



Welcome

Spring is just around the corner and it's time to re-embrace the big outdoors! Why not check out our downloadable walking challenge and get the whole family stepping out? And take a look at some great outdoor toy options that will definitely motivate the kids!

Of course, Mother's Day is just around the corner and Easter not too far away. Find inspiration for a great gift for mum for under £20. We have researched the best egg options and have some tips on organising a successful Easter egg hunt, plus loads of Easter craft and cooking ideas too.

Don't miss our giveaways either! This issue's goodies include Smoby Nature Playhouses, tonnes of books and a device to help those who find reading difficult. Apply inside and also ensure you receive every issue of our digital magazine with lots more content and goodies on offer.



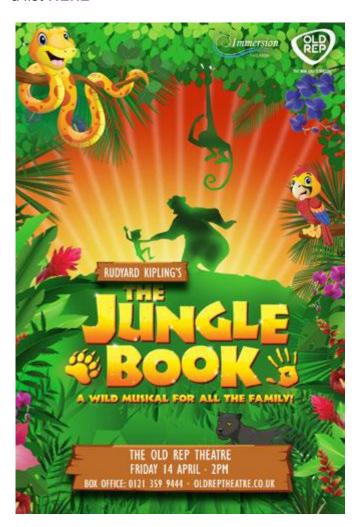
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Get in touch

Competition winners from our November/ December issue

Congratulations to all our winners. You can find a list **HERE**



Clubs, Classes & Activities



THEATRE DANCE ACT TRAIN SING BELIEVE ACHIEVE EXCEED



The Chocolate Shed

Chocolate making parties and workshops for chocoholics of all ages. Email

Theatretrain

Fun-packed, highenergy classes in singing, acting and dance. Ages 6-18.

Gra Na Rince

Kids' Irish dancing classes in Selly Oak and Redditch. Contact Louise 07790 876345 Email



BilinguaSing

Song-filled Spanish & French for little ones!

Email

bilinguasing.com Tel: 07539 863024



Football Funatics

Fun football coaching for children aged 4-13. Tel: 07931 455093 Email



Solihull Young Dancers

Ballet and Tap Lessons. Classes from age 2½. Tel: Kate 07722 732678



Premier Active

Action-packed holiday camps. Ages 4-11. Tel: 0121 514 2344 15% off, PAFAM23



S4 Swim

School holiday courses designed to boost your child's swimming development.

Birmingham Contemporary Music Group

BCMG

Free creative musicmaking workshops. Ages 7-18.

S4 Swim School



S4 Swim Intensive - School holiday swim courses to give your child a real boost with their swimming development:

Max of 5 swimmers per group; On-going swimmer assessment; Taught the S4 way, producing swimmers with technical ability; Consistent professional approach at all venues.

FIND OUT MORE



BilinguaSing



Multi award-winning sensory, musical language classes help to develop your child's early communication skills, build their confidence, and enhance their physical and emotional development. Each session is a fun-filled sensory adventure for babies, toddlers, nurseries and primary school clubs. Call Lucy on 07539 863024 or EMAIL

FIND OUT MORE

Softplay Takeaway

We offer softplay packages for children aged 0–12. Tel: 0161 818 4876.



FIND OUT MORE



What the parents say.....

We asked three parents, Sarah, Will and Rachel who all have or have had children at West House Nursery and Pre-School, to tell us what they think of it.

Will has two sons who started in the pre-school and then stayed on at West House School. He cannot speak more highly of their experience:- "It was obvious from the beginning that West House offered much more than extremely flexible hours. We also were overwhelmed with the nurture and care that both our boys received. They got to know us as parents too, so we really felt part of the West House family."

Sarah has also had a positive experience. She says:- "My daughters have received a head start for primary school at West House nursery."

When asked specifically about the staff Rachel, who has a daughter in the nursery, comments that:"The nursery staff have such a good understanding of where my daughter is at ability wise and provide many different opportunities to extend





and reach her next steps. They are also great at giving advice to a new parent on a range of topics including, napping/sleeping, learning to walk and toilet training just to name a few."

Will recalls that his wife was grateful that nappies and wipes were all provided:- "It was just one less thing to think about!"

Sarah adds:- "The staff are extremely caring and hardworking, and we couldn't be more grateful for everything they do for our little ones."

When asked what their child would say was their favourite thing about West House. Rachel is in no doubt:"100% her key people and the wonderful staff that look after her everyday in the room."

