

FREE



THE ESSENTIAL RESOURCE FOR
DERBYSHIRE FAMILIES WITH 0-11 YEAR OLDS

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Moor Lane, Allenton, Derby DE24 9HY



BOOM... Back to school!

Smart uniforms, shiny shoes, new routines. For many, September is a time of optimism and freshness whilst, for others, it comes with anxiety or sadness as we wave off a little one to a new nursery or school, perhaps for the first time. And it's not just us parents who experience this mixture of emotions: our children can too.

So in this **Back to School** issue, we've got a great article from Nikki Webster about **how to support your child at times of change**. Author, Hetty Waite, has carefully curated a list of **books to help address a range of children's common worries**.

We've also got articles from two highly experienced teachers. Amanda Vobes unlocks **the mysteries of phonics** whilst Boom Buddy mum, Hannah Adamson, shares a selection of **stimulating, educational and fun activities for 0-4 year olds**.

Our regular writers, Jennifer Moses and Steven Howard, are back with articles about how we, as adults, can get back to learning – whether this be **trying out a new language or gaining new skills in the garden**.

We're delighted to have announced six new **Boom Buddy families** in August. You may well have spotted some of their adventures already on our social media accounts. We can't wait to see what else they get up to!

Until next time,

Steph & Heather

steph@boommagazine.co.uk
heather@boommagazine.co.uk
www.boomderbyshire.co.uk



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Get in touch!

To list a class or event or suggest an article, email steph@boommagazine.co.uk

To find out more about advertising in Boom, email heather@boommagazine.co.uk

Or, if you're not sure who you need to speak to, just email info@boommagazine.co.uk

We can't wait to hear from you!

You can get your copy of Boom from many places INCLUDING:

nurseries, schools, libraries, health visitors, shops, cafes, and classes and groups for 0-11s in Belper, Ripley, Alfreton, Heanor, Wirksworth, Ashbourne, Matlock, Matlock Bath, Cromford, Duffield, Allestree, Darley Abbey and many places in between.

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www.bemybaby.co.uk



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GROUPS & CLASSES FOR 0-11s

If you wish to be listed in later editions, please get in touch:
steph@boommagazine.co.uk

Please note that this information was correct at the time of publishing.
Check all details before attending.

AMBER VALLEY, ASHBOURNE, WIRKSWORTH, MATLOCK AND BEYOND!

Baby Sensory (0-13m)
FlowMotion. Life Yoga Studio, Matlock
Mon 10.30 - 11.30am (birth-6m)
Mon 12 - 1pm (6m-13m)

The Venue, Ashbourne
Tue 10 - 11am (birth-6m)
Tue 11.30am - 12.30pm (6m-13m)
Tue 1 - 2pm (birth-13m)

Lion Hotel, Belper
Wed 10 - 11am (birth-6m)
Wed 11.30am - 12.30pm (6m-13m)
Wed 1 - 2pm (birth-13m)

Ripley Leisure Centre
Thu 10 - 11am (birth-6m)
Thu 11.30am - 12.30pm (6m-13m)
Thu 1 - 2pm (birth-13m)
Interactive, educational sensory classes which will help your baby learn and develop important skills in a supportive, friendly environment.
Book 07989 443734
www.babysensory.com/
centralderbyshire

Baby Sparks Sensory Class
The Firebird Centre, Hilton
Tue 10 - 11am (6m-3yrs)
Tue 11.15am - 12.15pm (6w-6m)

Mickleover Methodist Church
Fri 10 - 11am (6m-3yrs)
Fri 11.15am - 12.15pm (6w-6m)
Baby Sparks creates sensory adventures for babies and children which stimulate, engage and relax through singing, sensory games, instrument play, sensory play, lights and bubbles. The perfect class to nurture your baby's sensory development. £9 PAYG or cheaper if block booking.
Book www.babysparks.co.uk/
derbywest

Balance and Bloom Yoga with Emily

Shine with Tabitha, Belper
Wed 11am - 12pm mother and baby yoga (2m-toddler)
An hour of postnatal yoga for you to focus on your recovery/regain strength following pregnancy. Babies are very welcome! Suitable from 2mths+ Sun 6 - 7pm pregnancy yoga
Explore nourishing movement and relaxation during your pregnancy. Suitable from 14 weeks to birth.
Book one session or a block.
07816 653812
www.tabitha-yoga.co.uk
emilypastow@hotmail.co.uk

Belper Cloth Nappy Library

We have a large range of cloth nappies in all sizes from newborn to toddler available to hire. Come and see us at the monthly Transition Belper Repair Cafe at No. 28, Belper Marketplace or contact us for more information or advice.
belperclothnappylibrary@hotmail.com
[facebook.com/BelperClothNappyLibrary](https://www.facebook.com/BelperClothNappyLibrary)

Born to Perform

BTP Studios, Derby
Wed 4.15 - 4.55pm Itsy Bitsy Acrobatics (3-5s)
Wed 4.55 - 5.35pm Itsy Bitsy Crew Musical Theatre (3-5s)
Thu 5.30 - 6.45pm Acrobatics (8+)
Thu 6.45 - 7.45pm Commercial dance (10+) Book www.btpstudios.co.uk
info@btpstudios.co.uk

Glow Girls (8-11s)

Bridge the Gap, Derby
Mon 5.30 - 6.30pm
Wed 5.30 - 6.30pm
A girls' group for school years 4, 5 and 6, created to empower girls and help them navigate challenges they face as they grow. A cosy, safe space for girls to explore grounding, mindfulness, self-esteem, friendships, confidence building, kindness and more. £7.50 per session. Book by half term in advance.

Codnor Quackers (0-4s)

Codnor Sports Club
Fri 9.45 - 11.15am
A Friday morning full of fun, giggles, playing, snacks and singing at the top of our voices. Snacks for children and a lovely treat and a hot drink for the adults.
£5 for 1 adult and 1 child if you pay weekly, £20 for a 4-week prepaid ticket. £1.50 for additional adult or child. Booking advised
Fb Quackers in Codnor

Connected Perinatal Support

Becket Family Hub
Mon 10 - 11.30am Bump to Babies (0-2s)
Normanton Library
Mon 2.30 - 3.30pm Bumps, Babies & Books (all ages)

NICU, Derby Royal Hospital
Tue 1.30 - 2.45pm Coffee Afternoon
For families on this ward only.

Watermeadow Road Community Room
Wed 12.30 - 2pm Tea and Tots (0-5s)

Oakleigh Avenue Community Room
Thu 10am - 12pm Bump to Babies (0-2s)

Derwent Family Hub
Thu 10am - 12pm Dads' Space (0-5s)

Racecourse, St Mark's Road, Derby
Thu 7 - 9pm Dads' Space (newborns welcome)
Expect a warm welcome, non-judgemental peer support and a nice cuppa! No need to book.
www.connectedperinatalupport.org
admin@perinatalupport.org.uk
01332 412561 office
07719 064014 message

Most groups are term time only – please check before you travel.

Derbyshire Toy Libraries Toy Hire

Strutts Centre, Belper
Wed 10am - 12pm, Fri 9.30 - 11am, Sat 9 - 11.30am
Click & collect.
Browse: www.derbyshiretoylibraries.org/shop Book collection on Fb

Gymkids Gymnastics (toddlers+)

Belper Leisure Centre
Wed 9.45 - 10.30am (toddlers-3s)
Wed 10.45 - 11.30am (3-5s) coach-led
Genesis Centre, Alfreton
Thu 9.25 - 10.10am (toddlers-3s)
Thu 10.20 - 11.05am (3-5s) coach-led
Fri 9.25 - 10.10am (toddlers-2s)
Fri 10.20 - 11.05am (2-3s)
Fri 11.15am - 12pm (3-5s) coach-led
£42 per seven-week block.
Trials available - £6.

