



Webbs Road • Lavender Hill
Old Town; The Nursery • Old Town; The Kindergarten



Newsletter of the Year 2023

Froebel exclaimed 'Eureka... It shall be called Kindergarten!'

Friedrich Froebel is well known for being the inventor of the Kindergarten, his vision was for a space young children could attend where learning would be fostered and guided by knowledgeable adults.

Where the environment is tailored to suit the needs of the children, not the other way around. He wanted children to be nurtured, much like a gardener would tend to flowers, crops and hedgerows.

Giving the right amount of attention and care in an environment that is specifically designed for children to thrive surrounded by adults who understand them.

At the beginning of 2023 we had only dreamed of ending the year with a fourth setting. Expanding LTNS is something we are often working towards, but we agree that we would only expand if the right building became available at the right time. In spring that very thing happened. The building in the lane opposite our Old Town nursery appeared to let and we immediately saw our dreams becoming reality. The space was perfect for a Kindergarten, where our Twigs and Trees children in our Old Town nursery would graduate to

once they turned two years old. This would enable us to expand our under two's rooms in what we now call 'The Nursery'. The idea to name the new site 'The Kindergarten' is heavily supported by Froebel with the principles guiding our refurb as we carefully constructed plans for the creation of the spaces which have now become the Twigs and Trees rooms. On 30th October we started to transition the children from the nursery to the Kindergarten and the

'The name 'Kindergarten' came to him like a 'revelation' and united so many ideas, principles, and visions in one symbolic word'

-Liebschner (1992:25)

reactions from the children were wonderful. Upon entering for the first time Eddie said, 'my Kindergarten is so big and beautiful' Otto said, 'I love my Kindergarten' and Margaux was in awe, she opened her arms wide and said 'this Kindergarten is beautiful'. Seeing the joy on the children's faces, knowing that the environment was created just for them, was an added bonus for all staff involved. As the staff and children spend more time in the Kindergarten the space will adapt to the needs and interests of the children that occupy it. I

suppose the questions is, with the success of this expansion are we looking to add another LTNS site in 2024? Expanding is never out of the question, but it has to sit within the vision and values of LTNS and align with the Froebelian principles which guide not only our practice with the children, but our relationships with one another and the wider community. For now we sit in gratitude for a fulfilling year and anticipate what's to come.

Friedrich Froebel

(1782-1852)



- Friedrich Froebel was a German educator whose work focused on the individual lived experiences of children
- He believed in child-centred education and saw play as fundamental to children's development
- Froebel wanted to 'educate people to be free, to think, to take action for themselves'
- He focused on the role of the educator to support and guide children's learning by harnessing the indoor environment, the local community and natural outdoor spaces to support children's holistic development and natural desire to learn.



We are planning an Open Day for the Kindergarten in 2024 for new and existing families. More information to follow.



The Wonderful LTNS Team

Outstanding Contribution Award

This year we included a new award at our annual staff appreciation event. The award for Outstanding Contribution was given unanimously to our Nursery Administrator, Zara. Many of you will have spoken to Zara either via phone call or email but what you may not know is how she supports all aspects of the work at Head Office and across the nursery management team. Zara often goes above and beyond and thinks of everything! We are very grateful to have her on the team.



Wellbeing Conversations: The Art of Active Listening

At LTNS we are always looking for ways that we can improve our relationships with our team and ensure we are doing everything we can to support their wellbeing in the workplace.

During the summer this year our HR consultant, Elaine Bissett, invited staff from each setting to attend a 'listening group'. An important part of this group was to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to talk and to be heard about matters that affected them during the working day. This conversation was carefully facilitated by Elaine who asked open questions and listened carefully to their responses. Conversations like these can help to break down boundaries between different roles and departments and can help to influence real change. We often send out questionnaires for feedback at certain times during the year however, our approach is changing to be more responsive and inclusive to the needs of our staff team. Many know they can speak with their managers in the moment should they need to, but knowing there is dedicated time away from the nursery to discuss experiences, without being judged and to have the potential to have a direct impact can be a very powerful tool for real change.

