

Newsletter

Happy
New Year!

3-5s Nursery January 2016

Dear Parents and Carers

Happy 2016! I hope you all had a restful holiday and are ready for what 2016 brings. The children have all settled back into nursery really well. The Spring term is somewhat short, therefore what feels like cold dark mornings will soon be over.

The Autumn term finished with a variety of festive events. It was wonderful to see so many of you attend these and I know your children loved seeing you! If you took any photos of your child that you would like to share with me for the website, I would love to receive them. Just email them to me at head@dorking.surrey.sch.uk.

A massive thank you on behalf of myself and all the staff for the gifts which were received. The biscuits and chocolates are definitely keeping us all going.

Raffle

Wow! Our raffle was a big success! We raised a total of £650! This is most certainly a record. I will be dividing the money across the whole Centre and will let you know what we decide to buy. Thank you to everyone who purchased tickets, as well as those of you who gave a donation for prizes. Again, thank you to Sarah, Becky and Janine in the office for doing all the hard work and contacting local businesses! A full list of those to thank is at the back of the newsletter. We will be having an Easter Hamper raffle...so watch this space!

Joanna's absence

Following on from my letter at the end of term, Joanna will be absent until approximately half term. She has had her operation and is recovering well at home. During this time, Marian is leading the 3-5s nursery, so do talk to her if you have any questions. I am supporting Marian during this time with Joanna's key children.

Additional sessions and lunchclub

If your child is in the main classroom and you would like your child to stay for lunch club or an extended session, please speak to your child's Key Person or Marian.

From the nursery

Pam's children have been making the most of the wet weather. We have a huge puddle in the garden and they have been splashing about!

How to help at home

We will be talking to your children about staying safe when they are out and about this term. We will draw roads and practise crossing them and use our traffic lights in the garden area to stop the bikes and scooters. We will think about all the different kinds of vehicles which might be on the road and learn some new songs to help us remember what to do. We will talk about stopping at the kerb and listening for traffic.

When you are walking with your child, do remember to hold their hand and always keep them on the inside of the pavement. If you have a buggy with you, they can hold onto the handle and help you to push it. Talk to your child about why this is so important. The pavements around here can be very narrow and traffic will sometimes go surprisingly fast. Sometimes it's good to just stop and listen to the sounds around. Many children are really good at identifying different vehicles and understand the warning sounds that lorries make when they are reversing. You might like to have a conversation about vehicles that make no sound and could give you a surprise.



End of the session

Please can I remind parents that the the morning session ends at 11.45am, lunchclub ends at 12.30pm, full time session ends at 1.45pm and the afternoon at 3.30pm. At this time the team have to attend planning meetings, staff meetings and also prepare the nursery for the next day. Just before the holidays there were many occasions where parents were arriving late. This has an impact on the nursery and is also very distressing for your child. We do keep a log of all late collections and I will be in contact with those concerned if this continues. At private nursery settings, there is a charge for late collection. We do not currently have this system in place, however, it may have to be a policy that myself and the Governors consider if this continues.

In the event of snow...

Snow may be on its way. Please note, that we will make a decision as early as we possibly can in the event of snow regarding any closures that might have to take place. Myself, Marian and many other team leaders live outside of Dorking and therefore, it may be likely we will have to make the decision to close for our own safety travelling in. Please keep checking our website www.dorkingnurserychildrenscentre.org.uk regularly as I will post a message on there. We will also send out a Parentmail message. You can also check the Surrey County Council schools website and listen to local Heart FM.

Can you leave your buggy at home?

Our buggy park gets really busy during the nursery day, especially when services are running in the Children's Centre. Walking is not only a wonderful social activity for you and your child, it also has a significant impact on your child's physical and brain development. It would be great if parents could consider encouraging their child to walk to nursery, or even begin walking from the bottom of the drive, I always believe that small steps climb big mountains...why not try it?

Attendance

Although nursery is non-statutory, we are bound by the local authority and Ofsted to monitor the attendance of all children. Good attendance at nursery will help you and your child get into routines for when they start school. The children who attend regularly also make significant progress in their development.

Parking

Yet again I have to write about parking. We do not have spaces for parents for drop off and pick up unless they have a Dorking Nursery School Permit. I do urge you to purchase a permit for the local car parks for £10 a year.

Parent feedback

Thank you to everyone who completed the feedback questionnaire at the end of term. The results are attached at the back of the newsletter, along with our response to the points you have raised.

Dads and Grandads Storytelling Week—Monday 25th January

We will shortly be sending out a letter inviting dads, granddads and uncles to come in and read stories to the children. Please sign up for a reading slot by returning the reply slip.

Zoolab—Thursday 28th January

On Thursday 28th January, the Zoolab are bringing a variety of mini-beasts to nursery for the children to observe and handle. FOND have funded most of this out of their donation to the 3-5s nursery, but we would also like to ask for a voluntary contribution of £1.00 towards the cost. Please give this to the office as soon as possible.