West House School and Nursery in Edgbaston, offers a co-educational day nursery and pre-school and takes babies from the age of 6 months. The prep school is for boys age 4-11 yrs. Est. 1895.

Read the FULL INTERVIEW

6 March/April Familiesonline.co.uk

Discipline in primary schools

By Lucy Dimbylow

At some point during their primary school years, all children – even the very best behaved – are likely to find themselves in hot water after committing some sort of misdemeanour.

How these incidents are handled will vary from school to school and also within schools, depending on the severity of the behaviour.

And while many schools still use traditional punishments, such as keeping children in at breaktime or sending them to the Head Teacher, a growing number are adopting a method called **restorative practice** to improve the behaviour choices of their pupils.

What is restorative practice?

Restorative practice is a set of principles and practice that encourages children to take responsibility for their behaviour by thinking through the causes and consequences.

'In a rules-led system, the tendency is for the teacher to tell the child what they've done wrong and how they're going to pay for it – for instance, by sending them out of the classroom if they're disrupting the lesson,' says Chris Straker, a former Head Teacher and interim Chief Executive Officer of the Restorative Justice Council.



'The problem with this system is that children don't learn about the responsibility they had in that situation and how it affected other people, because an adult has intervened and told them what they've done wrong.'

READ MORE



Familiesonline.co.uk March/April 7

Supportive ethos gives EHS girls the edge



Parents with daughters starting in Reception in Sept 2023 or 2024 should add Sat 22 April to their diaries, when Edgbaston High School (EHS) opens the doors of its Prep department to prospective families. Come to visit and talk to our pupils; they are our best ambassadors!

READ MORE







Helping boys manage the gender gap

By Lisa Wander and Catherine Loble

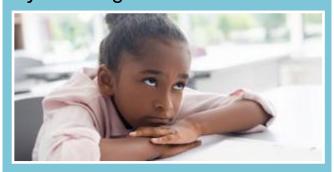


A 2022 global report shows that boys are increasingly becoming left behind in education. Furthermore, recent school entry baseline assessments show over one million boys are already under-achieving by the time they enter Reception. So what are the reasons behind this?

READ MORE

Six reasons children switch off from learning

By Gail Hugman



Given eleven years of full-time schooling, it's not surprising many children face difficulties that affect their learning and some switch off altogether. What are the reasons for this and how can children be helped to reengage?

READ MORE

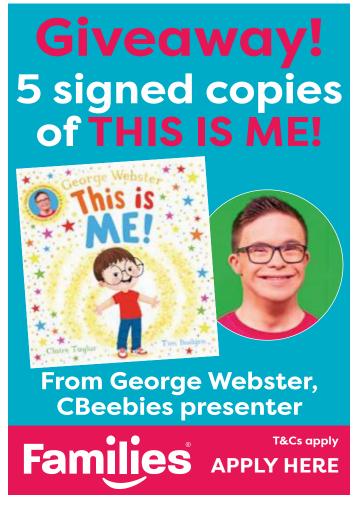
Stretching your child's imagination

By Jemma Z Smith



Imagination helps children think creatively and consider possibilities that may not be rooted in current reality. Imagination can be a powerful tool for problem-solving and innovation. So how can we encourage its maximum use?

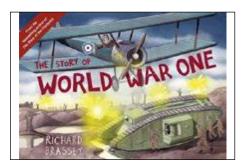
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March/April 9

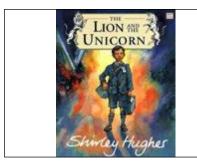
Engaging your child with history

Presented well, history can be enthralling for kids. If you want to encourage an interest, these books will really stimulate engagement.



The Story of World War One

Ages 6-8. Beautifully illustrated with facts explained in simple English.



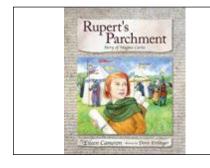
The Lion and the Unicorn

Ages 5-7. Powerful story about a child's WWII experience.



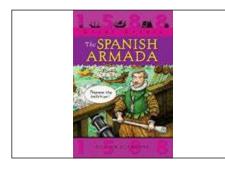
Coming to **Enaland**

Ages 3-6. An inspiring true story celebrating the Windrush Generation.



Rupert's Parchment: Story of Magna Carta

Ages 4-8. The exciting Magna Carta story seen through Rupert's eyes.



