**South Woodham Preschool**



**Christmas Newsletter : December 2024**

**LOOKING BACK…..**

Over the last half term our children have had lots of fun at pre-school.

They have enjoyed our role play area set up as a kitchen, a vets and Santa’s Workshop.

At Stepping Stones the children have enjoyed lots of fun activities this half term. Their creative work has included making firework pictures, invitations to the Stepping Stones Nativity, lots of Christmas craft and creating our display for South Woodham Ferrers Library which you will be able to view with your children from January 2025 to February Half Term. Their investigative work has included making poppies, magic milk and Little Scientist experiments, baking Christmas cookies, matching number to quantity with our hot chocolate mugs and exploring weight using our Robot scales. Along with lots of singing practice for our Nativity on 13th December.

We wish a warm welcome to our new starters in after half term: Bertie, Corey, Evelyn, Grayson, Mavis and Noah.

**WHAT’S HAPPENING NEXT HALF TERM:**

**Stepping Stones:** We will be starting our “Letter of the Week” from the start of next term (w/c 6th January). Each week the children are encouraged to bring in something (i.e. small toy or object) beginning with the letter we are focusing on. This term we start with “A” then second week letter “B” and so on. This is for Stepping Stones sessions only.

**Sponsored Bounce Week (10th-14th February 2025)**. We will be holding this fundraising event all week. Sponsor forms will be sent home in the new year. If applicable please tick the “gift aid” box as this brings in extra money for our preschool. Thank you in advance for your continued support of preschool.

**Child Absences:**

Could we please ask that if your child is going to be absent from preschool that you either email or phone into the office on the first day of absence and the reason for the absence. This is in line with our safeguarding policy. If we do not hear anything we will be in contact to confirm the reason for not attending. Thank you for your understanding.

**Illness**

Can we also remind parents/carers that if you need to give your child Calpol before coming into preschool as your child is suffering from a temperature please keep them at home. We understand your need for childcare however, with so many different infections around this helps with the spread and also from any staff shortages due to illness. Also, if your child has been given antibiotics and/or had diarrhea/sickness our policy is for them to not attend preschool for 48 hours in case of a reaction and also to avoid the spread to others. Thank you for your understanding and co-operation.

**Festivals**

If there are any special festivals that your family celebrate throughout the year we would love to hear about them. Please let a member of staff know and we will include this within our learning.

**PACKED LUNCHES.** Can we please draw parents’ attention to the guidelines set out for packed lunches – if you send grapes, large blueberries or cocktail sausages in for your child please ensure they are cut length ways to avoid choking. Please NO nuts/nut products or sesame seeds should be brought into pre-school. Could parents please write your child’s name INSIDE and OUTSIDE of their lunch box/bag as we have a few that are the same and lastly please ensure all children bring in with them a drink in a named sports style bottle. Many thanks for your support. Also, chocolate biscuits such as Penguin, Kitkat etc are fine but no chocolates or sweets.

**Drinks:**

The EYFS framework (statutory requirements) states that Early Years providers must promote good oral health of children who attend their setting. Ofsted will also assess settings on how they promote good oral health.

We therefore ask that when providing your child with their “named” sports bottle to access throughout the session they only contain water. We will refill these throughout the session with fresh water.

As usual all the children (dependent on allergies) will be offered milk or water at snack time on session.

**PANTOSAURUS.**

Talking PANTS teaches children important messages, like their body belongs to them and they should tell an adult if they're upset or worried. Please take the time to watch this short animation and share with your child.



[**https://youtu.be/-lL07JOGU5o**](https://youtu.be/-lL07JOGU5o)

**SAFEGUARDING**

**For online safety advice please visit** [**www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety**](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety)

**To download a guide for under 5’s please visit** [**www.internetmatters.org/advice/0-5**](http://www.internetmatters.org/advice/0-5)

Please be aware that we will always try our best to keep pre-school open in severe weather conditions but if we are forced to close a message would be placed on our website and Facebook page.

**PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE ensure you send your child to pre-school in appropriate clothing/footwear for the season. All items of clothing including jackets and hats should be named. Appropriate footwear worn for safe play in the garden and inside. If your child wears wellie boots on their journey to preschool please ensure they have appropriate shoes to change into.**

**If you are potty training your child please supply a few changes of clothes in their bag for ‘accidents’, including shoes. We do have spare clothes, but are limited on choice/sizes.**

**Late Pick Up!**

Can we please ask that you are prompt to collect your children at the end of session. This causes distress to the children who are waiting and also can affect the numbers of children we have on the premises especially in the afternoon when we are already full and children aren’t collected on time. We thank you for your co-operation and understanding.

