

I thought there would be a couple more years yet before I got one of those message that strikes panic and fear into the soul of a parent. The message that innocently arrives and you know has been typed by someone who is genuinely excited by it but once read suddenly takes over every spare thinking moment usually prefaced with a sigh. And so it was this week that said message arrived from my son's nursery. It read "Don't forget our Halloween dress up day next Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup>. Get ready for a fun filled day". Fun filled I am sure for all the delightful devils, witches, pumpkins and pussy cats. But as it arrived in between meetings, that text has haunted me ever since. Fear not, we shall embrace the fun factor and my darling boy will go dressed as something or other but the question is how much time do either of us have to do get creative or will we just revert to buying him a costume from the supermarket? I am absolutely sure it will be the latter. I have read about these type of moments in some hilarious social media posts from parents who have gone full scale art attack on their children in response to dress up days right through to those who didn't have the time so sent them to school in their pyjamas and convinced everyone, including the child, that they fit the theme with an amusing but totally lame line. So Halloween 2017, here you come to tempt brilliant and enthusiastic folks into encouraging us newbie parents to put down our laptops and smart phones and create costume masterpieces so our darlings can bob apples, scare smaller children, and genuinely have fun, while all the time not really knowing what you are all about. But that would be way too spooky...