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NEWSLETTER NO 1 AUTUMN TERM

Dear Parents and Carers.

Welcome back and we hope you had a lovely Summer Break.

Term Dates: 1 September – 12 December.

Half Term: 27 – 31 October.

No INSET days other than the one we have already had on 1 September.

Welcome! To the new starters who join us this half term.

They are: Amelia, George, Francesca, Harry, Ella, Abbie, George, Tegan, Thomas, Finlay, Olivia and Tilly. Welcome also to Beverley Howlett who joins the staff as a 1:1 support worker. Beverley is NVQ 3 qualified and has some great experience and we are really pleased she is joining the team.

Mrs Crilley has been with us 5 years now so it is really sad that for personal reasons, the time has come for her to leave us. She has been a wonderful person to have on our team and she will be missed by everyone! I would like to thank her for all her hard work and support for as long as I have been running the nursery. Mrs. Crilley will be leaving at half term.

Staff Qualifications

I am pleased to say our team are becoming a very well qualified bunch!

Firstly, Mrs. Mariotti despite a year of battling cancer, has passed her NVQ Level 2. Well done to her for achieving this despite everything! I am pleased to say she is recovering well from treatment / operations and at present hopes to be back at nursery after half term.

Well done to Mrs. Golding who is in the final stages of her NVQ Level 3 which she should complete this term.

Well done also to Miss Mewes who has passed all her assignments for the first two terms of her Foundation Degree. Congratulations to her and good luck for the next year.

And finally, I am delighted to have passed my EYP Level 6 and am now a qualified Early Years Professional. This means we are well within the timescales set by the government to have a graduate in every setting. It also means we can access funding that would otherwise not be available.

At the end of last term the whole team attended a very enjoyable session on Enabling Environments to help us think around how we are meeting the new

Early Years Curriculum at our setting. Several of us will be attending further training around the planning and assessing 0-5's within the EYFS this month.

Parents As Partners The new Early Years curriculum states that the parent is the most important educator of their child!

Do get involved with your child's development; talk to them about what they have done at nursery, what they enjoyed and feedback to your keyworker any information that will help us improve the nursery experience for your child. Our website is designed for parents to access so you can stay in touch with what is going on at nursery.

For those of you who cannot access the internet the Parent's folder holds the same information. This is put out every day for parents to access.

Could new parents please note that all forms, newsletters, policies and procedures relating to the nursery are all published on the web site.

Finally, do take the time to read your Autumn Plan 2008 which has been sent either via the children or on email so you can support your child in their learning and development and send in what is needed.

Train Journey by the 4's Club on Thursday morning 25th September. We are still looking for parent helpers so that we have a 1:2 ratio for for this trip. Please let Mrs. Bonner or Mrs. Raja know if you can help.

DIY Dads We could do with a few dads (well anyone really!) who would be willing to carry out small repairs to our equipment from time to time as all local handy men seem very expensive! Please let me know if you would be happy to do this. Also Mrs. Bonner is looking for dads to join us for her first woodworking session on 18th September. Too good to miss don't you think?

Parents Committee are meeting on Thursday 18th September at 8pm in the George IV pub. Please speak to your child's colour group rep if you have any thing you would like them to raise. An agenda will be circulated to committee members before the meeting.

Phoenix Cards Vicki Hudson (Fletch's mum) will be sending out the popular Phoenix card catalogues in the next few weeks. 10% of takings will go to the nursery toy fund and the products are lovely so make the most of this chance to order your Christmas cards and wrapping early!

Apologies to those of you who were confused about the start dates for this term. A Communication was sent home via the children at the end of term but not everybody received their letter. The web site had correct term dates, the INSET day was not mentioned. Apologies for any confusion caused.

Sessions for January 2010 if you wish to change your child's sessions after Christmas please complete a Change form and return to the nursery by **Friday 10th October**. (Available from nursery or website). If you do not want to change sessions no action is required. A letter or email confirmation

of the sessions you have been allocated for January will be sent out to you before half term. Remaining sessions will be allocated to new children.

