

January Newsletter

Welcome Back!!!

As January comes to an end, we'd like to take a moment to reflect on a lovely start to the year here at MiniMinds ☀️

The children have settled back into their routines beautifully after the holidays, reconnecting with friends and embracing new learning experiences through play. We've seen growing confidence, creativity, and enthusiasm as the children explored activities that supported their social, emotional, and developmental skills.

January has been a calm and nurturing month, giving everyone the chance to ease into 2026 at a comfortable pace. We're so proud of how well the children have adapted and are already looking forward to the exciting months ahead.

Upcoming Dates in February

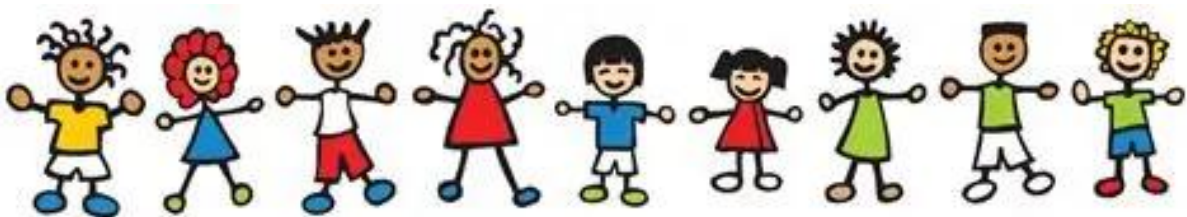
Tłusty Czwartek - Fat Thursday (Polish Holiday) – 12th February

Red Dress Day (Valentine's Celebrations) – 13th February

Chinese New Year – 16th February

Pancake Tuesday – 17th February

Pyjama Day – 27th February



Yellow Room

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Happy New Year! 🇬🇧

We were absolutely delighted to welcome the children back after the Christmas break. It was lovely to see their smiling faces and hear their excited stories about Santa and the presents they received. We hope you all had a joyful and restful holiday season. January has been a very busy and exciting month for us, full of fresh starts and winter discoveries. At the beginning of the month, the children explored the frosty weather through hands-on, creative activities. They made their very own ice paints, discovering what happens when water is placed in the freezer overnight. The following day, they painted with the ice as it melted, observing changes in texture and colour. This supported Aistear's theme of Exploring and Thinking, as children experimented, predicted outcomes, and learned through discovery.

Sensory play was a big hit this month. The children used "moondough" to build snowmen, strengthening their fine motor skills while engaging their imagination. We also painted on foil to imitate ice, mixing blue and white paints and exploring different surfaces. The children thoroughly enjoyed this creative process, linking strongly with Aistear's Communicating theme through self-expression and conversation.

An emerging interest in jewellery developed this month after Daisy got her ears pierced and Evie showed a keen interest in wearing jewellery. The children created their own earrings and bracelets using paper plates and cups, and they also made necklaces by threading beads. These activities supported



Aistear's Identity and Belonging, as children expressed their individuality, shared ideas, and worked alongside their peers.

January was also focused on fresh starts and healthy eating. The children explored a range of fruits and vegetables through hands-on activities such as cutting cabbage with scissors, painting with broccoli, fruit tasting, drawing their favourite fruits, and creating healthy eating plates. These experiences encouraged positive attitudes towards wellbeing and linked with Aistear's Wellbeing theme.

We also introduced yoga and movement, which the



children really enjoyed. They showed great focus and confidence and even demonstrated exercises they practise with their families at home, what a wonderful connection between home and preschool learning!

It has truly been a month full of excitement, curiosity, and learning. Thank you so much for your continued support. We are really looking

forward to seeing what February brings.

Warm regards,
Iluta & Amanda



Green Room

Welcome Back – Settling into Routines

Welcome back to all our children after the break. It has been lovely to see familiar faces returning and new friendships forming. Over the past few weeks, we have focused on gently re-establishing daily routines such as arrivals, mealtimes, rest and play.

Predictable routines help toddlers feel safe and secure as they transition back into the setting. This supports Aistear: Well-being, as children develop a sense of security, belonging and confidence within their environment.

Healthy Eating

Healthy eating continues to be an important part of our daily routine in the Green Room. Children are encouraged to try a variety of nutritious foods and to develop independence by feeding themselves. We talk about foods, colours and textures during mealtimes, helping children to build positive relationships with food. This links with Aistear: Well-being and Communicating, as children learn about making healthy choices while developing language through shared mealtime experiences.



