

# November Newsletter

## Important Upcoming Dates

**Wednesday 17th December** –  
Santa Claus will visit all our  
wonderful children in MiniMind's



**Friday 19th December** -  
Christmas Dinner & Christmas  
Jumper Day



**Friday 19<sup>th</sup> December** – ECCE  
only (9-12 & 1-4 children) finish  
for Christmas holidays

**Tuesday 23rd December** –  
Services closing at 6pm for all  
NCS children



**Monday 5th January** – Service  
reopens for all children & normal  
booked hours resume



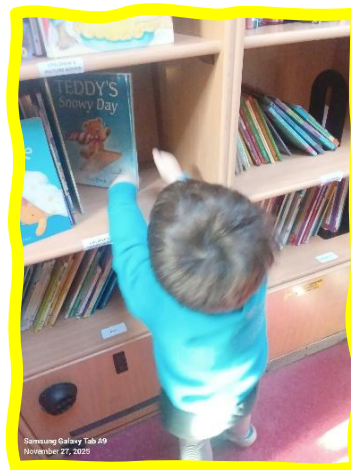
## Christmas Raffel

Raffel cards are due to be left back into MiniMind's by Thursday  
**11<sup>th</sup> December** and the winners will be drawn on Monday **15<sup>th</sup>  
December.**

## Dundalk Library Visit

We were delighted to welcome the Louth Library Van to our service this month! The children were thrilled to explore the mobile library, with each child getting the chance to step inside, browse the shelves, and choose a library book to bring back to their room. Some of our classrooms also enjoyed a special story time session, where the visiting librarian read wonderful stories that sparked imagination and excitement.

The Library Van will return in the New Year to visit the remaining classrooms, ensuring every child has the opportunity to participate in story time. We are so grateful to Dundalk Library for this visit, which helps nurture a love of reading and supports literacy in such a fun and engaging way.







## Dear Parents and Guardians

What a wonderfully busy and exciting month we've had in the Yellow Room! Our themes for this month were Helpers in Our Community, as well as Numbers and Shapes. The children were deeply engaged in play, exploration, and discovery, all beautifully connected to Aistear across the themes of Wellbeing, Identity & Belonging, Communicating, and Exploring & Thinking.

### Helpers in Our Community

This month the children enjoyed lots of role play, dressing up as community helpers and talking about the important jobs they do. This supported:

- ❖ Identity & Belonging: Understanding their community and the people who help them.
- ❖ Communicating: Sharing ideas, asking questions, and engaging in conversations.

A highlight of the month was a visit from our local minibus driver. The children loved exploring the bus, looking closely at the controls, and even sitting in the driver's seat. This hands-on experience helped them connect real-life roles to their pretend play.



### Numbers, Shapes, and Creative Exploration

We explored a variety of shapes and learned new songs about circles, squares, triangles, and patterns. The children were invited to:

- ❖ Cut out triangles and create shape artwork
- ❖ Build squares using lollipop sticks
- ❖ Stamp paint with LEGO to discover different print shapes

These activities supported Exploring & Thinking, as children experimented with form, pattern, and design, and Wellbeing, as they developed fine motor confidence.

With some lovely sensory tuff trays filled with shapes, numbers, and textures offered rich opportunities for open-ended learning, early maths concepts, and imaginative play.

### Emergent Interests

We had some lovely spontaneous learning moments this month too!

Ladybirds - When Evie discovered a ladybird in the garden, the children became fascinated. To build on this interest, they:

- ❖ Created their own ladybirds using moon dough, pipe cleaners, and loose parts
- ❖ Painted ladybirds
- ❖ Learned a new ladybird song

Rainy-Day Discoveries - One morning, a surprise rain shower led to Theo's great idea of collecting rainwater in a big pot. Indoors, this curiosity continued as the children were invited to paint rain and engage in water play. This nurtured:

- ❖ Exploring & Thinking: Predicting, observing, experimenting
- ❖ Wellbeing: Sensory play and joyful exploration

### Frosty Mornings and Winter Play



A few frosty days inspired the children to explore icy puddles and look closely at changing weather. To extend this we made our very own sensory snow using baking soda, cornflour, and water. The children moulded the snow, attempted to build mini snowmen, and looked at winter pictures while chatting about activities we can do in snowy weather.

These experiences encouraged scientific thinking, sensory exploration, and rich language development.

### Getting Ready for Christmas

We have begun decorating our room for Christmas. The children helped place decorations and set up our Christmas tree on

the wall, a wonderful opportunity for belonging, collaboration, and expressing excitement for the festive season.

