



We welcome all the new children and families that have started with us this Term. It's lovely to see the new children settling into the busy life of St John's. Your child's key-worker is available to see you at the beginning or at the end of the session if there is anything you wish to discuss regarding your child or children.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE LINKS IN THIS NEWSLETTER WILL EITHER NEED TO BE TYPED IN OR COPY AND PASTED FROM THE OUR WEBSITE OR EMAILED COPY

Spring Term Themes

This term we have followed the children's interest when planning activities. Do look at our Facebook page for pictures from each week.

We explored doctors and other health professionals; the building trade; winter Olympics with lots of races and competitions.

We have also been looking at other cultures; their celebrations and languages. Thank you for helping us to learn Head Shoulders knees and Toes in several other languages as part of 'International Mother Language Day is observed every year on February 21 to promote linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism around the world. Language is not just a means of communication but it also represents vast cultural and intellectual heritage'.

We celebrated Chinese New Year and as it is the year of the Tiger, we explored 'The Tiger who came to Tea'. Thank you to the parent who came in to explain about the festival

Early Years Alliance, Family Corner

St John's Nursery Playgroups are members of Early Years Alliance. They provide us with speedy updates of news and regulations, provide learning for the staff team on Educare, actively campaign for better financing, better conditions on behalf of Early Years settings.

In addition they have a 'Family Corner' which is free to all families through their link: <https://www.familycorner.co.uk>. There are lots of articles such as internet safety, Covid updates, World Book day.

Snack sharing

Thank you to all the parents and carers that regularly bring in a piece of fruit or vegetable for the children to share at snack time.

NHS 111

The NHS in Hertfordshire is encouraging parents and carers to call NHS 111 if they need urgent medical help for their child. Additional advice includes talking to a pharmacist if their medical concern isn't urgent.

In Hertfordshire, when you call NHS 111, fully trained advisers will assess the callers' needs and can connect them to the right healthcare professional. Advisers can arrange a call back or face-to-face appointment with a GP or nurse if the caller needs one and they can also give them advice on how to look after their condition themselves and guidance on any medication you are prescribed.

You can get more information on keeping well this winter through this link: <https://hertsvalleysccg.nhs.uk/your-health-and-services/self-care/winter-health>

Sessions for next term

We have a very full summer term ahead. A list is on the notice board asking which sessions you would like in the summer term. There are lots of afternoon spaces available as well as on Friday mornings. It's a good term to have longer days in readiness for reception. If you think you might be eligible for 30 hours of funding please check via the childcare choices government website. <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/> **before 31 March**

You will need to meet certain criteria which will be clear once you login.

Clothing

Please ensure your child arrives at playgroup in appropriate clothing for a fun, messy, outdoor, indoor, painting, gluing, playdough, water, shaving foam, cornflour, lots of fun kind of day! In this weather they should have a warm coat and sensible shoes (useable inside and outside) as we do go outside in all weathers unless it is really inclement. We have a supply of St John's fleeces, rain trousers and jackets which the children can grab in their haste to go outside and a stock of wellington boots if it is really wet with puddles. You could bring your child's Wellies, clearly named please.

Please can you also bring a **change of clothes** for your child in a small bag (drawstring gym bags are ideal for hanging 'low' on the peg, allowing room for the coat above). If children use playgroups clothes and underwear i.e. if they have an 'accident' please could you wash and return the loaned clothes as soon as possible.



World Book Day

We will be celebrating **World Book Day on**

Thursday 3rd March.

There are free audio books for you to access via this link:
<https://www.worldbookday.com/world-of-stories/>



As it is also Pancake day on the Tuesday we have decided to chose books for that week/world book day to be 'The Runaway Pancake' and 'Mr Wolf's Pancakes'. We will be practicing making pancakes on Wednesday so watch out for pancakes on the ceiling



Please can we ask your child to join in by wearing a favourite book character outfit. Nothing elaborate is needed and we have a selection of outfits which you could borrow. (Tiger, wolf, bear, zebra, sheep, Gruffalo, duck). Just a hairband or hat/cap with a picture. A t-shirt or top with a book character. We will be talking about reading and looking at pictures in books - as we do every day.

Volunteers Needed

Now Covid restrictions have lifted, could you spare half an hour a week to come a little around 11.30 to help us by washing up the children's snack plates and cups, it would be really appreciated. In addition, we always welcome parent helpers to come and read a book, or do some painting with the children. It's best if your child has already settled in the setting. Please see Mrs Mills if you can assist in any way.

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. Small pieces are often part of a larger set and can leave an activity very incomplete if any of the pieces are missing. Please check your children's pockets and return any items that may have 'slipped' into their pockets. We understand and no questions will be asked.



Staff & Recruitment

We are sorry to tell you that Holly Hesketh will be leaving us at the end of this term. She has decided to take a different career path. We are recruiting for a playgroup practitioner to join the team from after Easter. At our Oakmere setting we are looking for staff to join us as soon as possible. If you are an Early Years practitioner, or knows someone who might be interested, do speak with Mrs Mills. We are pleased to say that Mrs Conyers is recovering well from her operation and will be returning on a phased return from 7 March. Congratulations to Mrs Stone for passing her EYPDP with flying colours. She has taken the lead in advancing our knowledge of supporting/advancing speech and language for children of all levels

Equality & Diversity Audit

We had our audit on 21 February.

Every setting in Herts has to undergo this process to ensure we are compliant with County expectations. This was very successful and we were graded as Green—the highest level in all areas. We have received our report and it is very complimentary of our practices to ensure ALL children are receiving the best support possible. Our way of collecting information, working with and supporting children was praised; Our resources are very inclusive with books, jigsaws, poster and play figures, including dolls, representing all family compositions and ethnicities. Children understand our kindness rules. We use several methods to support children with communication and language including WellComm, Makaton, Elklan, Word Aware. We will be looking at 'Terrific Talkers' next term. Mrs Stone has just completed her EYPDP level 3 accreditation. We are now working towards level 4

Dates for your Diary

Spring Term 2022—5 January—1 April

Weds 5 Jan—Inset day, playgroup closed

Thur 6 Jan—current children return

Fri 7 January new children induction 12.20

14 Feb—18 Feb—Half term, playgroup closed

Thurs 31 March—Possible Easter Service in Church

Summer Term 2022—19 April—22 July

Tues 19 April—Inset day, playgroup closed

Wed 20 April—current children return

Fri 22 April 12.20 —new children's induction visit

Mon 2 May Bank holiday, playgroup closed

Mon 30 May—Fri 3 June Half term, playgroup closed

Sunday 12 June Potters Bar Carnival (details to follow)

Week commencing 11 July parent consultations

July: Picnic, fundraising & sports day

July: End of term party