Exercise and Active Play

Toddlers have been enjoying plenty of opportunities for exercise through both indoor and outdoor play. Climbing, dancing, running and ball play help children to develop

their gross motor skills and coordination. Active play also supports emotional regulation and confidence. These experiences strongly support Aistear: Well-being and Exploring and Thinking, as children learn about their bodies, movement and physical capabilities.

Afternoon Tea – Emerging Interest

We have noticed a growing interest and enthusiasm around afternoon tea. Children are showing increased independence, attempting to pour drinks, use utensils and sit together socially. This shared experience encourages social interaction, turn-taking and communication. This links to Aistear: Identity and Belonging and Communicating, as children feel included as part of the group and build relationships with peers and educators.

Doctors and Role Play

Recently, the children have shown a strong interest in doctors and medical role play. Through pretend play, toddlers explore familiar experiences such as visiting the doctor, caring for others and expressing emotions. This type of play supports children in understanding the world around them and processing real-life experiences. It links closely with Aistear: Exploring and Thinking and Communicating, as children use imagination, problem-solving and language during play.



Learning About Hygiene – Brushing Our Teeth

The children in the Green Toddler Room have been learning about hygiene, with a particular focus on brushing their teeth. Through songs, stories, role play and visual supports, toddlers are becoming familiar with the importance of keeping their teeth clean. These experiences help children to develop early self-care skills and healthy habits in a fun and age-appropriate way. This learning supports Aistear: Well-being and Exploring and Thinking, as children learn to care for their bodies and understand daily routines that promote good health.

A decorative border of blue umbrellas surrounds the text. The umbrellas are arranged in a rectangular frame, with a single row of 20 umbrellas at the top and bottom, and vertical columns of 20 umbrellas on the left and right sides.

Celebrating Birthdays

We were delighted to celebrate two special birthdays in the Green Toddler Room. Zara and Emilia both turned 3, and the children enjoyed marking the occasion together with songs and shared celebrations. Celebrating birthdays helps children to develop a sense of identity, belonging and joy within the group. This experience supports Aistear: Identity and Belonging and Communicating, as children feel valued, included and take part in social celebrations with their peers

Thank You

We would like to sincerely thank all parents and guardians for your continued support and cooperation. Working together helps us create a safe, happy, and nurturing environment where your children can thrive. Your involvement makes a real difference to the children's learning and well-being.

The green room team

Orange Room

We were delighted to welcome everyone back after the Christmas break and begin a new term in the Orange Room. The children returned full of excitement, refreshed, and ready for a new term of learning and fun.

Penguin Madness

The children became completely penguin mad this month! Two of our classmates kindly brought in penguin books, “The Not So Perfect Penguin” and “Jonty Gentoo”, along with a penguin teddy, “Waddles”. These sparked lots of interest and lovely discussions during circle time.

We followed this interest with a range of penguin-themed activities:

- Ice skating penguins: the children coloured penguins, attached them to lollipop sticks, froze them in blue glittery ice, and later explored them on a frosty tuff tray, watching the ice melt and gliding the penguins around.
- Penguin pictures: ripping paper to create bellies and adding eyes and beaks, supporting fine motor skills and creativity.
- We also introduced a new circle time song, “I’m a Little Penguin”, which quickly became a firm favourite.

These activities supported the Aistear themes of:

- Exploring and Thinking – investigating ice, melting and movement
- Well-being – developing fine motor skills and confidence
- Communicating – sharing ideas, songs and stories

Healthy Lifestyles Theme

One of our monthly themes for January has been Healthy Lifestyles, and the children have absolutely loved exploring what helps to keep our bodies healthy. We talked together about healthy food, good sleep, and exercise.



Activities included:

- Live fruit drawing, where children carefully observed and drew real fruits, developing observation skills, concentration and fine motor control.
- Fruit bubble painting, creating raspberries and blackberries for a fun sensory art experience.
- Fruit and vegetable stamping, exploring textures and patterns with apples and broccoli.
- Fruit tasting session, where children tried a variety of fruits, and afterwards drew their favourite one and proudly shared their choices with friends.
- Lemon tuff tray exploration, making their own “lemonade” with water, lemons, cups, and pipettes, many were surprised by how sour it was! This inspired yellow lemon playdough, requested by the children after the lemon activity.
- Exploring dental health through a tooth matching game and toothbrush art.
- A lovely walk, supporting physical development and fresh air.