Gymkids with CIA

Genesis Centre, Alfreton
Thu 4 - 4.45pm mini gymnasts (2-4s with parent)
Thu 4.45 - 5.30pm beginner (4-5s)
Thu 5.35 - 6.20pm beginner/intermediate (6-7s)
Thu 6.25 - 7.10pm intermediate (8+)
£30 per month. Trials available - £6.
Learn new gymnastics skills including balance, coordination and using equipment. Meet new friends and build confidence all whilst having fun!
Book 07894 987280
gymkidsema@hotmail.com

Infinite Wellbeing Community Centre

Market Street, Heanor
Mon to Fri 9am - 3pm; Sat 10am - 3pm
Role play area for children with a dedicated baby and sensory area.
£5 per family. Lots of other sessions for all ages throughout the week including our popular afterschool club. Booking not required.
www.infinite-wellbeing.co.uk

Infinity Dance Academy (2+)

Brailsford School (Thu)
5 - 5.45pm Splits & Tricks Minis (4+)
5.45 - 6.30pm Splits & Tricks Juniors (7+)
Brailsford Institute (Sat)
9 - 9.30am Nursery Ballet and Tap (2+)
9 - 9.30am Rainbow Ballet and Tap (3.5+)
9.30 - 10am Rainbow Modern (3.5+)
9.30 - 10am Primary Modern (5+)
10 - 11am Primary Ballet and Tap (5+)
10 - 10.30am Junior Contemporary (7+)
10.30 - 11am Junior Freestyle (7+)
12 - 12.30pm Jun/Int Gymnastic Dance (7+)
Fun and friendly dance classes for children aged 2 years +. NATD exams, shows and performances. Other classes available: Tue, Thu and Sat. Prices start from £4.
Book www.infinitydanceacademy.brailsford.co.uk/registration-form
infinitydanceacademy@hotmail.co.uk
07866 443047 • 07505 898616

Languages for All

Language learning for all ages. Groups or individually. Online or in person.
jmoses@languagesforall.org.uk
07918 173844
www.languagesforall.org.uk

Messy Munchies (6m-4yrs)

All Saints Church Hall, Matlock
Mon 10 - 11am
Food sensory play, allowing children to explore foods in a fun environment which can help with the weaning process. Each month is themed starting with construction for September and then autumn in October. £7.50.
Book www.bookwhen.com/
messymunchies

Mini Acorns (2-5s)

Ilam Park
3rd Mon of the month 10.45am - 12.30pm
A morning of nature-based craft, discovery and play with a new theme every month. Dress for the weather. Accessible, step-free routes. Meet at the Welcome Hut to sign in and receive your parking pass. Also receive 10% off at the Manifold Tearoom. Booking essential via the Ilam Park website. £5 per child.
01335 350503
ellie.smith2@nationaltrust.org.uk

Mini First Aid Nottingham & Derby

Across Derbyshire including Belper, Clay Cross, Darley Abbey, Matlock and Oakwood
Award winning 2-hour baby and child first aid classes. Ideal for parents and expectant parents. Babies welcome. £25pp. Private classes also available. Check the website for upcoming dates.
maria@minifirstaid.co.uk
07806 820393
www.nottingham.minifirstaid.co.uk

Moo Music Alfreton Area (0-5s)

Little Moo's Play Barn
Various classes Mon to Thu, morning and afternoon
Multisensory baby and toddler classes where we sing, dance and have fun to a unique catalogue of songs – you won't find our music anywhere else.
£7.50 PAYG or block book classes £7
Book www.moo-musicalfreton.com
07368 523259
moomusicalfreton@outlook.com

Nature Tots (0-4s)

Carsington Water Outdoor Classroom
Mon 10am - 12pm
Fortnightly 09/09, 23/09, 07/10, 21/10
A wide selection of outdoor activities including themed activities, stories, mud painting and sensory play. Pay on arrival, parking included. £6 first child; £3 sibling.

Old Farm Bus (0-11s)

Warmwells Lane, DE5 8JB
Muck Out Mornings
Fri & Sun 9.30 - 11.30am (0-4s)
Messy play, soft play bus and farm animals in the barn child £5 / adult £1.
Sun 9.30 - 11.30am craft session (5-11s) - £5 Book at Eventbrite
Home Ed Group
Wed 12 - 2pm £3 contribution.
Book theoldfarmbus@gmail.com

Phonics with Robot Reg

Vanessa's School of Dance, Belper
Mon 9.45 - 10.30am mini class (1-3s)
Mon 10.45 - 11.30am preschool class (3-4s)
Fun, high energy and educational sessions for toddlers and preschoolers that support the development of early language and literacy skills. £6.50 per session. Pre-booking essential. Termly and half termly bookings
07812023666
lindsay@robotreg.co.uk

Pregnancy & Post Natal Pilates (babies welcome)

Belper Pilates Studio, East Mill
Mat work - Wed 7.10pm
Reformer - Thu 9.45am, Fri 10.20am
Our physio-led classes are part of the Belper Health Hub. Mums and mums-to-be of all levels of fitness will benefit from safe mat or reformer Pilates instruction from trained physiotherapists. Babies are welcome at all sessions. Book 07703 116284
www.belperlifefitnessphysio.co.uk

Primrose Art Club (4-13s)

St Mark's Church, Openwoodgate
Wed 4.15 - 5.15pm (4-9s)
Wed 5.20 - 6.20pm (10-13s)
Fri 4.15 - 5.15pm (10-13s)
Fri 5.20 - 6.20pm (4-9s)
Arts and crafts group sessions where kids can explore their creativity and develop skills.
Book.primroseartclub@gmail.com
www.primroseart.club
07387 962150

SEN-Fit Tea Time Club

Spondon Methodist Church
Mon 4.30 - 6.30pm (8-16s)
Infinite Wellbeing, Heanor
Thu 4 - 6pm (10-16s girls)
St Hugh's Church, Borrowash
Fri 4.30 - 6.30pm (8-16s)
Fun activities fostering confidence and friendship. £10 per week. Booking required. Book info@sen-fit.co.uk

Sparks Film Club (7-11s)

The Grand Pavilion, Matlock Bath
Wed 5.30 - 7.30pm (25/09 - 04/12)
The Lime Tree Conference Centre
Sat 10.30am - 12.30pm (28/09 - 15/12)
Ignite imagination, build confidence and encourage a host of new skills whilst learning about the different aspects of filmmaking in these fun

and friendly classes. The autumn term theme is Finishing Touches. 10 weeks not including half term. Membership costs £56.25 monthly or £250 termly. Discounts for siblings or groups.
Book DerbyshireNorth@sparksarts.co.uk • www.sparksarts.co.uk/product/filmmaking-classes-derbyshire-north/

Taekwondo Maestros & Masters Academy (4+)

Little Eaton Village Hall
Tue 7 - 9pm (8+)
Sat 9 - 10am (4-7s)
Sat 10am - 12pm (8+)
Improve your fitness, flexibility, balance, confidence, discipline and moral values with the Korean martial art, Taekwondo! A great sport for your little ones (4+) and even for yourself as a fun, family activity. £30 per calendar month.
Book admin@mandm.academy
07818 559309
www.mandm.academy

The Drama Loft (7-11s)

