

# Termly News Letter



December 2025



## Thank you to all of our families, staff and children for an incredible year here at Once Upon a Time Daycare

As we come to the end of 2025, we would like to say a huge thank you to all of our wonderful children, families and staff for your continued support throughout the year. It truly has been a team effort, and we are so grateful to be part of your children's early years journey.

This year has brought some significant changes across Early Years in the UK. These include updates to Ofsted inspections, expanded free childcare entitlements, developments within the EYFS framework, and new government initiatives focused on giving children the best start in life. All of these changes aim to strengthen quality, consistency and support for families, and we are proud to be working in line with these national priorities.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are feeling very excited about what's to come. As a nursery, our goals include:

- Working towards achieving the HEY Award at our Sheffield branch
- Continuing to enhance and develop our outdoor spaces at both sites
- Raising more money for Sheffield Children's Hospital Charity as part of the Pride of Yorkshire trail
- And, most importantly, continuing to provide high-quality, nurturing care and education for all our children and families

**Thank you once again for being such an important part of our nursery community. We wish you a lovely end to the year and look forward to welcoming you into 2026 with us.**

### In this newsletter you can expect:

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Nursery News For You

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Dates For Your Diary

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Important Reminders

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HEY - Healthy Early Years

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Staff and Nursery Updates

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Staff Profile Highlights

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## Community News

### Sheffield

Sheffield Family Hubs offer free, accessible spaces with activities for under-5s, support for parents (0-19/25 SEND) on finances, work, parenting, and health, plus signposting to key Start for Life services, with current info available via the

[Sheffield Directory](#) and their social media, featuring regular updates on groups, events (like winter sessions!), and ways to get involved as a volunteer.

Our local Family Hub is Sharrow Family Hub: Highfield Library, London Road, S2 4NF  
Telephone: 0114 205 3471

### Derbyshire

The family help service supports families with specific needs in a targeted, helpful way. We want to help families feel stronger and more confident, and to make sure children and young people get the right support at the right time.

**Baby Buddies** - Help for parents and carers to learn about early childhood development, including brain growth, attachment, play, and early talking skills.

**Little Learners groups** - Activities to help children get ready for school. Parents learn what their child needs to know and do before starting school.

**Every Child a Talker** (ECAT) - Support for young children to improve their speaking and listening skills.

## Healthy Early Years



### The Importance of Sleep in Early Years

Sleep is essential for young children's growth, development, and overall wellbeing. During sleep, children's brains process information, consolidate memories, and develop emotional regulation. Adequate rest also supports physical growth, immune function, and helps children engage fully in learning and play.

#### Recommended sleep for children under 5:

**0-12 months: 12-16 hours per day (including naps)**

**1-2 years: 11-14 hours per day**

**3-5 years: 10-13 hours per day**

Ensuring children get the right amount of sleep helps them feel happy, alert, and ready to explore the world around them.

#### Family Advice:

Keep routines positive and calm—avoid battles at bedtime.

Communicate with nursery staff about your child's sleep patterns, so routines can be supported consistently.

Remember, every child is different. Some may need more or less sleep—observe how they respond to routines and adjust accordingly.



January 2026

## Dates For Your Diary

Dec 24<sup>th</sup> credit added to accounts in January (Feb Invoice)

Reminder – All bank holidays are not chargeable

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> January** – Nursery back open for ALL YEAR ROUND children

#### Term Dates

- Monday 5 January 2026 until Friday 13 February 2026
- Monday 23 February 2026 until Friday 27 March 2026
- Monday 13 April 2026 until Friday 22 May 2026
- Monday 1 June 2026 until Monday 20 July 2026, **Derbyshire's term ends on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2026**
- **We will be sending out more dates for the first term back in January!**

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# Meet The Team

## Dronfield

### Claire - Outer Space Room Leader/Acting Deputy

Claire is the Room Leader in our Outer Space classroom and is currently our Acting Deputy Manager. Inspired by her parents' work as foster carers, Claire has dedicated her career to making a positive difference in children's lives. She loves working with children of all ages, with a special fondness for our under-tuos.

Claire enjoys creating engaging, messy activities in a rich learning environment and incorporates Makaton into daily routines whenever possible. Building strong, positive relationships with parents is also very important to her. Outside of nursery, Claire enjoys socialising with friends, going on long walks, exploring new places, and photography. Her favourite time, however, is spent with her two nieces, aged 4 and 9.



### Ellie - Under the Sea Room Leader

Ellie has been part of our team for three years and is a valued member of the nursery. She is a proud mum to one daughter in our Jungle room, with another little one on the way! Ellie has a real passion for creating exciting sensory experiences, encouraging children to explore, investigate and enjoy getting messy. She also loves baking with the children, supporting them to discover new textures, tastes and skills in a fun and hands-on way.

### Kerrie - Jungle Room Leader

Kerrie is the Room Leader of our Jungle Room at the Dronfield nursery. She has been part of the Jungle team for just over a year and has loved every minute working alongside her wonderful team. Kerrie brings over 10 years of experience in Early Years and has a particular passion for baking, which she often shares with the children. Outside of work, she enjoys walking, cooking and baking delicious treats.



