

Welcome Back

We are delighted to welcome back all our children for ECCE 26/27. It's also great to see so many new faces joining the MiniMinds family. We do our best to produce a newsletter every month to help keep parents informed of what we have been doing, learning and celebrating each month.

Meet the team

Administration

Niamh Hoey
Stacey Coburn

Kitchen/Caretaking

Ciara McGee Ava Dullaghan
Shay Hoey Aoife Lawless

Teachers

Anna Silver	Ellen Dolan	Keri Kellegher
Leonne Carr	Hannah O'Connor	Aoife Gregory
Amanda Duffy	Kayleigh Cahill	Shannon Tuite
Ciara McCann	Rebecca Martin	Iluta Kakare
Sinead Donnelly	Jenna OhAGAN	Aelwen O'Shaughnessy

Upcoming Dates to Remember

Halloween Dress up will be on 23rd October
Children who only attend ECCE hours (9-12 or 1-4) and Afterschool will be off on 28th
Oct – 2nd Nov

It takes a huge amount of passion and dedication to keep all our children's interests and needs as a priority within our service. MiniMinds preschool is lucky to have a fantastic group of educators who work as a team to ensure our children and family's needs are met. We operate an open-door policy and Myself or Stacey are always available to discuss any issues or concerns you may have in relation to your children's care and development. I look forward to the year ahead and seeing all we can achieve together. *Niamh xx*

Green Room

Dear Green Room Parents,
What a wonderful and busy September we have had in the Green Room!

After beginning our settling-in process in August, we are delighted to now have 15 children settled into our room.

Settling In & Building Relationships

Throughout September, we have focused on helping the children feel safe, secure, happy and confident in the Green Room. We have spent lots of time getting to know each child, observing their interests and supporting them as they build new friendships.

The children have been learning and practising our daily routines, including circle time, snack time, lining up, tidying away and rest time. We are very proud of how well they

are adapting and becoming more independent. This links closely with the Aistear themes of Well-being and Identity and Belonging, as children develop confidence, independence and a strong sense of belonging within our room community.

Learning Through Children's Interests

Following the children's interests has been an important part of our learning this month. We have enjoyed exploring Five Little Monkeys, with songs, stories, puppets, art activities and our crocodile snap game.

We have also created a range of emergent activities based on what the children have shown an interest in, including our Gruffalo Granny sensory table and Rosie's Beauty Salon & Spa. These experiences have encouraged imaginative and pretend play, communication and social interaction.

These experiences support the Aistear themes of Communicating and Exploring and Thinking, giving children opportunities to express themselves, develop language, use their imagination and explore through play.



Sensory & Outdoor Adventures

We have enjoyed lots of opportunities to explore outdoors and use our senses. The children had great fun exploring soil, pumpkins and rainy-day puddles, putting on their wellies and wetsuits and discovering the different sensations of wet weather! Our sensory play has included jelly, water, different textures and messy play.



Everyday Learning & Independence

We enjoyed a special Breakfast Club, where the children explored cereal, rice crispies and milk using their senses.

Everyday routines have also provided valuable learning opportunities. The children are becoming more confident sitting together at snack time, tidying up and following our routines. Our full-time children are also settling very well into their midday rest routine, supporting their wellbeing and energy throughout the day.

Observing & Supporting Development

We have also started our developmental observations. These help us recognise each child's individual interests, strengths and areas they are developing, allowing us to plan meaningful experiences that support their learning and next steps.



Thank you to all our families for your continued support during this important settling-in period. We are looking forward to another month full of fun, discovery and learning together!

Warm wishes,
Anna, Ciara, Ellie, Aelwen & Amanda
The Green Room Team ❤️

Blue Room

Wonderful Start to Our Preschool Year!

What a fantastic and exciting September we have had in the Blue Room!

September is always such a special time in preschool as we welcome new children, make new friends, become familiar with our surroundings and begin to settle into our daily routines. This month has been filled with new experiences, lots of laughter, creativity, friendships and plenty of opportunities to learn through play.