New Nursery Fruit Bowl At a nursery Miss Mewes and I recently visited, we were impressed to notice a colourful and varied snack table with a large range of fruit for the children. The manager explained that her parents sent in a minimum of one piece of fruit per child per week. This meant each child had at least one item in the snack bowl that they liked, and the children also had a variety of fruit to choose from. I asked how the parents felt and she said they liked it and would send in extras from home that would otherwise go off such as from buy one get one free promotions.

I would like to trial this idea at our nursery also. Although there are no fees for parents, we still run to a very tight budget and this could help reduce overheads and increase variety/ quality of what is on offer to the children at snack time. Our budget will continue to provide toast/ cheese and biscuits, etc to go with the fruit. I hope this sounds fair.

From **Monday 22nd September** could each parent please send one piece of fruit with your child on their first day each week to go in the nursery fruit bowl? A bowl or plate will be ready so you can drop off the fruit with your child.

Grants As we now offer the pathfinder flexible entitlement and have a qualified EYP, we can apply for additional funding for equipment. I have ordered some new equipment for the indoor classroom (new trolleys, a new rug for the book corner, new dressing up rail with mirror, walkie talkies, musical instruments, children's lap tops plus more).

How You Can Help

We can also apply for a grant for the Outdoor Environment by end of October. This is very exciting and I would like ideas from you and your children of what we could spend this money on. This could be anything that will improve the outdoor environment for the setting and to help us effectively deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage in the area surrounding the nursery. Please complete and return the form at the bottom of this letter to let me know what you would like to have outside for your child. Please can all forms be back by **Friday 26th September** to give me plenty of time to consider your views before I send of the forms.

Grant Forms Just a reminder that the funding forms and equal opportunities statements (with you child's name on it if not attached to the form please!) need to be back NOW PLEASE so that I can claim the grant for your child.

School Admissions If your child was born between 1 September 2004 and 31 August 2005, you need to apply for their place in reception class by **Thursday 16 October 2008**. You can apply online at www.hertsdirect.org/admissions or call customer services helpline on 01438 737500 or 01923 471500. If you are applying for St Johns you also need to fill out the schools own application form.

Our Local Children's Centre in Ware are running several support groups for families with young children this term, including breast feeding support, baby yoga, stress busters for young families and raising confident children. For further details please **contact Sharon at the Children's Centre on 08448 009 880**. We have lost our old spot for notices at the front door since the building works and appreciate that this has made it more difficult for you to keep informed of such events. We are trying to find some space in the nursery to advertise parent notices for you in the near future.

Contacting Mrs. Raja. Having an office at home does present challenges as many of you will know, and much as I like to hear from you all, I wanted to clarify the best times to contact me.

I will be at nursery every Tuesday this term if parents would like to speak to me. I am also around on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays dropping off and collecting so fine to speak to me whilst I at nursery then also.

All other days except Wednesday I work from the office at home between 9.30 and 2.30 and am available to take calls. After 8pm is also fine for those of you who work in the day. If I do not answer, leave a message and I will call back.

Wednesdays for this term only are my day off; As Josh starts school in January this is my last chance to have a day off to spend with him! 3pm – 7pm is dinner / bedtime at our house and early morning (i.e. before 9am!) is school run time. Could I respectfully ask that you avoid calling at these times unless absolutely necessary. Thank you!

That's it for now – enjoy the start of term.
Mrs. Raja and the Nursery Team.

Grant for the Outdoor Environment

Name: **Child's Name:**

I think the money should be spent on.. (Please tick)

- Awning to allow all weather access
- New Sand Pit
- New Water Play
- Mobile cloakroom (for wellies/coats for all weathers!)
- Outdoor Parents' Noticeboard
- Improved access to field (gate at other end of decking / pathway?)
- Something else ((please give details of your idea)