

Newsletter Nov 2014

ST JOHN'S
NURSERY
PLAYGROUPS



St John's Methodist Church • Oakmere School

Mobile: 07969 924482 email: enquiries@stjohnsbakerstreet.co.uk www.stjohnsbakerstreet.co.uk

This newsletter, other correspondence and full playgroup information is available on our website

Parent Consultations

Consultations with your

child's keyworker will take place on **Friday 5th 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 where you can log your preferred 10 minute appointment time.

If your child is staying with us in the Spring term, you may wish to discuss their progress and any other issues you may have. Suggested questions are:



Is your child happy to come to playgroup? * Is there a particular area your child has developed in that stands out to you since attending playgroup? * Do you have any concerns or questions you wish to raise? ie concerns with your child's development? * Is there anything more that you feel your child's key person or playgroup staff could do to support your child? * Do you think your child benefits from our library book borrowing scheme? * If your child attends lunch club, are you happy with the amount they are eating/drinking? * Do you have any other questions, comments or suggestions you wish to make? * If your child has started potty training this term, are you happy how we have supported you and your child? * Are you happy with the communication that the playgroup provides (notice board, hand outs or face to face)?

Christmas Nativity

Thursday 11th December

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 10.50am and parents can take their seats (entering via the Clifton Room entrance) in the church from 11am 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 9am, the remaining children (ie those who do not attend on a Thursday) are to be dropped off at 10.50am. 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 although some children don't want to and some children change their mind on the day. 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, as other groups may be using the buildings on this day and some parents have to rush to pick children up from other venues. 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 Mash or myself in complete confidence. Videos and photos must not be uploaded onto social media sites e.g. Facebook



Wet Weather Gear



We had a busy week getting nearly all the children out for a walk on the Walk-o-dile last week. There will be more opportunities in the coming weeks if your child didn't manage to make it this time.

We also had a great puddle jumping session last Friday in the outside play area and wow, didn't the children enjoy it! We do provide a limited number of wellington boots, plastic trousers and jackets but sometimes the children are splashing before we've managed to dress them appropriately - our apologies if they come in a new set of clothing. Please however, provide your child with appropriate outdoor warm clothing from hats, gloves and coats and where possible, make sure your child's clothing is clearly named.

Snow Conditions

With the possibility of snowy conditions can we 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.

You can also log onto the Herts online system www.hertsdirect.org/eycclosures to see if we are closed. This is the same on-line system schools use to inform parents if the school has had to be closed due to severe weather conditions.



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!

We 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.



Children's Christmas Party

Friday 19th December 11.30am-1pm.

We would like to invite all the children, whether they attend on a Friday or not to join the Christmas party on 19th December. We are asking for a contribution of £2 from every child to go towards the cost of food as we will be providing lunch, including sandwiches, fruit, vegetables, snacks, and party treats.

The lunch and party games will be from 11.30am -1.00pm.

- Children who attend Friday morning arrive at normal time (9.00) but will stay until 1.00pm.
- Children who **do not** attend Friday's are invited to arrive at 11.30.

In order to make this day possible we will need parent helpers to help us prepare the lunch, set up the room and to entertain 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.



Final dates for Autumn Term 2014

Fri 14th Nov 12.30pm Annual Stakeholders Mtg
Thur 11th Dec - Nativity Play (see Page 1)
Fri 19th Dec - Xmas party and last day of term.

Spring Term 2015

Tuesday 6th Jan - Thursday 2nd April
Fri 9th Jan - new children first visit 1.30-2.45
16th - 20th Feb Half term, PLAYGROUP CLOSED

Prewriting Skills - Part 1

The following is taken from an article entitled *Early Literacy - Prewriting Skills* from the Family Childcare Academy website.

Are You Providing Enough Opportunities To Develop Pre-Writing Skills?

We know children learn best through active, hands-on play. In order to be ready to write, children need to have developed hand skills. This means they need to have the strength and dexterity to handle and control, small objects with their hands. But,



they will also need to develop the muscles in their forearm and upper body to provide the strength and stability that will allow them to use their hands to manipulate

and control writing instruments. Eye-hand coordination is another pre-writing skill, as is the ability to process sensory information. The brain coordinates tactile and movement sensations as a child is writing, which allows him to make changes as needed to maintain muscle control.

We know that activities like painting, colouring and even finger painting help prepare the muscles and brain for writing.

First, let's focus on ways to strengthen the upper body, shoulder, arm and wrist. Here are some activities that will help develop these muscles:

Outdoor and gross motor play is vital to developing the fine motor skills needed for writing. Be sure to provide the children with plenty of opportunities to climb, hang, swing, and dangle from monkey bars or other playground equipment. Twisting, turning, pushing, pulling, tugging, and lifting himself up are other activities that help to develop the muscles used for writing.



NB: St John's doesn't have monkey bars but we do have large climbing equipment for children to learn to pull themselves up onto, move across horizontal bars and to travel down the slide.

- *Use vertical spaces for drawing and other activities such as flannel boards, chalkboards, and letter and number magnets to strengthen the upper body while standing.*
- *Provide lots of opportunity to work with Play-Doh and clay which helps develop finger and hand strength and control. When they are playing with these materials, children are squeezing and kneading, poking and pinching, rolling and pressing - all excellent strength building movements.*



- *Provide comfy spaces to encourage tummy-lying on the floor with arms propped on forearms to read books, colour or do puzzles.*

Part 2: To encourage and support pincer grip development - See our Spring 2015 issue for the next instalment