We were delighted to welcome all of our new friends to preschool this month. We are so proud of how wonderfully everyone has settled into the Blue Room. For some of our children, this was their very first experience of preschool, and it has been lovely to watch them become more comfortable and confident as the weeks have gone by. We have been busy getting to know one another, learning our routines, discovering our favourite activities and creating lots of happy memories together.

Our September experiences have linked beautifully with Aistear: The Early Childhood Curriculum Framework, particularly the themes of Well-being, Identity and Belonging, Communicating, and Exploring and Thinking.

We have made the most of our outdoor time throughout September and the children have absolutely loved getting outside to explore! Our garden has provided lots of opportunities for children to run, climb, investigate, use their imaginations and enjoy active play with their friends. We have seen



children creating their own games, exploring different areas of the garden and developing their physical skills as they move around the outdoor environment. The mud kitchen has been a popular area for play, with the children using their imagination to create many dishes. The children's favourite at the moment is making "soup" and "pasta".

We have extended this idea to the indoors by providing the children with further activities to enhance their imagination with cooking. The children have had pasta in the kitchen and have also thoroughly enjoyed water play for

their "soup" making, as well as investigating and exploring jelly. The children have loved getting their hands involved and exploring different textures, materials and sensory experiences.

Dressing-up has been another favourite in the Blue Room this month. Every day the children have enjoyed choosing different costumes and becoming their own little characters. It has been so lovely to watch their imaginations come to life as they pretend to be different people and act out their own stories. We have seen lots of wonderful imaginative play, with children creating scenarios, taking on different roles and inviting their friends to join in. For instance, the children have loved playing hairdressers this month! They have enjoyed taking turns being the hairdresser and the customer, pretending to brush and style each other's hair, as well as cutting Mr Spaghetti' hair. This fun sensorial experience promoted senses, concentration and supported fine motor skills as the children used scissors.



Our theme throughout September has been "All About Me", which has given us lots of opportunities to get to know ourselves and one another. We have been exploring what

makes each of us special and unique. The children have been talking about themselves, their bodies, their features and the things they enjoy.

As part of our learning, we created our own self-portraits. The children enjoyed looking carefully at themselves and thinking about their different features before creating their own pictures.

We also explored our bodies, talking about different body parts and what our bodies can do. The children enjoyed identifying different parts of themselves and learning about how our bodies help us every day. One of the children's favourite activities was looking at their reflections in mirrors. They enjoyed observing themselves, making different faces and noticing their features. This strongly

supports Aistear Identity and Belonging, helping children to develop a positive sense of themselves and understand that everyone is unique and special.

We have also been very busy getting creative in the Blue Room this month! The children enjoyed painting leaves, exploring the different shapes and textures while creating their



own beautiful artwork. We also had lots of fun with apple stamping. It was wonderful to see the different ways the children used the materials. Some children enjoyed experimenting with colours and patterns, while others were more interested in exploring the materials themselves.

We encourage the children to focus on the process of creating rather than what the finished picture looks like. This gives them the freedom to experiment, make choices and express their own ideas.

Birthday Celebrations

September has also been a month of some very special birthday celebrations! We loved celebrating with Georgia, Mason and Olivia, making their special day memorable and singing happy birthday.

A huge well done to all of our Blue Room children for such a fantastic first month! We are incredibly proud of everyone and all the wonderful things they have achieved. We can't wait to see what October brings as we continue to play, explore, learn, create and make lots more special memories together!

Love from all the Blue Room team  

Yellow Room

♥ Welcome to Yellow Room! ♥

We can hardly believe how quickly our first few weeks in Yellow Room have gone! It has been a wonderful start to our preschool year, and we have loved getting to know all the children, watching friendships grow and seeing everyone become more comfortable and confident in their new environment.

A very warm welcome to Leo, Hanniyah, Alice, Zoe and Amy! We are so delighted to have you all join us. You have settled in so well, and it has been lovely to see you making new friends, joining in with activities and becoming part of our Yellow Room family.



☀ All About Me

We started our year with our All About Me theme, giving the children lots of opportunities to explore who they are, their families, their interests and what makes each of them special.

We enjoyed singing our favourite songs together and taking turns choosing songs and singing into our microphone. 🎤🎵 The children also explored Play-Doh face stencils, talking about themselves and their families.