**Fundraising since last newsletter**:-

Raffle Tickets - £174.60

October Half Term Scavenger Hunt - £33.00

Children in Need - £33.00

Christmas Mini-Bazaar and Cake Sale - £345.00

**THANK YOU TO ALL OUR PARENTS/CARERS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT**

 Please join us at our Facebook Closed Group.

**APPEAL FOR NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS & FUNDRAISERS**

As you are all aware we rely heavily on our Committee through the support of our parents. We have had quite a few members leave this year and really need more parents to join. If you feel this is something you would like to be involved with please speak contact any of the current Committee members or speak to a member of staff. Please be aware that a role on the Committee can be as little as giving up a few hours for any events that are being held or a more involved role as one of our Officers.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT WHETHER YOU CHOOSE TO PAY YOUR FEES** MONTHLY, HALF TERMLY OR TERMLY PAYMENTS SHOULD BE MADE AT THE **BEGINNING** OF A MONTH OR AT THE **BEGINNING** OF THE TERM.

**NON-PAYMENT OF FEES**:

IF FEES ARE NOT PAID PROMPTLY THE COMMITTEE WILL NOW BE PUTTING A FREEZE ON “PAID FOR” SESSIONS AND ANY “EXTRAS” THAT ARE NOT COVERED BY FUNDING I.E. LUNCHES. PLEASE BE AWARE AS A CHARITY WE RELY ON PROMPT PAYMENT OF FEES TO ALLOW US TO MEET ALL OF OUR FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS.

**OUR FAMILY BOARD:** We continue to use our ”Family Board” and would ask that any children who haven’t already done so to bring in a photograph of their family and/or extended family. This board is used to celebrate diverse family structures, cultures and religions and to encourage the children to talk about their own relations and identify and embrace similarities and differences.

**NUMBER FOR REPORTING ABSENCES: 01245 425746**

Could we please ask that any absences be made either by email to [management@southwoodhampreschool.co.uk](mailto:management@southwoodhampreschool.co.uk) or by leaving a voicemail message on the landline.

**SNACK DURING SESSION NEXT HALF TERM:-**

Week 1 - Crackers & Cucumber

Week 2 - Breadsticks & Apples

Week 3 - Cereal

Week 4 - Crispbread & Raisins

Week 5 - Bread/Toast & Apples

Week 6 - Use up from previous weeks

**IDEAS FOR SNACK**

We would appreciate suggestions of any favourite healthy snacks your child has that we could possibly add to our selection of snack choices we offer the children.

Healthy Packed Lunches for Early Years - A practical Guide for Parents and Carers can be found at www.childrensfoodtrust.org.uk/childrens-food-trust/early-years

Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers : <https://infantandtoddlerforum.org/media/upload/pdf-downloads/HR_toddler_booklet_green.pdf>

**SCOOTERS/BIKES**

Unfortunately, we are unable to store any scooters/bikes during the day while your children are at pre-school.

**YOUR CHILD’S DEVELOPMENT**

If you have any concerns about your child’s speech please speak with your key person at any time. Also, you can access an on-line basic assessment at [www.talkingpoint.org.uk](http://www.talkingpoint.org.uk) which gives guidance to parents about the ages/stages of a child’s speech development.

***UNIFORM***

Please fill out an order form, which can be found in the foyer or email into the office with your order.

**Price List:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| T-shirt | £7.50 |
| Polo Shirt | £8.50 |
| Sweatshirt | £12.00 |
| Fleece | £14.00 |
| Book Bag | £7.00 |
| Cap | £7.00 |

***SECOND HAND UNIFORM***

We have a selection of second hand uniform that we sell for £1 each for t-shirts and polo shirts, £2 each for sweatshirts and £2.50 for fleeces.

**TERM DATES:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Mon 16th Dec – Fri 3rd Jan **2025** | Christmas Holidays |
| Mon 6th Jan | Start of Spring Term |
| Fri 14th Feb | Last Day of Term |
| Mon 17th – Fri 21st Feb | Half Term Holidays |
| Mon 24th Feb | Closed for Staff Training |
| Tues 25th Feb | Start of New Half Term |
| Fri 28th March | Last Day of Term |
| Mon 31st March – Mon 21st April | Easter Holidays |
| Tues 22nd April | Start of Summer Term |
| Fri 23rd May | Last Day of Half Term |
| Mon 26th – Fri 30th April | Half Term Holidays |
| Mon 2nd June | Closed for Staff Training |
| Tues 3rd June | Start of New Half Term |
| Weds 4th June | Stepping Stones Hyde Hall Trip \* |
| Thurs 17th July | Last Day of Term |
| Fri 18th July | Stepping Stones Graduations \* |

\*Details will be sent out nearer the time.

We would like to wish all our children, parents and carers

a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year

We look forward to seeing you all back on Monday 6th January 2025