Duffield Baptist Church
Mon 6.10 - 7.20pm
Term time drama club that encourages social and communication skills, where young people can keep their imaginations alive, build confidence and, most importantly, HAVE FUN!
£8 per session. Discount for block booking. Register for a free taster session Mon 6 - 7pm on 02/09.
Book 07857 316322

The Little Baby Sanctuary (0-active crawling)

Fusion Yoga Well-being Centre, Ripley
Tue 10.30 - 11.30am baby massage
Tue 1 - 2pm baby yoga
Sage Yoga Studio, Belper
Thu 10.30 - 11.30am baby yoga
Thu 1 - 2pm baby massage
Anna Michelle's School of Dance, Darley Abbey
Fri 10.30 - 11.30am baby massage
Fri 1 - 2pm baby yoga
Gentle, interactive strokes and movement supporting common ailments, concerns and baby milestones with Nicky, qualified NNEB nursery nurse, baby massage and baby yoga instructor.
Book www.thelittlebabysanctuary.co.uk • 07739 551379

TinyTalk (0-4s)

Communicate with your baby before they can speak! At TinyTalk we sign, bounce and giggle through each class, while you learn a handful of useful BSL signs with action songs, stories and familiar nursery rhymes. Enjoy social time and a nice hot cuppa and biscuits after every class. All class sizes are limited.
St John's Methodist Church, Allestree

Mon 9.45 - 10.45am (babies)
 Mon 11.15am - 12.15pm (toddlers)
The Church on Oakwood
 Tue 9.45 - 10.45am (toddlers)
 Tue 11.15am - 12.15pm (babies)
 Book bookwhen.com/
 tinytalkderbynorth
 www.tinytalk.co.uk/emilyreeve
Belper Groups back in January but look out for Halloween and Christmas specials!

Toddler Tuesdays (18m-5s)
Denby Pottery Village
 Tue 10 - 11am
 Creative group craft sessions for your pre-schooler and a free hot drink at Bourne's Coffee shop for you. £7.
 Book www.denbypottery.com

Twistin Tinies Adventures (0-18m non-walkers)
Belper Community Hall
 Mon 12.30 - 1.30pm
 Tue 11.15am - 12.15pm
Arc Leisure Centre, Matlock
 Wed 11.15am - 12.15pm
 Innovative sensory adventures to help your baby grow!
 Block bookings - 4 trial classes. £20 for new customers.
 Book www.twistintots.co.uk
 07977 578359
 jacqui@twistintots.co.uk

Twistin Tots (0-5s)
Belper Community Hall
 Mon 9.45 - 11.30am stay and play
 Tue 9.45 - 10.30am
Arc Leisure Centre, Matlock
 Wed 9.45 - 10.30am
Darley Abbey Village Hall
 Thu 9.45 - 10.30am stay and play
 Magical music and movement classes for under 5s and their grown-ups. Weekly or block bookings - 4 trial classes £20 for new customers.
 Book www.twistintots.co.uk
 07977 578359
 jacqui@twistintots.co.uk

Vanessa's School of Dance (2-18s)
Vanessa's School of Dance, Belper
 Mon 4.15 - 4.45pm nursery ballet & tap (2-4s)
 Mon 4.45 - 5.15pm ballet & tap (reception)
 Thu 4 - 4.30pm musical theatre (reception)
 Sat 9 - 9.30am Tiny Diamonds acro (4-6s)
 Sat 9.30 - 10am modern dance (5-7s)
 Mon to Thu 4pm onwards and Sat 8.45am - 6.30pm (see timetable for more classes)
 Ballet, tap, modern, contemporary, musical theatre, singing, acrobatics and street dance. Adult classes offered in tap, ballet & fitness.
 Book www.vsdance.co.uk
 01773 823309 • 07581 228557

UNDER £4 OR FREE
Acorns Toddler Group (0-4s)
Woodlands Church, Allestree
 Mon 9.30 - 11.15am
 Free play, snacks, singing and a Bible story.
 www.woodlandschurch.org.uk
 01332 551336

B.E.A.R.S. Breastfeeding Support Group
Heanor Children's Centre
 Tue 9.30 - 11am (fortnightly)
Alfreton Library
 2nd Mon of the month 12 - 1pm
St Mark's Church, Openwoodgate
 Fri 1 - 2.30pm
 Refreshments, social and breastfeeding support with a chance to meet other parents! Older siblings very welcome. Please check the BEARS Facebook page for group updates before you set out. For urgent support, call BEARS on 07776 495900 or use Fb messenger.

Breastfeeding Network Derbyshire
Online - Zoom
 2nd Thu of the month 8 - 9.30pm
 VWorkshop for pregnant parents interested in learning more about breastfeeding. Free but register to receive the invite. Check the Fb page for details and the Eventbrite link.

Bridge the Gap Sinfon Family Hub
Family Drop-In (0-5s)
 Tue 10 - 11.30am
 These free drop-in sessions offer a friendly and relaxed space for families to support their wellbeing, get creative and talk to the Bridge the Gap team. Parents, expectant parents, babies and young children (under 5) are all welcome. There's no need to book, just come along.
Becket Family Hub, Derby
Introducing Emotions (0-2s)
 Thu 9.30 - 11.30am
 A new free 10-week course for parents and children under 2 years that will gently introduce emotions through creativity, play and stories. First course starts 12/09.
Community Gardens, DE24 8WJ
Nurture in Nature Parent Wellbeing Sessions
 1st Fri of the month 12 - 1.30pm
 Time outside. Creative activities, wellbeing support and someone to listen. Welcome to bring lunch or a hot drink. Book www.jwbridgethegap.com
 staceyemurray@jwbridgethegap.com
 01332 600827

Denby Bottles Messy Church
Denby Bottles Methodist Church
 3rd Sun of the month 10.15am
 Crafts, food, music and worship. No need to book.

Derbyshire Dales Mum2Mum Breastfeeding Support Group
 Note all groups run once a month. Follow social media pages to see

which week each venue is.
The Play Village, Ashbourne
 1st Wed of the month 12.15 - 2.30pm
Hulland Ward Millennium Hall
 3rd Wed of the month 10 - 11.30am (at Hulland Hippos)
Wirksworth Memorial Hall
 Thu 9.45 - 11.15am (monthly at Wirksworth Stay and Play)
Ashbourne Elm Church
 Fri 10 - 11.30am (weekly)
 Free drop-in sessions run by local mums trained in peer support. Part of the Breastfeeding Network. All welcome.