### Emily - Little Kingdom Room Leader/3<sup>RD</sup> in Charge

Emily is a wife and mum of two who loves spending her weekends out on walks with her dog, Poppy. She has recently completed her Early Years Teacher Training and is very excited to put her learning into practice within the nursery. Emily describes herself as a happy and positive person who isn't afraid to be a little bit silly in the classroom—especially when it brings laughter and joy to the children.



# CHRISTMAS *Top Tips*

Once Upon A Time



DAYCARE

## A POSITIVE PARENTING APPROACH TO CHRISTMAS

*Christmas is a special time to share with children. But it also brings lots of challenges. Children can find it hard to cope with all that anticipation and excitement. And big emotions can lead to struggles with regulation. Add in lack of sleep, too much sugar and disrupted routines and, unsurprisingly, the results can be a bit fractious.*



## HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

*Christmas is a very exciting and can be rather over stimulating for your child at times, expecting them to fully embrace these experiences with ease isn't really fair and just sets them (and you) up to fail. Young children thrive on routine. Early waking, a late unfamiliar lunch and no nap will put the sweetest three-year-old out of kilter. The excitement of Christmas can be overwhelming for small children who are not yet able to manage big feelings. So have realistic expectations and remember that "special" does not equal "perfect"*



## REMEMBER TO RELAX

*Christmas is all about spending time with family. And it's hard to spend quality time with your children when you are in the kitchen peeling endless potatoes. If the trimmings are overtaking Christmas, it's time to rebalance and prioritise presence not presents. Spend as much time as possible playing, snuggling, laughing, relaxing, de-stressing and building relationships.*



## HEALTHY CHRISTMAS

*The festive season is a wonderful time for treats and celebrations, but a little balance goes a long way for young children. Enjoy sugary foods in moderation, and try to keep up healthy meals, regular physical activity, and plenty of fresh air. Just as importantly, maintaining a consistent sleep and daily routine will help children stay well-regulated, settled, and happy throughout the festivities. A healthy balance supports children's wellbeing and helps everyone enjoy the season a little more*



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# Sheffield

## Sally - Outer Space Room Leader & 3<sup>rd</sup> in Charge

Sally has been part of our team since 2018 and has a real passion for supporting our youngest children. She is dedicated to early development and oversees both downstairs rooms, ensuring children, staff and families receive consistent support and high-quality care.



## Shannon - Under the Sea Room Leader

Shannon joined us in 2024 and has quickly become a valued and trusted member of our team. She shows genuine dedication, passion, and a natural love for working with our one-year-olds, creating a nurturing and secure environment where children feel safe, settled, and supported. Shannon is a kind, calm, and inspiring leader who manages her room and team with pride, care, and warmth, always placing the children's wellbeing and development at the heart of everything she does.



## Leigh - Little Kingdom Room Leader & 3<sup>rd</sup> in Charge

Leigh has been part of our team since 2018 and has worked her way up to 3<sup>rd</sup> in charge! She brings lots of fun, energy, and inspiration to our over-2s, creating exciting learning opportunities and encouraging every child to explore, learn, and grow. Her dedication and creativity make a real difference to the children, staff, and families she works with every day.



## Alicia - Jungle Room Leader

Alicia has been with us for 3 years and is a fantastic part of the Jungle team. She will be going on maternity leave at the end of February to welcome her baby girl and plans to return in January 2027. We'll keep you updated on all the exciting things happening in the Jungle room during her absence.



## Hannah - Enchanted Forest Room Leader

Hannah joined us in 2024 and is now the room leader for our oldest children. She has a strong understanding of school readiness and is helping prepare our children for their next chapter. Hannah is also completing her Level 3 in Special Educational Needs with us.



## Staff Updates

- Ecclesall Road - Alicia will be leaving us to have her baby girl in March 2026, she will return in January 2027
- Ecclesall Road - We have recently welcomed Dionne to our team in Jungle room.
- Dronfield Site - Steph the Chef will be leaving us to have her baby girl in February.
- Dronfield Site - Ellie will be leaving us to have her baby girl in April 2026.
- Dronfield site - Alicia will be returning in June 2026 after having her baby boy.

**Despite the current recruitment challenges in the Early Years sector, our dedicated staff and key workers continue to provide a wonderful, consistent environment, maintaining high standards of care and ensuring every child feels supported and nurtured. If you know someone who is qualified Level 3 or above in Early Years, and interested in a position please email [info@onceuponatimedaycare.co.uk](mailto:info@onceuponatimedaycare.co.uk)**

# Start Well Sheffield Advice Phonenumber

Our phonenumber is a simple, friendly way for families in Sheffield to get quick support, helpful tips, and general advice for children under 5.