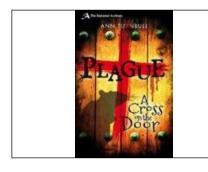
The Spanish Armada

Ages 6-11. Explores the English navy's defeat of the Spanish Fleet.



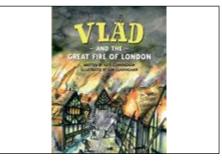
Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot

Ages 5+. Accessible re-telling of the plot to blow up parliament.



the Door

Ages 7-9. Exciting read bringing the plague and its impact to life.



Plague: A Cross on Vlad and the Great **Fire of London**

Ages 3-9. How did the fire start and how did Londoners escape?



1066 The Norman **Conquest**

Ages 7-9. Exciting account of the military invasion of England.

Free KS1 and KS2 SATs revision tools

With KS1 and KS2 SATs approaching, your kids can have fun AND learn with these free resources.



Karate Cats English

Fun BBC Bitesize game which prepares for Year 2 English SATs.



√ Maths

✓ English

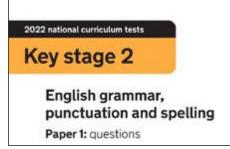
Year 2 KS1 SATs topic checklist

Use this to identify skills and gaps that need more practice.



Karate Cats maths

And prepare for Year 2 maths SATs with Karate Cats too!



Year 6 KS2 2022 English SATs <u>papers</u>

past papers.

2022 national curriculum tests Key stage 2 **Mathematics**

Paper 1: arithmetic

Year 6 KS2 2022 Maths SATs papers Review and practise

maths using past papers (with answers).



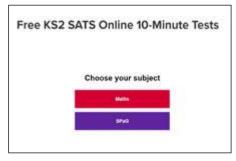
Guardians Defenders of Mathematica

Fun BBC Bitesize game which develops KS2 SATs maths skills.

Practise English using

KS2 Crystal Explorers

Join the adventure and improve grammar, punctuation and spelling.



KS2 SATs Online 10-Minute Tests

10-Minute Tests (and answers) - ideal for practice on-the-go.

CHECKLIST

✓ Maths

✓ English

Year 6 KS2 topic checklist

Use this to identify skills and gaps that need more practice.

Familiesonline.co.uk March/April 11

Would you like to own this magazine?

Do you like the sound of having the freedom to run your own business with the support of a respected and well-established franchise? To never again miss a school concert, sports day or parent's evening?

Being a Families magazine owner and editor offers fantastic flexibility and rewards as well as amazing



opportunities. There are around 30 Families Magazine editors in the UK network from a variety of career backgrounds around the UK, mostly mums and dads. The Families Head Office supports editors to run their own magazines with full training provided.

If you would be interested in exploring this opportunity and would like an informal chat, feel free to get in touch on 07807 352087 or EMAIL.



Families Magazine business for sale!



Would you like to try your hand at magazine publishing?

- Decide your own hours and be your own boss
- Buy a well-established business to run from home

You could be the new editor of Families Birmingham magazine! Full training provided.

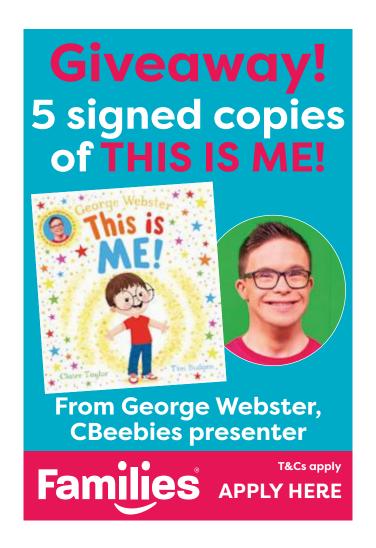


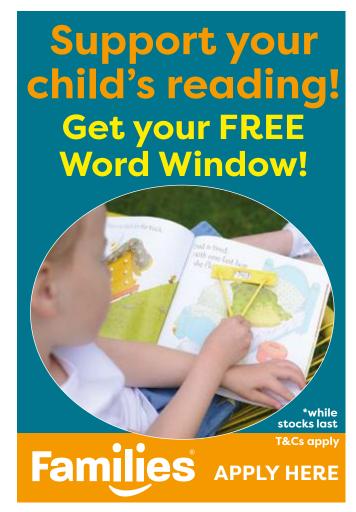
Work around your family commitments doing something you love



For further details email editor@familiesbirmingham.co.uk or call 07807 352 087

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Five Super Springy things to do!

