

Playgroup News

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Autumn 2024



Welcome to all the new families who have joined us this September and welcome back to the families who returned after the summer holidays. The new children are settling in to the busy and lively routine of the playgroup. It's a busy term in the run up to Christmas with lots of new experiences for the children.

This Terms Topics

With the weather turning colder as winter approaches and leaves are falling off, seeds, acorn and conkers, we would like to ask you and your child to collect items from nature to enhance the children's learning. We will email some autumn treasurehunt sheets and we will go for walks to find leaves, conkers, acorns, pine cones etc. Do bring items in which you find. We will create stickman pictures, count, sort and arrange natural shapes. We will look at the different shapes of leaves and try to work out which tree they come from.



We are exploring various celebrations including Rosh Hoshanan, Harvest Festival, Divali/Diwali, fireworks, Hanukah and then Christmas, while we prepare for the nativity play. If you celebrate any of the above or other special events during the autumn term we would love you to come in and talk to the children about them for 10 minutes or so about how you celebrate. We have DVD's which introduce the various celebrations but it is also nice to find out how your families celebrate. We will introduce activities linked to Harvest and fireworks, there. We will talk about fire works and dangers of burns.

During World Nursery Rhyme week (11 Nov) we will be exploring new and old rhymes and doing lots of fun learning activities.

We are looking at the many different places our children live, going for walks to find bungalows, flats, caravans and houses. Making our own house with lots of conversations and new language around shapes, numbers, where we sleep and so on. Then going on to look at what 'home' looks like across the world



Mrs Stone and the team will be introducing lots of new science, technology, engineering and maths activities, having been inspired by an excellent training session. So listen out for new words from the children.

Staff News

Our other St John's Nursery Playgroup based within The Wayside Jubilee Centre will be saying goodbye to the leader Alyson Brown at the end of this term. She has been with us for over 13 years so has supported many children in that time and will be missed. We wish her all the best as she takes up her new position at a day nursery nearer to home. We will therefore be looking for a new Leader, so please contact us to if you think you have the skills to take on this demanding role. Adverts will be going out next week

Healthy eating,

At St John's we promote and encourage healthy eating. Please see the poster on the notice board with ideas for healthy lunchbox content.

Birthday treats can be supplied in the form of fruit either fresh, dried or exotic! These special fruits will be served at snack time to celebrate your child's birthday. Or if you enjoy baking a healthy banana bread (without nuts or sesame seeds) is another option See our poster on the display board for more ideas



Remember NO SESAME SEEDS and NO NUTS IN ANY FORM, INCLUDING PEANUT BUTTER OR NUTELLA.

Nutrition Guidance

Nutrition guidance from 'The Nutrition Foundation'.

The British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) has published its updated 5532 guide, a resource about portion size and healthy eating focussed on toddlers, which includes new information on free sugars, and more advice on vegetarian and vegan diets for young children, aged 1-4 years.

For easy access to the resources we will email the presentations. There are some great ideas for both meals at home and food to put in your child's lunchbox.. See the booklet on the notice board for 10 Steps for Healthy Toddlers. If you would like a hard copy we can print it for you. We have lots of ideas to share, including a toddler cookery book from which we can copy recipes.



For further information see our notice board.

Mini me's

We will reintroduce Mini Me's to the children. So if they tell you they have a picture of themselves on a little wooden block—that's the mini me. It means they can take 'themselves' into play. They can be the train driver, the hero, the mummy, daddy, brother or sister while playing with other small world characters. We also found out that if your child's best friend isn't it, they can just borrow their mini me to play with. A really popular addition to their play.

Choking

Choking is a real danger for young children who not only put food in their mouth and may not chew it, but also small toys. At our recent Food Hygiene visit there was a big focus on what we do to avoid children choking. He was very impressed at how closely supervised the children are during lunch and snack. With all staff also having full paediatric first aid and know how to deal with choking incidents. Please see the attached posters for more information about how you can avoid choking incidents at home and how to treat a child who is choking.

Family Centre & Health News

The Autumn Programme is now available to view on www.hertsfamilycentres.org/events/whats-on-at-family-centres-in-hertfordshire.aspx (You can cut and paste via the newsletter on our website)

We recommend you register with your local Family Centre (PB1 or Furzefield) to receive regular updates and newsletters. https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/ufs/CHSERV_FCREG.eb?ebd=0&ebz=1_1601375741952

Some more links which you may find useful: [Families First News](#) contains a regular article on mental health and emotional wellbeing support with many useful links.

The [Families First Portal](#) provides links to information, advice and guidance on local and national services for families, parents or carers needing support.

We will continue to email updates from Hertfordshire's Best Start newsletter relating to health, funding, safety advice and any articles which we feel might be useful to you

Snow Conditions

With winter being the next season, 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 recorded message.



Please always make sure your child has the correct clothes for current weather conditions

Term Dates

PLEASE NOTE THAT PLAYGROUPS ARE FUNDED FOR 38 WEEKS OF THE YEAR SPREAD ACROSS 3 TERMS

Autumn term 2023—14 weeks

Monday 2 September - Friday 13 December (14 weeks)

Manday 2 September - inset day - playgroup closed
Tuesday 3 September, current children start
Friday 6 September new children induction 12.20
Thursday 10 October: Harvest in church. All children and families invited 11.15

Monday 28 October - Friday 1 November Half Term - playgroup closed

Saturday 8 November; Scout Christmas Market- Santa visiting the church

Monday 11 November, Photographer (Lenman) 8.15-11. All families and siblings invited (more info to follow)

Monday 11 November - Nursery Rhyme week
Week commencing 2 December, parent consultations
Stakeholders annual meeting to be confirmed
Wednesday 11 December Christmas Party for all children; 11.30-2—details to follow

Friday 13th December - Nativity in Church - all children and their families invited Details to follow.

Friday 13 December LAST DAY OF AUTUMN TERM

Spring Term 2024 - 11 weeks

6 January— 4 April (11 weeks)

Monday 6 Jan inset day, playgroup closed
Tuesday 7 Jan current children return. No afternoon session for current children

Friday 10 January new children induction 12.30

Monday 17 —Friday 21 February Half term, playgroup closed

Thursday 7 March World Book Day dressing up day
April — Easter Service in Church TBC

FRIDAY 4 APRIL LAST DAY OF SPRING TERM

Summer Term 2024

22 April - 18 July (13 weeks)

Tuesday 22 April - Inset day
Wednesday 23 April - current children return
Friday 25 April new children induction 12.30, no afternoon playgroup for current children

Monday 5 May - Bank holiday playgroup closed

Monday 26 - Friday 31 May Half term, playgroup closed

Sunday June - Potters Bar Carnival. Date to be confirmed

Week commencing Monday 7 July - parent consultations

Friday 18 July Picnic, sports day, end of term event at Furzefield open space and woods

FRIDAY 18 JULY. LAST DAY OF SUMMER TERM