Derbyshire Toy Libraries Stay and Play
Glebe Field Centre, Crich
 Mon 9.30 - 11am
Grassmoor Community Centre
 Tue 9.30 - 11am
Belper Community Hall
 Wed 9.30 - 11am
Kilburn Village Hall
 Thu 9.30 - 11am
 Cost of sessions varies from £2-4. Additional siblings/adults £1. Under 6m go free. No booking required.
Strutts Centre, Belper
 2nd Sat of the month 9.30 - 11am
 Multiples playgroup (14/09 & 12/10)
 For carers of twins and triplets. Friends of multiples welcome. £4 for the first child. Additional siblings/adults £1.
 Book www.derbyshiretoylibraries.org

Holbrook Baby and Toddler Group (0-5s)
Holbrook Moor Methodist Chapel
 Wed 9 - 11am
 Have fun and share experiences in a friendly environment. Toys for all ages, crafts, stories and singing plus a healthy snack for the children and cake and a drink for adults. £2 per family. No need to book.
 07980 652431 or Fb

Hulland Hippos Baby & Toddler Group (0-5s)
Hulland Ward Millennium Hall
 Wed 10 - 11.30am
 A range of stimulating play activities for under 5s, including a baby area. Snacks and drinks. Songs and a story at the end. Busy, friendly group. New families welcome.
 £3 per family. No booking required.
 Fb or www.hullandchurches.org.uk/groups/hulland-hippos

Kilburn Baby & Toddler Drop-In
Kilburn Village Hall
 Sun 9.30 - 11.30am (fortnightly)
 Welcoming all families, babies and toddlers to our play, colouring, reading & sensory areas. Drinks provided.
 07877 356262
 kilburnbaby@gmail.com
 Fb KilburnBabyAndToddlers

Little Church (0-5s)
St Peter's Church, Belper
 Wed 10am - 12pm £1 per family
 office@stpetersparishbelper.org.uk

Little Sparkles (0-4s)
Ashbourne Elm Church
 Thu 9.30 - 11am
 Parent and toddler group with lots of toys, a short story and some songs. Snacks provided for children and drinks for adults. Booking preferred but not essential.
 Book ashelim.ch/sparkles
 office@ashbourneelm.church
 01335 344338

Little Springs (0-5s)
Wellspring Church, Wirksworth
 Tue 9.30 - 11am
 A range of toys, a weekly craft activity plus story time and songs. Stay and play with your little one and enjoy making new friends and learning together.
 Suggested donation of £2 which covers refreshments - real coffee and homemade cake!
 www.wellspringchurchwirksworth.co.uk/little-springs
 Fb Little Springs at Wellspring Church

Messy Church (all ages)
Ripley Salvation Army
 3rd Fri of the month 3.30pm
 Games, craft and stories followed by a meal. Donations welcome
St Swithun's Church, Belper
 2nd Sat of the month 4 - 6pm - donation
 office@stpetersparishbelper.org.uk
St Mark's Church, Belper
 4th Sat of the month 4 - 6pm - donation
 office@stpetersparishbelper.org.uk

Nature Tots
Avenue Country Park, Chesterfield
 Fri 10 - 11am
 Monthly 27/09 & 25/10
 Meet at the carpark for a short walk with fun nature activities along the way. Free. No booking required. Free parking. www.derbyshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/things-to-do

NCT Bumps and Babies (0-5s)
West End Community Centre
 Tue 10am - 12pm
 Open all year round for anyone pregnant or parents/carers of pre-school age children. Hot and cold refreshments and biscuits always available. Free parking. Suggested donation £2.
 clairebrassington.nct@hotmail.co.uk

Prams & First Shoes (0-2.5s)
St Mark's Church, Openwoodgate
 Thu 9.30 - 11.30am
 01772 826519

SEN-Fit Support Sessions
Infinite Wellbeing, Heanor
SEND Parent/Carer Support Group
 1st Wed of the month 9.30 - 11am
 Free to attend sessions for parents and carers to chat and get information, support and signposting. Includes refreshments.
 No need to book.

Walking Group
 2nd Thu of the month 6.30 - 8pm
 Evening walks blending fitness with nature and social support. No need to book. Free to attend. Just turn up at Infinite Wellbeing, Heanor.
Neurodiverse Adults Social Group
 4th Thu of the month 6.30 - 8pm
 No need to book. Free to attend. Just turn up at Infinite Wellbeing, Heanor.
 info@sen-fit.co.uk

Stanley St. Andrew's Stay and Play (0-5s)
Stanley St. Andrew's CofE Primary School
 1st Fri of the month 2 - 3pm
 Free play session for pre-schoolers, led by a qualified teacher to encourage and develop school readiness. Sit back with a hot drink and have a chat whilst staff run the activities.
 info@st-andrews-pri.derbyshire.sch.uk • 01159 324252

Toddlers Inc. (0-5s)
Denby Bottles Methodist Church
 Tue 10am - 12pm
 Lots of toys for all ages, finishing with a song and rhyme time. 50p per child includes a snack and drink for all.

Tots @ Dots
Dot-Teas Emporium, Belper
 Thu 10am - 12pm
 Drop-in meet-up for mums, dads and carers to come along with little ones. Free but the tea rooms ask that you buy a drink. No booking required.

Whistlestop Wildlife Watch Group (5-11s)
A different place each month
 Sun 08 Sep 10am - 12pm River Dipping at Bradford Dale
 Sun 13 Oct 9.30 - 11.30am Red Deer and other upland wildlife at the Eastern Moors
 Outdoor wildlife-themed activities at a different nature reserve/wild space in central and north-east Derbyshire each month plus occasional indoor sessions at the Matlock Bath base. £2.50 for one child; siblings 50p extra
 Children must be accompanied by an adult. Booking required. Carparking and meeting point will be confirmed nearer the time via email.
 whistlestop_watch@yahoo.com

Wirksworth Stay and Play Baby & Toddler Group (0-5s)
Memorial Hall, Wirksworth
 Thu 9.45 - 11.15am
 Volunteer-run playgroup with sensory play, a wide range of toys, and themed creative activities.
 No booking required. Includes snack for the children. Drinks and biscuits for the adults. 0-6m £1.50; 6m+ £3 per family. More info on Fb.

Yellow Daisies Stay & Play (0-5s)
The Village Hall, Heage
 Mon, Wed & Fri 9 - 11am play group - £3.50 per child
 Tue 9 - 11am messy play - £3 per child
 Includes snack and drink plus hot drinks for adults.
 yellowdaisies72@gmail.com

Most groups are term time only - please check before you travel.

LIBRARIES FREE

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 Mon 11 - 11.30am story time
Allestree
 Tue 2.30 - 3pm rhyme time
Ashbourne
 Thu 10.15 - 10.45am story time
Belper
 Wed 11 - 11.30am story and rhyme time
Heanor
 Mon 2 - 2.30pm story and rhyme time (fortnightly)
 Thu 11 - 11.30am story and rhyme time (fortnightly)
Matlock
 Thu 10.30 - 11am story and rhyme time
Ripley
 Tue 10 - 10.30am rhyme time
Wirksworth
 Thu 2.15 - 2.45pm children's singalong



Follow us on social media for updates and loads more content.



Find all this information online at www.boomderbyshire.co.uk

INSPIRING IDEAS FOR 0-4 YEAR OLDS



Written by Hannah Adamson (from Boom Buddies Family, The Adamsons)
Hannah is a primary school teacher in Derby and mum to 15-month-old Lucy. Here she shares some activities for 0-4 year olds which can help children develop essential skills.

Maria Montessori said, *“The wise mother will remember that play time is never wasted.”*

This quote really struck me recently. I was filling Lucy's tuff tray with cuddly dogs to use alongside the book *Dogs* by Emily Gravett, when I started to doubt myself about the potential learning benefits. I voiced my concern to my husband and he pointed out, “She'll enjoy it, isn't that enough?”



Of course it is, but once I started to think about it, the benefits seemed obvious. She would be exploring an interest, engaging in imaginative play, working on her fine motor skills by scooping 'dog food' into the bowl, communicating by signing the word

'dog', exploring early phonics by thinking about the sounds dogs make and learning about care needs (using her comb to brush the dogs)! All that from an activity I had thrown together with things we already had!

I know Lucy is only 15 months old and 'school-readiness' doesn't need to be a priority yet, but creating opportunities for her that develop essential skills has become one of my favourite things. I love watching her excited face when she realises there are new things to explore. Each setup stays out for around a week, giving her ample opportunity to engage with it fully and read any related books multiple times!