Our creative activities included making self-portraits using paint sticks, as well as creating faces using loose parts. We also made individual face jigsaws using photographs of the children, encouraging them to recognise and talk about themselves.

We explored our bodies too, including a height check, which we can revisit later in the year to see how much everyone has grown! We also enjoyed creating our body outlines outdoors using chalk.

Our All About Me theme has helped the children to develop their sense of identity, confidence and belonging while learning more about themselves and each other.

Aistear links:

- 🎨 Well-being: Developing confidence, identity and a positive sense of self.
- 🗣 Communicating: Sharing ideas, talking about ourselves and listening to others.
- 🧠 Exploring & Thinking: Exploring our bodies, similarities, differences and the world around us.

🍂 Exploring Autumn

As we moved into Autumn, the children became fascinated by the changes happening around us. We have been exploring the colours, textures and natural materials that Autumn brings.

We have enjoyed Autumn tuff trays, leaf exploration, pinecones, sticks and other natural materials. We also used broccoli for Autumn-coloured painting and created Play-Doh hedgehogs, using sticks and googly eyes to add details.



The children have also been enjoying our Autumn songs, including songs about the changing colours and falling leaves. We have been encouraging families to join in too by collecting leaves, sticks, acorns and pinecones during walks and bringing them in for us to explore together.



More recently, the children collected leaves from our outdoor area and brought them inside to paint in beautiful Autumn colours such as red, orange, yellow and brown. Once dry, they glued their painted leaves onto paper to create colourful Autumn artwork.

We have also been exploring flowers and nature, including cutting flowers, giving the children opportunities to carefully investigate natural materials while developing their fine-motor skills.

Aistear links:

- Well-being: Enjoying active outdoor experiences and connecting with nature.
- Communicating: Talking about what we notice and sharing ideas.
- Exploring & Thinking: Investigating seasonal changes, colours, textures and natural materials.

Our Emerging Interest – Building!

One of our biggest emerging interests has been building and construction, which began when Leo showed a particular interest in building.

We followed the children's curiosity and expanded this interest into lots of different building experiences. Outdoors, the children experimented with building walls using different materials and explored our construction and cement-themed tuff tray.

We have also built rocket ships, houses using giant jigsaw blocks and different structures, giving the children opportunities to work together, solve problems and explore what happens when different materials are combined.

It has been wonderful to see the children sharing ideas, working together and using their imaginations to create their own structures.

Aistear links:



- ✚ Exploring & Thinking: Problem-solving, experimenting and discovering how things can be built.
- ✚ Communicating: Sharing ideas and working together.
- ✚ Well-being: Developing confidence, independence and a sense of achievement.
- ✚ Birthday Celebrations!

We have also had some very special celebrations in Yellow Room! 🎉 We celebrated Leo's 3rd birthday with lots of excitement, singing and a special birthday party. The children even enjoyed creating birthday cakes during our Play-Doh play. We also celebrated Kerry's birthday, enjoying a lovely cake together and making it a special day in Yellow Room. Birthdays are a lovely opportunity for the children to celebrate their friends and experience a sense of belonging and community within our classroom.

💙 Looking Ahead

We are so proud of how the children have settled into Yellow Room and of all the wonderful learning, friendships and experiences we have shared already.

We are looking forward to continuing to follow the children's emerging interests, building on their ideas and creating lots of opportunities for them to explore, investigate, create and learn through play.

Thank you to all our families for helping us make such a positive start to our preschool year. We can't wait to see what the coming weeks bring! 🍁💛

Love from,

Keri & Hannah

Yellow Room 🌈



Red Roome - Morning Session

Welcome Back to the Red Room!

We would like to give a very warm welcome back to all of our children after the summer holidays! ❤️ It has been so lovely to see all the children back in the Red Room, and we are delighted to say that they have all settled back in so well. They have been reconnecting with their friends, becoming familiar with their routines again and enjoying lots of fun and exciting learning experiences together.

It has been a busy and exciting start to the new preschool year, and we have loved watching the children's emerging interests develop. We have been following their ideas and creating lots of opportunities for creativity, imagination, sensory exploration, communication and learning through play.

