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This newsletter, other correspondence and full playgroup information is available on our website
Our new Ofsted number is EY538418 as the Playgroup changed to Charitable status, all other details remain the same.

Christmas is only 6 weeks away so for the playgroup that means the annual Nativity Play, the children's Christmas party, Letter to Santa, parent consultations and lots of glittery pictures and cards! Information on all of these activities now follows:

Letter to Santa/Father Christmas



You should by now have received a letter home asking permission for your child to join in the writing to Santa/Father Christmas activity and requesting a 2nd class stamp or 55p. If Christmas is a celebration that you as a family do not celebrate, then your child will not be required to write a letter.

Once the children have written their letters to Santa, we will walk with them to the post box to post their letters using the Walkodile!. Letters must be with the post office by Friday 9th December. We would appreciate some parent helpers that week to accompany us on the walk. Extra warm clothing may also be needed if it's particularly cold.



Parent Consultations

Consultations with your child's key-worker will take place on Friday 9th December. Parents who have recently had a 2 year old consultation will not need a consultation at this time. We will give you your child's learning journal to take home earlier in the week; please remember to bring it back with you for your 10 minute appointment.



Later this month, there will be a form on the notice board stating when your 10 minute appointment time will be. This is a time to discuss with your child's key-worker their progress and any other issues you may have.

Early Education and Childcare News

Hertfordshire County Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient childcare places for children of all ages. They would like parents feedback on the childcare options available for their family. Please go to the following link and complete the survey on-line.
<https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/Sufficiencyparentsurvey/>

Christmas Nativity

Thursday 15th
December, 11.15am

We are planning to perform our nativity event in our St John's Methodist church. All the children who attend St John's Nursery Playgroup are invited to take part. Family and friends are invited to attend this wonderful event, sharing in the celebration of the birth of Jesus. Coffee and mince pies will be served in the Clifton Room from 10.40am and parents can take their seats (entering via the Clifton Room entrance) in the church from 11.00 where you will be able to view pictures from our sessions. If you are able to help serving, please let us know.



Children who attend on THURSDAYS should be dropped off at the normal time at 8.55am, the remaining children (ie those who do not attend on a Thursday) are to be dropped off at 10.40am. Please let us know if your child will be attending (using the form on the notice board) and if your child normally attends lunch club and/or the afternoon session if they will be staying or going home with you following the nativity.

All the children are given the opportunity to wear a costume if they wish and we will not pressure any children to dress up if they don't want to, however please do not feel too disappointed if they refuse or change their mind - remember this is the first of many opportunities they will have to perform! We are looking to borrow some children's dressing gowns on the day, if you have one we could borrow, please bring it in, **clearly labeled**.



The car park usually gets packed so please park considerately and avoid blocking cars in, we encourage you to walk if at all possible. In the past we have allowed parents to take pictures and videos (as unobtrusively as possible please), however we can only allow this with the agreement of all parents - if you have any concerns about this, or any other issues concerning the nativity, please speak to Mrs Mills or Mrs Mash in complete confidence. Videos and photos must not be uploaded onto social media sites e.g. Facebook

Children's Christmas Party

Tuesday 20th December 11.30am-2pm.

We would like to invite all the children, whether they attend on a Tuesday or not to join the Christmas party on Tuesday 20th December.

This year we have invited Smartie Artie to come and entertain the children between 12.00 and 1.00pm in the main hall at the front of the building followed by a party back in our Rainbow Room. The party food we will be sandwiches, fruit, vegetables, snacks, and party treats and including fruit squash or water.

We would ask for a contribution of £2 from every child to go towards the days activities.

- Children who attend Tuesday mornings arrive at normal time (8.55) but will stay until 2.00pm.
- Children who **do not** attend Tuesday morning's are invited to arrive at 11.30am.
- Children who attend Tuesday afternoons, are also invited to arrive at 11.30am.
- Children who normally are with us on a Tuesday afternoon can stay until the usual 3.00pm pick up time.
- If you want your child to stay until 3.00pm for an additional £5, we need to know in advance so we can organise the correct staff/child ratios.

In order to make this day possible we will need parent helpers to help us prepare the lunch, set up the rooms and to generally help with the children.

A form will be on the notice board closer to the time for you to let us know if your child will be attending and if you are able to help on the day and if you want your child to stay until 3.00pm.

Staff News

We are pleased to announce the following two appointments at St John's Nursery Playgroups: **L**aura Toohey will be joining the **Baker Street** team on Monday 12th December, she will be our new 'Yellow Giraffe'. Laura's previous role was working in a Hertsmere children's centre in St Albans as a Children's Centre worker but decided she wanted to work in a setting with a key group of children. Laura is looking forward to joining us, she will be here for the Nativity play and children's party. Laura's qualification is Advanced Level Apprenticeship in Early Learning and Childcare (Level 3)

Jane Higley has already joined our **Oakmere** team this month. Jane has worked as a childminder for a number of years in Potters Bar and in a day nursery near Hertford as a Room Head for 2 years. Jane achieved her NVQ Level 3 CCLD in February 2009.

Snow Conditions

With winter almost here, there is the possibility of snow. We would like to remind you of our 'snow policy'. If at least two of the local primary schools are closed due to the snow, we will not be able to open either. Please check our website or phone the playgroup (07969924482) where we will leave a message.



Fruit Sharing & Tissues

Please don't forget to bring in some fruit each week, we'll provide the carbohydrates and protein ranging from bagels, crackers, pitta bread, crumpets, popcorn, humus and cheese! **W**e would be grateful if every child could bring a box of tissues to help us keep the children's 'noses wiped' as much as possible.



Toys...

Children love to 'borrow' toys or items they are particularly attracted to but unfortunately it does leave us with missing jigsaw pieces, missing dice or play money etc. Can you please check your children's pockets regularly and return any items that may have 'slipped' into their pockets.



Annual Stakeholders Meeting

Thank you to the parents who were able to make the ASM meeting last week. We will be conducting a survey in the Spring Term regarding the 30-hour free child care entitlement offer the Government is proposing for next year. The report will be available to read in the Upper Room. If you would like your own copy, please let us know.

Dates for your Diary

Autumn Term 2016

Friday 9th Dec - Parent Consultations
Thurs 15th Dec - Nativity Play 11.15am start
Tues 20th Dec - Xmas party all children invited and parent helpers required
Wed 21st Dec - last day of term, CLOSE 1pm.

Spring Term 2017

Mon 9th Jan - Fri 31st March
Fri 6th Jan - INSET DAY—CLOSED
Mon 9th Jan - children return
Fri 13th Jan - new children's first day
Mon 13th-Fri 17th Feb - Half term, CLOSED
Mon 3rd - Mon 17th April inclusive - Easter Holidays, CLOSED

Summer Term 2017

Tues 18 Apr - Fri 21st July
Tues 18th Apr - INSET DAY - CLOSED
Wed 19th Apr children start back
Fri 21st Apr new children's first day
29th May - 2nd June, Half term, CLOSED
Sun 11th Jun - Potters Bar Carnival
Fri 21st July last day of term

Dates to be advised

Barnado's Big Toddle & Farewell Picnic
May - Voting Day