Here are some of our favourite activities we've tried so far, with suggestions of what to include, the learning benefits and how to uplevel it depending on your child's age:



1) Flower Potions

Activity: making 'potions' using natural materials (outdoors, unless you don't mind mess inside!)



Resources: water, a 'cauldron', jugs, spoons, scoops, whisk, petals, grass, leaves

Learning benefits: gross motor lifting, fine motor scooping, pouring and mixing, hand-eye coordination, colour recognition, imaginative play

Potential uplevelling: counting, measuring, colour mixing (using coloured water)



2) That's Not My... Material Exploration

Activity: taking inspiration from the Usborne touchy-feely books, exploring different textured materials

Resources: a wide range of child-safe materials from around the house, including different fabrics, wood, plastic and metal

Learning benefits: phase 1 phonics (experimenting with sounds that different materials make), fine motor grasping and manipulating (e.g. scrunching fabrics up), colour recognition

Potential uplevelling: expanding vocabulary (describing the materials in different ways), sorting, comparing and contrasting the materials, simple experiments (e.g. is it waterproof?)

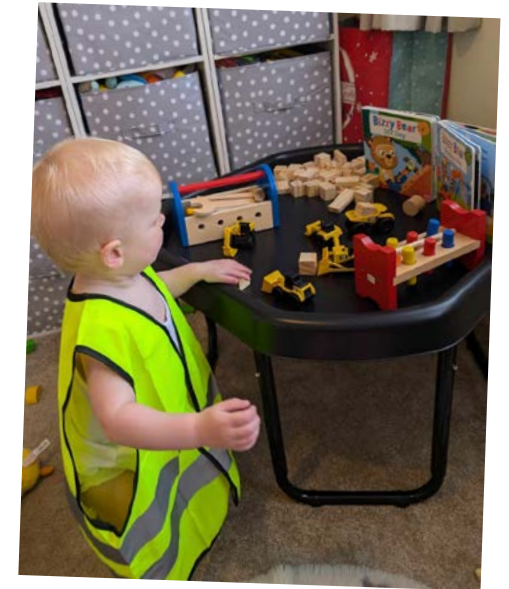
3) Construction and DIY

Activity: exploring all things construction and DIY

Resources: a toy toolkit, a hard hat and hi-vis jacket, building blocks/boxes, toy construction vehicles, something for the vehicles to move (ceramic baking beans, rice or pasta are cheap, reusable options)

Learning benefits: gross and fine motor skills, imaginative play, phase 1 phonics (experimenting with sounds of hammering, stacking, screwing, etc.)

Potential uplevelling: provide real tools and let them have a go (closely supervised of course!), provide building challenges that involve turn taking



We'd love to hear about your favourite activities for 0-4 year olds too, so feel free to tag us in any social media posts about activities we can try!

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SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD AT TIMES OF TRANSITION



Written by Nikki Webster from Bridge the Gap
Nikki is the Clinical Director at Bridge the Gap with 17 years' experience working in mental health. She is a fully registered, experienced mental health nurse, ACT therapist, and has training in Behavioural Family Therapy and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.

As I sit here as a parent of a very soon to be secondary schooler, I am writing this article feeling all of the emotions. Waves of anxiety, worry, angst and pride mix into my parenting at this stage and I am all too aware that my daughter is feeling a whole host of different emotions too.

Change is hard. And with it comes uncertainty. For us, as adults, it is difficult and yet we have emotionally mature brains (though sometimes questionable, I admit!) whereas our children do not have the capacity to regulate, as we do.

Whether you are parenting a child who has entered the school system for the very first time, entered secondary school for the first time or simply moved classes within the same school, change and transition still comes with mixed emotion. Uncertainty fuels anxiety and worry – we don't enjoy the not knowing. We thrive on certainty and routine as a species, and so when change rears up, this challenges our attempts to control every potential outcome. Our children feel this ten times more. The pre-frontal cortex of their developing brains is not yet fully adjusted to understanding the world. This part of our brain, the 'personality centre' is the cortical region that makes us uniquely human. It is where we process moment-to-moment input from our surroundings, compare that input to past experiences, and then react to them. Without past experience, we have little to go on – we are entering new territory. And we know that this part of the brain is the last to mature – in some, as long as 30 years.

So how can we support them through change, transition and any turbulence within their early life?

Change is a fact of life, and helping our young people understand the potential positive outcomes of change is a helpful starting point. Teach them that our brains need these new experiences to shape us, to help us to grow and to nurture our ability to

process difficult emotion. Remind them that once they have taken that leap, the first big step – that they have done it! However difficult an emotion feels, it cannot harm us physically. It is simply just emotion. Anxiety and worry feel uncomfortable, yes, but they will ALWAYS pass. All emotion will pass.

Once our children have completed a few weeks within their new class or school environment we can remind them that they have done it, they have moved through the most difficult first step and sat with that uncomfortable feeling of doing so. They are amazing for that. Celebrate with them - something we do a lot of at Bridge the Gap is completing a 'Book of Truth'. A Book of Truth is a scrap book of photos, quotes, sayings and reminders showing that they have moved through change and the difficult emotions that came with it previously. Something they can, in time, look back on and remind themselves that they have built a little more resilience because they have succeeded in facing new challenges and expectations placed on them. "Do you remember when I was worried about not making any friends? Look how many I have now!" Reminders that they have achieved their goals encourage them to become resilient adults with the ability to sit with emotion that is uncomfortable.

Settling in to a new routine sometimes takes a little longer than we felt it might. All of our children are different and it is important to go at their pace. If they are struggling, reach out and speak to adults around them such as teachers or assistants who might be able to offer a little extra support. Slow down your pace a little too – what does the early school rush look like at the moment? What are the expectations on them after school? Maybe take some time to reflect on these key times and what you can add in or remove, to ease a little pressure for them. Some simple tips might include the following:



- Use play when it comes to placing a demand. For example, "How fast can you tie your shoelaces? Let's time each other!"
- Give choice wherever possible as this allows them to feel a sense of control, "Do you want to brush your teeth before or after breakfast?" or "Would you like cereal or toast today?"
- Connection, connection, connection: often our children struggle to leave us because we are their safe adult, their whole world, and we help them to feel secure and regulated in their emotional state. Consider how you can build connection in – do you have time for a short cuddle and story in the morning, is it worth waking them a little earlier to fit this in? Perhaps a quick game of Top Trumps after school before tea?



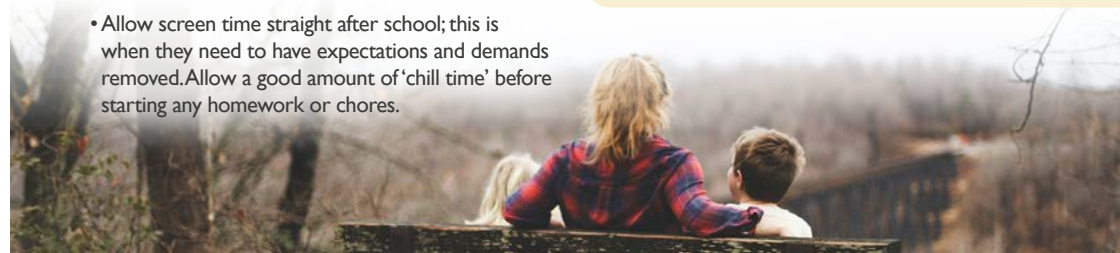
- Allow screen time straight after school; this is when they need to have expectations and demands removed. Allow a good amount of 'chill time' before starting any homework or chores.