By @torinbirmingham



Looking for fun family things to do this spring? Read on and see the great local ideas suggested by @TorInBirmingham (formerly @girlaboutbirmingham).

1. See the new life

Attwell Farm Park, Redditch is a top pick for us in the spring. There's an outdoor playground, indoor soft play and opportunities to meet and greet baby animals.

Another favourite farm which often has lambing events is **Ash End House Farm, Tamworth.**

Here are some places to see lambs with the **National Trust**.

2. Have a picnic party

At home, spread your blanket out on the floor with some pillows, grab a few teddies and set everyone a place for a yummy afternoon tea.

Have you heard of Mystery Picnic? Neither had I! Find out more.

Pack your basket and go boating! Go Boat is back in April.

3. Smell the flowers

Explore some beautiful local gardens which offer children's activities, like Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Martineau Gardens or Blakesley Hall.



There's a Forest Fairy event on 25 March at Aston Hall and an Earth Day event at Weoley Castle on 22 April.

4. Spring into festival fever!

At RHS Malvern Spring Festival expect to find food stalls, stunning flowers, rides, treats, trails and more.

Another event I'm booking this year is the one-day festival Swingamajig at Birmingham Botanical Gardens.

5. Hunt for Easter eggs

Who doesn't love hunting for chocolate eggs around the house? I've previously found some fun Easter egg hunt kits in Poundland!

Hunt for the golden egg at Cadbury World.

Check out the National Trust.

READ MY FULL ARTICLE

14 March/April Familiesonline.co.uk

Hosting an Easter egg hunt

Choosing the location

Your garden is great or a local park if your group is large.

Allow for weather. Have an indoor Plan B or take wet weather gear.

Avoid an area so large that it's impossible to find the eggs!

For younger kids, **keep it simple.** Scatter eggs about in obvious locations.

Incorporating nature

An outdoor hunt is an ideal way to incorporate outdoor learning.

Use vegetation in your own garden or park as hiding spots.

Instead of solving clues, complete a spring spotting sheet or scavenger trail along the way.

Collect items along the way instead to make a nature craft to win the prize.

How to decorate eggs for Easter



A short 3-minute video which demonstrates how to easily decorate eggs for your hunt.

Hiding the eggs

Before you start, **count the eggs.** You'll thank yourself later!

Make it fair with different colour eggs for different kids.

Try treasure hunt style with clues and rewards along the way. Finish with a grand prize.

Find age-appropriate hiding spots - too easy and it's over in a flash; too hard, kids get upset.

Selecting prizes

Go healthy with less sugary offerings.

Personalise your own decorated eggs (name, date, place) to create keepsakes.

Customise treats for your child - favourite pens, books, gift voucher.

Try tokens to collect and redeem for prizes or even cash.

Readymade Easter egg hunt downloadable



Try this readymade indoor hunt with clues and hiding spots suitable for most houses.

Familiesonline.co.uk March/April 15

Top Easter eggs for 2023

Choose your Easter eggs from the couch this year with our wonderful selection of treats.



Space Eggsplorer Chocolate Egg

Decorated, hollow milk chocolate space shuttle with milk chocolate balls.



Percy Pig[™] Easter Egg Hunt Bucket

Hollow milk chocolate eggs and a small bag of mini Percy™ Piglets.



Easter Eggtastic
Easter bundle

A chocolate egg for every occasion in this egg-tastic Easter bundle.



Egg On My Face Chocolate Slab

Cheery milk chocolate slab with two white chocolate half-eggs.



The Raspberry
White Chocolate
Eaa

Belgian white chocolate, raspberry pieces and marshmallow chunks.



Giant Dinosaur Egg

Gargantuan 700g egg, 11+ inches tall, made of smooth, rich Belgian chocolate.



Chocolate Dorset
Dinosaurs

Handmade shapes with milk, dark & white chocolate.



Extra Thick White Chocolate Easter Egg

A generous egg, piled with fun chocolate treats.



Capsule of Milk Chocolate Robots

Fabulous tin capsule filled with ten mini milk chocolate robots.

Easter crafts for the kids to enjoy

Get the kids crafting during the school holidays with this great selection of arty Easter and spring-themed ideas.