Dinosaurs!



One of our first emerging interests in the Red Room was dinosaurs! The children showed lots of curiosity and excitement when exploring dinosaurs, so we followed their interest with a range of fun activities.

We enjoyed reading "Harry and the Dinosaurs Say Raahh!" and talked about the different dinosaurs we could see in the story. The children enjoyed learning and using new dinosaur words and sounds.

The children also got creative making their own dinosaur pictures and explored different dinosaur figures through sensory and imaginative play. We created dinosaur-themed play opportunities where the children could use their imagination to make up their own dinosaur adventures.

We also explored dinosaur footprints, looking at the different shapes and sizes of the footprints and talking about which dinosaurs they might belong to. The children enjoyed using their ideas to create their own dinosaur scenes with leaves, figures and natural materials.

Our dinosaur activities provided lots of opportunities for the children to develop their communication, imagination, curiosity and early understanding of the world around them.

Gruffalo Fun

Following an interest in The Gruffalo, we enjoyed lots of fun and engaging activities inspired by the story.

The children made their very own “Gruffalo Crumble” using Rice Krispies, which was a big hit! They also explored playdough and created their own Gruffalos. Our little artists painted Gruffalo pictures and carefully glued and stuck on his eyes, tusks, prickles and other features. We also learned the Gruffalo song and enjoyed singing it together. To finish off our Gruffalo fun, we made some delicious Gruffalo buns!

All About Me



We continued exploring our All About Me theme, giving the children opportunities to talk about themselves, their families, their likes and dislikes, and what makes each of us special.

The children enjoyed chatting about our All About Me questions and listening to their friends share their ideas. These conversations helped encourage communication, confidence, turn-taking and a sense of belonging within our Red Room family.



Pirates & The Sea

Another wonderful emerging interest was pirates and the sea! This interest began during outdoor play, when the children started pretending they were pirates sailing on a ship, jumping into the sea and swimming.

We followed their ideas and created lots of exciting pirate-themed experiences. The children made their own pirate hats and decorated them using colourful paint sticks.

We also enjoyed sensory and imaginative play with pirate ships, water and sea creatures. The children created their own stories and adventures, developing lots of wonderful language and imaginative play.



Our pirate adventures continued with treasure maps and a treasure hunt! The children worked together, followed clues and searched for hidden treasure before finishing the week with a very exciting Pirate Party!

Sensory & Imaginative Play

The children have loved exploring sensory experiences throughout the month. From gloop, water, sea creatures, boats and playdough, there have been lots of opportunities to investigate different textures and materials.

Through these experiences, the children have been encouraged to use their senses, develop their fine-motor skills, communicate their ideas and work together with their friends.

Celebrating South Africa Day



We also had a very special South Africa Day to celebrate with Amelia and her family. Amelia's family kindly

sent in some lovely treats for everyone to enjoy.

It was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Amelia's family, culture and traditions and to encourage the children to learn about and appreciate the different cultures and backgrounds represented within our Red Room community.



Throughout the month, our activities have been inspired by the children's own ideas, interests and curiosity. This has supported learning across Aistear 2024, including Wellbeing, Identity and Belonging, Communicating, and Exploring and Thinking.

It has been such a lovely start to the new preschool year, and we have loved watching the children's ideas develop and seeing where their imaginations take us! We are looking forward to lots more fun, learning and adventures together in the Red Room.

Love,
Iluta and Leonne 



Red Room - Afternoon Session

Hello to all our wonderful Red Room parents! ♥

We have had an amazing first month back in the Red Room! It has been such a busy, exciting and enjoyable month, with lots of new friendships, conversations, creativity and, most importantly, lots of emerging interests for us to follow and explore with the children.

After the long summer holidays, the children have settled back into the Red Room so well. It has been lovely to see everyone becoming comfortable in the room, reconnecting with friends, making new friendships and getting involved in all of our activities and experiences.

Music & Michael Jackson

One of our first emerging interests this month was music, sparked by the children's excitement around Michael Jackson.

We followed the children's lead by creating music-themed sensory and creative experiences. The children explored a music tuff tray with Rice Krispies, music-themed pictures and a variety of musical instruments.

