



# 11 nursery open day activities that are sure to draw parents to your event!



plus a last minute preparation checklist

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Welcoming parents to view your setting at its best can often be the first stage to enrolling new families, encouraging positive word of mouth, and building community involvement in your nursery. We're referring to none other than open days! These are often used when spaces become available in rooms; these may be immediate or may be due to careful projection monitoring.

It can be challenging to plan for a profitable open day. You want to ensure the choice of activities is engaging and that they will draw families to your event - all the while being mindful of the costs associated with the day! To help you organise a successful event, we have collated 11 of the top nursery open day ideas for you to try that will **wow** your parents and families.



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## What to prepare before your nursery open day

For an open day to run smoothly, it requires a great deal of administration and preparation from yourself and your team. In addition to the regular day-to-day time-sensitive tasks you must complete for your nursery to run effectively, it can be easy to forget simple preparations before the big open day event. We have it covered! Below is a list of those easily forgotten tasks that will take your open day from good to outstanding.

### Tidy, tidy, tidy

As most open days are held on a weekend to fit around family working schedules, it is likely there may not be the usual buzz of chaos around the nursery when the families arrive. Ensure all rooms in the nursery are presentable and tidy. Encourage the parents and carers to move around the nursery to showcase the incredible, enriching environment you have crafted for their child. The nursery should show the wide range of activities, materials, and resources the children can interact with whilst being clutter-free.







## Create a music playlist

Your Early Years setting may be alive with the sound of music daily; ranging from tidy-up music with a lively beat, to calming relaxation sounds to encourage mindfulness practice. Think about the impact music can have on a setting.

Upbeat tunes may encourage parents to walk around the nursery at their leisure (if you feel that is appropriate). Whereas calming music or music from contrasting cultures can give some insight into how the room is run without explanation.



## Showcase your learning styles

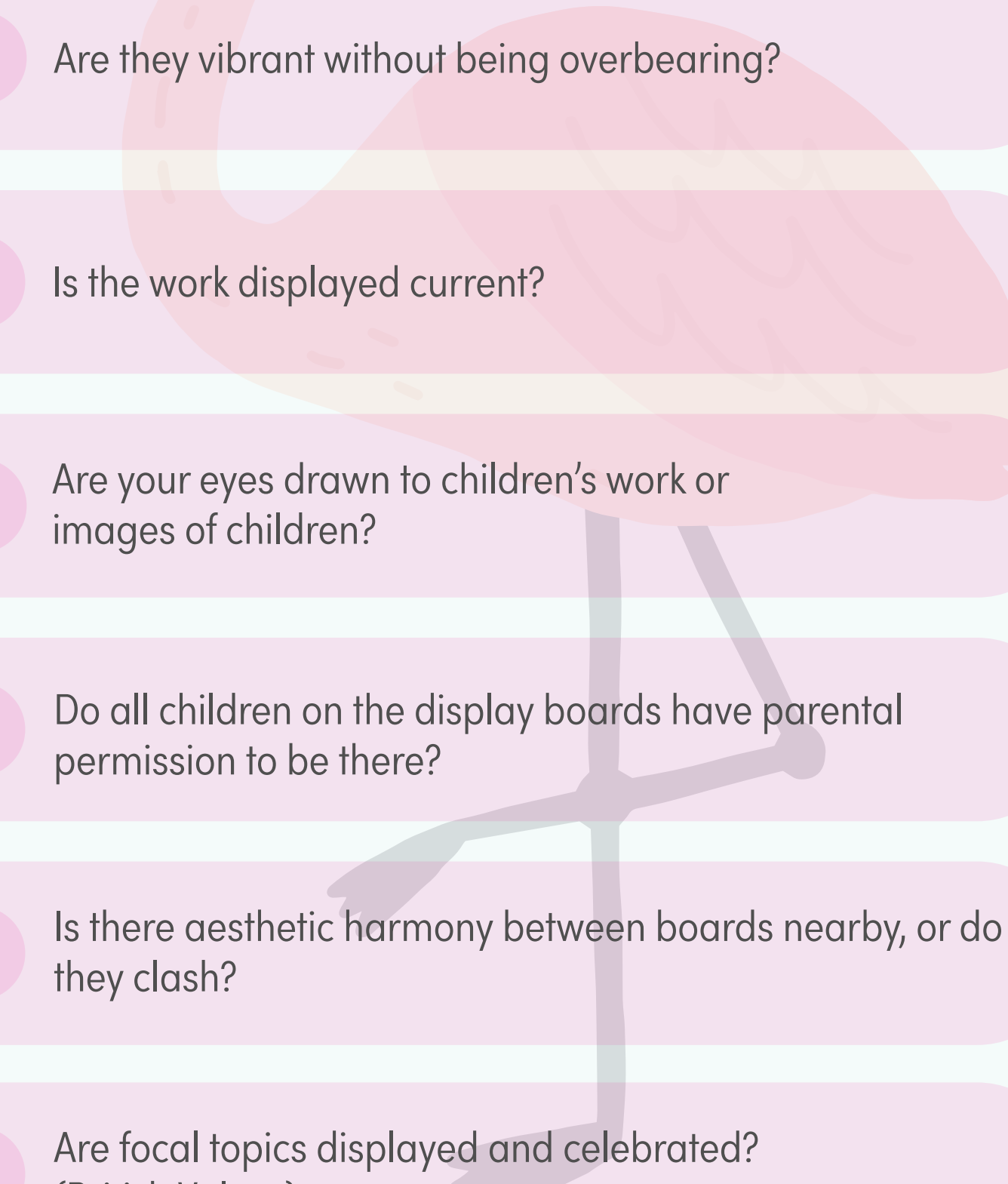
Prominent philosophical or pedagogical influencers may impact your nursery curriculum intent: Montessori, curiosity approach, loose parts play.