These experiences linked closely with Aistear’s themes of:

- Well-being – learning about healthy food, exercise and self-care
- Exploring and Thinking – observing, tasting, experimenting and problem-solving
- Communicating – discussing preferences and sharing ideas with friends

Special Projects

We also worked together on a St. Brigid’s Day group project, celebrating this special Irish tradition through teamwork and creativity.

This supported:

- Identity and Belonging – learning about our culture and traditions
- Communicating – working together and sharing ideas

January has been a busy, joyful month full of curiosity, creativity and learning. Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We are very much looking forward to all the fun and learning still to come in the weeks ahead.

Aoife and Leonne ❤️



Blue Room

Dear Families,

Happy New Year and welcome to our January newsletter from the Blue Room! We have been so happy to welcome all of our children back after the Christmas break. It has been wonderful to see everyone settle back into routines, reconnect with friends, and feel a strong sense of identity and belonging, which is a key focus of the Aistear 2024 framework.

We began the month with our Winter Wonderland theme. With the chilly weather outside, the children explored the winter season through hands-on experiences with ice, frost, and snow. Through sensory play such as ice crushing, snowy playdough, and arctic animal play, the children were exploring and thinking, developing curiosity, problem-solving skills, and an understanding of the world around them. Making a tiny snowman also encouraged lots of rich conversations, supporting communicating through language and shared experiences.

As part of welcoming the New Year, we talked about New Year's resolutions and simple goals we would like to work on together. These included trying not to use our dummies, keeping hands to ourselves, and choosing fruits over sweets. These discussions supported children's wellbeing, helping them develop self-awareness, self-care skills, and positive relationships with others.



Health and wellbeing were a strong focus this month. During our Healthy Eating topic, the children explored watermelon through tasting, art, and themed playdough. Fruit tasting sessions with citrus fruits encouraged children to use their senses, try new foods, and make healthy choices, supporting wellbeing and exploring and thinking.



We also learned about happy teeth and how to look after them. Through dentist role play, the children practised checking teeth and talking

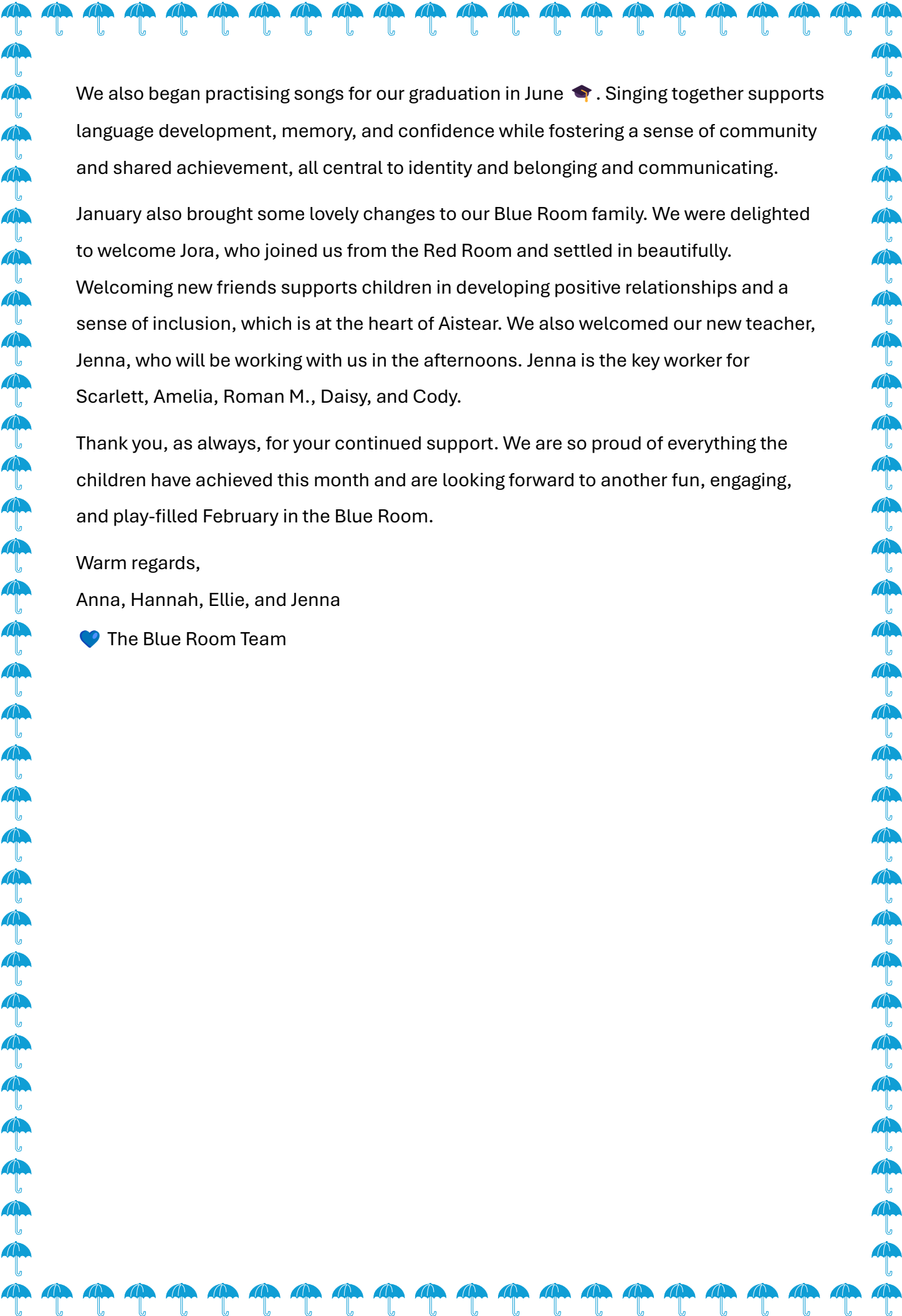
about oral hygiene. Our Doctors' Surgery role play area allowed children to take on different roles, helping them build confidence, empathy, and communication skills