We also talked about our favourite songs and gave everyone the opportunity to sing into the microphone. It was wonderful to see the children expressing themselves through music, movement and singing while developing their confidence and enjoying these experiences together.

All About Me

We also spent time exploring All About Me, giving the children opportunities to talk about themselves, their families, their likes and what makes each of us special.

The children enjoyed answering our All About Me questions and creating beautiful self-portraits. We had lots of interesting conversations about ourselves, including different hair colours and styles.

These experiences gave the children opportunities to listen to one another, share their ideas and celebrate the similarities and differences that make us all unique.

Rainbow Fun

Our rainbow interest also brought lots of colour and creativity into the Red Room!

The children enjoyed exploring colourful sensory activities, including rainbow spaghetti, where they could squish, mix and investigate the different colours and textures using their hands.

We also created beautiful rainbow artwork using a variety of materials. It was lovely to



see the children's creativity and excitement as they experimented with colours and created their own colourful pictures.

Taking Care of Our Teeth

Another wonderful emerging interest this month was looking after our teeth.

During circle time, we talked about why it is important to brush our teeth and discussed foods that are good for our teeth. The children shared their own experiences of visiting the dentist and caring for their smiles.

We then turned our learning into lots of fun through dentist and doctor role play. The children enjoyed pretending to be dentists, checking teeth and caring for their patients.

We also created our own toothbrush activity using egg cartons and white paint. The children used toothbrushes to "brush" the teeth clean and enjoyed brushing laminated pictures of teeth too. We sang tooth-brushing songs and listened to stories about visiting the dentist.



Horses & Rainbows



Towards the end of the month, we followed the children's emerging interests in horses and rainbows, creating lots of opportunities for creativity, imagination and exploration.

The children enjoyed making their very own horses using paper plates, glue and sticking materials. They carefully added ears, eyes, noses and colourful manes, creating some fantastic horses!

We also enjoyed reading stories about horses and unicorns and learned a fun new horse song, which the children loved singing along to.

Our sensory play was a big hit too! The children explored oats, horses and wooden blocks, using their imaginations to create different scenes and stories. We also had lots of fun exploring the horses in gloop, encouraging the children to scoop, squish, mix and investigate the different textures.

Following on from one of our children showing an interest in rainbows, we also got creative and made some lovely colourful rainbows. The children enjoyed choosing their colours and creating their own beautiful rainbow artwork.

✂ Developing Our Fine-Motor Skills

The children's interest in horses also led to lots of opportunities to develop their fine-motor skills.

The children were invited to cut pretend horse food, including apples, carrots and hay, using scissors. They also practised cutting paper into different patterns and shapes, explored cutting playdough and enjoyed cutting spaghetti as part of our sensory and junk-art activities.

These playful experiences helped the children develop their hand strength, coordination, concentration and confidence while having lots of fun.

🌱 Learning Through Aistear 2024

Throughout September, we have continued to follow the children's emerging interests, allowing their ideas, questions and play to help guide our planning.

Our experiences supported learning across the Aistear 2024 themes of Well-being, Identity and Belonging, and Exploring and Thinking.

Through music, sensory play, art, role play, outdoor play and conversations, the children have been developing their confidence, communication, relationships, creativity, independence, fine-motor skills and understanding of the world around them.

We are so proud of how well the children have settled back into the Red Room after their summer holidays. It has been wonderful to see their personalities, friendships and interests developing throughout our first month together.

Thank you, as always, for your continued support. We can't wait to see what exciting interests and adventures October will bring!

Love,

Iluta and Leonee 💖



Orange Room

♥ Orange Room – September Newsletter ♥

A Wonderful Start to Preschool Year 2! What a fantastic September we have had in the Orange Room! ♥ The boys have settled into Preschool Year 2, getting to know new friends, reconnecting with familiar faces and becoming comfortable with their teachers, routines and their new environment. We have had a month filled with fun, laughter, creativity, exploration and lots of learning! This month, we began with our “All About Me” theme, giving the children plenty of opportunities to talk about themselves, their families, interests and what makes them unique. This theme supported the Aistear theme of Identity and Belonging, helping the boys develop a strong sense of who they are and their place within our Orange Room community.