Burlap bunny bunting



Bunny scrunchies



Spring tin can animals



Easter biscuits



DIY Easter egg pinata



Easter bonnet



Easy button Easter egg



Mini Easter baskets



Easter egg weaving

Easter treats to make with the kids

From Neha Gandesha @squashedpickle

Froyo Easter egg lollies



These frozen yoghurt treats are considered the best Easter cooking activity in our family. With a few simple ingredients, such as Greek yoghurt and food colouring, you can create a delicious Easter snack which the kids will run to the freezer to devour!

RECIPE

VIDEO

Easter hot chocolate



Kids can top these with their favourite chocolate eggs, sprinkles or even cookies and enjoy in a hot cup of milk. They make great Easter gifts when wrapped up too. Remember, marshmallows should only be given to kids over 5-years-old as they are a choking hazard.

RECIPE VIDEO

Cinnamon Swirl bunnies



These bunnies are so fun for Easter and very easy to make, thanks to the ready-to-bake cinnamon swirl rolls made by Jus-Rol. The fun is in shaping the rolls so they turn into bunny ears! Kids can decorate the finished product with sprinkles and candy eyes and they make a really cute little Easter snack.

RECIPE

VIDEO

Milky Bar Oreo chicks



These are another really fun Easter-themed treat to make with the kids and they use favourite chocolatey treats including Oreos, Milky Bar and yellow and orange Smarties. Other than that, all you really need are some lolly sticks and some candy eyes to really bring the chicks to life!

RECIPE

18 March/April Familiesonline.co.uk

Helping children who find reading difficult

Word Window is a specially designed hand-held tool that helps children break down words to make them easier to read. It was invented by a mum with an extensive background in education who created it to help children that found reading difficult.

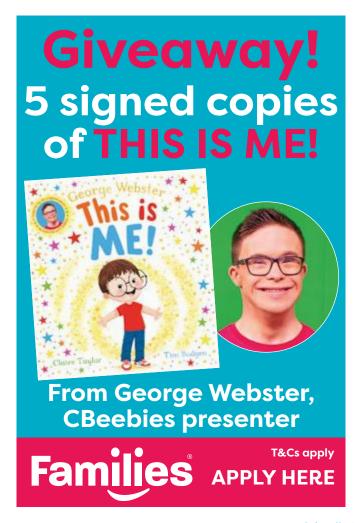
Words are built on letters, sounds and other words and Word Window gives children, parents and teachers the ability to highlight sections of the word so that fluency and comprehension can build over time.

Word Window is successful at helping children to bridge the gap between learning phonics and building these skills into reading as it engages the kinesthetic sense when reading, a sense which is often neglected.

Check out the website HERE or find on Facebook.

Special offer for Families readers using discount code FM10 at checkout.





Familiesonline.co.uk March/April 19

Let's play outdoors!

Get your little ones active and outdoors now spring is on its way. Here are some favourites from child psychologist and play expert Dr. Amanda Gummer, founder of The Good Toy Guide.



Xootz Bubble-Go-Scooter

An easy-to-master 3-wheeled scooter which blows bubbles as you ride! RRP: £49.99



Geosafari® JR.Kidnoculars® **Extreme**[™]

Magnify nature! 3x nofocus binoculars & builtin mic. BBP £26.50



Kids First Weather Science Kit

Investigate different types of weather with this interactive lab kit. RRP: £16.95



Naylor Activity Tunnels

Lightweight, bright play tunnels for indoor or outdoor adventures! **RRP: £33**



Diditrike

Quirky, lightweight and easy-to-manoeuvre early vear's ride-on. RRP: £44.99



Smoby AquaPlay LockBox

Kids can explore waterway adventures with this canal-inspired playset. RRP: 39.99



Zoomarang

The original backyard boomerang! Circles out 30 feet with ease.

RRP: £4.99



Smoby KS Slide

Encourage active play with a slide that doubles as a water-slide! RRP:£69.99



Waterwall

Hands on problemsolving fun with this interactive water flow.

RRP: £99.99

Top value family holiday destinations

Travelling abroad as a family is a wonderful experience but can be costly. Families asked Ashley Lutz at Travel Counsellors to recommend some destinations that offer excellent value for money.



Turkey
Warm, family-friendly and relatively cheap once you are there.



Portugal
A Eurozone destination
where your cash can
work harder.



Montenegro
Cheaper and quieter
than neighbouring
Croatia.