- Ensure you have lots of snacks on hand straight after school to let them re-fuel!
- Consider what their bedtime routine looks like, ensure lots of connection time for them to chat through worries if they have them (as this is often when they surface!).

Remind them that they are doing it – they are sitting through emotion every day, facing new challenges and learning all of the time. They are amazing for that and you are amazing for supporting them through it and being their cheerleader.



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EVENTS

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER 2024

Events happening locally for all ages!

All information is as accurate as we could make it at the time of writing. Check out our blog and social media for more information and events nearer the time.

Treasure Island Outdoor Theatre

Crich Tramway Museum
Fri 30 Aug to Tue 03 Sep – 10am to 5pm
Notice This Notice Theatre Group performing Treasure Island. Suitable for the whole family.

The Darley Park Concert

Darley Park
Sun 01 Sep – gates open 3pm
A spectacular evening of classical music and fireworks. Family friendly, picnics welcomed.
Tickets: from £5 (from £2 for ages 1-15) when buying in advance

Making Faces Workshop with Clare Calder-Marshall

Aqueduct Cottage, Cromford Canal
Sun 01 Sep – 10.30am, 11.45am & 1.30pm
Hour-long sessions of fun for all the family, turning natural materials into art! Book via Eventbrite or contact Clare on 07394 284600

Summer of Play – The Garden of Imagination

Calke Abbey
Sun 01 Sep – 9.30am to 5pm
The Garden of Imagination is back and bigger than ever this summer, with nine exciting zones to explore.

Summer of Play – Outdoor Games

Foremark & Staunton Harold Reservoirs
Sun 01 Sep – 10am to 4pm
Ready, set, go! Enjoy a summer of play with outdoor games for the whole family to enjoy.

Belper Woods of Wellbeing

Belper Parks Local Nature Reserve
Sat 07 Sep – 10am to 5pm
Nature-based wellbeing activities, talks and tasters. Family-friendly. £3 donation.

Children's Craft Drop-In Sessions

Belper Library
Sat 07 Sep & 05 Oct – 10am to 3pm
Suitable for families with children aged five years and over.

Derbyshire Toy Libraries

Buy It Now Sales
Sat 07 Sep & 05 Oct
Virtual Toy Auctions
Thu 12 Sep & 10 Oct

Lego Club

Ilkeston Library
Sat 07 Sep – 10.30am to 12pm
Back to school themed activities. Drop-in for age 4+.

Matlock Bath Illuminations

Matlock Bath
Sat 07 Sep to Sun 27 Oct – 6 to 9pm
A fun-packed family event, featuring a spectacular parade of illuminated and decorated boats on the River Derwent. Booking required.

Marehay Show

Marehay Park, Warmwells Lane DE5 8JE
Sat 07 Sep – from 12pm
Family fun with entertainment, stalls, horticulture and handicrafts.

Wirksworth Artisan Farmer's Market

FREE
Sat 07 Sep & 05 Oct – 9am to 2pm

Allestree Scarecrow Festival

FREE
Scarecrow HQ - The Red Cow, Allestree
Sat 07 & Sun 08 Sep
The 6th Allestree Scarecrow Festival plus garage sales.
www.allestree.org/scarecrow-festival

Shardlow Inland Port Festival

Sat 07 & Sun 08 Sep
Floating market, historic and working narrowboats, live entertainment, craft stalls and fun dog show.

Steampunk Weekend

Crich Tramway Museum
Sat 07 & Sun 08 Sep – 10am to 5pm
Ever-popular steampunk event, suitable for the whole family.

Tapton Lock Festival

FREE
Tapton Lock Visitor Centre, Chesterfield
Sat 07 & Sun 08 Sep – 11am to 4pm
A family event on the banks of the beautiful Chesterfield Canal. Arts and craft workshops, outdoor performances, storytelling and narrowboat rides.

Wirksworth Art Trail

Various Locations
Sat 07 & Sun 08 Sep – 10am to 5pm
Wirksworth transforms into a huge gallery with homes, gardens and public spaces thrown open for over a hundred artists to exhibit their work in more than 70 venues.
Tickets: £10; under 16s free.
Free trail guide.

Belper Food Festival

FREE
Sun 08 Sep – 10am to 4pm (quiet shopping 9 to 10am)
Delicious hot food, bars serving thirst-quenching drinks, craft stalls and cake and producer stalls too.

Waingroves Show

Various Locations
Fri 13 to Sun 15 Sep
Packed with fun all weekend with live bands, displays, stalls, games, competitions and Horticultural Show!
www.waingrovesshow.com

New Mills Festival

Various Locations
Fri 13 Sep to Sun 29 Sep
Community spirit, supported by volunteers, businesses, artists, performers and creative thinkers.

Bat Walk

FREE
Allestree Park
Fri 13 Sep – 5pm
Discover the bat species found within the park and see the efforts being made to encourage them.

Museum on the Move:

Menagerie **FREE**
Assembly Rooms, Chesterfield
Fri 13 Sep to Sat 12 Oct – starts 10am
Mon-Sat Fun activities and animal related crafts for all ages.

Derby Pride

FREE
Markeaton Park
Sat 14 Sep – 12pm
Live music, acts and DJs – a vibrant market area featuring local LGBT+ small businesses, charities and other organisations. Family area for kids of all ages.

Discovering Connections

Calke Abbey
Sat 14 Sep – 10am to 3pm
Join the team in the Riding School for a day of talks, resources and family-friendly activities.

Belper Farmer's Market

FREE
Belper Market Place
Sat 14 Sep & 12 Oct – 8.30am to 1pm

Community Garden Picnic

FREE
Derby Arboretum
Sat 14 Sep – 12 to 4pm
Bring a picnic to this free family event with entertainment, activities, snacks and films.

Introduction to Traditional English Archery

Croots Farm, Duffield
Sat 14 Sep – 10am & 1pm
Two-hour family sessions (age 7+) including the history and design of the English longbow and arrows, the techniques and warm ups needed to draw the bows. Equipment supplied.
<https://www.trybooking.com/uk/DSYS>

Fabulous Places Autumn Market

Osmaston Park Wedding Venue, DE6 1LW
Sat 14 Sep – 10.30am to 3.30pm
Over 70 fabulous small businesses, creatives and makers, seasonal blooms and plants, autumnal interiors, artisan food, home and garden, decorative vintage and jewellery.

Spectrum Summer Festival

Lea Green, Matlock DE4 5GJ
Sat 14 Sep – 10am to 4pm
Award-winning Autism-friendly festival. A safe, welcoming, friendly and open space for those on the autistic spectrum and their families.
Tickets: £15; under 3s free

Melbourne Festival

Various Locations
Sat 14 & Sun 15 Sep – 10am to 5pm
Art and Architecture trail. Easy walking loops around the streets of Melbourne, featuring work by some of the Midlands' best creative artists.
Tickets: adults £5; under 18s free

Duffield Arts Festival and Scarecrow Trail

Various Locations
Wed 18 to Sun 22 Sep
Performances and workshops and talks across the fields of music, drama, art and books.

Displaced: From the Nile to the Derwent

Museum & Art Gallery
Sat 21 Sep – 11am & 1pm
Family tours of over 80 objects and three mummified humans. No booking required. Tickets: £5 (includes exhibition trail sheet)

Hulland School Open Day

FREE
Hulland Primary School
Sun 22 Sep – 2 to 4pm
Visit the beautiful school and grounds whilst having fun on the bouncy castle, tractors, forest school and classroom activities.
www.hullandprimarieschool.co.uk

Board Games Club

FREE
Belper Library
Tue 24 Sep & 22 Oct – 4 to 7pm
Suitable for families with children age 4+.