Supporting your child's communication and language development at home

El, our SENCo and Helen, our Children's Centre Manager will be running a practical workshop for nursery parents on Thursday 4th February from 9am—11.30am or 12.45pm—3.15pm. This will give you lots of ideas to improve communication with your child. There will group discussions and practical ideas of how to turn anything into an opportunity to support your child with communication. If you would like to book a place at this free session while your child is in nursery, please let Becky and Sarah know.

Speech and Language Therapists

The Dorking Schools' Partnership (15 schools in the area working together) are seriously considering developing a project to support a Speech and Language therapist. It would be very helpful to have the contact details of local Speech and Language therapists.

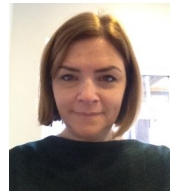
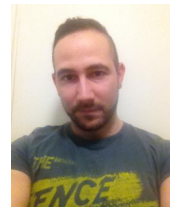
Please could you contact Stella Willis on willis.stella@ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk or phone 01306 886312 if you know anyone who may be interested or are interested yourself.

Staff changes

We welcome two new members of staff this term.

Cem Memish joins our team as our new Caretaker, and Charlotte Pesquero will be taking over as SENCo from El Davis in February when El begins her maternity leave. I know you will make them both feel welcome.

We will also be saying goodbye to Angela Diggins later on in the term. Many of you may know Angela who works at our Goodwyns Road site as a Family Support Practitioner. Angela has decided to spend more time with her family—we wish her well!



Contacting Health Visitors

We work closely with the Health team locally. If you need advice from a Health Visitor, please call the number below. Please note this an advice line, not an emergency number.

The Advice Line number is: 0208 979 6464. It is open between **9.30am and 1pm**. If a parent leaves a message on the answerphone before 1pm the team will try and return the call that day.

Staying safe

Please can I remind parents to ensure they hold their child's hand when they leave nursery, both from the doors and at the gate. We had a 'near miss' at the bottom of the drive just before the holidays, which could have been quite serious.

Children's Centre news

There is a new Spring term programme available, please check the website for sessions, groups and courses. Alternatively please pick one up at the office.

Dads' group

We hold a Dads' and male carers' group at the Goodwyns Road site on the first Saturday of each month. The next groups will be on January 9th, February 6th and March 5th 2016 from 10am-12pm. We ask for a donation of £1.50 plus a contribution towards the bacon butties. To find out more speak to Natalie Grace on 01306 740095.



Family First Aid

SURREY TRUST
CARE
Nurturing skills | Changing lives

This is always a popular course so we will be running 2 Family First Aid courses this term as well as an evening course in April 2016. If you would like to put your name on the waiting list for one of these courses please ring Sarah on 01306 740095 or Becky on 01306 882397.

Once we have confirmed your place on a First Aid course, we ask for a £5 booking fee to secure your place. This helps us cover the administrative costs of running these workshops.

NEW FOR 2016

Conversation Café



This group is held monthly at West Street and is a group to support parents who speak English as an additional language. There will be others there to chat to and we will provide resources to help develop conversational skills. If you need to bring under 5s with you, they can play in the room alongside the adults.

9.30am-10.30am Wednesday 13th January, 10th February and 9th March

Speech and Language Advice Sessions

If you are concerned that your child may have a speech and language delay, drop in to speak to Helen and Maria at our monthly advice sessions. West Street 10-11am Wednesday 27th January, February 24th and March 23rd.

Citizens Advice Bureau



Janet, from Citizens Advice comes into our Centre at Goodwyns Road every Tuesday from 10am-12pm. From February onwards she will not be at the Centre every week but you can ring her and she will arrange to meet you either at either of our sites. Please ask us for her contact details if you want them.

Friday 15th January 2016 is the closing date for our 2-3s and 3-5s Nursery admissions, so please make sure you have completed an application form for younger siblings by this date to avoid disappointment, please also let friends locally know to do so.

If your child is due to start school this September, (if born between 1st September 2011 and 31st August 2012) then you need to ensure your school application is completed by this date. If you would like some help to do this, please speak to Sarah in the office.

Diary Dates

Wednesday 13th Jan, 10th Feb, 9th March—Conversation Café (for EAL families), 9.30-10.30am—West Street

Friday 15th January—NURSERY ADMISSIONS DEADLINE

Jan 25th—29th—Dads and Grandads Week—more details to follow

Wednesday 27th Jan, 24th Feb, 23rd March, 10am-11am—Speech and Language Advice session—West Street

Thursday 4th Feb—Speech and Language Workshop times??

Saturday 6th Feb, 10am—12pm—Dads Group—Goodwyns Road site

Mon 15th—Fri 19th Feb—Half term

Tuesday 1st March—Parent Evening 7pm

Saturday 5th March, 10am—12pm—Dads Group—Goodwyns Road site

Best Wishes

Donna Harwood-Duffy



Parent Feedback response

Thank you to everyone for completing the induction feedback. We take your comments and responses very seriously and are grateful for you taking the time to tell us your thoughts.