Mauritius
Something for all ages
with prices almost half
of the neighbouring
Seychelles.



Jamaica
Named best value
destination in the
Caribbean (The Post
Office).



South Africa
Wildlife, exploration and relaxation – and easy-ish on the wallet once there.



Albania
Kids' attractions, sandy
beaches and a family 3
course meal for £20!



Sri Lanka
Relatively affordable
food, transport and
accommodation.



Thailand
One of the cheapest
long-haul destinations to
fly to. Cheap once there.

Choose Away Resorts for your next family holiday

Get away to brighter days this spring with Away Resorts.

Whether you desire coastal or country, our 23 stunning UK locations are jam-packed with fantastic facilities, from arcades to swimming pools, and surrounded by awesome local attractions for full on family fun.



Join us at selected parks this Easter for themed activities, stage shows and live acts to keep you and the little ones grinning from ear to ear!

So, are you ready to get away to it all with the family (and pooch!) where new experiences await at every turn?

Call 03333 634189 or Book today HERE.



22 March/April Familiesonline.co.uk

Family Walking Challenges

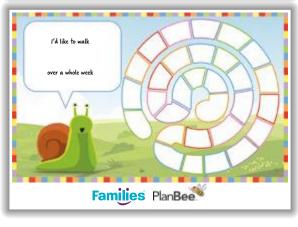
Family life is busy and it can be difficult to stay active whilst still finding time for everything else – particularly spending quality time together. By making time to walk as a family, you can meet your exercise goals together. Try one of these three family walking challenges from PlanBee.

You are challenged to walk
30,000 steps
5 hours or
set your own challenge









DOWNLOAD FOR YOUR KIDS HERE!

Healthy after-school snack ideas

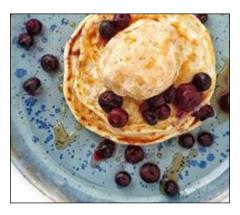
We asked our friends at Kitchen Titbits for healthy ideas to satisfy our kids' after-school hunger and to avoid spending a fortune on packaged snacks.



Energy-balls



Banana and blueberry muffins (vegan)



Banana ice cream



Butternut squash and feta scones



Oat pancakes



Yoghurt and fruit bark



Fruit smoothie



Courgette spinach cheese muffins



Snack mix

Mother's Day gifts for under £20

Attention dads! This is one for sharing with the kids before 19 March!



Gourmet chocolate pizza For the mum who loves pizza and chocolate! £11.75



Photo cushion Capture family memories on this multi-photo upload cushion. £19.99



bottles For mums who are both eco and style conscious. From £12.49



wooden memory box Kick start mum's collection with a few of

your own items. £19.99



Olive & Pip's Drawing Make Up Baa Create something

special with those drawings on the fridge. £20.99



biscuits Gift box of ten biscuits. Hand drawn illustrations of heart-warming messages. £20

Sketchy Muma



Reusable coffee cup

Designed to last 10 years. 100% recyclable. £14.95



Rarebirds Lucky Dip Book Club

Choose a genre; they will choose a book for mum. £8.99



Gift wrapped

botanical posy
Mini posy made up of
seasonal flowers, foliage and herbs. £15.95

What's On Out & About

All events are subject to change so check online before visiting.

Pre-booking is often necessary.

Ackers Adventure, Birmingham Open daily

Activities include archery, climbing, orienteering, zip wire, etc.

Aston Hall Birmingham
Sun 19 Mar
Big Book Day Takeover
Meet characters who have
all escaped from their
stories.

Baddesley Clinton, Solihull 3-10 April Easter Adventures

Fun-packed Easter themed fun throughout the gardens.

Barber Institute of Fine Arts, Birmingham Open Tues-Sun Barber Family Trails Explore Barber's collection through different fun themes.

Birmingham Botanical Gardens Open daily Family Activities

Discover the plants, birds and mini-beasts with Family Backpacks.

Black Country Living
Museum, Dudley
Open Wed-Sun until 31
March, then open daily
See history brought to life
across 26 acres.

CBSO Centre & B:Music, Birmingham Various days/times Free Music Workshops Creative music-making workshops. Suitable for age 7+.

The Core, Solihull
Various days/times
Arts and Activities
Arts activity workshops for all ages.