We can't wait to see all Christmassy cheer that next month will bring! Lots of love, Iluta and Amanda x







### **Dear Parents & Guardians,**

Welcome to our November update! This month has been full of learning, play, imagination, and fun. Below is a look at what we have been exploring in the Green Room this month.

### **Exploring Shapes**

This month, the children have been busy discovering a variety of 2D shapes, including circles, squares, triangles, and rectangles. We have done some lovely activities, and these included shape hunts around the classroom, creating shape pictures and collages, and sorting shapes by size and colour. These are all links in to exploring & Thinking – Developing early mathematical concepts, recognising and categorising shapes, and talking about where we might find the shapes.

### **Role Play: The Green Room Hairdressing Salon**

The Hairdressing Salon has been a huge hit! The children have enjoyed taking turns as stylists, customers, and receptionists, using brushes, and pretend hairdryers, practicing language such as “What style would you like?” or “Your appointment is ready!” this links to Aistear’s themes of Identity & Belonging / Communicating – developing confidence, using rich vocabulary, cooperating with others, and understanding social roles.

### **Babies & Care Corner**

Our baby care role-play area has encouraged gentle hands and caring actions such as feeding, dressing, bathing, and putting babies to sleep. This fun activity has also helped us learn about body parts, clothing items, and routines. It also encouraged conversations about families, siblings, and home life. This links to Aistear themes of Well-Being / Identity & Belonging by developing empathy, nurturing behaviour, and understanding personal and family relationships.



## Frozen Story role Play

This month, the children have been exploring a magical Frozen-themed story tray as part of our Aistear play. Using icy sensory materials, snowy landscapes, and characters from the Frozen world, the children have been building stories, acting out scenes, and creating their own imaginative adventures. This play supports the Aistear themes of Exploring & Thinking and Communicating, as children problem-solve together, use rich language, and engage in creative storytelling. The tray has sparked wonderful conversations, teamwork, and plenty of frosty fun, all while helping children develop early literacy, social, and sensory skills.

### Additional November Highlights

- ❖ Lots of outdoor play
- ❖ Developing independence with coats, zips, and tidy-up time
- ❖ Singing and story time connected to our monthly themes

### Reminders

- ❖ Please label all coats, hats, and bags.
- ❖ As the weather is getting cooler, please send your child with warm outerwear.
- ❖ If your child is absent, let us know with a reason for their absence.
- ❖ We encourage all our families to engage with us through the Little Vista app.

Thank you for your continued support.

We look forward to a cosy and creative December ahead!

Warm regards, The Green room team







### **Dear Blue Room Families,**

November has been a wonderfully busy and joyful month in the Blue Room! We've welcomed new friends, celebrated special birthdays, explored a wide range of learning experiences, and embraced the start of the festive season together. Here is a look back at all the fun we shared.

### **Welcoming New Friends**

This month, we were delighted to welcome Joe and Freya to the Blue Room. The children showed kindness and confidence as they helped their new friends settle in, offering tours, invitations to play, and lots of warm smiles. We are so happy to have them both in our Blue Room community!

**Happy Birthday!** We had lots of celebrations as Amelia, Daniel and Scarlett turned 4. We enjoyed singing, sharing treats, and making their birthdays feel special. Happy Birthday once again!



### **Learning Through Play. Numbers & Shapes**

Our monthly theme has been Numbers and Shapes, and the children explored these concepts in many creative ways. Through construction play, art, jigsaws, sensory exploration, and circle time discussions, they enjoyed:

- ❖ Building towers and homes using different shapes
- ❖ Counting pieces in their creations
- ❖ Spotting shapes around the room
- ❖ Using shapes and numbers in imaginative, sensory play and art.

We loved seeing their confidence grow through hands-on learning.

**Dina School** - During Dina School sessions, we talked about classroom rules and making good choices. The children shared thoughtful ideas about being kind, helping friends, and listening to others, building important social and emotional skills.

**Exploring Feelings** - The Colour Monster. One of our favourite stories this month was The Colour Monster. We used props, art, and craft activities to explore our emotions. The children created their own colourful monsters and even made magic surprise playdough with hidden colours inside, a big hit that sparked so much excitement!



## Our Community Theme

We learned about the important people who help us in our community. A highlight of the month was a special visit from a real bus! The children climbed aboard, explored the seats and buttons, and met a real bus driver who answered all their curious questions. In small-world play, we reenacted a Peppa Pig house fire, using fire trucks, firefighters, and story figures to learn how helpers keep us safe. We also had a dress-up, dramatic play and small world toys around our community helpers' theme.



**Baking Fun.** Our afternoon children also enjoyed baking cookies. They measured, mixed, and watched carefully as their creations baked, the best

part, of course, was sharing their warm cookies with friends.

