inspired meaningful learning opportunities that strengthened the children's understanding of life cycles, growth, and change over time.

It has been a week full of curiosity, care, and hands-on learning. We will miss our little ducklings dearly.