Your focus should be on showcasing these underpinning teachings within your setting, demonstrating the learning methods through the activities or resources on display during your open day.

If your setting is a Montessori nursery, have natural-based play activities, explaining to the parents the benefits and impact these methods have on early child development.

## Displays

Assign a team member to complete a quick display audit for the rooms in your nursery. You may even choose to dedicate some of your Level 2 or Level 3 apprenticeship staff's 20% off the role hours to this task. When auditing displays in EYFS settings, always question:

- 
- Are they vibrant without being overbearing?
  - Is the work displayed current?
  - Are your eyes drawn to children's work or images of children?
  - Do all children on the display boards have parental permission to be there?
  - Is there aesthetic harmony between boards nearby, or do they clash?
  - Are focal topics displayed and celebrated?  
(British Values)

## Outward appearance

The outdoor environment is your prospective parents' first impression of your nursery. Even the weather can help or hinder you! Take every effort to look from the perspective of a potential parent at the outside appearance of your nursery. Keeping on top of the following maintenance tasks throughout the year will reduce the priming needed in order to be ready for the open day event:

Paint on the outside of the building

Weeds on the driveway or in the carpark

The foyer and entrance area are clean, tidy, and engaging

Correct Covid-19 signs up with old guidance removed

Flowers

Clean windows

Signage



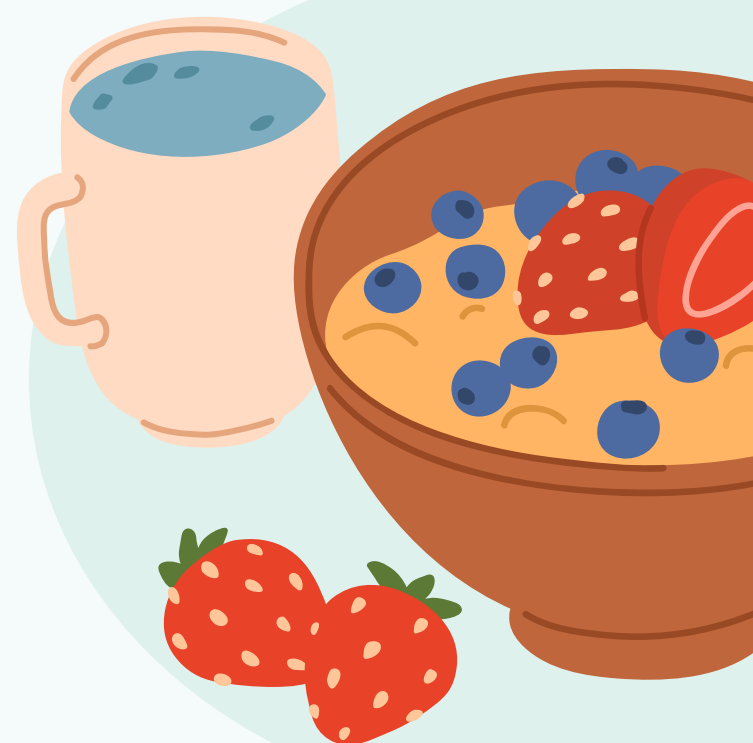
## Easy and affordable activities for a successful parent's open day

As explained by Nigel Rolfe, CEO of Cherry Childcare Ltd, when planning and delivering a profitable parent's open day, you must focus on gaining prospective interest for the spaces or upcoming spaces you will have. The activities your nursery chooses for the open day must mirror these spaces. For example, if there will be forthcoming spaces in the baby room, then baby-appropriate activities are more suitable than an activity that requires the dexterity and cognitive ability of a school-starter.

### Offer refreshments

A most successful draw that can require minimal cost and effort is the food and drinks available to visitors. By offering a morning bacon sandwich, or tea and cake, parents who may be returning from the school run might take the opportunity to visit your setting.

This can work well as a hook for settings attached to primary schools (day nurseries that also offer before and after school care for older children). Do care to cater to various dietary needs: vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free- plus remember to indicate clearly which is which.





