



Playwell Pre-school Newsletter

April 2017

Dates for this term

Bank Holiday – Monday 1st May

Photographer – Friday 19th May

Last Day of term – Friday 26th May

Back to school – Tuesday 6th June

Fundraising

We would like to thank all of you for your generosity with regards to the sponsored circuit £710.97p! We haven't done a sponsored circuit for many, many years and we were very unsure as to how many laps each child would do, or even if they wanted to do it in the first place! They all surprised us and some children who attend a full day wanted to do it twice- we couldn't refuse them.

We have purchased a new car, rickshaw and circle bike.

Thank you to Lisa Hopkins, your Parent representative, for organizing the Mother's day presents which raised £46. She worked very hard helping each child choose a gift and wrap it. She is also working hard on the DVD club which has raised £85 and we have purchased some new Peppa pig toys.

Thank you for your kind donations for our fruit tin to enable the children to have great snack during the morning session.

World Book Day

On World book day the children had great fun coming to pre-school dressed up as their favourite book character, they all looked so great. We do have some photos of World book day and many of our other activities in the photo books on the shelf in the back room along with our policies and EYFS info. If you get a chance, come and have a read through.





Just a couple of reminders

You do not need to bring in any spare clothes for your child, we have plenty. We are spending a lot of time looking for bags which may or may not be around, so this will enable us to change your child quicker. We also ask that you do not hang any bags on the coat trolley as the children are struggling to find their coats too.

Please do not bring toys in from home, they get lost and children get upset.

Can you please put your child's name on their coat, it makes life a lot easier!

Thank you- we really appreciate your support.

Annual Open Day

We were all so pleased to see so many of you at our annual open day, this was, by far the most attended in recent years. We hope that you found your time with us informative and reassuring but please remember you can speak to any one of us at any time. We will always find the time to speak you if you have any concerns, worries or praise(!) to share. Your child is the reason that we are all a part of Playwell and we would like everyone to be happy with their experience of our pre-school.

Questionnaire feedback

We handed our questionnaire out to you and we received 26 back, so thank you for taking the time to fill them out. Many of the comments were very positive-

Fun

Friendly

Approachable

Wide variety of activities

Growing confidence in your children during their time with us.

Other areas of feedback:

Outside area

We would love to have grass and more green areas outside, but as you are aware we rent the halls and outside area and this space is used for other groups and car parking during the evenings and weekends. We like to think that we have improved the outside area with the children planting their own plants, taking care of them and searching for minibeasts when the weather allows.

Microwave facilities

We can not heat the children's lunches in case we heat it too hot and they burn their mouths, hands or other children. We may not heat it enough and cause stomach upsets. It is always best to put hot food in a thermos, then it will be at a safe temperature for children to eat.

Staffing levels

The EYFS states that the adult ratio is 1 adult to 8 children. In the mornings we have 1 adult





to 5.8 children so we have a better staff ratio than other nurseries or pre-schools, this is because we are aware that we have a lot of space. In the afternoons it is 1 adult to 5 children.

It was also suggested that we have students to make up for our lack of staff, this is not legal. We do have a student at the moment but we cannot use her as an extra member of staff.

Structured learning

We have spoken to many Reception teachers about how we can get the children ready for Reception class. We have always been told that the children only need to recognize and write their own names by the time they go to school. We do a lot more than this, all day our conversations with the children include counting (cups, friends, toys). Much is the same with colours and shapes. The EYFS is about children learning through play, and learning through discussion. School is for the structured learning using phonics and we are getting them ready to learn in an informal nursery environment. All children learn at different levels and we adapt to their individual learning skills, some are ready for more writing, others are still a little too young.

Flexible opening times

It has been commented that we are not flexible about time changes or maybe opening 20-30 minutes earlier. Our hours have been the same for many years and has always worked. We do have to think of parents who have children in all schools in the area and this has always seemed to be ok. If we open earlier, then we will have to close earlier and that may not be suitable for all parents as this doesn't fit in with school finishing times.

Parent evenings

It is very rare for a pre-school to hold a formal parents evening as it is non-statutory education. Unfortunately we cannot provide this service as we only rent the halls for the time that the pre-school is open. We do hold our annual open day and we do put on every newsletter that if you have any concerns, come and chat to us. You can also make an appointment to have a look at their records and discuss their progress, just approach your keyworker.

Battery toys do not work

We are aware of this and it all relies on a member of staff to pick some up while they are out shopping. We will do our best to work on this.

School uniform

We did look into this a couple of years ago, we priced up t shirts and jumpers with a logo on them. They were quite expensive and felt that as parents are paying fees, we couldn't expect them to pay for an expensive uniform too. Children should really wear old clothes, we don't care what your child looks like, we just want them to have fun! Leggings, tracksuit bottoms, t shirts and trainers are great for messy play and can be a lot cheaper than a uniform.

Fees

It was commented that perhaps the fees could be increased instead of fundraising. We are aware that many parents struggle with fees which is why we like to keep them as low as we can whereas fundraising is a choice. We like to think that doing fun things to raise money for new toys gives the children a sense of pride and enjoyment.





Management Committee

Many of you have stated that you were not aware that we had a management committee and that you could be part of this by being a parent representative. A letter requesting a parent rep went out at the end of September, we are sorry if your child wasn't at Playwell when this was circulated, but you should be aware of our parent rep Lisa, who is Bens mum. If you have anything that you want to discuss with her, she is available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays and she will bring these comments to the meetings. Our parent rep needs to be someone who comes to Playwell regularly and has the chance to build relationships with parents and staff, unfortunately is not similar to a school governor role. It is more hands on!

Parent rota

Many parents have stated that they don't know about our parent rota. It is widely advertised on our newsletters, facebook and the notice boards!

Rest time

Could the children who stay for lunch have 20-30 mins rest after lunch? We would love that! The children do not want to though. We do sit and read books in the book corner after lunch while the staff tidy up and we encourage them to enjoy activities sitting down so that their lunch settles. Please remember that we do have children that come in at 12, they don't want to sit down and rest, they want to learn through play! If any child wants to sleep or rest, we do have beds.

EYFS

Many of you are not sure about the Early Years Foundation Stage and what that means to your child. Please find attached some information that is given out in your welcome packs for you to read through. Your keyworker should have gone through this when your child started and also at the open day, we do have a board in the middle hall which gives you some basic information and a book in the back hall for you to glance through. Please ask if you want any of us to go through it with you.

See more at <http://playwell-eltham.co.uk/our-curriculum>

Stickers

We give out stickers to the children to build up their confidence and for trying really hard at anything! Tidying up, writing their name, listening well etc. We apologise if your child doesn't remember at the end of the day what they got the sticker for, but please be assured that it was something that impressed us.

We would like to finish by quoting a parent who said us *'let the children be children and let them play, they have lots of structure in school, I just want my child to be happy'*. We totally agree with this and we find that all the children are happy here, they love coming, they have a great time with us and they learn better when they are happy and secure.





If you are interested in spending some time with us please sign up for our Parent rota. There is one in the friendship centre and one by the back door. We love having parents in as it does help to develop great relationships between staff and parents and carers.

If you haven't already done so, have a look at our facebook page – we post every day with all the activities your children have been up to. You will also find the newsletter on the website as well as term dates and occasional posts.

Don't forget- we are available at all times if you have any concerns or worries regarding your child.

Thank you, The Playwell team