2023 Staff Spotlight

Each quarter throughout the year a staff member is nominated by their manager, their colleagues (and sometimes the children) to be spotlighted for their outstanding contribution to LTNS. We are so proud of everyone in the team, but these staff went above and beyond in 2023.

 Eva Webbs Rd	 Edona Webbs Rd	 Fernanada Webbs Rd	 Kim Webbs Rd
 Amy Webbs Rd	 Claire Lavender Hill	 Amel Lavender Hill	 Amber Lavender Hill
 Nazmun Lavender Hill	 Kamila Lavender Hill	 Emine Old Town	 Muna Old Town The Nursery
 Leah Old Town The Kindergarten	 Chanade Old Town The Nursery	 Anne Old Town The Kindergarten	

LTNS Socials



Quarterly socials are a great way for the teams to get together in a relaxed environment and enjoy food, drinks or games. The socials are organised by the social secretary of each nursery with the only exception being the spring social which is organised by Zara. The spring social invites all staff across LTNS to come together for a meal and awards ceremony. We take the time to congratulate all staff who have worked at LTNS for one year or more. Josephine at our Lavender Hill nursery celebrated more than 12.5 years with us in April. Now that is something worth recognising!

When we asked Josephine what she enjoys about working at Linden Tree she said, *'I feel very secure and respected in the nursery and I enjoy the children and families. [Linden Tree] feels like home to me'.*
(Josephine and her manager, Rosa, photographed right)



A Selection of 2023 Highlights ...

LTNS Old Town – Ofsted March 2023 Outcome: GOOD

On the crisp and sunny first day of March our Clapham Old Town nursery school had their Ofsted inspection. We had two inspectors visit us (one main inspector and one for quality assurance). They were very calm and relaxed during the day, asking open questions to all staff, speaking with children and having important conversations with the managers. During the feedback meeting there were a lot of positive comments and the inspector was very keen to focus on our relationships with parents. This was noted on the report which states; *'The nursery team builds open and honest relationships with parents and carers. Staff know that parents are important to children's well-being and development...as a result parents feel supported with any changes in their lives.'*

Thank you to all those parents who spoke with the inspector, your comments are so important to us and give the report an excellent example of how crucial those partnerships are.

If you are yet to read the report, please do so by clicking [here](#)



Expeditions throughout the year!

We are so excited when we can venture out of the nursery schools on expeditions both near and far. This year the Trees children across all sites enjoyed the annual trip to Kew Gardens, exploring the plants, trees and sculptures as we gave children the opportunity to explore and choose where to go and what to see next. Thank you to those parents who were able to join us on the day, it's great for us to share this experience with you.



Other trips include Old Town; The Nursery and The Kindergarten visiting the Fire Station, Lavender Hill going for a tour at Battersea Arts Centre and visiting the Garrick Theatre to see 'The Gruffalo's child' and Webbs Road visiting the Natural History Museum and Battersea Arts Centre for the 'Solstice' immersive trail.

Learning and Development Update

Our new Head of Learning and Development was appointed in September. Angela Fedi joined us from a larger nursery chain and has a wealth of experience training early years staff both in the UK and Internationally. Angela, along with her assistant Monika, are prioritising the development of the staff team and ensuring those who are new to LTNS receive improved training and induction to fulfil all elements of their job role. We are excited for the future of the quality of training across LTNS.

'How does furthering knowledge of the Froebelian approach impact the relationships within our nursery community?'

This year we asked ourselves the above question for a Froebel Trust funded project which took place with a group of Twigs and Trees parents at our Webbs Rd nursery led by Monika Kraszkievicz (Learning and Development Assistant).