Alfreton Artisan Market

FREE
Sat 28 Sep & 26 Oct – 10am to 3pm

Spooktacular Children's Halloween Party with Hazzza Parties

Morley Hayes Hotel
Thu 03 Oct – 2 to 4pm
Tickets: £27 adults; £16 under 10s

Chesterfield Vegan Market

FREE
New Square, Chesterfield
Sun 06 Oct – 10am to 4pm
From cupcakes to zero-waste solutions, with pies and loaded fries in-between.

Wirksworth Wizarding Day

FREE
Various Locations
Sun 06 Oct – 10am to 4pm
A unique experience inspired by the wizarding world of Harry Potter. You can also travel to the day in wizarding style onboard the Ecclesbourne Valley Railway.

Swan Lake

Buxton Opera House
Sun 06 Oct – 4pm
A timeless ballet with exquisite dancing featuring a live orchestra with over 30 musicians.
Tickets: from £37

Sunflower Maze and PYO Sunflowers

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Derby Folk Festival

Various Locations
Fri 11 to Sun 13 Oct
Traditional music and arts festival.

Curious Investigators

Derby Theatre
Sat 12 Oct – 11am & 2pm
A cracking new adventure for 3-7-year-olds and their grown-ups!
www.derbytheatre.co.uk

Enchanted Memories

Little Moos Play Barn
Sat 12 Oct – 9.30 to 11am (0-12m), 11.30am to 1pm (0-5y)
Mini Autumnal photoshoot.

Oliver!

Derby Theatre
Wed 16 to Sat 19 Oct – 7.30pm (& 1.30pm)
This captivating production invites audiences of all ages on a journey of discovery, compassion, and resilience.
www.derbytheatre.co.uk

Hocus Pocus Spooktacular

Elvaston Castle
Sat 19 Oct – gates 5.30pm; show 7pm
Bring a blanket or camping chair, wrap up warm, and watch Hocus Pocus (PG) under the stars! Fancy dress highly encouraged.

Animal Encounters

Little Moos Play Barn
Sat 19 Oct – 10 to 11.30am & 12pm to 1.30pm
45 mins of free play, 45 mins of fun with the animals. All children will receive a snack and squash.

Science Discovery Fun Day

Rosliston Forestry Centre
Sat 19 Oct – 11am to 3pm
Have fun with science! No booking required. Suitable for all ages.

Check out our spooky half-term events guide on our blog!



Owl Trail
Rosliston Forestry Centre
 Sat 19 Oct to Sun 03 Nov – 10am to 4pm
 Visit the shop and purchase a trail map. £3 per child.

TinyTalk at Halloween Specials
St Mark's Church, Openwoodgate
 Tue 22 Oct – 10am & Fri 25 Oct 10 & 11.30am
 Join Derbyshire's favourite baby class for festive themed fun before regular classes return in 2025!

Halloween by Torchlight
White Post Farm
 Fri 25 & Sat 26 Oct
 Bring along your torches for a family night of fun, and enjoy the farm life at dusk for a spooky Halloween evening! Free pumpkin for children, and free hot drink voucher for adults.

Assemble – Derby's Making Festival
Museum of Making
 Sat 26 Oct
 An annual gathering that celebrates makers of all shapes and sizes at the Museum of Making.

Halloween in Enchanted Ilam: Magical Creatures Trail
Ilam Park
 Sat 26 Oct to Sun 03 Nov
 Discover magic round every corner and create your own mythical magical creature! £3

Museum on the Move: Romans
FREE
Hasland Village Hall
 Sat 26 Oct to Sat 09 Nov – starts 10am Mon-Sat
 A chance to explore Roman life through this interactive exhibition that includes handling replica Roman items. Closed between Sat 02 and Tue 05 Nov.

Kids' Broom Making Workshop
Ilam Park
 Mon 28 Oct – 10am to 2pm
 Make your own witch and wizards broom ready to fly round our magical trail.

Halloween Fun
Crich Tramway Village
 Mon 28 Oct to Fri 01 Nov – 10.30am to 4.30pm
 Activities each day to keep the children entertained.

Pine Cone Owl workshop
Rosliston Forestry Centre
 Tue 29 Oct – 2 to 4pm
 Make an adorable baby owl from a simple pine cone with the EEP Team. £3 per child. Under 3s free.
 Booking recommended 01283 535039 or rosliston@southderbyshire.gov.uk

Halloween Family Party Night!
Conkers, Waterside Centre
 Thu 31 Oct – from 6.30pm
 Tickets: from £8.45



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NAVIGATING CHANGE THROUGH BOOKS

Written by Hetty Waite
 Hetty is a local mum and author. The first book in her Young Adult dystopian trilogy, *MUTATE: Part 1 of The Chromosome Trilogy*, is now available to buy on Amazon, with the digital version currently on sale for 99p.



September tends to be a time of new experiences. First day starting at a new school maybe, or at least with a new class or teacher. First time trying out a new routine, or first time spending more time away from your child. Whilst these new experiences can be exciting, they can also feel overwhelming and daunting – for parents as well as children. These book choices aim to help you navigate the changes your family might be undertaking, and will hopefully reassure your little one that they can face any new challenge and thrive.

Practising Mindfulness

Too Many Bubbles

by Christine Peck and Mags DeRoma

Follow the story of Izzy the mouse, whose grumpy thoughts won't leave her alone. Using bold colours and simple images, this book teaches basic mindfulness activities that you can introduce to your child. There's even a page at the end with additional techniques you can try out at home.

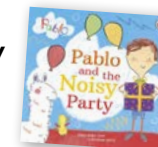


Embracing Autism

Pablo and the Noisy Party

by Pablo

A lot of youngsters can really struggle with loud noises, especially when coupled with a new environment or crowds of people. Explore how to cope with Pablo and his hand-drawn dinosaur Noasaurus, as they realise it's ok not to be the same as everyone else.



Exploring Emotions

The Colour Monster

by Anna Llenas

With emotions explained as colours (and a very cute monster!), this book can help your child make sense of all the different feelings they may be experiencing. As you might imagine from the title, it's bold, bright and a great way to give your little one the vocabulary they need to explain their emotions.



Developing Resilience

Tilda Tries Again

by Tom Percival

The importance of resilience in both childhood and later life shouldn't be overlooked – it's vital that our children feel able to maintain their balance when things don't go as planned. In this book, Tilda begins to develop her resilience with the help of a ladybird and her own bravery in refusing to give up.



Navigating Friendship Fallouts

One Little Word

by Joseph Coelho and Allison Colpoys

When a metaphorical argument grows into a giant purple and orange monster, it can really come between friends. This book helps you explore friendship fallouts in an easy-to-understand and visual way. Whilst also showing the benefits of saying sorry, this is the perfect companion for anyone worried about their child's peer relationships.

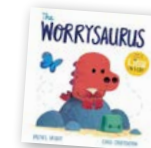


Handling Worries

The Worrysaurus

by Rachel Bright and Chris Chatterton

An overthinking dinosaur with a wise mother learns to chase his fears away in this lovely story with super cute characters. I especially liked the idea of his tin of special things that he uses to comfort him – much like the inevitable teddy bear that will accompany many children into their new environment this September! (Ours is a mouse called Spaghetti!)