You can call us about a wide range of topics to support your child's health and wellbeing. Some of the most common things parents ask us about include:

- Help with food fussiness or healthier eating habits
- Ideas to support potty and toilet training
- Ways to dump the dummy / oral health care
- Sleep and getting into a good routine
- Help with early speech and language development
- Supporting children's emotional wellbeing

No question is too small — our team is here to listen and help. Our phone line operates every Friday morning 9am-11am

Start Well Sheffield Advice line – 0114 2057241



**Start Well**  
SHEFFIELD

Scan the QR Code for more information and events from the team on our Start Well Sheffield Directory

# Let's celebrate!

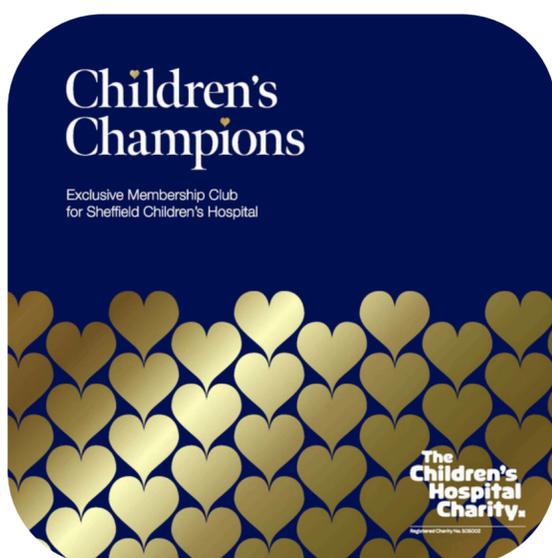
## SENCO - Jenny at our Dronfield site has achieved the Inclusion Awareness Award



We are incredibly proud of Jenny for achieving the Inclusion Awareness Award from the Derbyshire Early Years Special Educational Needs Service. Jenny has dedicated a great deal of time, commitment, and hard work to complete this award, demonstrating her passion for inclusive practice and supporting every child to thrive.

This achievement strengthens our provision as a fully inclusive setting, ensuring we are well-equipped to support children with additional needs and work closely with families to meet each child's individual requirements. Jenny's knowledge and commitment help us continue to create a nurturing, supportive environment where every child feels valued, understood, and included.

A huge congratulations and thank you, Jenny, for your dedication and the positive impact this has on our children, families, and team.



As Children's Champions, we donate **£500** every month to the Sheffield Children's Hospital Charity that's a whopping **£6000** per year. In addition, we run fundraising events and other activities to support this incredible cause, which is close to all of our hearts.

Thanks to your amazing support this year, we have raised enough to sponsor 2 Lion Cubs in the Pride of Yorkshire next year – a whopping **£1,900!** A huge thank you to everyone who bought a personalised bauble – your generosity makes a real difference.

We also got our snowflake on the Children's Hospital, celebrating all of our support this year!

❄️ And a massive thank you to everyone who brought in a gift for a child in hospital on Christmas Day – we collected so many, and your kindness will make the festive season extra special for them!



## Discounts and Special Offers

### Nursery Discounts

Did you know about the discounts we have available?

- 7% sibling discount
- 5% NHS discount
- 10% discount for a 5 day booking pattern
- 5% discount for a 4 day booking pattern
- NO DISCOUNT WILL EXCEED 10%

### LITTLE REMINDER FOR FAMILIES

DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU RECEIVE A DISCOUNT AT BISTRO BAR, ECCLESALL ROAD, SHEFFIELD JUST FOR BEING ONE OF OUR PARENTS/CARERS? SIMPLY SHOW THE TEAM MEMBER S YOUR INVOICE AND ENJOY 10% OFF YOUR BILL. YOU ALSO RECEIVE 5% OFF YOUR BILL IF YOU LEAVE A REVIEW ONLINE!



### REFER AN EMPLOYEE OFFER FOR FAMILIES

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE THAT IS QUALIFIED IN EARLY YEARS AND IS LOOKING FOR A NEW POSITION WE ARE RECRUITING QUALIFIED NURSERY NURSES! IF YOU CAN THAT IS WONDERFUL AND TO SAY THANK YOU, WE WILL REWARD YOU WITH £250 CREDIT ON YOUR CHILDCARE ACCOUNT. (THIS WILL BE APPLIED AFTER PROBATION IN THE EMPLOYEE'S 7 MONTH OF EMPLOYMENT).



# REFERRALS TO SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY

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Following a successful pilot, we are now ready to launch our new referrals process across the city. From Monday 2nd June 2025, all referrers will be encouraged to use our new electronic referral form to make referrals to the service. The form includes all of the criteria to access the service, as well as enabling us to gather the vital information we need as part of the referral. During the initial launch phase, we will continue to accept paper or SystemOne referrals. Any referrals received using the old paper form or SystemOne will be triaged against the new specialist service criteria. We will send referrers a reminder to use the new electronic form for future referrals. From 1st September 2025, we will only accept referrals via our electronic referral form. We will no longer accept referrals that are sent to us on a paper form or via SystemOne. These referrals will be rejected, and we will redirect referrers to the electronic referral form. The referral form is available on our website: [www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy-new-homepage/speech-language-and-communication/](http://www.sheffieldchildrens.nhs.uk/services/speech-and-language-therapy-new-homepage/speech-language-and-communication/) If you need any support to complete our new electronic referral form, please contact us on [scn-tr.slt-sheffield@nhs.net](mailto:scn-tr.slt-sheffield@nhs.net)

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