The project consisted of six play sessions which were planned by the Twigs and Trees educators who harnessed the children's interests to further their knowledge and understanding in a specific area. The areas focused on were:

- Play based learning
- Froebelian approach to literacy and language
- Engaging with nature
- Early Maths
- Creativity
- Families and community

A newsletter was sent out to parents and staff before each session and during the session Monika narrated the learning that was taking place to parents and staff using Froebelian terms and focusing on play as underpinning learning. An overall find was that most of the parents who attended did not realise the deep thinking that takes place during play and that play is in fact, a child's work.

Thank you to all those parents who took part by completing questionnaires and attending play sessions with their children.

We have further events planned which includes a webinar on 'play' with Jane Whinnett MBE on 9th January (find more information on page 4).



A HUGE THANK YOU

A big heartfelt thank you to all of our staff, children and families. We have had a very busy year at LTNS with the launch of The Kindergarten at Old Town and we couldn't even begin to achieve any of this without the unwavering support of everyone involved. A key Froebelian principle is 'Unity and Connectedness' and when we reflect on 2023 we are humbled by the connections made across the Froebel Networks and with individual families which supports the important role we play within the community.

Webinar invitation: 9th January at 8pm

On Tuesday 9th January 8 - 9pm we will be broadcasting a webinar on play hosted by Jane Whinnett MBE. This is an open invitation for any staff or parents who would like to join the live stream which will be recorded. This webinar comes at the end of the Froebel Trust funded project (see page 2). Jane will be tying all six themes together as she discusses why play is so important for young children. Whether you were involved in the project not, we urge you to join us in what promises to be a very engaging session on why play is a vital tool to support learning.



Jane Whinnett is former Head Teacher of two maintained nursery schools in Edinburgh and a founder member of the Edinburgh Froebel Network. Jane is also a Travelling Tutor on the Froebel short courses.

Vision for the future: Nature Kindergarten

'Nature Kindergarten' is all about engaging with nature. You may have heard of Forest School, in which case, Nature Kindergarten follows a similar thread. For us using the term 'nature' at the beginning puts the emphasis on learning in and about nature rather than thinking about a 'forest'. The notion of a forest is limiting, whereas the natural world we have in Clapham surrounds us on the commons and this offers a great sense of security as children know where they are going, yet excited with what they might find. Nature Kindergarten will be rolled out at The Kindergarten first and then introduced across all LTNS Twigs and Tress rooms. All staff will attend training to learn more about how to plan sessions throughout 2024.



We understand the important job we do and feedback such as the below demonstrates the wonderful impact it is has on children, parents and families.

"Hi Fathima, I just wanted to drop you a quick note before things wrap up for Christmas to thank you and the team for a great year. I really appreciate the proactive support you have all provided throughout the year especially when Finn and Sully have gone through some tougher transitions. The Nursery's support when Finn started potty training was amazing, you came to me with suggestions and solutions of what could help him along - things that you would do at nursery but also things we could reinforce at home too. Additionally, I was so grateful when Finn was going through a bit of a tough few weeks and was struggling with his sharing and listening. You, me and Amy had a really productive meeting discussing what we could collectively do to support Finn through his big emotions and these tools and suggestions have helped us immensely at home. Lastly (but not least) your suggestions and support in working out Sullys nap schedule has resulted in him now sleeping through the night!!! Both of my kids are SO happy at LTNS which makes [dad] and I happy. We see the love and care that all of the teachers have for our boys and we see their development soaring. Thank you and a huge thanks to all of the team!"

- Old Town; The Nursery parent

2024 Diary Dates

Tuesday 2nd January

First nursery day of the year!
Open at 8am

Thursday 28th March

INSET DAY –
All Nursery Schools Closed

Friday 19th July

Staff Appreciation Event-
All Nursery Schools to
Close at 3pm

Friday 20th September

INSET DAY –
All Nursery Schools Closed

For the full list of 2024 dates
please follow the link

[LTNS Diary Dates](#)



info@ltns.org.uk
0203 900 2737

[LTNS Brochure](#)