Jewellery Quarter
Museum
Tue 11 April
Kids Jewellery Workshop
Design and create your
own unique jewellery. 8+

Packwood House, Solihull 7-14 April Easter Adventures Activities for families ending with a yummy chocolate egg!

Rush Trampoline Park, Birmingham Open daily

With 35,000 sq ft of activities, there's fun for all ages.

Sandwell Museums Various days/times

A range of different museums, plus activities. Mostly free.

Soho House
Wed 5 April
Journey to the Moon
Create space craft using recycled materials.

Tamworth Castle Open Tues-Sun History brought to life. Many activities for families.

ThinkTank
Second Sat each month
Morning Explorers
Autism friendly visiting

ThinkTank
Selected Thursdays
Toddler Thursday:
Planetarium

times and activities.

Inspire your future scientists and astronauts.

ThinkTank Every Sat until 25 March Big and Small Family Show

Live and interactive, science demonstrations.

Staffordshire Regiment Museum



Come and see us at the Museum this year. There are lots of activities to get involved in which keep all the family entertained.

More info HERE.

What's On Entertainment

All events are subject to change so check online before visiting. Pre-booking is often necessary.

The Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham

3-15 April Annie

A much-loved smash-hit production starring Craig Revel Horwood.

Birmingham Hippodrome

8-19 March My Fair Lady

This world-famous musical comes to Birmingham this spring. How loverly!

24-26 March Dinosaur World Live

A roarsome interactive show for all the family.

11-15 April SpongeBob the Musical

A hilarious deep-sea show for all ages.

Birmingham Repertory Theatre

13-15 April Mog the Forgetful Cat

Join Mog on her journey through one exciting year.

26-29 April Rush: A Joyous Jamaican Journey

The story of Reggae music and the Windrush Generation, 10+.

CBSO Centre, Birmingham

24-25 March Notelets: Around the World

Dance, sing and get involved with music from across the globe.

The Core Theatre, Solihull

Weds 12 April The Three Little Pigs

Join in the catchy songs and dancing in this lively show.

Thurs 13 April Unbelievable Science

Science and silliness for ages 7 to 107!

Tues 30 May The Worst Princess

A modern fairy tale turned on its royal head!

Midlands Arts Centre

Mon 12 March Nick Cope

Musical fun for children and parents.

Mon 3 April Shark in the Park

A fin-tastic family musical.

Old Rep Theatre, Birmingham

Fri 14 April The Jungle Book

Funny, exciting, and wildly entertaining. Perfect for the whole family.

Symphony Hall, Birmingham

Sat 1 April The Spectacular Music of Harry Potter

This concert features the music from all 8 Harry Potter films.

Town Hall, Birmingham

Sat 25 March Wallace and Gromit: The Wrong Trousers

A showing of this family favourite film with live accompaniment from a brass band.

10-12 April Hey Duggee Live!

Join Duggee and friends in this interactive production.

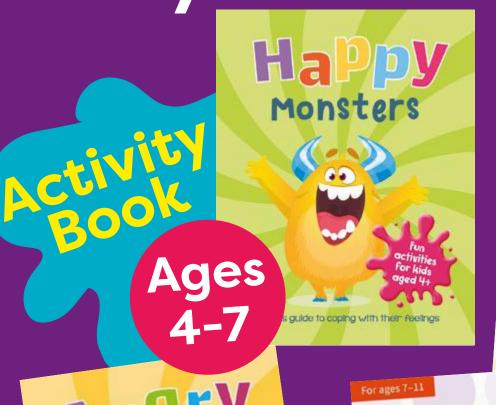
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre

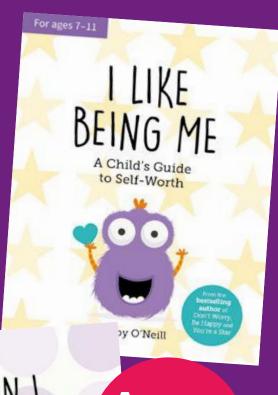
Sun 2 April Ugly Duckling

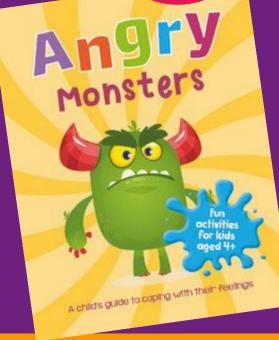
Little ones can enjoy live ballet for the first time with this timelesss story.

Improve your child's wellbeing!

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