**Outdoor Adventures.** We made the most of the November weather, exploring changes outdoors, enjoying fresh air, and even discovering snow and ice! The children loved investigating how ice melts, how it feels, and how it changes. Apologies for any muddy clothes, but messy days are full of learning!



## Festive Beginnings

As November came to a close, we began preparing for the festive season:

- ❖ Painting decorations for our Christmas tree
- ❖ Learning Christmas songs (including Jingle Bells in different languages!)
- ❖ Dressing up in festive outfits
- ❖ Decorating the classroom and tree
- ❖ Dancing to holiday music

The room has felt extra magical, thanks to the children's excitement and creativity.



## Library Visit

Our children enjoyed a wonderful visit from the Louth Mobile Library Service this week. They listened to engaging stories and then explored the library van, each choosing a book that we will read together in our classroom. A lovely experience that sparked lots of excitement for reading!



Thank you for another wonderful month filled with curiosity, creativity, learning, and friendship. We look forward to all the festive fun waiting for us in December!

Warm regards, The Blue Room Team, Anna, Ellie, Hannah, and Katie





November's Theme of the Month was Numbers and Shapes & People in Our Community.

November was a wonderfully busy and engaging month in the Orange Room. Our themes, "Numbers and Shapes & People in Our Community," offered the children a wide variety of learning opportunities that supported early numeracy, creativity, confidence, and understanding of the world around them. As always, our learning was play-based, child-led, and connected to the Aistear framework.

### Exploring Shapes & Numbers

Throughout the month, the children were immersed in hands-on activities that strengthened their early maths and problem-solving skills. During circle time, we practiced counting 1-15 in English, along with 1-5 in Irish. The children also learned fun shape poems and rhymes, supporting listening, memory, and language development (Aistear: Communicating).

The children explored shapes in many creative ways, including:

Wooden and foam block play, where they built towers, balanced structures, created roads, and worked together, supporting spatial awareness, teamwork, and gross motor skills (Aistear: Well-being; Identity & Belonging).

Playdoh and tuff tray activities, where they rolled shapes, matched outlines, and used pinchers to place pompoms along shape borders. These activities strengthened fine-motor control, hand eye coordination, and early mathematical awareness (Aistear: Exploring & Thinking).



Lego stamping and sponge painting, where children experimented with patterns, colour, and shape printing. This supported creativity, sensory exploration, and emerging design awareness (Aistear: Communicating; Exploring & Thinking).

Outdoor shape games, where the children listened for a called-out shape and ran to stand on the matching one drawn on the yard. This playful learning linked movement, shape recognition, listening, and social bonding (Aistear: Well-being; Exploring & Thinking).



One of the month's favourite activities was making shape pizzas, using big circles for pepperoni, small circles for olives, rectangles for cheese, and triangles for lettuce. This



playful task helped with classification, patterning, and early maths language while also sparking lots of role play (Aistear: Exploring & Thinking).

Our edible number tuff tray filled with number cereal, bowls, and number cards was another big hit, encouraging counting, number matching, pouring, scooping, and sensory discovery.

### People in Our Community

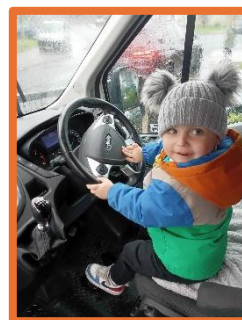
We spent lots of time talking about community helpers and how they support us. During circle time, the children enjoyed stories, discussions, and small-world play with our community toy set, deepening their understanding of roles such as Gardai, bus drivers, doctors, and shopkeepers (Aistear: Identity & Belonging; Communicating).

We had two very exciting real-life experiences this month:

A friendly visit from the Gardai, who passed by during outdoor time and kindly turned on their lights for us, creating lots of excitement and curiosity.



A visit from a local bus driver, who showed us his bus. The children loved sitting in the seats, exploring the inside, and even beeping the horn! These experiences helped the children feel connected, safe, and valued in their community (Aistear: Identity & Belonging).



### Beginning Our Christmas Celebrations

Towards the end of the month, the classroom became wonderfully festive as many children arrived in great form after attending Frostival. Together, we made sparkly red Christmas playdough and frosty white playdough mixed with silver glitter, activities that encouraged creativity, sensory development, and fine-motor skills.

We also began transforming our room for the season:

Decorating our Christmas window and room. Learning seasonal songs, including "Jingle Bells" in Irish, "Santa Got Stuck in the Chimney," and "Five Little Elves"

Starting a collaborative "Santa Got Stuck Up the Chimney" display. Each day, the children worked together to add new pieces like the fireplace, stockings, background, and Santa's boots. This ongoing group project has helped build teamwork, confidence, and a sense of shared pride (Aistear: Identity & Belonging; Communicating).