👨👩👧👦 All About Me & Our Families

One of the highlights of September was creating our Family Wall. As family pictures came into the room, each child had the opportunity during circle time to show their picture to their friends and talk about the people who are important to them. This created lots of lovely conversations as the boys shared stories about their families and listened to one another. Our Family Wall celebrates the wonderful diversity within our Orange Room community and gives the children a visual reminder that their families are an important part of our preschool environment.

We also created our Birthday Wall, showing where everyone's birthday falls throughout the year. This provided opportunities to talk about birthdays, celebrations and the special things that make each person unique. Aistear Identity and Belonging:

The children are developing a sense of identity, confidence and belonging as they share information about themselves, their families and their experiences with others.



🧠 Getting to Know Ourselves

The boys had lots of fun with our self-portrait activity. Each child was given a page with half of their face and was encouraged to draw the other half. Using mirrors helped the children look closely at their features and notice what makes them unique. We also completed our “All About Me” start-of-year interviews. The children drew pictures of themselves and their families and answered questions about their favourite things, interests, future jobs, superpowers and what makes them happy. We had some very funny and imaginative answers! These activities encouraged the boys to express their ideas, talk about themselves and listen to the ideas of their friends. Aistear Identity and Belonging & Communicating. The children are developing confidence in expressing themselves, sharing their ideas and experiences, and listening to others.

Racing into Year 2!

As part of settling into our new year, the boys worked together to design our Orange Room door display. After lots of ideas, they decided on a racetrack theme! Each child designed and decorated their own racing car before we added their picture to it. We created our own road and added all our little drivers to the display.



We also introduced our Line Leader Trophy. Each day, the child whose car is beside the trophy gets to be our line leader. This gives the boys a special responsibility and helps support our daily routines, while also showing everyone who is part of our Orange Room family. Aistear Identity and Belonging: The children are developing confidence, independence and a sense of belonging by contributing their ideas to the classroom environment and taking on meaningful responsibilities.

Exploring Autumn

As the month went on, the boys' interest naturally turned towards Autumn. While playing outside, they noticed the leaves falling and

became curious about the changes happening around them. We followed this emerging interest and began exploring our Wonderful World of Autumn. We introduced our new Autumn songs, "Autumn Leaves Are Falling Down," and "Autumn Leaves" as we talked about the changes we can see during this season. The boys collected fallen leaves from our garden and brought them into the Orange Room for leaf printing and leaf rubbings using crayons.

Hedgehogs & Hibernation

Our Autumn learning led us to one of our favourite little woodland animals the hedgehog. We enjoyed a hedgehog story "Don't hog the hedge" and talked about hibernation, exploring what hedgehogs do as the weather gets colder and how they prepare for their big sleep. The boys created their own hedgehog artwork using paint

sticks, glue, eyes and spikes. They also enjoyed making hedgehogs using playdough, using their imaginations to create their own



little creatures. We also introduced our hibernating hedgehog during circle time; the children named him Hattie after the story. We asked, "How will we get our hedgehog ready?" This has sparked lots of curiosity and gives us plenty to explore as we continue our Autumn adventures. Aistear Exploring and Thinking: Through sensory play, stories and hands-on experiences, the children are developing their ability to explore, investigate, problem-solve and make connections about the natural world.

Building, Creating & Working Together

The boys helped Stephen collect leaves after some of the trees were cut back. From this, they then had the opportunity to help build a teepee from the leftover branches. They loved getting involved in the building process and have enjoyed using it for imaginative play. These experiences encouraged teamwork, cooperation, physical skills and imaginative play.

Aistear Well-being, Identity and Belonging & Exploring and Thinking:



The boys are developing confidence and independence while working together, helping others, using their physical skills and engaging in imaginative play.

We also want to wish Teddy a Happy Birthday as he turned 4 this month! We hope he enjoyed his special day.

We are so proud of how everyone has settled into Preschool Year 2 and become part of our Orange Room family. We have loved watching friendships develop, confidence grow and personalities shine throughout the month. We are excited to continue following the boys' interests and seeing where their curiosity takes us next!

Love Aoife, Amanda, and Aelwen