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BACK TO SCHOOL: LEAVING YOUR COMFORT ZONE



Written by Jennifer Moses from Languages for All
Languages for All is a small, local company of dedicated and experienced language teachers offering English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish lessons to people of all abilities.

I have always loved the 'Back to School' time, which the French call 'La Rentrée' [The Return]. The start of a new term, with all its possibilities: new teachers, new lessons and new stationery – definitely my favourite part! In Germany, Austria and Switzerland there is a wonderful tradition for children on their very first day of school, where they receive a 'Zuckertüte' [sugar bag], a cone filled with sweets and small toys to celebrate starting school. The cones are often as big as the children themselves and are a long-standing tradition, bringing joy to youngsters poised at the start of their educational careers.

As a freelance tutor, this is a different time for me now, particularly as many of the learners are adults returning to language learning after what is, for some, a very long break away from education! I have a lot of admiration for these adults who are prepared to go back to the classroom: it can be very daunting. We carry many more responsibilities and much more is expected of our time, juggling families, jobs, household chores and friends. As adults, we have so much more whirling around our minds that it can be harder to learn new things. We are also often more self-conscious than children, whose minds are set up to learn and absorb information and for whom everything is new.

Adults also bring a lot of previous learning experience to lessons. This can be a great advantage, as we can relate the language we are learning to one we have learnt previously. We are often quicker to spot patterns in language and make new connections which advances our learning. Unfortunately, many adults also bring negative learning experiences with them. Situations where our confidence was knocked at school impact on our confidence in our abilities. I often find adults are far quicker to criticise and put themselves down when they make mistakes in learning. Making mistakes is a key part of learning, however. When learning a language, we



need to try it out and often mistakes can help us remember the correct words or rules. A big part of my role as a tutor of adults is to build their confidence and encourage them to leave any negative past learning experiences behind them.

Adults are usually motivated to learn a language for different reasons to children. They are seeking the ability to communicate when travelling rather than trying to pass exams, so the pressure to be perfectly accurate is reduced and the learning should be enjoyable!

Regardless of where you come to it from, the benefits of learning a new language are many and include the following:

- Improved memory
- Warding off dementia
- An open mind
- Gaining an understanding of other cultures
- The opportunity to socialise and meet new people in group lessons

Finally, let's not forget the one I consider to be the most important – learning a language is fun!



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FINDING OUT ABOUT PHONICS



Written by Amanda Vobes

Amanda is a mum, teacher of small children, reader, player of silly games and current Early Reading lead, amongst other things, at Ashgate Primary in Derby.

WHAT IS PHONICS?

In a nutshell, phonics is the way most of our children learn to read. In reception and Key Stage 1 (ages 4-7), children take part in daily phonics sessions that give them the building blocks they need to read and write.

The easiest way to think of it is that each letter of the alphabet not only has a name (ABC), but also its own sound, known as a phoneme. It's these sounds that we hear and blend together every day when we speak. Our children listen to and mimic the sounds they hear us make when they learn to speak. Then later they use these same sounds when they learn to read.



SO HOW CAN YOU HELP?

The most important first step in learning to read is to be able to hear those individual sounds in each word. A good way to start hearing the first sound in a word is with a game of I Spy, but with a twist! Normally in I Spy we would say, '... something beginning with c,' (pronounced see). Now, for someone who can't read, that's tricky! Most words starting with c when written don't actually sound that way. For example, if the answer was cat, it doesn't start with the c (see) sound.

So, what we need to be saying is, 'I spy something beginning with c,' making the sound at the beginning of the word cu-p. Try a few words in your head. What is the first sound in chair? Or how about tent? Playing this game regularly, using sounds, will soon have your little one hearing initial sounds.

Once they can hear those first sounds, the next step is to hear all the sounds in a word. To do this, we just tweak the game a little and break the whole word down into sounds, exactly as we would say it: 'I spy a c-a-t,' making sure not to leave a gap between each sound.

This can seem tricky because some sounds we say are joined together to make new sounds called digraphs. At some point, your child may well come home saying something along the lines of 'two letters, one sound!' and that will mean they are learning these new joined sounds at school. For example, car is simply 'c-ar' with the a and r said together. Other examples are 'ch-air' or 'c-oa-t'. Have a look around you, choose something you see and have a go at breaking it down!

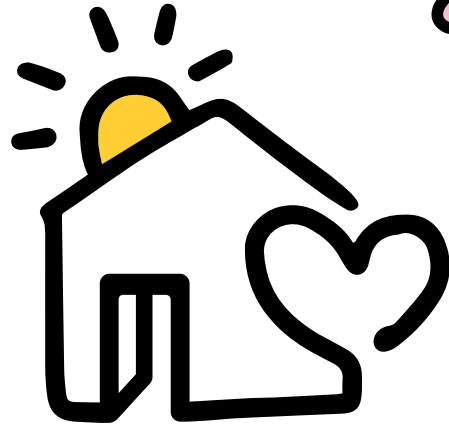
Once your child can hear the sounds inside the words they say, they will have mastered those first building blocks to becoming a reader and be ready to match them to the visual letters, or graphemes, which is where phonics sessions come in.

Ask the school early on which scheme they use so that you can access online materials often supplied for parents. This is helpful for when they start bringing home books to read and sounds to learn; these books should only contain words that match the sounds your child can confidently recognise and use.

Learning to read is the most important academic skill your child will acquire. Finding that ten minutes to hear your child practise regularly at home is the most important homework you will ever help them with. It is the start of everything else!



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LEARNING FROM THE GARDEN



Written by Steven Howard from N/D Garden Design

Steven is an eco-friendly garden designer and consultant based in Ashbourne, Derbyshire



As September arrives and the kids go back to school, some of us will suddenly find we have much more time to spend in the garden. With the paddling pool and toys finally tidied away, we can have an objective look at the garden, take stock and work out what has worked and what hasn't. Autumn is the best time to start any major garden projects; it's now that you want to start planning your garden for 2025 but also a great time to reflect on what you've learned over the spring and summer.

Gardening is nothing if not one big learning experience, even as someone who has gardened for a living and as a hobby for years, I am still learning. There are very few people who can say they know it all. Every year, I watch the garden for changes and differences and adjust my habits the following year accordingly. Gardening 'successfully' (I use inverted commas because this is a very subjective concept) is difficult. It takes time, dedication and patience to master but it also takes a great deal of trial and error. This is part of the fun but can also tip the scales of enjoyment if there starts to become more error than trial. One of the reasons I started the garden coaching service was because I would very often be met with people who simply gave up because they had convinced themselves they couldn't garden.

Here are some tips to help you learn how to get the best out of your garden:

1. Take notes. I am a dedicated note taker and try my best to notice the little changes each year brings. Some years are better for growing than others so note these changes and use that information to good effect in future years.
2. Sit and watch. I often tell garden coaching clients that 'There's no better fertiliser than the shadow of the gardener.' It's an old Japanese proverb which basically means if you're out in the garden often, observing the changes and variations, you'll have a better garden overall.
3. Grow the same varieties twice. Every year is different. You might have no success with tomatoes one year which might be more down to the season than anything you might have done wrong. Don't give up - grow the same varieties the next year and observe the changes. Remember your secondary school experiments: keep all the factors the same except one and record the outcomes.

Being green-fingered is less of a skill and more of an intuition. An intuition which only comes from confidence gained through experience. Consuming garden media is great but they often offer very general advice and there's no real substitute for personal experience and 'failures' only help with gaining that experience. So don't let the negatives get in the way of you enjoying your garden. Enjoy the ebb and flow and start planning for next year!



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How it works?

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Baby Zone

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