### Special Celebrations

This month, we also celebrated Lev and Tadgh's birthdays. A big Happy Birthday to both boys!

Love from Leonne and Aoife







Dear families,

November has been a wonderful month filled with excitement, exploration, and learning as we continued to develop our understanding of shapes and numbers while also building anticipation for Santa Claus' arrival next month. The children engaged enthusiastically with our theme of the month, singing new favourite songs such as "Terry the Triangle" and "Sammy the Square," which supported their confidence and communication in line with the Aistear theme of Communicating.

### Exploring Shapes and Numbers

Throughout the month, the children participated in a wide range of hands-on shape and number activities. They especially enjoyed shape stamping with paint, sorting shapes, exploring puzzles, and creating artwork using different shapes. These activities encouraged the children to problem-solve, express their creativity, and make connections, supporting the Aistear themes of Exploring and Thinking and Well-being as they gained confidence in their abilities.



### People in Our Community

We were also delighted to welcome several community helpers to our room this month. We had a visit from Sean the Bus Man, which was a big highlight, and the children were



very excited when the Library Van arrived. These experiences helped the children learn about the world around them and understand the important roles people play in their community, linking strongly with the Aistear theme of Identity and Belonging. The children also explored special community helper toys, which led to lots of role play where they took on different jobs and worked together. This imaginative play supported cooperation, social development, and

communication further connecting with the Aistear themes of Communicating and Well-being.

### Emergent Interests

Another big part of our month was the children's love for KPop Demon Hunters. The room was often filled with enthusiastic singing and dancing to favourites like "Soda Pop"

and “Golden.” These lively musical moments brought joy to the room and encouraged the children to express themselves creatively while also building friendships and confidence, supporting the Aistear themes of Well-being and Communicating.

### Celebrations



We also had two special birthdays this month for Archie and Kira. We celebrated with fun singing, cake and lots of birthday cheer. Happy birthday to you both!!

Overall, November has been a month full of creativity, discovery, music, and meaningful experiences. We are very proud of how engaged the children have been in their learning, and we look forward to all the magic and excitement that December and Christmas will bring.

Love the red room team,

Jade, Keri and Brigid x







Dear Families,

We've had a wonderful and exciting month in our after-school program, full of creativity, connection, and cozy fun. As always, our goal is to create a warm "home away from home" where children feel safe, valued, and free to express themselves. This month, we truly saw that sense of belonging shine through.

### 🎄 **Decorating Our Christmas Tree**

The children had an amazing time decorating our Christmas tree in the well-being garden. They carefully hung ornaments, added colourful ribbons, and worked together to make the tree shine beautifully. Beyond the festive fun, this activity helped the children practise teamwork, patience, and shared decision-making. They took pride in contributing to something that belongs to all of us, and the joy they brought into the room helped build a strong sense of community, much like decorating a tree together at home.



### 🐶 **A Special Visit from Mia's New Puppy**

A highlight of the month was a surprise visit from Mia's adorable new puppy! The children were thrilled to meet our furry little guest and showed such gentle and caring behaviour. Moments like these support children's emotional development, helping them practise empathy, kindness, and calmness while also experiencing the pure joy that animals naturally bring. The puppy's visit filled our space with excitement, laughter, and a real sense of shared wonder.



### 💚 **Creating Our Kindness Tree**



In celebration of Kindness Month in the children's schools, we've begun creating our very own Kindness Tree. Each child is adding leaves that display acts of kindness they've shown or witnessed. This project has been incredibly meaningful. It not only encourages children to notice kindness in themselves and others, but also helps them reflect on how their actions impact the world around them. Watching the tree grow day by day reflects how they are growing, too—becoming thoughtful, compassionate, and supportive friends. Our Kindness Tree has

quickly become a symbol of the warm, caring atmosphere we work hard to nurture.

### **Hot Chocolate to Keep Us Warm**

With the cold weather settling in, we enjoyed making warm and delicious hot chocolate together. The children loved stirring their cups, adding marshmallows and cream, and settling in for a cozy evening of stories and puzzles. Simple moments like these help create routines of comfort and connection. Sharing warm drinks and quiet activities gives the children time to unwind after a busy school day, strengthening their sense of security and belonging. It's in these small rituals that our "home away from home" feeling truly comes alive.



We're so proud of how the children have grown, emotionally, socially, and creatively, through the experiences we've shared this month. We look forward to even more fun, learning, and kindness in the weeks to come.

Love from Shannon

