



SPRING TERM NEWSLETTER 2 MARCH 2010



Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome back we hope you had a nice half term. Please read on for everything you need to know for this half term.

New Starters

Welcome to Phoebe Prentice and Autumn Shine who start with us this half term.

Topics at Nursery this half term we are looking at Growing and The Weather. The children will be talking about the seasons, making rain gauges and planting in the allotments. Our role play area will be a weather forecasting studio, a fruit and vegetable shop and also outside a garden centre. We are planning a trip to the school obstacle course and a trip to the nature reserve with the 4's club. Information about the nature reserve trip is attached. *Please note that this trip will be weather dependant so if the weather is really poor on the day we may need to cancel. In this case there will be 4's club in the hall as usual instead. A member of staff will be at the Nature Reserve to redirect anyone in the event of cancellation and a message will be left on the nursery phone that morning in the event of poor weather.*

The last week of term will be about Easter ending with an Easter Celebration on the Friday which we would love parents and carers to join us for.

Caterpillars and Butterflies Update



The transition to our new groups has gone really well. All children seem to know which group they are in and many now urge others in their group to come to circle time when their group is called. We have seen confidence increase and the children are participating really well at circle time. We think their listening skills are improving and the caterpillars are beginning to learn to sit still with a little encouragement from us. We have now done away with colour groups completely. We have ordered new boxes for artwork and belongings that will have the caterpillar and butterfly logos on them. These are arriving next week.

End of Term Easter Celebration This will take place on Thursday 1 April 9.30-12am. All children and their families are invited to this morning which is to raise funds for a new climbing frame for the outside deck. The Parent Committee will be running a

cake stall. Please bring a cake or make/ decorate cakes or biscuits to bring along. There will also be a book stall where we will be selling second hand children's books. Bev will be organizing an Easter Bonnet / Hat Parade and the children are invited to come wearing their Easter bonnets/ hats and / or Easter fancy dress. There will be a prize for the best Caterpillar and the best Butterfly. The Key Workers are organizing relay races and an Easter Egg Hunt in the field (weather permitting). Please speak to Kirsty (Little Jake's mum) or Bev about the book stall and Kelley (Jessica's mum) or Kath (Izzy's mum) and about the cake stall or you have anything you would like to donate. Helen (Millie's mum) and Louise (Lila's mum) will be organizing a raffle and there will also be refreshments available on the day.

Garden Centre Role Play next Week. W/C 15 March we would like to do a garden centre role play on the outside deck. Please can you send anything that would help with this – old gardening magazines, children's gardening tools, old flower pots, compost, seedlings etc. Please label anything you would like returned and we can hand it back when the role play is finished. If the weather is nice we hope to start planting in the allotments as well and brighten them up for spring.

Self Registration Just a reminder to encourage your child to choose their card and sign themselves in for the day as this is not always happening. If your child is missing a card please speak to a member of staff – thank you.

Fruit Bowl



Thanks to everyone who is sending in a piece of fruit with their child each week. Please keep this up! It is lovely for the children to be able to help themselves to fruit at the snack bar each morning.

Invoices Second payments are now overdue so please pay promptly if you have not already done so. Thank you!

Changes of Address If you have moved house or changed your contact numbers please let us know so we can keep your child's records up to date. Please give a note giving details of any changes to Bev or Louise as you come into nursery. Thank you.

Advertising – Can you help? We now have some lovely nursery flyers which I would like to get sent circulated in our catchment area. If you could take a bundle and drop them in letter boxes in your street / local area please speak to Louise and Bev we will be happy to give you a few to take. Whether it is only 5 or 105 all offers are welcome. Also if any of you attend toddler groups or leisure Centres where we could leave some leaflets or bars / cafes in the area where parents meet, can you let me know?

The nursery is not that well known and there are still lots of new houses going up in the local area so we would like to spread the word a bit. Louise has also placed adverts in The Mercury and Axis Magazine this month and we will be monitoring response to these. We do still have spaces in the afternoons which we would like to fill.

Louise has also had some A4 size posters laminated so if there is a board near where you live where these could go up could you let her know. (A big thank you to Megan Taylor's mum Tori for designing and printing the new flyers).

Further Improvements at Nursery The builders are finishing the last part of the deck this week. Our Wendy house arrived but the door was damaged so we are waiting for a replacement. We hope to have the last part of the deck in use very soon now. This week the builders hope to start work on extending the deck. I have ordered a Wendy house to go to the rear of the deck

Heating in the Hall We have been told that the heaters are to be upgraded in the Easter Holidays. In the meantime please dress your children warmly – jumpers /fleeces as the cold weather continues. PLEASE LABEL COATS AND HATS. Please do send in warm coats during this cold weather as it does get really cold especially in the outside classroom.

Spotlight On.. Information For Parents We are introducing some A4 1 page sheets that will be available on the website too to educate / inform our parents about areas within Early Years that we think will be of interest. The aim to help you support your child and understand more about the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which is the national curriculum for 0-5 years . For this first edition Martin is talking about developing Numeracy and Literacy Skills with pre-school age children. (Sheet attached). Please let us know what you think about this idea thank you!!