while strengthening identity and belonging and communicating, as outlined in Aistear 2024.

To support emotional regulation and physical development, the children took part in kids' yoga, relaxation, and calming activities. These experiences helped children learn how to move their bodies, relax, and manage their emotions, directly supporting the wellbeing learning goals within Aistear.

Creativity and imagination were flowing throughout January. Indoors, the children enjoyed our Blue Room theatre, using puppets to tell stories, express ideas, and build language skills, linking closely with communicating. Our cardboard junk art projects encouraged teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving, supporting exploring and thinking. Outdoors, the children worked together with water pipes, experimenting with water flow and cooperating with peers, further strengthening communicating and identity and belonging.



We also began practising songs for our graduation in June 🎓 . Singing together supports language development, memory, and confidence while fostering a sense of community and shared achievement, all central to identity and belonging and communicating.

January also brought some lovely changes to our Blue Room family. We were delighted to welcome Jora, who joined us from the Red Room and settled in beautifully.

Welcoming new friends supports children in developing positive relationships and a sense of inclusion, which is at the heart of Aistear. We also welcomed our new teacher, Jenna, who will be working with us in the afternoons. Jenna is the key worker for Scarlett, Amelia, Roman M., Daisy, and Cody.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We are so proud of everything the children have achieved this month and are looking forward to another fun, engaging, and play-filled February in the Blue Room.

Warm regards,

Anna, Hannah, Ellie, and Jenna

💙 The Blue Room Team

Red Room

We hope everyone had a lovely Christmas break and enjoyed spending special time with family and friends.

The children settled back into the Red Room very well and were excited to reconnect with their peers and routines.



Over the past few weeks, we have been very busy learning all about the planets. The children showed great curiosity and enthusiasm as they explored the names, colours, and sizes of the different planets through hands-on activities, discussions, and play.

This learning supported Aistear:

Exploring and Thinking, as the

children developed early scientific understanding, asked questions, and shared ideas with one another. It also linked to Aistear: Communicating, as they used new vocabulary to

describe what they were learning.



An emerging interest in monsters captured the children's imagination. Together, the children designed and created their very own monster by choosing his colours, features, and name. They decided to call him Jimmy. This experience supported Aistear: Identity and Belonging, as the children worked collaboratively, shared ideas, and felt a sense of pride and ownership in their creation. It also supported Aistear: Communicating, through group discussions, storytelling, and naming, and Aistear: Exploring and

Thinking, as the children used creativity and problem-solving skills 🗨️ 🎨 .

We also noticed changes in the weather, with very cold, rainy, and frosty mornings. The children enjoyed exploring what they observed outdoors and expressing their ideas through a variety of art and craft activities, using different materials and textures to represent the weather. This learning supported Aistear: Exploring and Thinking, as the children made connections between their environment and their artwork.

We would like to give a very warm welcome to our new friend Esa to the Red Room family.



Finally, happy birthday to Raynah and Jasmine,

who both recently turned 3 🎉 🍰 🎈 ❤️

The red room Jade, Keri and Brigid ❤️