Main classroom 3-5s feedback

- All parents found the information prior to starting useful and informative.
- The majority of new families attended our open afternoon and found it was a good opportunity to see the setting and meet staff; one parent said '*it was very helpful and a lovely afternoon*'
- Half of our parents attended to Welcome Evening in July. It was the first time we had held such an event and will do so again this year.
- 89% agree that the home visit was a useful part of the settling in process for their child, some of the positive comments relating to this are; '*it gave a good chance to talk and bond*', '*VERY MUCH:)*', and '*very important that the key person has background information about my child*'.
- The settling in process was a positive one for 95% of families. Some of the comments being; '*this process seemed smoother than previous years, with parents being encouraged to leave their child as soon as they seemed settled, this made it easier for all involved!*' and '*we felt that the transition from 2-3s was managed very well, either side of the summer holidays*'.

Some of the positive comments :-

- *Just wanted to say thanks....my daughter is very very happy!*
- *All been brilliant-keep it up!*
- *My child really enjoys his time at the nursery. Great job from everyone*

Other comments and our response...

The home visit—two parents gave feedback about the home visit.

- One parent was unsure if the home visit was necessary for the 2nd child in a family. Our response to this is that the home visit is an important part of the settling in process and is as much about finding out information about the child from you as parents, but for the child to begin to develop a relationship with the member of staff.
- Another parent stated that they had not seen their child's key worker due to the timescales of recruitment, but had found the process positive for their child to see a familiar face. They also commented on the wording of some of the questions and whether it is appropriate to have these types of conversation in front of the child. Our response to this is we knew that due to the recruitment of Natasa and Marian who were new to the team, some families would not be visited by their key worker, in the first instance this is our aim and has not happened in the past, however, the familiarity of a current staff member ensured consistency for the children. With regard to the questions, we are currently looking at the home visit format and will take this into account when making changes for our new admissions in September.

Settling in process

- One parent did not find the process worked for them or their child, but did not add any additional comments. We realise that settling in needs to be tailored for each individual, and unfortunately we do not know in advance how each child will react to their new environment. What we do ask is that parents continue to work with us to ensure the process is right for each child.

Other comments

- A parent has suggested we cover the glass panel in the door so the children do not see their grown up leaving. Our response is, that saying goodbye is an important part of the settling process and your children need to understand that you will leave and come back, for some children, waving through the panel is an important part of this and for others it is where they look for the final wave. I am sure you can understand we are stuck between a 'rock and hard place' on this debate, and cannot fully cover the panels for safety reasons.
- One parent has commented on some of the interesting behaviours from our young children; such as hitting, scratching and biting. Our response is that as part of our Behaviour Policy, we do not condone such actions, unfortunately it is a large part of children understanding their emotions and the right way to display these. It is really important we teach the children about how to communicate their needs and feelings in an appropriate way. We will continue to focus on this in our group times, however, if you have any concerns please talk to your child's key person or myself about this.

Parent Feedback response

SEN feedback (Pam and Anne's families)

- All parents found the information prior to starting useful and informative, one parent said *'great, covered all my concerns'*
- All parents strongly agree that the home visit was useful part of the induction process. One parent said; *'Appreciated having to time to be able to get to know my key person and talk through specific issues regarding my child before nursery started, which put my mind at ease and as it was in my home setting I was more relaxed.'*
- The settling in process worked well for all the children in our SEN unit. *'the approach taken was very suitable, and each child's needs taken into consideration'*.
- All the parents who responded attended our SEN Welcome Evening in September.
- All the parents have valued the time at their SEN Review meeting to discuss their child and found the meeting *'professional yet sensitive when discussing a child with SEN'*.

Some of the positive comments :-

- *An amazing team of people working with our child, thank you !*
- *Thank you for a wonderful first term, we couldn't have asked for more.*

Other comments and our response

- Most of our SEN unit children live outside the area and come to nursery by taxi. A parent suggested for *'coffee mornings / workshops, a start time of 10 or 10.30am'* so they have the opportunity to get to Dorking through the traffic and other school drop offs. We will certainly build this into our considerations when planning future events.
Thank you!



Our Christmas raffle prizes were kindly donated by the following businesses:

Madame Tussauds/Zachary Williams' mum

Dorking Halls

Dorking Sports Centre

Cheeky Monkey Baby shop

Café Rouge

Amanda Johnson Reiki

Bits & Bobs Party Shop

Bocketts Farm

Boots the Chemist

Burgundy & Black Cafe

Calliope

S J Clear

Cook

Costa Coffee

Cummins

Dorking Flowers

Elaine's Florist

Edinburgh Woollen Mill

The Fig Tree

Fluffatorium

Fullers

Frith Pharmacy

Head for the Hills

The King's Arms

Marks & Spencer

Mullins Coffee Shop

Pets Corner

Random House/Simon Rhodes ex parent

Rush Hairdressers

Sainsburys

Shabby Chic

Too Many Cooks

The Vineyard wine shop

Viva Restaurant

Waitrose

Watermill Inn

Waterstones

Wow gallery

Wanda and Yago Henry's mum

Becky's dad

Donna Harwood-Duffy

Prathikna's family