Parent Communication A new information board will be put up each day to tell you snack and activity of the day. This was suggested by the parents committee to help keep parents informed. The board will be placed next to the Parents Information Board outside the gate. A Parent Feedback Box has been placed next to the door into the hall on the outside deck. This is for you to post comments / feedback about the nursery. Feedback forms will be left underneath this box for you to complete. We hope you find both of these useful!!

Children's Portfolios The Butterfly and Caterpillar Key workers would like to send the children's "Special Books" home during the Easter Holiday for you to look at. These books (which are presented to the children at the graduation ceremony when they leave) contain photos and artwork to give you an idea of what your child is achieving at nursery. For the children it would be lovely if you could sit and share this with them, talk with them about their friends and teachers and what they enjoy doing. There will also be a space for your comments / feedback. We would especially be interested in things they are achieving outside of nursery. Also any photos /artwork you or your child would like to add to the book would also be great.

Term Dates

Spring Term

Last Day of Term: Thurs 1 April

Summer Term

Tue 20th April – Fri 23rd July

Inset Day Mon 19th April

Half Term Mon 31 May – Fri 4th June

Bank Holiday Monday 3rd May

Thank you everyone for your continued support. Enjoy the rest of Term!
Louise and the Nursery Team

4's Club Trip to the Nature Reserve Thurs 25th March



Linked to our topic of Nature and Growing we thought it would be lovely to take a trip to the Great Amwell Nature Reserve with the Butterflies (4's Club) children. This is a beautiful local resource which attracts nature lovers from near and far due to the variety of species of birds / animals some of which are rare species. If you cannot attend then a member of staff will look after your child but we do need as many parents as possible to meet our Outings Policy requirement of 1 adult for every 2 children so please join us if you can!!

Arrangements for the Day

We will meet at Information Point at the entrance to the Nature Reserve at 9.15am. Please bring waterproof coat and sensible footwear. We expect to finish around 11.15am. You are of course welcome to spend longer at the reserve with your child and their friends if you wish to do so.

Directions

To get to the Information Point you need to walk down the footpath from Lower Road. This is signed "nature reserve" from lower road and can be found opposite the memorial stone on Lower Road on the left hand side if you are driving away from the parish hall. Please speak to Louise or Martin if you are unsure of how to get there. *NB To get to the Nature Reserve you will have to cross the railway line with your child. You will need to go through the pedestrian gate, check that the lines are clear and walk across the line with your child. Please be extra vigilant when crossing the line and keep your child with you at all times.*

Treasure Hunt



We plan to put the children into smaller groups and send them on a treasure hunt. If they can follow the clues successfully, they will end up finding some treasure (our mid morning snack and a small treat for each child!). We will finish with mid morning snack. (Parents there are no coffee machines so feel free to bring a thermos with tea and coffee!) Drinks and snack will be provided for the children.

Nature Reserve Trip

- *I would like my child to take part in this trip (NB Butterfly Group Only)*
- I will / will not be attending with my child. (Please complete)
- If I am unable to attend I give permission for a member of staff to look after my child. I have read and understood the Nursery Outings Policy. (Please see website under Procedures, Password Learning.
www.greatamwellnursery.com)

Name of Child:Parent / Carer signature:



Starting Nursery - Settling Children into the Nursery

Welcome to our new 'Spotlight On' section of our Newsletter. In this section, we aim to look at areas of our practice and help parents understand how and why the nursery operates in the way it does. We hope to share our experiences and expertise with you and we invite your feedback and comments on the 'Spotlight On' subjects.

In this newsletter, Martin explains the typical settling in process, why some children take a different amount of time to settle in and the stages of bonding with peers and keyworkers that children experience.

Starting nursery is a major milestone in a young child's life and an important step in their development. All of the keyworkers at Great Amwell Nursery aim to make this transition as smooth and enjoyable as possible.

Most children go through a number of emotional developmental phases during their first term in the nursery. For many children, this is their first experience of spending time away from their parents in a large environment. Naturally, during this process some children experience differing levels of separation anxiety from their parents. This is totally normal and all part of their transition into their new school life.

Children learn to adapt from a series of singular bonding relationships (close bonding with their parents) to new singular bonding with their keyworker and eventually multiple bonding with the other staff and more importantly, their peer children within the nursery. At the multiple bonding stage, children feel part of the social fabric and fully integrated into the nursery.

So, how long does this take? It depends on the child, their experience of being apart from their parents and how confident they feel at adapting to change.

You might be wondering what you can do as a parent to make your child's settling in process go as smoothly as possible. Here are a few tips:

- Arrange a play visit to the nursery in the weeks before your child is due to start
- Talk to your child about their new nursery in a positive way. Help them to visualise themselves in their new nursery and make it something to look forward to
- Avoid negative suggestion. Saying "If you don't like it, Mummy will come and get you" might show your best intentions, but subconsciously plants negative emotion.
- Talk to your child's keyworker on a regular basis. We are there to provide a stimulating, secure and enjoyable environment for your child. Share your experiences at home and we can get to know your child's likes and dislikes easier
- Remind your child that his / her keyworker is there to solve any problems they have. If they're upset for any reason it's the keyworkers job to put things right.
- Remember, if your child does show signs of separation anxiety it's almost always temporary and usually stops within minutes of Mum leaving. Anxiety usually stops for good once they have formed new relationships with peers and nursery staff.

In the next newsletter We will be looking at our approach to literacy and numeracy.