## Baby activities for your nursery setting open day

### Sensory play

Sensory play is vital for effective development with children; parents and carers may be looking for free sensory activities to try with their babies.

To gain interest from the newborn - 24-month age range, offer a selection of sensory activities to enjoy when visiting your nursery.

Explore a list of 25 ideas for baby sensory play [here](#).



### Music

Music classes for babies are among the most popular paid-for classes parents and carers attend with their newborns. Music is an excellent introduction to soft and lively sounds that engage with the rate of development of their senses.

It leads toward repetitive songs with actions and is perfect for aiding language and communication progress. Include a baby music sensory class for your prospective parents delivered by one of your team members.



### Baby craft ideas

The rapid rate of development means the baby stage flies by, and many parents and carers wish for more keepsakes from their baby's first few months.

Using affordable crafting equipment such as non-toxic paint and recyclable materials, create handprint keepsakes for the parents to take home as a reminder of their open day experience.

You may wish to branch out further and purchase some air-drying clay to add something special to their hand- or footprint.



### Water play

Water play is another sensory exploration for young minds, with many parents and carers opting for swimming classes for sensory development opportunities.

If your parent open day falls in the summer, consider pulling out the watering cans for some soft water sensory play.

## Toddler activity ideas for your nursery open days

### Balloons

Creating balloon animals can be fun for team members or parents and carers to try with toddlers.

Print out some simple balloon animal instructions and stick them to a table supplied with materials, remembering to support when necessary!

You can also aim to use biodegradable or eco-balloons for your decorations.



### Soft play

Using the equipment you may have in your nursery or hiring local soft play equipment near you can be an excellent, and often safer, alternative to a bouncy castle.

This activity encourages balance, decision making and creative play.

### Face painting

This activity is inexpensive and easy to hook families of all ages. Print some simple face paint design options for children to choose from and request a brave staff member to become the artist.

Why not get the whole team involved and encourage all staff members to have their face painted!



### Petting zoo

There are several educational animal workshops available to hire in your local area. These well-trained and experienced animal handlers offer animal care experiences for EYFS children.

Linking the positive mental health benefits of animal interaction and teaching children the importance of caring for animals responsibly is an exciting draw for parents and children alike.

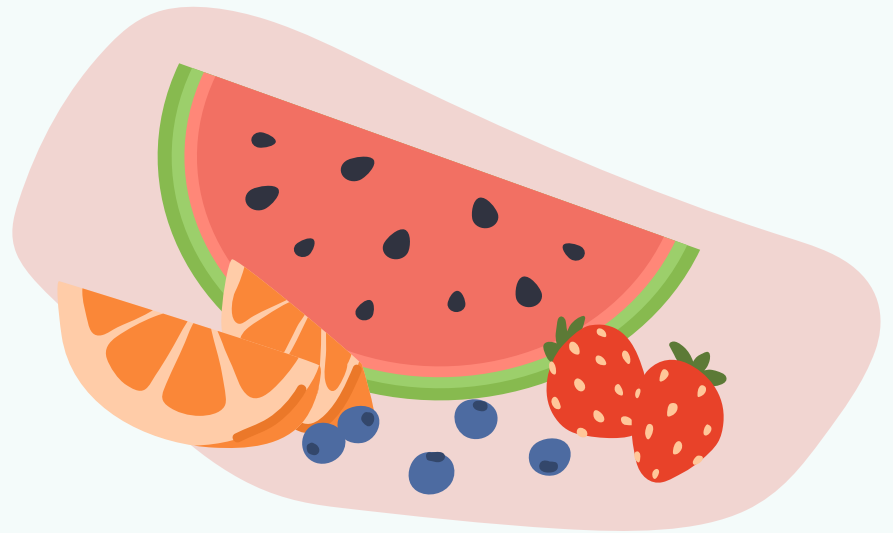
You can hire mobile petting zoos, specifically for EYFS settings. Take care they have suitable insurance and their ethos is underpinned by educational values and animal welfare.



### Fruit salad fun

Perfect for a mid-morning snack option whilst celebrating your nursery's healthy eating policy.

The selection of a variety of fruit can be used to create faces on pre-bought pancakes, and can also be a challenge for the curious with... blindfolded fruit tasting!



### Character appearance

A visit from the real Cinderella, Moana or Spiderman could do the publicity of your open day event wonders, and who says you can't?

See if any of your team members might be willing to take on the persona of a well-loved character for the morning.

Encourage pictures near your entrance or area to share your nursery's name for additional social media promotion.



## One final thought

Your open day should be carefully organised to stay within the pre-arranged budget whilst targeting the specific audience you want to encourage to enrol within your nursery. Stay creative (yet frugal) and enjoy! And remember, the success of the day comes down to tracking. Using helpful nursery software, store and, most importantly, convert all potential parents/carers from the event into brand new members at your nursery!

